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Feed the Future and Conflict Integration

A Toolkit for Programming

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Feed the Future and Conflict Integration: A Toolkit for Programming

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CREDIT: SIEGFRIED MODOLA/USAID. JOYCE AKINYA RAISES POULTRY TO REDUCE IMPACT ON LOCAL FISHING

Acronyms

AHADI	Agile ad Harmonized Assistance for Devolved Institutions (AHADI)
CBT	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategies
CLA	Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting
CSRF	Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility
CVP	USAID's Center for Conflict and Violence Prevention
FCV	Fragility, Conflict and Violence
FTF	Feed the Future initiative
GFSS	Global Food Security Strategy
HDP	Humanitarian, Development and Peace Assistance
IDP	Internally displaced people
IP	Implementing partners
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
PREG	Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
ToC	Theory of Change
VCAF	Violence and Conflict Assessment Framework
WFP	World Food Programme

Executive Summary

CREDIT: FINTRAC, INC.. IMPROVING POST-HARVEST HANDLING/PROCESSING AND JOBS FOR WOMEN AND YOUTH

This toolkit is a groundbreaking effort to ensure all investments under the United States Government's Global Food Security Strategy integrate conflict. The better we understand the connections between conflict and food systems, the better we can meet the goals of the Feed the Future Initiative while also contributing to a more peaceful world. Fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) can easily undermine progress under Feed the Future, but there are steps we can take to mitigate these dynamics and capitalize on opportunities for peace throughout our programming.

Section 1 describes the connection between food insecurity and FCV. It also introduces the new Global Food Security Strategy's cross-cutting intermediate result on conflict sensitivity[1], social cohesion, and peacebuilding. Section 2 overviews key terms that will be used throughout the brief.

Section 3 outlines the relationship between food systems and FCV, with a focus on recent trends. It also makes the point that people do not experience conflict and violence alone; they live in complex risk environments. This section lays out how food systems and FCV relate to climate change and the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Section 4 defines two key concepts integral to the toolkit: conflict sensitivity and conflict integration. Conflict sensitivity focuses on understanding the context, the two-way interaction between the context and an intervention, and adapting accordingly to minimize harm and maximize opportunities for peace. Conflict integration broadly addresses the collective dynamics that underpin peace, security, and sectoral goals. This section also details the key components to a conflict analysis, providing resources and examples. Section 4 outlines key steps to identifying a conflict sensitive theory of change (Section 4.2). It then provides detailed diagrams and examples on what a conflict sensitive theory of change might look like in the context of seeds systems, nutrition, or livelihoods efforts (Section 4.3).

1 Note: dark blue hyperlinks link to key terms and concept definitions.

Section 4.4 discusses activity design, offering details on common FCV problems and proven approaches to address them from Feed the Future programming. These ideas can serve as a springboard for experimenting with what theory of change and programming approach makes best sense in your local context. It also provides best practices, guidance, tools, and resources for conflict sensitive design and implementation, from developing a Scope of Work, to holding a Technical Evaluation Committee, and adaptively managing throughout the program lifecycle.

Section 4.5 describes best practices, guidance, tools, and resources for conflict sensitive Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL). It includes advice on the benefits and drawbacks to various data collection methods, advice on developing conflict sensitive indicators, and guidance on conflict sensitive evaluations.

Section 5 provides examples of conflict sensitive programming. It is organized around initiatives to solve five common problems in FCV contexts: 1) low social cohesion, 2) inequality in economic opportunity, 3) political exclusion and lack of public trust, 4) resource competition, and 5) psychosocial support.

Section 6 focuses on resilience and conflict. Since resilience is a core objective of the Global Food Security Strategy, and the resilience framework already integrates conflict risk, resilience is a powerful approach that addresses the interrelated and compounding risks people face in their lives, from conflict and violence to climate change or a pandemic.

Section 7 shares five engaging case studies on how Missions have integrated conflict across their portfolios. Moving beyond specific activity designs, this section highlights interesting organizational structures, Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) approaches, buy-in options, training and practicum ideas, and novel approaches for Missions to consider. Missions are at various points along the spectrum of conflict integration, providing a range of models for what the conflict integration journey can look like.

Section 8 concludes with final, overarching takeaways for success for integrating conflict across Feed the Future investments, from the importance of conflict sensitivity and working with and through local systems, to promoting Humanitarian-Development-Peace Coherence, to consistently experimenting and adaptively managing activities.

Finally, the annexes provide a range of additional programming examples, tools and resources, such as conflict sensitivity activity and project design, implementation, MEL checklists and charts, and detailed accounts of especially promising programming approaches.

Feed the Future Priority Countries

Bangladesh
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Ethiopia
Ghana
Guatemala
Honduras
Kenya
Liberia
Madagascar
Malawi
Mali
Mozambique
Nepal
Niger
Nigeria
Rwanda
Senegal
Tanzania
Uganda
Zambia

USAID Resilience Focus Countries

Burkina Faso
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Ethiopia
Haiti
Kenya
Madagascar
Malawi
Mali
Mozambique
Niger
Nigeria
Somalia
South Sudan
Uganda
Zimbabwe

1. Introduction

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The fight against global food insecurity is facing powerful headwinds. While the stresses on the food system are numerous, this toolkit focuses its attention on conflict. Why? Because conflict remains the largest single driver of global food insecurity worldwide. The metrics were alarming even before Russia's invasion of Ukraine disrupted global supply chains and raised apprehension about impending crisis. Conflict was responsible for roughly 72 percent of acute food insecurity worldwide in 2021. And as many as 60 percent of the world's 828 million hungry live in regions subject to war and violence. Conflict-affected areas are the frontlines in the global fight against hunger, and addressing food insecurity increasingly means addressing conflict, violence, and fragility.

Conflict interacts with other forces that have battered the food system in recent years. Climate change has contributed to record-breaking droughts in the Horn of Africa and to extreme rainfall in Pakistan. While COVID-19 lockdowns have eased, the pandemic's legacy can be felt around the globe in damaged livelihoods, soaring inflation, and increasing poverty. As these and other factors threaten food access, the risk of future conflict is likely to only exacerbate them.

The Global Food Security Act, and continued reauthorization of the Feed the Future Initiative (FTF), has effectively codified the flagship global food security program of the United States government. In 2022, the reach of FTF was expanded from 12 to 20 countries. The U.S. government has updated its Global Food Security Strategy (2022-2026) (GFSS) in response to these compounding crises. Additionally, USAID and the whole of the U.S. government are responding to the global food security crisis driven by Russia's war on Ukraine. This supplemental funding has heightened our food security response, now reaching more than 50 countries.

The GFSS aims to sustainably reduce global poverty, hunger, and malnutrition by working to achieve three primary objectives: 1) Sustainable Agriculture-

led Economic Growth, 2) Strengthened Resilience of People and Systems, and 3) a Well-Nourished Population. Meeting these goals requires new strategies for responding to the overlapping crises fueling food insecurity around the world. The most recent GFSS elevates several new priorities, including introducing Cross-cutting Intermediate Result 9 on Integrating Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion.

The GFSS adopts a multirisk approach that recognizes the interrelated and compounding impact of shocks such as climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and conflict. The inability to manage major shocks can create a negative feedback loop with conflict and violence. For example, food price spikes can trigger conflict, which in turn exacerbate poverty and food insecurity. But the stand-alone impacts of conflict and violence on food systems are also devastating. When conflict strikes, it severely disrupts agriculture and food systems. Farmers cannot plant crops or access markets. People are displaced from their homes, lose jobs, and cannot meet their basic needs. They often cope in dangerous ways, by eating less or quickly selling off assets. Food insecurity can in turn increase conflict risks by, for example, motivating rebel recruitment, increasing anger against ineffective government, and increasing tension between haves and have-nots. This awful cycle undermines prospects for both peace and agriculture-led growth.

Peacebuilding programming alone cannot address the complex challenges that create fertile ground for conflict. These efforts must be nested within a comprehensive strategy addressing issues such as political marginalization, reduced economic and educational opportunities, social cohesion, weak governance, and, of course, food security. Interrelated issues cannot be solved through siloed approaches, which is why the conflict-integrated approach is so critical.

By integrating conflict across the GFSS, FTF brings a powerful set of development tools to the collective challenge of preventing, mitigating, and recovering from conflict and violence. Conflict integration recognizes that food security and conflict dynamics are inherently related and that in order to maximize the benefits of one, the other must be considered as well. Contributing to a more peaceful environment enables the GFSS and FTF to better achieve their goals around food security, resilience, and inclusive agriculture-led growth. By understanding the connections between conflict and food systems, we can ultimately both improve our sector goals and create opportunities for peace.

This toolkit offers guidance for USAID staff implementing FTF programming in FCV contexts. It is supplemented by formal GFSS Activity Design Guidance on Conflict Integration, which is a shorter companion to this product. This toolkit is designed to frame what is different about operating in FCV contexts, providing more detailed "how to" content for Missions. This toolkit routinely utilizes the following key terms:

Cross-Cutting Intermediate Result #9: Enhanced integration of conflict sensitivity, peacebuilding, and social cohesion

"...Each of the choices made by implementers risks exacerbating the conflict dynamics, fragilities, and risks of violence that exist within communities—but can also create or make use of opportunities to reinforce positive dynamics. Building on these opportunities can strengthen resilience, foster collaboration, and mitigate the risks of future violence and conflict. To best advance food security, deliberate programmatic choices that integrate conflict sensitivity and resolution, and social cohesion are critical. In the food systems and resilience contexts, this may mean addressing structural violence, such as access and control over productive assets and cultural barriers that affect women's empowerment and agency, fostering dialogue and inclusive growth strategies to resolve land and water conflicts, and strengthening communities to resolve rangeland management issues and conflicts caused by migration."
Source: Global Food Security Strategy

2. Key Concepts

CREDIT: USAID NUAC. PRODUCING HIGH-QUALITY SEEDS

- **Conflict:** Conflict is present when two or more individuals or groups pursue mutually incompatible goals. Conflict is a continuum. When channeled constructively into processes of resolution, conflict can be beneficial; however, conflict can also be waged violently, as in war.

- **Conflict integration:** Conflict integration is the intentional effort to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of development and humanitarian assistance by addressing the collective dynamics that underpin peace, security, and core sectoral goals. Doing so can move programming beyond conflict sensitivity and the principles of Do No Harm to promote better development outcomes and sustain peace and prosperity.

- **Conflict sensitivity:** Conflict sensitivity is a crucial first step in conflict integration. It is the ability of practitioners to:

  Understand the context in which they are working. Key dynamics relate to economic, social, and political factors and issues of gender, power dynamics, and access. Topics to examine include motives, how key actors might mobilize for peace or conflict, and which events or windows of opportunity could trigger conflict or create opportunities to build peace.

  Recognize the interaction between the intervention and the context. What is the interaction between the identified key elements of conflict and the intervention? Fields of observation include the project, partners and stakeholders, and organizational setup.

  Act on these changes to adapt programming direction and pivot when necessary. Conflict sensitivity is as much about HOW you work as WHAT you do. Is the community engaged to understand the local dynamics? It is possible to modify a project midstream while keeping the goals the same. Making reflective, strategic adaptations in operations and implementation should become part of the program management cycle.

- **Food security:** Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

- **Food systems:** The intact or whole unit made up of interrelated components of people, behaviors, relationships, and material goods that interact in the production, processing, packaging, transporting, trade, marketing, consumption, and use of food, feed, and fiber through aquaculture, farming, wild fisheries, forestry, and pastoralism. The food and agriculture system operates within and is influenced by social, political, economic, and environmental contexts.

- **Fragility:** The vulnerability of a country or region to armed conflict, large-scale violence, or other instability, including an inability to manage transnational threats or other significant shocks. Fragility results from ineffective and/or unaccountable governance, weak social cohesion, and/or corrupt institutions or leaders who lack respect for human rights.

- **Humanitarian-Development-Peace Coherence:** Efforts to promote complementary collaboration across humanitarian, development, and peace actors in pursuit of a common agenda. The goal is to maximize impact and sustainability of programs across different kinds of assistance and to reduce the need for humanitarian assistance over time.

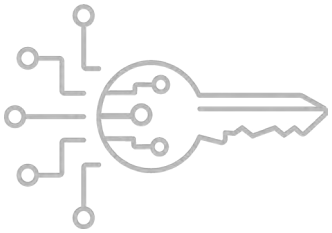
- **Resilience:** The ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.

- **Violence:** The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person or against a group or community that results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation. This includes, but is not limited to, identity-related violence, criminal violence, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), gang violence, and homicide.

CREDIT: MARIA FRANCO, NCBA CLUSA. COOPERATIVE FARMERS WORK TOGETHER IN ACOPAGRO, PERU

3. Fragility, Conflict, and Violence and Food Systems

CREDIT: USAID POLICY LINK. WOMEN FARMERS TRANSPLANT SEEDLINGS



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Conflict is the largest driver of global food insecurity. All USAID staff engaged with FTF programming confront some aspect of FCV in their daily work.
- Climate change is a powerful compounding variable whose effects will be felt with increasing intensity throughout the food system.
- The legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic similarly compounds conflict risk through its impact on livelihoods, extreme poverty, and inequality.

The external forces stressing the global food system have led to widespread alarm about its overall health.[2] While many factors have contributed to the deterioration of key metrics—climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and resultant increases in global poverty have all played critical roles—this toolkit focuses first on conflict, the largest single driver of food crises worldwide.

Food and conflict systems are underpinned by shared dynamics and interact in complex ways. For instance, the link between food insecurity and conflict is prominent when food price spikes trigger violent protests or when competition over natural resources leads to violence. Land disputes, access to markets, and local corruption can also worsen food insecurity and conflict alike.

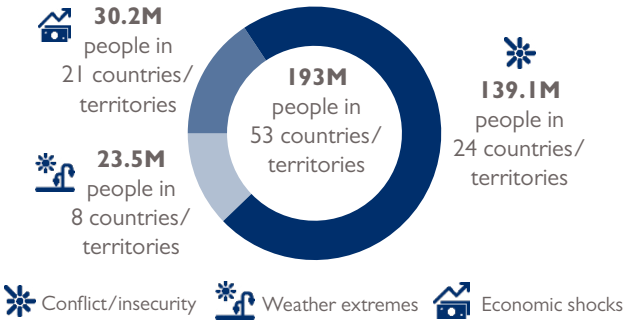
When conflict strikes, it severely disrupts agriculture and food systems. Farmers cannot plant or access markets. People are displaced from their homes, lose jobs, might be targeted for their food assets, and cannot meet their basic needs. They often cope in dangerous ways, by eating less or quickly selling off assets. Food insecurity can in turn drive conflict by motivating rebel recruitment. This cycle undermines prospects for both peace and agriculture-led growth. In post-conflict settings, food systems need to be rebuilt quickly so that

2 Food insecurity indicators have been on the rise in recent years. Risks associated with poor diets are the leading cause of death around the globe even before inflationary pressure has pushed the cost of a healthy diet beyond the means of 3.1 billion people worldwide. The Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 explicitly called for the doubling of incomes for small-scale producers by 2030.

livelihoods can resume, but it is essential that they are built up inclusively and do not fuel the next conflict.

The relationship between conflict and food systems is ultimately bidirectional: conflict can lead to ruptures in the food system, and disruptions in the food system may elevate tensions and surface grievances that perpetuate conflict. When these dynamics are exacerbated by other shocks and stresses—e.g., damage to livelihoods by events such as the pandemic—the risk of instability only rises further. Climate change, which will be borne out in global markets and local ecological systems, especially exacerbates risk in both directions.

Numbers of People in Acute Food Insecurity by Driver, 2021



Source: World Food Programme

Russia, Ukraine, and the Intersection Between Conflict and Food Systems

The current moment demands a consideration of the intersections between conflict and food systems. Armed conflict and violence have been on the rise for the better part of 10 years. The United Nations hosted a Food System Summit in 2021 to alert the world that progress toward Sustainable Development Goal #2 on Zero Hunger was falling behind. And then Russia invaded Ukraine. The implications for food systems have attracted significant attention. Global policymakers have warned of the potential of a "hurricane of hunger" since Russia and Ukraine are key exporters of staple crops and inputs; the conflict could disrupt global supply chains, raise prices of basic commodities, and elevate risks for the world's most vulnerable. Beyond Ukraine, nearly every major food crisis is occurring in a country experiencing conflict and violence. Understanding the relationship between conflict and food systems and what this means for programming is more essential than ever before.

3.1. What Is Fragility, Conflict, and Violence? How Does It Relate with Food Systems?

This toolkit discusses conflict in concert with two related elements—fragility and violence. Fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) dynamics often build off each other. Ineffective governance, weak social cohesion, and institutional corruption are hallmarks of fragility. Conflict may then emerge as competing groups attempt to settle grievances or assert power.[3] Armed conflict between state or non-state actors is only one type of violence; SGBV, gang or street violence, and violence from transnational groups are examples of others.

Virtually all USAID staff who encounter FTF programming will need to deal with some aspects of FCV in their daily work. Whether you are an agronomist working in the Sahel, a water engineer stationed in North Africa, or an agricultural value chain specialist based in Honduras, it is necessary to understand how FCV forces interact with the food system (and vice versa). Some of the patterns that have been observed include:

- **High-intensity conflicts over government control often involve significant disruptions to formal markets and food security.** Conflicts that have the most significant disruptions to food systems can often be traced to certain conditions: 1) government control is an animating issue (civil wars); 2) casualty numbers are high; and 3) institutions are weak or failing (Brück and d'Errico 2019). When all three persist, there is greater opportunity for supply and demand channels within the food system to break down.

- **Intercommunal conflicts over resources often endanger agricultural production.** Agriculture's economic importance in rural areas can elevate tensions over physical resources. Those resources might be lands with high crop yields (Ang and Gupta 2018), grazing and water rights (Odhiambo 2012), or access to land (Abegunde 2011). As agricultural production is often a driver of intercommunal conflicts, it also regularly sustains the most damage. Unsurprisingly, the output of staple crops has fallen in places where fields and farmlands may be mined or targeted, water contaminated or polluted intentionally, or crops destroyed (Adelaja and George 2019; Olaniyan and Okeke-Uzodike 2021). Even in places where production may remain stable, the influx of displaced people may lead to deficits in food availability as demand surges.

- **Urban protest is often associated with shocks to the food system in weakly institutionalized democracies.** Increases in food prices have been tied to social unrest. The risk for urban violence

Definitions

Fragility is the vulnerability of a country or region to armed conflict, large-scale violence, or other instability, including an inability to manage transnational threats or other significant shocks. Fragility results from ineffective and/or unaccountable governance, weak social cohesion, and/or corrupt institutions or leaders who lack respect for human rights.

Conflict is present when two or more individuals or groups pursue mutually incompatible goals. 'Conflict' is a continuum. When channeled constructively into processes of resolution, conflict can be beneficial; however, conflict can also be waged violently, as in war.

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person or against a group or community that results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.

3 Conflict typologies and definitions often use frequency of violence (rates of conflict-related deaths) and the affiliation or structure of the groups (state actors, non-state actors, spontaneous outbreaks) as variables to distinguish between varieties.

is more pronounced in democracies or semi-democracies—especially weakly institutionalized democracies or democratizing states. Relative to autocracies, democracies pursue policies more favorable to rural areas and less favorable to cities (Hendrix and Haggard 2015). Mass protests may also more effectively mobilize in urban areas, where there may also be more tolerance for public dissent.

- **Autocratic governments and leaders in fragile states may use the food system as a weapon or as a strategy for maintaining support.** Various levers are employed: regimes may tie the provision of food to political loyalty as a form of social control, state-owned enterprises may dominate critical segments of the food system to guarantee provision of key supplies and staples, or agricultural producers may receive higher levels of material support, especially when land or income inequalities persist (Thomson 2017). Autocratic governments and leaders in fragile states also subsidize food prices in the face of global fluctuations while being less tolerant of organized dissent (Rudolfsen 2020).

- **Groups that resort to violence may target agriculture for revenue.** Armed groups may use strategies that endanger food security and increase the risk for additional violence. In Afghanistan and Colombia, farmers have been encouraged by market signals—or forced by militant groups—to shift from the production of staple crops to illicit products as a strategy for generating revenue (Messer and Cohen 2006; Nilsson and González Marín 2020). The dynamics are not significantly different in Mexico, where illegal narcotics trade has crowded out traditional agriculture (Dube et al. 2016).

- **Prolonged conflict can lead to displacement and forced displacement, which can stress food systems in multiple ways.** Conflict is the largest driver of internal displacement and external refugees. Generally, conflict and large numbers of internally displaced people (IDP) disrupt agriculture, markets and trade; compromise food security; and contribute to poverty. Local circumstances can alter outcomes. Nigeria has experienced recent conflicts over governance considerations (the Boko Haram insurgency) and intercommunal grievances (farmer-herder disputes). The relationship between conflict type and the impact of displaced people has divergent effects on overall agricultural production (negative for insurgency; positive for communal violence), labor profiles (households work more hours in environments where displaced people are fleeing insurgencies), and crop selection (high-nutrient cash crops such as beans are favored with insurgencies, while heavier items such as potatoes are produced less) (George and Adelaja 2021).[4]

4 The authors theorize that divergent outcomes may be because insurgencies generally impact larger geographic areas and lead to greater devastation than intercommunal violence. The result is a larger number of IDP with fewer material possessions. Crop production also shifts towards crops purchased in bulk by relief agencies and government programs that support humanitarian efforts. Others have observed similar dynamics. "Conflict resilient crops" refers to crops that not usable in their raw form, that do not require intensive management, and are very easy to transport, presumably so displaced persons can move with seeds and perhaps some of the harvest. That can mean different things in different places: in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, soybean, cocoa, and vanilla require considerable processing and have been labeled conflict resilient.

3.2. What Other Key Food System Drivers Interact with Fragility, Conflict, and Violence?

The external forces stressing the global food system have led to widespread alarm about its overall health. While many factors have contributed to the deterioration of the global food system—climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and resultant increases in global poverty have all played critical roles—this toolkit focuses first on conflict, the largest single driver of food crises worldwide.

Food and conflict systems are underpinned by shared dynamics and they interact in complex ways. For instance, the link between food insecurity and conflict is prominent when food price spikes trigger violent protests or when competition over natural resources leads to violence. Land disputes, access to markets, and local corruption can also worsen food insecurity and conflict alike.

When conflict strikes, it severely disrupts agriculture and food systems. Farmers cannot plant or access markets. People are displaced from their homes, lose jobs, might be targeted for their food assets, and cannot meet their basic needs. They often cope in dangerous ways, by eating less or quickly selling off assets. Food insecurity can in turn drive conflict by motivating rebel recruitment. This awful cycle undermines prospects for both peace and agriculture-led growth. In post-conflict settings, food systems need to be rebuilt quickly so that livelihoods can resume, but it is essential that they are built up inclusively and do not fuel the next conflict.

The relationship between conflict and food systems is ultimately bidirectional: conflict can lead to ruptures in the food system, and disruptions in the food system may elevate tensions and surface grievances that perpetuate conflict. When these dynamics are exacerbated by other shocks and stresses—e.g., damage to livelihoods by events such as the pandemic—the risk of instability only rises further. Climate change, which will be borne out in global markets and local ecological systems, especially exacerbates risk in both directions.

Resources that Provide Insight into Fragility, Conflict, and Violence Dynamics

- World Bank Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence 2020–2025. The World Bank strategy provides specific guidance for engaging in various FCV settings.
- Resilience and Food Security amidst Conflict and Violence. Policy brief prepared by USAID's Bureau for Resilience and Food Security that highlights key trends and the relationship between FCV and food systems.
- USAID Land and Conflict Toolkit. Toolkit providing a framing of this issue, case studies and key technical guidance from across the program cycle on land and conflict.
- USAID Water and Conflict Toolkit. Toolkit providing a framing of this issue, case studies, and key technical guidance from across the program cycle on water and conflict.

Other forces that shape food systems also interact with FCV dynamics. The USAID food system conceptual framework depicts these forces as "drivers" that can stress the resilience of the entire system.[5] When a food system falters, it not only threatens the identified outcomes—diets, income, health, nutrition, and environmental sustainability—but also elevates FCV risks.

5 USAID defines food systems as: "the intact or whole unit made up of interrelated components of people, behaviors, relationships, and material goods that interact in the production, processing, packaging, transporting, trade, marketing, consumption, and use of food, feed, and fiber through aquaculture, farming, wild fisheries, forestry, and pastoralism. The food and agriculture system operates within and is influenced by social, political, economic, and environmental contexts."

The GFSS identified priority areas for emphasis and action within FTF programming. The priority areas have implications for the entire food system **and** potentially compound the risks associated with FCV. The sections below focus on two: climate change and the long-term effects associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.2.1. Climate Change

USAID frames the joint challenges of climate change and conflict as composed of compounding risks. These joint challenges include the potential of climate change to increase conflict risk as well as the ways in which conflict decreases adaptive capacity. Climate change and conflict—linked or not—are the two biggest drivers of food security. As a result, the overlap of these two systems will unquestionably have major impacts on food security and FTF programming.

The GFSS elevates and highlights how climate change multiplies and compounds risks, describing how it contributes to crop failures, water insecurity, and the depletion of natural resources. USAID's Climate Strategy frames climate change as an overlapping and compounding risk, emphasizing how it decreases adaptive capacity.

Climate-related shocks and stresses have core linkages with FCV dynamics that can be transmitted through different channels in the food system. For instance, changes in grazing patterns linked to reduced rainfall may contribute to new conflict between farmers and pastoralists. When pests decimate crop yields in agricultural exporting nations, the damage may increase regional or global prices, sparking protests in urban areas or countries reliant on food imports. These immediate and longer-term impacts of climate change all elevate conflict and instability risk, from food price volatility to insecure livelihoods and unsafe migration, to competition over resources and inflamed grievances following extreme weather. With climate change loading the dice on FCV risks, many FCV contexts and many communities are managing these overlapping risks at the same time, seeking solutions that respond to this complex risk environment.

Climate Change, Migration, and Violence in Honduras

Honduras illustrates how climate stress in one location can combine with other forces to contribute to greater regional instability. Central America, including Honduras, is naturally susceptible to soil erosion due to its topography, which negatively impacts crop yields. Repeated droughts in the last decade, intensified by climate change, have created additional stress, leading to annual crop losses of 70 percent for subsistence farmers in the Dry Corridor, an agriculturally important but erosion-prone and climatically vulnerable region that stretches throughout much of Central America. Back-to-back hurricanes in 2020 also destroyed crops and worsened food security. To cope with these shocks, many Hondurans have migrated to urban centers with high rates of violence. The unsafe internal environment has contributed to large external outflows of migrants with higher numbers of border apprehensions reported from 2012-19 at the United States' southern border.

CREDIT: USAID FEED THE FUTURE HONDURAS

3.2.2. Long-Term Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic

While the most immediate disruptions associated with food availability and the COVID-19 pandemic may have abated, longer-term implications remain. COVID-19 has had negative consequences on worldwide food access and diet quality by increasing global food prices and damaging livelihoods, pushing tens of millions into debt and extreme poverty.

For agricultural livelihoods, the largest decreases in income have been observed among vegetable and fish producers, whose products are highly perishable. Although livestock producers have been cushioned to an extent through delayed sales or other practices, long-term implications of the pandemic for them are also alarming—future earnings may be constrained by depleted herds.

Changes in food access have nuanced relationships with FCV. Conflicts between communities often occur in food insecure areas, with violence more likely in urban settings, especially in democracies (Hendrix and Brinkman 2013; Hendrix and Haggard 2015). While the most food insecure tend not to instigate riots, volatility associated with food access can unite disparate social groups, especially if there are underlying grievances that might inflame tensions.

Climate Stress, COVID-19 Economic Damage, and Farmer/Herder Conflicts in Kenya

Kenya is emblematic of how the COVID-19 pandemic has combined with other drivers and contributed to systematic turbulence. Similar to Honduras, the country has faced recent climate stresses—the ongoing drought in the Horn of Africa is the most severe in 40 years, and the 2020 invasion of desert locusts was the worst in 70 years.

CREDIT: TINE FRANK/USAID. MOYALE LIVESTOCK MARKET

While climatic forces have put crops and livestock under threat, COVID-19 has pushed vulnerable populations further towards the brink. Income loss and food insecurity increased dramatically during the pandemic (Shupler et al. 2021; Xu et al. 2021). The after-effects continue to be felt even as lockdown measures have faded; inflation has surged as the Kenyan economy recovers from a depreciation of its currency associated with a decline in both exports and revenue from tourism.*

Rising food insecurity has consequences for FCV. Kenya has a history of farmer-herder conflicts, with disputes over access to water, land, and grazing rights serving as frequent flash points (Odhiambo 2012). With both groups facing inflation, lost livelihoods, and rising food insecurity, there has been an increase in small arms attacks in hotspot regions already and the risk that this will further inflame conflict.

* Year-on-year inflation in Kenya on food and non-alcoholic beverages was 15.8 percent, the highest of any category. The prices of sugar, cooking oil, maize, and Irish potatoes were all more than 30 percent higher than the previous year.

3.3. What Did We Learn in Section 3?

This section focused on specific priority areas elevated in the GFSS: FCV, climate change, and the long-term effects associated with the COVID-19 pandemic all interact, with implications for FTF's objectives around agriculture-led economic growth, resilience, and a well-nourished population. The interaction between FCV and food systems is the focus of this toolkit. While specifics may vary depending on local circumstances—high-intensity conflicts may lead to widespread damage, intercommunal conflicts over resources may endanger agricultural production, autocratic governments might use the food system as a weapon or as a strategy for maintaining support—a key takeaway is that FCV dynamics are front and center in all FTF programming, no matter the location or aspect of the system.

Climate change can increase the risk of resource competition, transboundary water management issues, livelihood insecurity and climate-driven migration, and extreme weather events, which all elevate FCV risks and threaten food insecurity. The COVID-19 pandemic can be expected to continue to be felt through its damage to incomes and livelihoods and increased food prices, all of which limit food access. Lost economic stability makes people vulnerable to recruitment and more likely to riot in the face of price spikes.

In short, food systems, food security, and FCV are related, but the relationship isn't necessarily straightforward: it can only be determined by considering a range of contextual factors which can interact and amplify each other. For FTF programming to anticipate how different forces converge and interact, USAID staff will need to look at the entire conflict system and food system, and not just how individual puzzle pieces fit together.

CREDIT: DAVID MUTUA. NTABAS LOGAL DELIVERS MILK IN KARARE, KENYA

4. Conflict Integration, Conflict Sensitivity, and Feed the Future Programming

CREDIT: SITHU, ACDI/VOCA. SMALLHOLDER SESAME SEED FARMERS IN MYANMAR

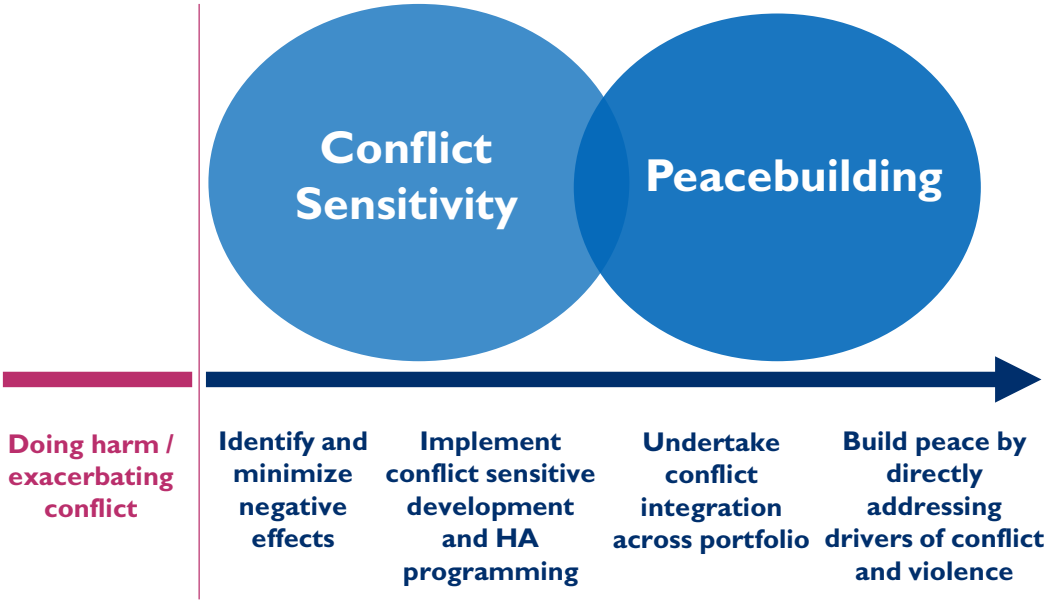
The GFSS now calls for the enhanced integration of conflict sensitivity, peacebuilding, and social cohesion into FTF programming. This integration matters because FTF programs, like all development programs, inescapably alter the political economy of their operational areas—including conflict dynamics. Conflict-blind programs—those that do not recognize and plan for this interaction—run the dual risk of doing harm and undermining their own intended development gains. But when we integrate a conflict-aware and conflict sensitive lens into program design and implementation, FTF programming can minimize harm, create powerful opportunities for peace, and in so doing foster the most conducive environment for its own effectiveness and sustainability.

Conflict integration is the most aspirational level of this—the intentional effort to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of development and humanitarian assistance by recognizing that the dynamics that underpin peace, security, and core sectoral goals are in fact collective goals, and addressing them as such.

Conflict sensitivity is the ability of practitioners to understand: 1) the local context; 2) the two-way relationship between an intervention and the context; and 3) to adapt accordingly. Conflict sensitivity is an essential first step towards conflict integration. Conflict sensitivity is a longstanding field that typically focuses on program-level impacts and the ability to minimize harm while promoting opportunities for peace. Conflict integration seeks transformative change by reshaping the dynamics causing conflict and insecurity across strategies, portfolios, activities, and everyday actions.

The goal of this section is to provide the "how" behind integrating conflict, and specifically conflict sensitivity, across FTF programming. It provides the key ingredients to a successful conflict analysis as well as options for data collection. It describes the step-by-step process to develop a conflict sensitive theory of change and shares detailed food system examples. It then provides key considerations for conflict sensitive design and implementation, with links to tools for conflict sensitive solicitation development, Technical Evaluation Committees, adaptive management, MEL, closeout, and more.

Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding



Source: USAID

Conflict Integration Versus Conflict Sensitivity

1. Conflict integration is the intentional effort to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of development and humanitarian assistance by addressing the collective dynamics that underpin peace, security, and core sectoral goals. Doing so can move programming beyond conflict sensitivity and the principles of Do No Harm to promote better development outcomes and sustain peace and prosperity.

2. Conflict sensitivity is the ability of practitioners to:

   - **Understand the context in which they are working.** Key dynamics relate to economic, social, and political factors and issues of gender, power dynamics, and access. Topics to examine include motives, how key actors might mobilize for peace or conflict, and which events or windows of opportunity could trigger conflict or create opportunities to build peace.

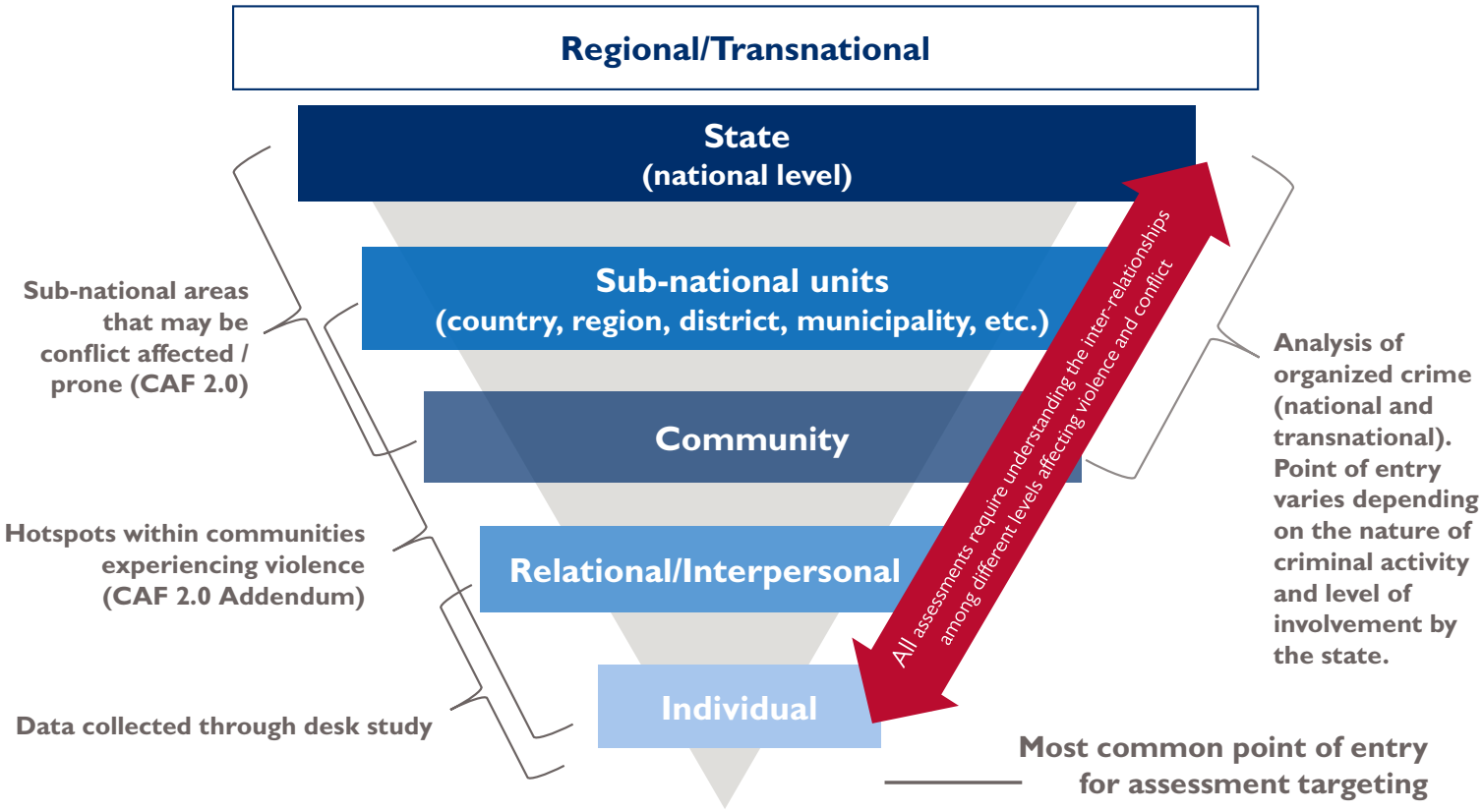
   - **Recognize the interaction between the intervention and the context or conflict.** What is the interaction between the identified key elements of conflict and the intervention itself? Fields of observation include the project, partners and stakeholders, and organizational setup.

   - **Act on these changes to adapt programming direction and pivot when necessary.** Conflict sensitivity is as much about HOW you work as WHAT you do. Is the community engaged to understand local dynamics? It is possible to modify a project in mid-stream while keeping goals the same. Making reflective, strategic adaptations in operations and implementation should become part of the program management cycle.

3. Conflict sensitivity is an essential first step to conflict integration. Conflict sensitivity is a longstanding field that typically focuses on program-level impacts and the ability to minimize harm while promoting opportunities for peace. Conflict integration seeks transformative change possible by reshaping the dynamics causing conflict and insecurity across strategies, portfolios, activities, and everyday actions.

Conducting a conflict or contextual analysis is the first step to ensuring conflict sensitive program design and implementation. USAID's Violence and Conflict Assessment Framework (VCAF) offers a systematic way to examine the factors that drive and mitigate conflict and violence, opportunities for building peace and strengthening social cohesion, the roles different actors play in shaping conflict dynamics, and potential trajectories that might shape future outcomes related to conflict, violence, and peace.

USAID Conflict Components

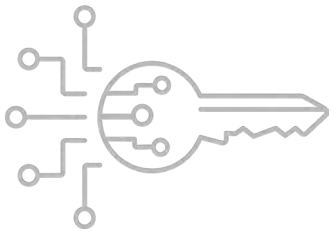


SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM TANGO INTERNATIONAL

Key Resources on Conflict Sensitivity

- Responsible Programming: A Note on Conflict Sensitivity from USAID's Center for Conflict and Violence Prevention (CVP). This guide highlights how practitioners can improve development outcomes using a conflict sensitive approach.
- Conflict Sensitive Aid (CSAid) Online Course. This course trains participants on how to integrate conflict sensitivity into USAID programming.
- UNICEF's Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding Programming Guide. Tool for field staff and leadership to understand, situate, and operationalize conflict sensitivity through UNICEF's existing work.

4.1. Conflict Analysis



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The first step in designing and implementing conflict sensitive, sustainable, and effective FTF programming requires taking an intentional approach to understanding the context. In conflict contexts, this means analyzing the conflict.
- USAID's Violence and Conflict Assessment Framework (VCAF) reflects USAID's approach to analyzing these issues through a development lens.
- The components of the VCAF (detailed in this chapter) represent building blocks to help users make sense of complex conflict contexts in a systematic and approachable way.
- Other frameworks and tools may also be used to develop this understanding.

Violence and Conflict assessments or other formal or informal analyses can be undertaken at any time and at different scales to respond to the full spectrum of decision-making needs of USAID and our partners in violence and conflict-affected settings. Larger-scale assessments should be conducted prior to strategic planning initiatives, such as development of a new Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) or ahead of large-scale program design. They may also be particularly helpful in helping Missions and technical teams navigate significant changes in a conflict or operating environment. Smaller-scale and light-touch assessments and analytical exercises should be used ahead of activity designs, programmatic pivots to new geographic areas, and to inform conflict sensitive adaptive approaches. In each of these cases the assessment framework remains the same, but the level of analysis, data collection, and synthesis processes, and ways in which findings and recommendations are delivered and applied, should be fit for purpose.

Analysis is not a one-off exercise. While teams often benefit from a detailed deep dive at critical planning junctures, teams should identify periodic opportunities to examine how dynamics may have changed and the implications for programming. While some teams may choose to conduct or commission formal research, this can also be done by convening stakeholders to collaboratively update and analyze any changes.

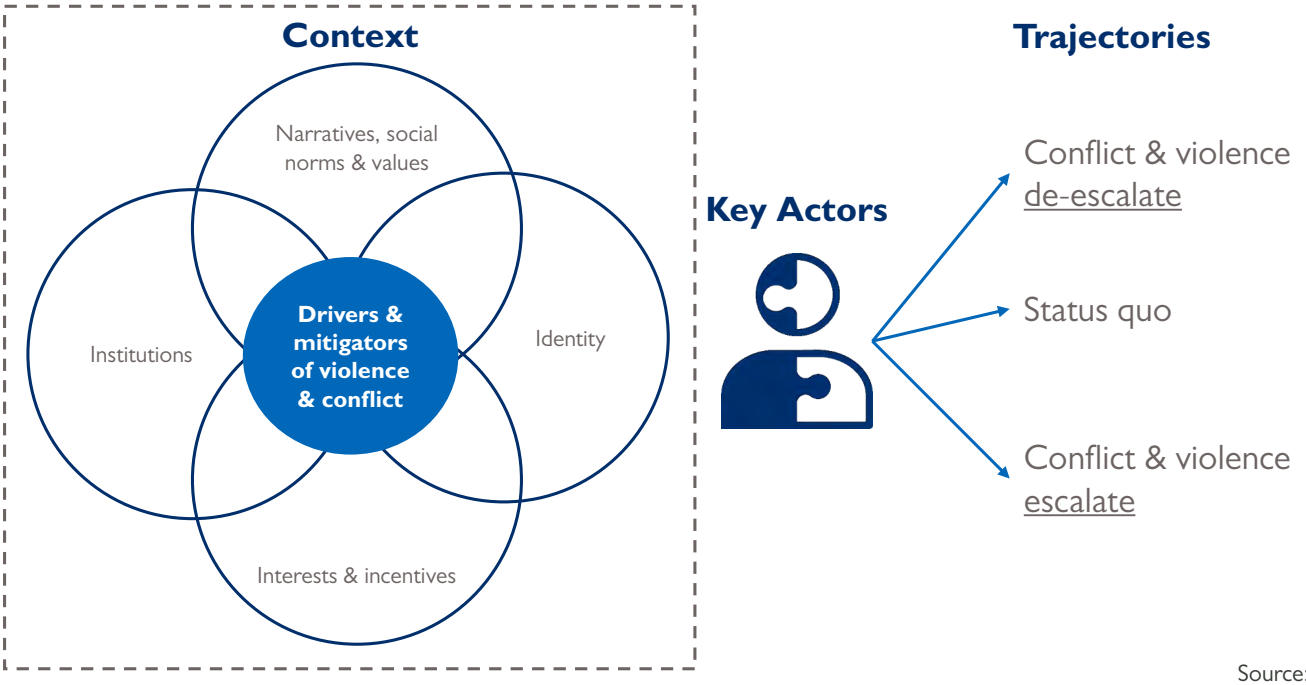
While the way assessments and analyses are conducted should be fit for purpose, USAID's Center for Conflict and Violence Prevention (CVP) encourages assessments to consider a number of considerations relevant to diverse conflict and violence-affected settings.
CVP encourages assessments to identify both those factors which drive and mitigate conflict and violence by examining interactions between the following five areas:

- Context
- Identities
- Institutions
- Interests and incentives
- Narratives, social norms, and values

Analyses should also examine who is shaping these dynamics and how these dynamics may play out in the future. To do so, the VCAF also considers:

- Key actors, including mobilizers, enablers and influencers, and groups affected
- Trajectories dynamics might take, specifically examining trends, triggers, and windows of opportunity. In fragile contexts, these trajectories pay special attention to patterns of recurrent shocks and stresses.

Components of USAID Conflict Analysis



Source: USAID

USAID TOOL BOX

How Can I Leverage Other Analyses?

In the event a Mission can't pursue a formal assessment, planning teams can still conduct practical, cost-effective, and useful analytical exercises to help inform more conflict sensitive approaches. One such exercise includes reviewing and pulling together relevant secondary data and analysis from across the Mission and implementing partners along with data and analysis produced by external organizations. Several other USAID assessments are particularly useful for their local insights, including Political Economy Analysis (which includes important insights on how power, interests, and incentives operate in society), gender and inclusive development analyses (exploring issues of marginalization and differing experiences among social identity groups), and risk and resilience assessments (which integrate conflict risk among other key risks).

These may also include key information from: 1) food systems analysis such as nutrition or value chain analysis; 2) natural resource management and landscape analysis (water, land, and marine); 3) climate risk assessments; and 4) livelihoods assessments, all of which may provide insights into dynamics driving divisions between social groups or otherwise shaping conflict dynamics. USAID's Center for Conflict and Violence Prevention has compiled and organized a number of third-party conflict, violence, and peacebuilding datasets and analytical resources into a library of Peace & Security Data and Analysis. The library includes resources by both thematic area and region to assist in such exercises, regardless of where it is being undertaken. Annex C-G provides more detail on how existing analyses and data can be leveraged to analyze the conflict context, as well as how planned activities and programs can contribute to filling remaining gaps.

4.1.1. Context

Context refers to the natural, social, political, and economic environment in which conflict and violence dynamics play out. It includes both slow-to-change "foundational factors" and past experiences that serve as reference points. Contextual factors are not by themselves causes of conflict and violence, but they may shape the evolution of conflict and violence systems. They tend to be fixed or slow to change, such as geography, borders with conflict-affected countries, natural resource endowments, or class structures. They include factors that may change over time in response to development interventions (such as high birth rates or economic inequality), as well as factors that may shift quite rapidly in response to shocks (such as an influx of refugees from a neighboring country or a pandemic). Some contextual factors are local, such as a customary land tenure system or a history of deep-seated divisions between particular groups, while others, such as geopolitical relationships and influence, climate change, global economic trends, and cross-border flows of people and goods, operate across geographies and exert external pressures on local conflict and violence dynamics. For the purposes of the VCAF, context should pay special attention to histories and levels of conflict and violence, histories of shocks, stresses, and transnational influences that may shape dynamics, and perceptions of historic U.S. government involvement in the context and its relationship to existing conflict and violence dynamics.

Key Factors in Fragile, Conflict, and Violence-affected Contexts

Transnational Factors

- Regional relationships and issues (including refugee flows, conflict spillover, migration)
- Geopolitical influence
- Porous borders
- Perceptions of the U.S. government and its legacy of engagement in the region being assessed

Climate Change and Environment

- Geography and natural resource endowments
- Susceptibility to natural/human-generated disasters
- Climate change

History, Demography, Infrastructure

- Infrastructure (including service delivery)
- History
- Demographics

Social, Economic, and Political Factors

- Economic issues (including youth underemployment, dependence on natural resources)
- Social issues (including history of divisions between ethnic groups, entrenched discrimination towards LGBTQI+ people)
- Political issues (including entrenched state corruption, policies that limit electoral participation)

4.1.2. Identities

The VCAF looks at identities as salient markers of similarity, affinity, or distinction among groups of people. In conflict-affected contexts, tensions may occur over group identity, including ethnic, religious, political, economic, or geographic differences. In contexts affected by non-conflict violence, identities often play a role in driving such violence, especially when they provide a sense of belonging, power, relevance, or agency for members of organized criminal groups, gangs, or violent extremist organizations.

Identity may also shape who perpetrates and who is victimized by violence, such as when people of particular genders, ages, ethnicities, religions, or political groups are targeted for harm. For example, rebel recruitment might target teenage boys who are pastoralists. Within a dynamic conflict system especially, experiences or perceptions of victimization may forge identities, fomenting identity divisions and hardening rigid "us versus them" binaries. For example, a religiously diverse and tolerant community may be united by shared livelihood, but religion becomes salient when violent extremists begin to encroach on the area in which the community lives. Even when identity groups have not experienced direct violence, perceptions of marginalization or discrimination by formal or informal social and political institutions may intensify identity-based grievances and provide motivations for engaging in conflict. The multiple ways in which identities shape conflict and violence makes such distinctions crucial to analyze using the VCAF.

USAID Tool Box
Inclusive Development Is Essential Amidst Conflict

A key principle of effective and sustainable development is inclusion. USAID defines inclusive development as "the concept that every person, regardless of their identity, is instrumental in the transformation of their own societies and their inclusion throughout the development process leads to better outcomes." Inclusive development involves listening to diverse perspectives, supporting broad-based and meaningful participation in development planning and implementation by people from different identity groups, and understanding how development efforts are working—or not—for those marginalized in society.

- Identity-based exclusion and discrimination can strengthen the grievances that feed into conflict dynamics and violence, and inclusive development efforts can help shift those inequalities and contribute to conflict prevention and mitigation.
- The perspectives of marginalized groups can enrich our conflict analyses, helping us to see dynamics we might otherwise have missed.
- Marginalized groups often disproportionately experience the impacts of FCV, bearing the brunt of violence and conflict more often and earlier on. Inclusive development efforts recognize this and center their need for protection and inclusion.
- Supporting the participation of marginalized groups in conflict and violence prevention and decision-making can help ensure efforts reflect diverse needs, making peace more sustainable.

4.1.3. Institutions

Institutions are the formal or informal rules and practices governing human interaction. These include social and political structures, laws, policies, organizations, and other mechanisms for shaping human behavior. Institutions can play key roles in shaping conflict and violence dynamics. These institutions may be codified (e.g., laws, a constitution), take the form of existing formal governance structures (e.g., a Ministry of Finance, an office of the Mayor), or exist as informal social arrangements (e.g., clan elders, religious communities). Institutions often play a powerful role in shaping dynamics of violence. In violence and crime-affected contexts, both formal (e.g., public schools) and informal (e.g., family or friend groups) institutions can play powerful roles in socializing people into, or away from, violence. An analysis of institutions at the community level may reveal that people join gangs (an informal institution) for physical or economic security the state does not provide. In such contexts, a gang may be perceived as a more effective institution than formal government at providing security, livelihood support, or even support for public health initiatives.

The interplay between identities and institutions (formal and informal) creates perceptions of how legitimate and effective those institutions are, which in turn can lead to either grievances or mitigating factors. Common patterns of grievance include elitism, exclusion, unmet expectations, and corruption. Grievances maybe expressed by disengaging from participation in civic institutions, which may make people more vulnerable to engaging with malign actors such as criminal gangs, militias, or violent extremist organizations. For example, grievances can arise when national grazing laws disfavor pastoralists over farmers, or farmers experience crop loss when pastoralists shift grazing routes due to climate change. Grievances can also emerge when one district remains cut off from livelihood opportunities and market access, slowly becoming further marginalized over time. Inequality to access to land, water resources, and financial services can simultaneously create grievances and hamstring food security and agricultural production.

4.1.4. Interests and Incentives

Interests and incentives collectively reflect the motivations of individuals and groups for engaging in violence or conflict for economic, political, or social gain or need. Individual and group interests reflect their underlying core needs, wants, fears, or concerns. Incentives refer to the real or perceived rewards or costs attached to decision-making. Interests and incentives are often constructed through thoughtful (rational or intuitive) calculations of such risks and rewards. They can be complex and overlapping across a range of economic, financial, political, and psychosocial factors. In fragile, conflict, and violence-affected contexts, people may engage in violence to amass wealth or political power, or to support or protect the basic needs of their family and community. Taken together, interests and incentives inform individual or group motivations for engaging in violence or conflict or supporting non-violent change.

Understanding the full range of motivations of actors to engage in conflict, violence, or peace requires thinking and working politically with a wider lens that accounts for a range of socioeconomic and political interests. It also requires an understanding of how the broader system incentivizes or restricts opportunities for political and economic gain from acts of violence or peaceful dispute resolution.

Interests and incentives may differ between actors. In situations where elites promote violence to amass wealth and political power, they typically mobilize individual "foot soldiers" who may engage in violent or criminal activity for different motives. Elites may invoke very real grievances against the state, such as the inability to make a sustainable living, or identity-based dynamics of exclusion, in order to motivate followers. Political leaders can have strong incentives to mobilize for conflict and violence that impacts the food system. They may be worried about losing power and encourage criminal gangs to loot crops and damage agriculture infrastructure.

Beyond individual and organizational levels, entire systems can be dominated by interests and incentives. Extreme examples are countries like Somalia and Yemen, which have been called "violent political marketplaces." These are systems where the supply of and demand for resources, rather than formal institutions, shape politics and public authority in ways that are transactional, exclusionary, and violent. While few countries fall on this extreme end of the spectrum, the same principles may govern subnational systems and institutions.

Licit and illicit markets, including trade in weapons, drugs, wildlife, and other commodities, along with human trafficking and natural resource extraction, create significant economic incentives, fueling violence and conflict dynamics. As violence and conflict economies become increasingly entrenched, the willingness and ability of states, international actors, and individuals to reverse the status quo, or even to opt out of the system, diminishes.

4.1.5. Narratives, Norms, and Values

Narratives, norms, and values describe the messages sent in a conflict and violence-affected environment and the social and cultural lenses through which individuals and groups process information and attribute meaning. They help identify how and why individuals and groups perceive events and others the way they do, how these perceptions inform their behaviors, and the different roles actors play in mobilizing, influencing, or enabling violence and peace.

Narratives are the stories we tell and that are offered to us (by institutions, media, etc.) to make meaning of our lives and condition or influence others in pursuit of a variety of objectives. Narratives may promote violence and hate, recruit people to conflict, or encourage people to work together for peace. Narratives are crucial in shaping how people make meaning, and in how they see themselves or others reflected in identity groups. Narratives include messages about violence and conflict itself, including stories about events, actors, and causes of conflict that may shape people's perceptions and behaviors. These narratives move through a variety of domains, including traditional media, social media, school curricula, official pronouncements, or rumors. Control of narratives and modes of dissemination are established arenas of social and political contest, and the range of competing narratives in society often reflects fault lines of conflict.

Norms shape group and individual behaviors at all levels of society. They can be understood as expectations within a group about the appropriate way to behave. Norms guide behavior by suggesting what group members should do in a situation, what others are expected to do, and how group members anticipate others will react to certain behaviors. There are often powerful incentives for complying with norms, such as rewards of social acceptance, and punishments for challenging them, such as threats of social marginalization and even violence. Norms defining the behaviors, expectations, and perceptions of others may be widely shared or deeply contested by people within a group or society. Norms can and do change. For example, in many parts of the world, women's rights activists have succeeded at shifting expectations of and behaviors towards women and girls. However, not all changes in norms are beneficial.

Values represent social standards of what is or is not considered good, important, or worthwhile. While few people may see violence in and of itself as a "good," other values—such as a perception by male youth that they must be tough or aggressive to be respected as men, or a social emphasis on the importance of "discipline" in families or schools—may become supporting links in a chain of influence helping to drive violent behavior. Values are often transmitted by both formal and informal social institutions, including families, religious groups, schools, media, and public culture. Assessment teams should understand the social context in which values are formed to avoid making external normative judgments that could undermine trust in the assessment process.

4.1.6. Key Actors

Understanding the different roles individuals and groups play in driving or mitigating conflict and violence can help inform our programmatic approaches. The VCAF helps users focus on identifying key actors—those individuals or groups with the potential to significantly

shape outcomes in conflict, violence, or peace. The VCAF examines three critical groups of actors, including mobilizers, enablers and influencers, and the groups affected by the dynamics in question. Individuals and groups may play multiple roles in conflict and violence (e.g., perpetrators may themselves be victims of violence).

- Mobilizers are those who have the means and motivation to organize others for action for sustained conflict, violence, or peace. Mobilizers are defined by their financial resources, organizational capacity, and ability to attract and maintain external support.

- Enablers and influencers are those who help shape an environment conducive to violence, conflict, or peace or who shape people's behavior in violence and conflict-affected contexts by encouraging others to behave peacefully or violently. Violence or peace are not necessarily their specific objectives.

- Groups affected are those most likely to be impacted by conflict and violence or involved in peace efforts. This includes those most at risk for experiencing atrocities and other harms.

An important question to ask in the context of FTF programming is: how might different actors in the food system influence the dynamics of conflict, violence, or peace? For instance, powerful patronage networks might control access to food markets in one region. Local political leaders might encourage young people to loot and attack local businesses—hurting the local food supply—to make a point about their influence in the area. Private sector actors might benefit from the war economy by providing high-value goods and might have an incentive to ally with those who will fuel the conflict. Local militia groups might benefit greatly from the ability to tax farmers or control ports. And what groups are most likely to be affected by conflict-induced changes to the food system? Are certain groups more likely to suffer from acute food insecurity?

These actors, among them religious leaders, schoolteachers, and traditional community leaders, can also mobilize people towards peace. For instance, after a series of xenophobic attacks targeted informal, foreign-owned convenience stores, known as spaza shops, in townships and informal settlements in South Africa in 2008, South African mothers joined together to protest and prevent future attacks. The mothers were concerned about losing access to food and basic goods sold in the shops. Many of the mothers also sent their children to childcare facilities run by foreign nationals. The mothers were economically interdependent on the facilities, reliant on them to pursue their own livelihoods.

4.1.7. Trajectories: Trends, Triggers, Windows of Opportunity

Trajectories are possible alternative futures for a country and their potential impact on conflict and violence. Trajectories include possible trends and triggers which might shape patterns of future conflict or violence and windows of opportunity for advancing peace and security. In fragile settings, the VCAF should particularly explore which recurrent shocks, stresses, or transnational influences identified from the context may also interact with the identified drivers and mitigating factors to shape future trajectories. Trajectories include trends (relationships that perpetuate or mitigate violence over an extended time) and triggers (specific points in time, usually actions or events, that have the potential to affect future violence). Trajectories also include windows of opportunity (an event or convergence of events with the potential for ushering in change). Triggering events and windows of opportunity may create conditions that amplify violence, conflict, or peace.

Windows of opportunity help guide us as practitioners towards how we can apply what we know about the conflict context towards what practitioners can do about these dynamics in programming. Windows of opportunity are also the critical junctures and events we should be closely tracking and adaptively managing programming against. Future trajectories and potential inflection points towards peace or conflict can have significant impacts on what is possible for FTF programming.

Windows of opportunity sometimes happen suddenly: for example, natural disasters, economic shocks, food price spikes, a coup, or the death of a leader could rapidly change the context. Other windows of opportunity unfold more gradually, such as longer periods of civil protests that culminate in a political transition. These windows of opportunity could trigger violence, or they could become opportunities for peace. For instance, the 2004 Tsunami in Aceh, Indonesia, damaged institutions and infrastructure and triggered a humanitarian crisis that ultimately incentivized actors to negotiate. A global example comes from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has increased risk to the food system while creating unintended opportunities to build a more resilient system. The spike in global food prices caused by Russia's invasion has led to widespread calls for greater resilience in the food system, including recommendations to policymakers, instructions for how donors can support food system transformations, and the collective requests of affected countries. Windows of opportunity could involve a large, catalytic moment, but they could also involve something smaller—nascent indications of trust in dialogues between groups with fraught histories, for instance—suggesting the possibility of a different path forward.

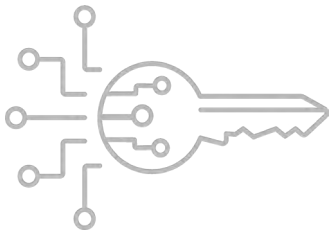
It can be helpful to brainstorm potential triggers in your context. What potential triggers can you identify? How might they create windows of opportunity towards either violence or peace? Historic examples of triggers include:

- Bread riots in Sudan in 2018 in response to then-president Omar Al-Bashir's tripling of bread prices.
- Aerial bombings in Yemen in 2016 by an Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia, which triggered a new arms race in the politically volatile region.
- The assassination in 1994 of Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana, which was one factor in triggering the Rwandan genocide.
- The Montgomery Bus Boycott, which helped trigger the U.S. civil rights movement.
- The murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police in May 2020.

Resources for Conducting Conflict Analysis

- Conflict Analysis Framework: Field Guidelines and Procedures: Provides practice guidelines for conflict analysis in the field
- Good Practice Note: Conflict Sensitivity, Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace (United Nations): Provides guidance on how peacebuilding activities interact with peace and conflict
- Collaboration for Resilience (Adelphi): Provides detailed mapping tools to help conduct a conflict analysis

4.2 Conflict Sensitive Theories of Change



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Developing a conflict sensitive Theory of Change (ToC) links our understanding of the context to what we will do differently in FTF programming, with a focus on what, how, and why.
- Conflict sensitive ToC are ideally developed with feedback from local communities and deeply rooted in the local context.
- Conflict sensitive ToC are never limiting—they serve as foundations for experimentation, trial and error, and adaptive management.

Conflict analysis offers a structured process for how to think through the complexities of fragility, conflict, and violence; conflict sensitive ToC provides the logic and plan for how to intervene in FCV contexts. Framed another way: conflict analysis provides the story while the ToC provides the strategy.

Developing a conflict sensitive ToC is a crucial part of conflict sensitivity. The ToC links what we know about the conflict context with what we are then going to do about it. Because it can be overwhelming to make this jump, we have broken this process down into seven key steps.

These steps help you develop and test hypotheses: IF we do X, THEN Y will be the result, BECAUSE of Z (Z being the rationale or causal mechanism that underpins the intervention). Wrestling with the ToC allows missions to answer critical questions: What am I trying to do? What is the logic? What strategies will lead to the result I want? What are the potential unintended consequences?

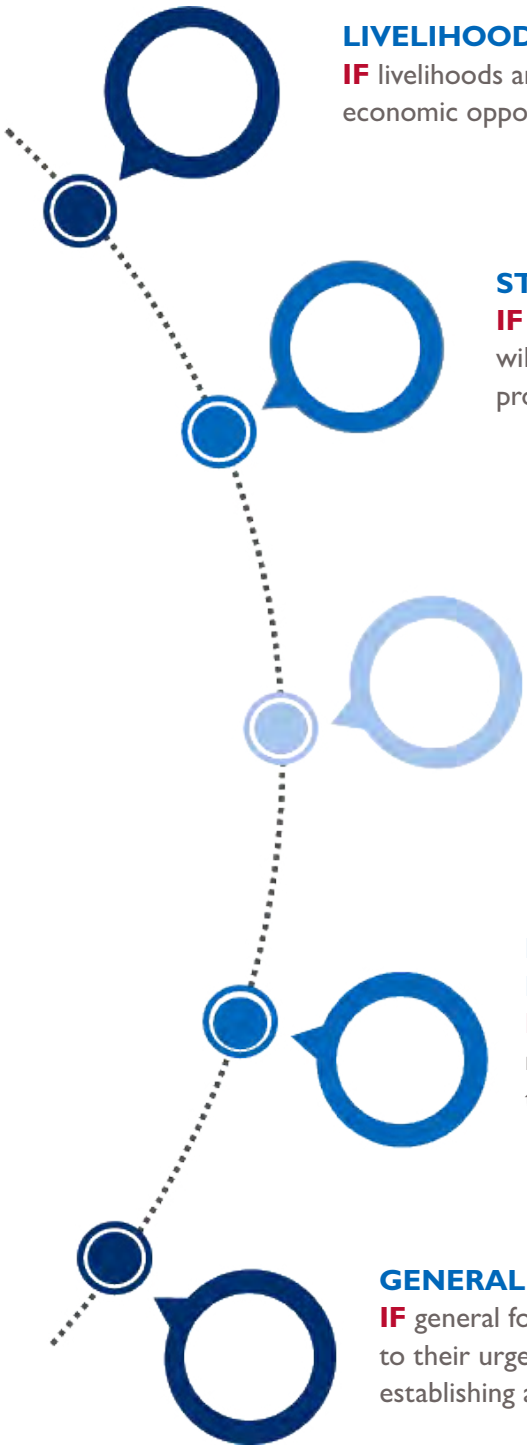
In addition to the step-by-step guide outlined above, there are additional considerations for developing a conflict sensitive theory of change. First, the theory of change will be developed alongside, or with feedback from, the community being targeted in programming. Second, the theory of change is a starting point and should not become a strait jacket if conditions, needs, or realities on the ground change significantly. Flexibility and adaptability are critical, and it is important to respond to new opportunities or respond to changing circumstances. The ability to introduce new technologies or adopt novel approaches to old problems often hinges on the willingness of communities to accept the innovation or policy.

KEY STEPS: CONFLICT SENSITIVE THEORY OF CHANGE

1. Conduct a conflict analysis to better understand the context.
2. Identify the conflict drivers and mitigating factors with which the intervention will potentially interact.
3. Identify the activity problem and purpose: what and who needs to change?
4. Develop the approach: how will change happen? Here's a resource to help!
5. Articulate the theory of change: show how change will happen with a careful if/then statement.
6. Battle test the theory of change: logic gaps, assumptions, evidence, and common sense?
7. Monitor and evaluate outcomes/impacts: how will we monitor progress and measure change?

World Food Programme Theory of Change in FCV Regions

A review of World Food Programme (WFP) initiatives in four countries, Kyrgyzstan, Iraq, Mali, and El Salvador, identified broad theories of change related to peace and security. The first four initiatives listed below had quantitative or anecdotal evidence that supported the hypothesis, while the final one on general food assistance could not be substantiated. These broad theories of change are elaborated on in greater depth in Section 5, which provides an overview of key conflict drivers and possible programming approaches to addressing them, with a focus on in-depth conflict sensitive programming examples.



LIVELIHOOD INVESTMENTS

IF livelihoods are enhanced and/or diversified, **THEN** this will contribute to improving economic opportunities and prospects for the future.

STATE-CITIZEN LINKS

IF government service delivery is inclusive and/or enhanced, **THEN** this will help strengthen state–citizen links and contribute to stability and the prospects for peace.

COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

IF all sections of the community participate in the planning, implementation, and monitoring processes of community programming, **THEN** this will help to (re)build trust and social capital between communities.

ENHANCING ACCESS TO AND SUPPLY OF CONTESTED NATURAL RESOURCES

IF the supply of natural resources is enhanced and/or the equitable use of natural resources is guaranteed, **THEN** this will create resilience to shocks that otherwise might leave communities vulnerable to violence.

GENERAL FOOD ASSISTANCE AND STABILIZATION

IF general food assistance is provided to people affected by crises to respond quickly to their urgent food needs, **THEN** this will contribute to restoring stability and re-establishing a sense of normalcy among affected populations.

CREDIT: HECTOR R. SANTOS/USAID. HONDURAN FARMER DIVERSIFIED CROPS FOR YEAR-ROUND INCOME

Climate Change, Migration, and Violence in Honduras

Climate change and violence have contributed to instability and migration across Honduras (see Section 3.2.1.). The country's most recent CDCS and subsequent activity designs focus strongly on addressing irregular out-migration. Migration and displacement are driven by factors such as climate change, violence, poor economic prospects, social and political margination, and other factors. Limited viable internal options for migration lead to external migration.

A high-level goal underlying USAID/Honduras activities is fostering a more prosperous, democratic, and secure Honduras where citizens, especially youth, are inspired to stay and invest in their future. A conflict sensitive ToC that ties the goal of the CDCS with the FCV and climate change dynamics discussed in Section 3 is the following:

> **IF** USAID targets areas in Honduras ravaged by drought with agricultural resilience programs that support livelihoods, empower local farmers, and increase local food security, **THEN** migration outside the country will decrease **BECAUSE** the economic prospects in agricultural areas within Honduras will improve.
>
> Additionally: **IF** USAID invests in programs to provide urban youth with alternatives to gang activity through improved formal sector employment opportunities, **THEN** migration outside the country will decrease **BECAUSE** people living in cities will be less likely to migrate as violence decreases and economic opportunities increase and people migrating from rural areas will be more likely to choose internal destinations.

CREDIT: KENYA-USAID. PASTORALIST MOVING HERD IN TURKANA

Climate Stress, COVID-19 Economic Damage, and Farmer/Herder Conflicts in Kenya

Climate stresses and the COVID-19 pandemic have had damaging effects on agricultural livelihoods and food security in Kenya (see Section 3.2.2.). The country's most recent CDCS included Development Objectives that can form the basis for at least two conflict sensitive ToCs related to livelihood investments and governance considerations. These are outlined below.

Economic Growth and Livelihoods

The CDCS emphasized the importance of inclusive growth, economic growth opportunities, and regional collaboration.* Steps to reduce the potential for conflict underpinned many Intermediate Results associated with the Development Objectives. A conflict sensitive ToC that focuses on the economic and regional cooperation components of the CDCS can be expressed as follows:

> **IF** USAID targets livestock value chains with inclusive programs that generate economic opportunities inside Kenya and in regional markets for multiple groups of stakeholders, **THEN** the potential threat for violent extremism from groups like al-Shabaab will decrease **BECAUSE** rural Kenyans will have increased short-term access to food and better prospects for sustainable agricultural livelihoods into the future that makes rebel recruitment less appealing.

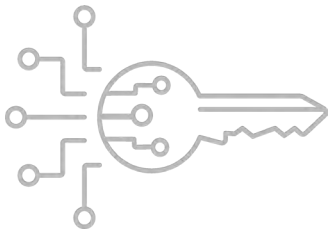
Governance and Institutions

The CDCS also focused on strengthening political institutions and governance systems. The ToC can be expressed as follows:

> **IF** USAID can work with Kenyan stakeholders (e.g., private sector, civil society, and government) to enhance the performance of key institutions and governance mechanisms, **THEN** the potential for farmer-herder conflicts will decline **BECAUSE** different groups will feel there are effective forums that represent their interests and can resolve disputes over land and natural resources without resorting to violence.

* Inclusive growth was a component of the goal statement associated with the CDCS. Economic growth opportunities were highlighted in Development Outcome #3. Regional collaboration was a component of Development Outcome #4.

4.3. Conflict Sensitive Program Design



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Program design offers opportunities to ensure conflict sensitive approaches are mainstreamed throughout the activity.
- While FCV dynamics can be expected to engage with FTF programming in certain bidirectional patterns, there are nuances associated with certain components of the food system. This section discusses three possible interventions: seed systems programs, livelihoods diversification, and nutrition-specific programs and services.

Conflict sensitive design considers how programs may interact with FCV and how those dynamics may affect the implementation and achievement of results. This toolkit emphasizes how ALL FTF programming will encounter these FCV forces to some degree and will need to take steps to recognize and reduce them.

Certain bidirectional patterns between food system interventions and FCV dynamics will apply across the board. Table 1 below summarizes some of the most prominent cross-cutting issues from two vantage points: 1) how FCV might interact with all food systems interventions; and 2) how all food systems interventions might interact or contribute to FCV dynamics.

Program design provides an opportunity to ensure conflict sensitive approaches and considerations are mainstreamed throughout the activity. This can be done by:

- Discussing the operating situation, group relationships, history of violence, and other factors that may impact implementation with stakeholders, including public and private sector and Mission technical teams.
- Considering how planned activities and results may impact the context and FCV dynamics.
- Using this understanding of the contextual dynamics to design activities that integrate these considerations so that potential for harm is minimized and peace and stability opportunities are leveraged.
- Applying parts or all of the Do No Harm framework steps in the design phase.
- Working to integrate local perspectives (particularly of marginalized groups), information sharing, and monitoring systems to enhance ongoing understanding of the context as it evolves.
- Developing functions and roles that local communities (particularly marginalized groups) will play in the activity to focus on community feedback, create reality checks, and encourage local ownership and sustainability.

The following pages provide discussion of interventions with relevance to FTF: 1) seed systems; 2) livelihood diversification; and 3) food assistance programs. Each section attempts to advance the discussion of how specific programs might interact with FCV dynamics and possible responses, including key questions that can be addressed by existing USAID tools and resources, the relevance of the issue, possible responses, and additional links.

Two-Way Relationship Between Interventions and FCV

FCV ⇒ Intervention	Intervention ⇒ FCV

• FCV can impair the performance of all components of the food system, damaging links between segments and limiting outputs. General effects include:
  • Unavailable inputs.
  • Damaged infrastructure and capital.
  • Labor shortages.
  • Diminished trade.
  • Curtailed supporting services.
	• Elite capture or corruption could reinforce unequal power dynamics.

• Greater insecurity in FCV zones necessitates extra security planning, considerations, and costs. There is a need to plan for the additional costs as well as develop protocols for keeping aid workers safe.	• Perceptions of particular groups being privileged could inflame tensions.
• Armed groups could evaluate interventions against their animating interests—for instance, groups attempting to establish parallel states may perceive that initiatives designed to support extension services undermine arguments the government is dysfunctional and does not provide for the population.	• Intervention could become a power struggle or trigger for FCV if armed parties attempt to establish competing programs to establish or consolidate popular support, or to leverage the intervention for reputational benefits.
• Scarcity and trauma can have complex interactions with cognitive abilities—in FCV contexts the burdens of dealing with multiple stressors may make interventions difficult.	• Water and irrigation programs may create conflict over land or water access and perpetuate power imbalances between marginalized groups and more dominant actors.
• Marginalized groups (women, youth, and ethnic minorities) could particularly face challenges (direct targets, recruitment, replacement workers, and land access).	• Interventions could interact with other stressors (climate change) in unexpected ways, leading to unexpected consequences (livelihood failure) that perpetuate FCV dynamics.

CREDIT: MD. SAIFUL ISLAM, SEED RETAILER TEACHING TECHNOLOGY

4.3.1. Seed Systems

Seed systems play important roles in building sustainable and productive food systems. Seed access, availability, and quality are all crucial to increase agricultural production, support economic livelihoods, and build resilience to climate stress. Seed market systems have unique features, with high concentration in the formal sector as well as dense networks of informal networks with different power centers. FCV dynamics can be firmly entrenched, whether with regard to the viability of certain crops in FCV settings, access and availability considerations, or the potential to perpetuate local grievances.

Interaction Between FCV and Interventions to Support Seed Systems

FCV ⇒ Seed Systems

- Damage to storage facilities and other infrastructure could destroy capacity to store farm-saved seeds.
- FCV could alter crop preferences (length of growing period, ease of transport, whether output requires processing are all among factors that could influence decision.)*
- Overall economic damage could limit tolerance for experimentation with new varieties.
- Disruptions in supply chains for complementary inputs (fertilizer) could limit the demand for and effectiveness of seeds.
- Seed sharing and informal market activity could decrease amidst increasing social tensions associated with FCV.

Seed Systems ⇒ FCV

- Informal seed traders may be adversely affected by direct seed distributions or other emergency initiatives.
- Formal seed markets are often concentrated; working within existing structures could reinforce power imbalances and grievances.
- Drought-resistant seeds or other new technologies could prove ill-suited to local conditions or not match the scale of climate change; failure could reinforce economic fragility.
- Theft of valuable seeds could act as trigger for conflict.

* The final bullet of Section 3.1 also discussed how FCV might alter crop production patterns and "conflict-resilient crops."

Seed System Intervention Programming Considerations

Power Dynamics Considerations	
KEY QUESTIONS	• What are power dynamics in local seed and other input markets? • Who are the key actors? • How have farmers historically accessed seed? How has this changed? • What is the role of informal traders vs. formal actors?
USAID TOOLS	• Conflict and Violence Assessment Framework • Political Economy Analysis • Food Systems Conceptual Framework
RELEVANCE	• Seeds are critical components of production, yet their provision could reinforce existing power inequities. • In FCV regions, farmers are more likely to access critical inputs from local or informal networks.
POSSIBLE RESPONSES	• Map local networks and identify actors, taking care to understand contours of informal seed networks (critical component of seed distribution in many locations). • Identify who can support conflict sensitive or peacebuilding approaches. • If using direct or emergency seed distributions, establish support mechanisms (village groups with diverse representation) to ensure equitable distribution.

Core Food System Considerations	
KEY QUESTIONS	• What are prominent bottlenecks in the seed system the intervention is targeting?
USAID TOOLS	• Value Chain Analysis
RELEVANCE	• Seed availability: Storage units can be targets in FCV contexts; formal/informal market linkages may break, impairing movement of seeds. • Seed access: Economic shocks associated with FCV may limit financial access to seeds. • Seed quality: Training or extension services associated with new seeds might not be possible in regions with elevated security risks.
POSSIBLE RESPONSES	• Seed availability: Improve local storage capacity, facilitate logistics associated with movement of local seed. • Seed access: Direct distribution or market-based approaches (cash, vouchers, seed fairs). • Seed quality: Evaluate suitability of conflict-resilient crops (less intensive, easily transported, etc.); consider whether vouchers or subsidies might promote adoption of new technologies.

Social Dynamics Considerations	
KEY QUESTIONS	• Are there significant IDP or refugee populations in the area? • What are the gendered power dynamics of the local seed system, i.e., access, purchasing power, selection?
USAID TOOLS	• Conflict and Violence Assessment Framework • Land and Conflict Toolkit • Gender Analysis
RELEVANCE	• Seed programs targeting IDP or refugee populations face entrenched challenges, including the following: 1) access to land; 2) familiarity with seeds/plant varieties; and 3) access to supporting inputs and materials (among others). • Returned populations getting access to seeds as part of return packages that local populations may not have received. • Women may be excluded from local market structures, and there may be gendered power dynamics around access, purchasing power, utilization, selection, etc.
POSSIBLE RESPONSES	• Seed programs for IDPs should take a systems approach, considering access to land, other agricultural equipment, and training or extension services. • Livelihood diversification activities are an alternate consideration. • Consider gendered dynamics of seed systems to foster inclusion—are there forums for communication or participation?

Environmental Considerations	
KEY QUESTIONS	• How might new technologies interact with climate change?
USAID TOOLS	• Scientific or technical analysis • Risk and Resilience Assessment
RELEVANCE	• New seed technologies may mitigate risks associated with climate change, although failure could lead to economic fragility and further stress FCV dynamics.
POSSIBLE RESPONSES	• Similar responses as seed quality—evaluate suitability, emphasizing interaction with climate effects. • Promising varieties may require subsidies or voucher programs.

Read More

- ISSD Africa: Seed Systems in Conflict-Affected Areas
- ISSD Africa: Seed Emergency Response Tools: Guide for Practitioners
- Mercy Corps: NE Nigeria Joint Livelihood and Market Recovery Assessment
- USAID: FTF Global Supporting Seed Systems for Development
- USAID Seed Systems in Fragile States: Haiti Case Study
- CGIAR: Gender Dynamics in Seed System Development
- Agrilinks: Market-led Interventions for Seed Security Response in Emergencies (webinar)
- African Seed Access Index: Seeds Dashboard

CREDIT: WINROCK INTERNATIONAL. FARMERS SELLING PRAWNS IN BANGLADESH

4.3.2. Livelihood Diversification

Livelihood diversification in agricultural production activities can take various forms. On-farm diversification can involve new products, processes, activities, or markets to generate increased earnings or reduce variability; off-farm diversification may involve complementary economic activities or entire new skill sets that push individuals away from agricultural or pastoralism. Diversification can promote resilience in a number of ways—the GFSS promotes livelihood diversification in multiple ways, highlighting its importance as a component of pursuing objective #2 (strengthened resilience among people, communities, countries, and systems).

Interaction Between FCV and Intervention to Promote Livelihood Diversification in Agricultural Production

FCV ⟹ Livelihood Diversification

- Security situation might preclude agricultural activities—key assets may be destroyed or abandoned.
- Damage to other food system components may receive greater priority (physical infrastructure, restoration of market channels).
- FCV might draw agricultural labor into conflict or related illicit activity.
- FCV might lead to internal migration to escape instability and casualties.
- Range of viable crops or processing activities and tolerance for experimentation may decrease.

Livelihood Diversification ⟹ FCV

- Moves out of traditional livelihoods (pastoralism, agriculture) may change nature of violence and lead to smaller-scale thefts and/or SGBV.
- Diversification into agriculture may increase competition for land/water.
- Diversification into agriculture may exacerbate financial or economic uncertainty.
- Alternative lifestyles may contribute to environmental degradation and/or exacerbate climate stress, perpetuating FCV dynamics.
- Transitioning out of pastoralism or off-farm diversification strategies may lead to migration and contribute to elevated FCV risks in urban centers.

Livelihood Diversification Intervention Programming Considerations

Power Dynamics Considerations	
KEY QUESTIONS	• Who are the target populations for the program? • How might potential triggers for FCV change with any shift in livelihoods?
USAID TOOLS	• Conflict and Violence Assessment Framework • Political Economy Analysis
RELEVANCE	• Groups such as pastoralists and farmers may have different organization and expertise, requiring different outreach strategies. • FCV patterns can be expected to evolve with diversification, with the possibility of increased competition for firewood, charcoal, water, land and other resources.
POSSIBLE RESPONSES	• Understand local context and potential for unintended consequences (land titling, for example, can harm pastoralists by eliminating grazing or water access). • Focus on participatory processes that safeguard the rights of all participants. • Support community-centered efforts at peace and reconciliation to support conflict resolution.

Core Food System Considerations	
KEY QUESTIONS	• What are the viable diversification strategies?
USAID TOOLS	• Food Systems Conceptual Framework • Risk and Resilience Assessment • Political Economy Analysis • Market Systems Resilience Resources
RELEVANCE	• Value chain analysis can yield examples of potential strategies for diversification. • FCV might preclude specific products, process or industry upgrades, both on- and off-farm.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES	• Priority in FCV might be security support, infrastructure reconstruction or reviving markets, and supply chain linkages.
	• On-farm technical considerations that might facilitate product or process diversification include:
	  • Village Savings and Loan Associations may assist with access to finance
	  • Research and development of resilient crops and production methods
	  • Support for trainings and extension services
	  • Subsidies to encourage experimentation
	  • Promotion of local food systems
	• Off-farm diversification could involve more extensive vocational and employment training, although these can be costly and time-consuming.

Social Dynamics Considerations	
KEY QUESTIONS	• What are potential support strategies to mitigate risks of SGBV?
USAID TOOLS	• Conflict and Violence Assessment Framework • Gender Analysis • Inclusive Development Analysis
RELEVANCE	• Livelihood diversification may change scale of violence (banditry, SGBV).
POSSIBLE RESPONSES	• Support local health infrastructure, focusing specifically on treatment for SGBV survivors; support enabling environment for women's rights, participation, and empowerment. • Address questions of local definitions of masculinity and provide pathways out of agriculture (where wanted) for youth males through trainings that reduce risk of criminal behavior.

Environmental Considerations	
KEY QUESTIONS	• Are there environmental risks associated with diversification strategies?
USAID TOOLS	• Water and Conflict Toolkit • Environmental and Natural Resource Management Framework • Tropical Forest & Biodiversity Assessments • Risk and Resilience Assessment
RELEVANCE	• Diversification may lead to economic activities (farming, mining, others) that stress natural resources and perpetuate FCV considerations.
POSSIBLE RESPONSES	• Trainings may promote awareness. • Subsidies and incentives could promote adoption. • Technical support to local environmental non-governmental organizations.

Read More

- SPARC: Livelihoods and Markets in Protracted Conflict
- USAID: Resilience and Risk in Pastoralist Areas: Recent Trends in Diversified and Alternative Livelihoods
- USAID: Effective Engagement with Pastoralist Populations

CREDIT: US EMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

4.3.3. Nutrition-Specific Interventions and Services

Good nutrition is central to sustainable development and is required to make progress on issues such as health, education, employment, reduction of poverty and inequality, and the empowerment of girls and women. Reducing child malnutrition and saving lives requires action in multiple settings. In health systems and emergency settings, the GFSS focuses on pregnant women's access to appropriate vitamin and mineral supplements and dietary counseling, exclusive breastfeeding for children under 6 months and continued breastfeeding until 24 months, optimal complementary feeding for children starting at 6 months, vitamin A supplementation for children 6-59 months, and prevention and treatment of wasting. These nutrition-specific interventions are then complemented by broader efforts throughout the food system, such as large-scale food fortification, and improved affordability and accessibility to safe, nutritious foods for women and children. It is just as essential for nutrition-specific interventions to be conflict sensitive as with any other kind of activity: in fact, a recent academic interest and discussions about whether direct food assistance can contribute or extend conflict points to the risks inherent in any interventions that do not consider conflict sensitivity.

Interaction Between FCV and Nutrition-Specific Interventions

FCV ⟹ Nutrition-Specific Interventions

- Security considerations could limit access to vulnerable populations or endanger delivery personnel.
- Potential delivery sites may be damaged or unavailable.
- Intensity of FCV could overwhelm local health systems, further straining outcomes for vulnerable populations.
- Water infrastructure and/or hygiene resources could be destroyed, undermining efficacy of intervention.
- Elevation of conflict dynamics and deterioration of trust could limit willingness to engage.

Nutrition-Specific Interventions ⟹ FCV

- Distribution of nutrition commodities could lead to risk of violence for recipients in resource-poor settings.
- It could serve as source of revenue and/or provide reputational benefits for one group, potentially sustaining FCV.
- Provision and distribution may perpetuate existing grievances or create new ones if marginalized groups or displaced groups are perceived as receiving favorable treatment.
- Inattentive program design could allow warring parties to access critical information about opposing groups (demographics, location, nutritional deficiencies).
- Migration could further inflame tensions (widespread movement to access aid) or potentially elevate risks of physical danger (encouraging groups to stay in locations with active violence).

Nutrition-Specific Intervention Programming Considerations

Power Dynamics Considerations	
KEY QUESTIONS	• What is the local context?
USAID TOOLS	• Conflict and Violence Assessment Framework
RELEVANCE	• The infusion of nutrition-specific interventions (e.g., distribution of nutrition commodities) into FCV regions holds the risk of perpetuating the conflict by benefitting hostile parties.
POSSIBLE RESPONSES	• Emphasize conflict sensitivity, resilience, peacebuilding strategies (see Section 6 for examples).

Core Food System Considerations	
KEY QUESTIONS	• What are the local nuances associated with food security and nutrition outcomes? • What nutrition-sensitive interventions would best complement nutrition-specific interventions? • What are the local capacities for market-based activities to combat hunger and malnutrition? • How can local systems and food environments be supported to sustain nutritional outcomes long term?
USAID TOOLS	• USAID Nutrition Resource Hub • Market Systems Resilience Resources • Political Economic Analysis
RELEVANCE	• Conflict analysis is a first step and should be supplemented with analysis of nutrition situation and its determinants to better inform program design. • Emphasis should be on vulnerable populations and equity considerations.
POSSIBLE RESPONSES	• Assess nutritional status of populations disaggregated by gender, age groups, children with/without disabilities, disabilities across age bands, geography, ethnicity, socially disadvantaged groups, etc. • Describe the causal analysis of food insecurity or nutritional deficits for vulnerable populations, including environmental, cultural, and socio-economic determinants. • Perform institutional, human resource, and budget analyses as well as analysis of existing coordination mechanisms. • Analyze key policy frameworks, guidelines, documents, and legislative frameworks.

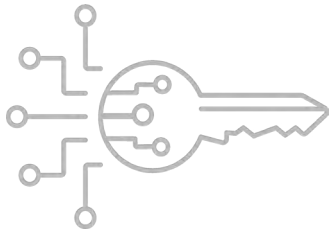
Social Dynamics Considerations	
KEY QUESTIONS	• How can nutrition-specific interventions ensure women and children are targeted effectively and benefits are not co-opted by others?
USAID TOOLS	• Gender Analysis • Inclusive Development Analysis • USAID Nutrition Resource Hub
RELEVANCE	• Multiple intervention delivery methods improve food security and nutritional outcomes, especially in FCV regions.
POSSIBLE RESPONSES	• Understand bottlenecks and drivers (supply and demand, socio-cultural, environmental, economic, political) that impede effective program delivery. • Assess additional risks, vulnerabilities, and capacities that will further impact the nutritional status of women and children. • Include intervention locations that can be accessed by women and children (schools, health clinics, etc.). • Consider strategies to target specific dietary components for women or children.

Data Considerations	
KEY QUESTIONS	• How can data collection be enhanced?
USAID TOOLS	• USAID Nutrition Resource Hub
RELEVANCE	• Researchers are still uncertain about the relationship between nutrition-specific interventions and FCV.
POSSIBLE RESPONSES	• Evaluate potential ways to supplement performance indicators for FTF programming with eye toward relationship with FCV (spatially and temporally disaggregated data with local granularity to tie to specific groups/events). • Consider additional dietary indicators such as women's minimum dietary diversity or dietary quality scores.

Read More

- SIPRI/WFP: The World Food Programme's Contribution to Improving Prospects for Peace
- United Nations Food System Summit: Addressing Food Crises in Violent Conflict
- USAID: Understanding Key Dimensions of Food Environments
- USAID Nutrition and Resilience: Discussion Brief on Better Integration of Nutrition into
- Resilience-Strengthening Programs
- FAO: How to Conduct a Nutrition Situation Analysis

4.4. Conflict Sensitive Implementation



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Start up could involve a rapid conflict analysis to address any change in circumstances as well as wide-ranging discussions and workshops with key stakeholders about conflict sensitive strategies.
- Important work plan considerations include recruitment strategies, physical location of offices, and evaluation of procurement strategies.
- Establishing relationships an important component of conflict sensitive implementation—USAID staff and IPs should pay particular attention to power asymmetries and develop strategies for cultivating ties with marginalized groups.

As programming transitions from design to implementation, some of the nuances associated with conflict sensitivity evolve. Prior sections discussed how USAID staff can understand local context, articulate development hypotheses that consider these features, and anticipate how food system interventions might interact with FCV dynamics. Conflict sensitive implementation incorporates these elements while also considering how to proceed with the day-to-day elements associated with projects and activities. This section examines four different stages associated with implementation: 1) start up; 2) work plan considerations; 3) implementation; and 4) closeout.

4.4.1. Start Up

Start up is a critical opportunity whereby USAID and activity implementing partners (IPs) can consider necessary changes to design and/or implementation practices given any shifts in FCV dynamics. There are several opportunities during start up to integrate conflict sensitive practices:

- **Conduct rapid conflict analysis.** While Section 4.1 emphasized the importance of conflict analysis as a first step, up to 18 months may pass between the issuance of a solicitation and an award, during which time there may be many changes in the FCV context. A rapid assessment of the context before implementation will help conflict sensitive considerations include dynamics among target demographics, key actors, institutional performance, and political context.
- **Hold discussions with appropriate staff that unpack critical elements of the conflict analysis (as well as key support tools).** Section 4.3 provided examples of illustrative key questions associated with FTF programming in FCV regions. These should be discussed with Mission staff and IPs. Technical considerations can also be a focus: what are the communication expectations for the IPs? What are the security risks? Can Contracting Officer's Representatives make field visits? How can USAID practices incorporate flexibility and adaptability into programming structures to promote conflict sensitivity?
- **Share assessment findings early.** USAID can host a learning session following the conflict assessment (or review of existing conflict assessment) for further discussion of key findings, conclusions, and recommendations with stakeholders and civil society.
- **Lead workshop sessions with implementing partners focused on conflict sensitivity.** Sessions should provide an opportunity for USAID and partners to detail objectives, implementation, reporting, priorities, management of potential disruptions to programming, and political sensitivities. See the Ethiopia case study in Section 6 for examples of co-creation workshops and conflict practicums that embody this approach.

- **Require conflict sensitive work plan within the first two weeks.** Key startup tasks should be included as well as processes that will accomplish tasks.

4.4.2. Work Plan Considerations

While Section 4.3 detailed illustrative examples of how food system interventions might engage with FCV dynamics in a broad sense, the technical elements of work plans can further complicate FTF programming efforts. Conflict sensitive work plan considerations include the following:

- **Consider office locations and recruiting practices.** Work plans often begin with office locations and recruitment of new staff. With each, perceptions are critical. Offices located in predominantly expat neighborhoods may send the wrong message, as might a building owned by a wealthy politician from an extreme right- or left-wing party. When hiring, emphasizing certain skills may exclude certain populations. Due to entrenched marginalization, certain groups may lack necessary skill sets. This needs to be weighed accordingly by the hiring team. It is also likely that certain excluded groups have less access to the recruitment pipeline, or less of the credentials, degrees, or training that might make a candidate appealing for a role–even if those credentials are not actually essential for the skills a job requires. The hiring team should adopt inclusive recruiting practices that ensure a diverse set of people are exposed to job opportunities and considered for roles.

- **Evaluate provision of goods and services.** Conflict sensitive seed systems or food assistance interventions must be cognizant of supporting local value chains while also not prioritizing (or excluding) certain groups. The same logic applies to office supplies and other materials. Where will the IP obtain equipment? If procured locally, the IP must consider supplier affiliations. Even a minor decision of where to service cars, for example, might have unintended consequences on FCV dynamics.

- **Establish communications protocols.** If USAID is launching a program designed to foster collaboration between pastoralists and farmers, language should be neutral and not directly echo one's terminology. USAID and the IP should come to agreement during the startup workshop on communicating the work and ensuring this is captured in the conflict sensitive start up plan so everyone is using the same language.

- **Draft MEL plan: Typically, a first-year MEL Plan is requested within 30 days of award.** USAID needs to ensure there are indicators that monitor changes in the FCV context and monitor the ToC. See Section 4.5 for additional MEL considerations.

4.4.3. Implementation

A significant component of conflict sensitive implementation involves relationship-building and management among all parties involved in the activity, including the donor, the core IP and their partners, and the local communities and beneficiaries. Developing a respectful rapport and open lines of communication are critical to ensuring programs and activities do not reinforce FCV dynamics.

Building relationships is not easy—there are no foolproof strategies. There are, however, techniques that might increase the potential for success. These are not necessarily unique to FTF programming. Relevant strategies USAID has previously identified include the following:

- **Establishing feedback loops and regular check-ins.** Can facilitate adoption of conflict sensitive strategies.

- **Visiting Sites.** Can boost the confidence of the grantee, build trust in USAID, and demonstrate the importance of the relationship.

- **Learning and adapting practices, systems and processes.** Conflict sensitivity emphasizes flexibility and adaptability in the face of dynamic challenges.

- **Encouraging reporting.** It is important for IPs to report negative results—examples where the activity did harm can provide learning opportunities.

4.4.4. Closeout

Closeout can be viewed as a process instead of a single action. It incorporates some physical and financial consequences of USAID's support and should be cognizant of legacy, learning, and local sustainability. Conflict sensitive closeout can be facilitated by planning in advance, updating the conflict analysis to reflect new learnings, ensuring the property closeout and equipment transfer is conducted in a transparent manner, and documenting how the project promoted a Do No Harm approach and contributed to peace.

Developing Deeper Relationships to Shift Power Arrangements

The GFSS elevates the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion across the FTF portfolio. To support this, it is critical to develop strategies to cultivate relationships with populations that may have been excluded from the process in the past. Building relationships is complex and nuanced work that, when poorly executed, can make things worse.

Duke University's World Food Policy Center has focused much of its local programming efforts on developing deeper local relationships in the food system and initiating conversations that can shift and share power arrangements to build resiliency. Lessons learned from various projects to facilitate relationship development in challenging circumstance include the following:

- **Limiting pre-set meeting agendas to allow space for developing the agenda together.** This practice can help give everyone an opportunity to contribute to agenda setting and allow the group to decide the most pressing issues. It can also allow room for emergent topics for discussions.

- **Convening and adjourning with exercises that emphasize focus and attention.** Examples include deep breathing, sharing of personal stories, and one-word expressions of how people feel about the meeting or about the work of the project.

- **Engaging in regular meetings or communications.** This helps participants to stay connected and keep activities moving but also keeps the process from feeling rushed. Continuing to "move quickly and move slowly" with trust-building should guide the process.

- **Acknowledging feelings of discomfort.** Being reflective can cultivate another way of thinking, feeling, and being in shared spaces in FCV contexts.

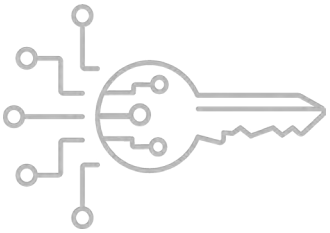
- **Being responsive to stakeholder voices.** Listen and adapt programming to address stakeholders' concerns. Allowing divergence from strict timelines is important to encourage greater responsiveness to context and circumstance.

- **Moving at the speed of trust.** Allow the tempo of the work to match the demands of the project. This could include periods of intentional slowdown to encourage relationships to be nurtured and processes interrogated.

Conflict Sensitive Implementation Guidance

Considerations	Questions
Conflict Analysis	
• Time elapsed since initial design • Existence of conflict assessment (and other supporting analysis—nutrition, value chain, political economy, etc.) • Time and cost for conducting assessment	• What analysis already exists? When was it done? • What additional information is needed? • What parameters exist regarding timing and funding for an assessment?
Implement Conflict Sensitivity Plan/Operational Approach	
• Existence of political sensitivities that could inhibit implementation • Goods and services that could exacerbate conflict • Site and office locations • Security procedures • Coordination with other IPs and donors • Communications and outreach planning	• What is the process for engagement of local communities that will enhance connectors? • How does timing in plan equate with realities on the ground? • What approaches can be used to gain access to closed areas? • Where can we be flexible and adapt as needed?
Monitor, Learn, and Adapt	
• Feasibility of baseline data • Readiness of IP to collect data in remote areas • Openness of IP and USAID to adjust if activity is perceived to have negative effects on FCV dynamics (or if FCV having negative effect on intervention) • Analysis and interpretation/utility of data collection for conflict sensitive work	• Are targets outlined in design still applicable given shifting FCV dynamics? • If data will be collected by a third party, what is the reliability of such data and the perceptions of the group by local populations? • What adjustments need to be made to positively align with changing dynamics? How will these be made?
Check-ins and Reporting	
• Changes in local context • Sharing lessons • IP staff assessments and feedback on process and work with communities • Government acceptance/resistance to activities	• Have there been changes in the FCV context? • Do our plans respond to the current needs and dynamics? • Are analyses, security plans, reports, etc. up to date? • Are there other stakeholders to consider?
Relationship Management	
• Are targets outlined in the design still applicable given any shifts in FCV? • What adjustments need to be made to positively align with changing dynamics? How will these be made?	• Who is consulted? • Do people feel they are treated fairly? • Are there different rules for different people/ groups?
Closeout Strategy	
• Communication with staff, partners, beneficiaries • USG property disposition • Capturing and sharing learning • Updating understanding of FCV dynamics?	• Have stakeholders been informed of activity closeout? • Who is getting the property? What are the perceptions? • How is knowledge being captured and shared?

4.5. Conflict Sensitive Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Conflict sensitive MEL plans should understand the context, recognize interactions between context and programming, and act on this information to mitigate harm and contribute to peace.
- Performance monitoring should disaggregate data by key identities and heed perception indicators; context monitoring should pay attention to changing FCV contexts.
- Learning approaches emphasizing experimentation in FCV contexts can identify knowledge gaps, question assumptions, and strengthen adaptive management to changing dynamics.

The difficulties that FCV contexts present for MEL activities are expansive. Some of the more prominent may include the following:

- Difficulties in identifying and accessing the affected populations
- Understanding power and relationship dynamics
- Fear and sensitivity around fact-finding missions and perceived grievances
- Limited availability of good quality data
- Unreliable data due to invalid or biased sources
- Harm caused during data collection
- Security risks during data collection for staff and target populations
- Challenges with and potential harm caused by monitoring and evaluating sensitive issues

Conflict sensitive MEL does not demand adherence to one methodology or set of protocols. It is a package of whatever techniques will address the greatest number of challenges. Utilization of these techniques can help measure conflict sensitive outcomes and reduce the potential that monitoring or evaluation activities contribute to FCV dynamics.

MEL processes can influence—and are influenced by—the local context. It is crucial to take steps to ensure that MEL does not contribute to harm and can instead positively influence the context. Flexibility is critical as programs adapt to local circumstances and decide when to halt or resume activities. The sub-sections below outline some of the considerations with individual MEL components.

Resources for MEL Considerations

The following documents offer checklists and considerations for ensuring MEL is conflict sensitive. MEL staff should incorporate process indicators into monitoring plans to measure the degree of conflict sensitivity during implementation.

- USAID: Monitoring and Evaluation Challenges and Best Practices
- USAID: MEL Plans Considerations for Conflict Sensitivity
- USAID: Guidance for Inclusion of Conflict Sensitivity in Evaluation SOWs
- International Development Evaluations Associations' Evaluations in Context of Fragility, Conflict and Violence
- USAID Learning Lab provides three supporting toolkits: 1) monitoring, 2) evaluation and 3) collaboration, learning and adapting that discuss different MEL aspects
- Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning at the Activity Level
- UK Aid and CARE International Monitoring and evaluating conflict

4.5.1. Monitoring

Monitoring for conflict sensitivity at the strategic and activity levels includes tracking salient conflict and violence dynamics over time for different populations. Indicators are identified based on findings from violence and conflict assessments or other contextual analyses.

Key Components of Conflict Sensitive Monitoring

Performance Indicators	Context Indicators	Conflict Sensitive Indicators
• Disaggregate by key populations or identities	• Monitor conflict and violence dynamics	• Use process indicators to monitor CS implementation
• Identify perception indicators to understand gaps between perceptions and behavior	• Link indicators to scenario planning or adaptive management	• Select indicators that track how the context might affect programming and how programming might affect the context

Monitoring FTF programming requires regular assessment of performance and context indicators. There are 53 performance indicators that measure the outcomes of FTF programming; there are 20 context indicators that yield insights into the local conditions. Continuous monitoring can provide indications of evolving conditions that elevate FCV risks. It is essential to disaggregate qualitative and quantitative data by gender, age, group identities, geography, and other characteristics identified in assessments and activities to capture FCV dynamics.

Although changes associated with some metrics may transmit clear warning signs of potential FCV risks,[6] additional information beyond indicators will be required to assess conflict dynamics and unanticipated consequences. Perception-based information is especially key to understanding processes that can trigger, mitigate, or extend FCV risks and understand gaps between perceptions and behavior. Mixing qualitative with quantitative approaches will necessitate different methods—surveys, structured or semi-structured interviews, and focus groups may all be appropriate.

To sustain effective monitoring in FCV contexts, monitoring processes must not contribute to harm and support peacebuilding by showing sensitivity to enumerator identities and ensuring monitoring does not take place during sensitive times.[7] In areas of active conflict, alternative forms of monitoring such as utilizing remote technologies or by third parties can help protect target populations and staff while promoting accountability.

Data Collection Regimes and Food Systems

While there have been recent efforts to improve data collection regimes, lack of quality data remains not only a challenge for FCV contexts but food systems in general. The Committee on World Food Security recently released a report on data collection and analysis tools associated with food systems. The publication catalogs existing initiatives and presents recommendations and considerations for global stakeholders, including governments and donors.

6 Metrics from the FTF indicator list include depth of poverty of the poor, average income of small-scale food producers, percent of households with access to basic sanitation service, percent of households that believe local government will respond effectively to future shocks and stresses, and number of adults who perceive their tenure rights to land or marine areas as secure with USG assistance.

7 The Conflict Sensitive Implementation section of this toolkit (Section 4.4) discusses operational strategies for work plans and building relationships with diverse and representative groups that may have suffered historical inequities.

4.5.2. Evaluation

Conflict sensitive evaluations can help produce knowledge on how or why an intervention was conflict sensitive and on the relationship between conflict sensitivity and programmatic results. Conflict sensitivity should be integrated into the identification of evaluation questions, the approach to data collection and analysis, and the dissemination of evaluation findings. Evaluators can capture unintended positive and negative outcomes using methods suited to complex conflict and violence affected contexts.

Evaluations provide structured assessments of program implementation and ToC and help inform when adjustments might be needed. FCV settings demand flexibility and adaptation. Given the sensitivities associated with outreach to groups that may have suffered marginalization and trauma, each data collection method, such as surveys, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and media analyses, should be adapted to account for local conflict dynamics, including composing evaluation teams with respect to key identity groups and language preferences. Participatory approaches, which involve stakeholders in specific aspects of the evaluation process, can be especially useful in gathering perception-based data, although evaluation teams must apply care in questioning groups affected by conflict.

A developmental evaluation is one approach well served for the ambiguities and complexities associated with FCV regions. The evaluator is embedded into the program team, ideally over the entire lifecycle of the project. A collaborative process allows the evaluator to identify and work with all stakeholders to understand the local context and identify potential adaptations to activity design. Developmental evaluations are particularly well suited to situations where the ToC is untested or where USAID objectives and goals may change in rapid fashion, while less conducive for situations where there is less need for flexibility or where a learning culture may not exist.

USAID has used developmental evaluations for more than 10 years. The Developmental Evaluation Pilot Activity recently piloted four developmental evaluations to test the effectiveness of the approach. While the program for the Bureau for Food Security encountered some challenges, it also generated insights into enabling conditions required to increase potential for success for developmental evaluations. Critically, there is a need for someone within leadership structures to serve as an advocate for the approach and prioritize its implementation.

Pros and Cons Associated with Using Digital Evaluation Tools in FCV Contexts

The International Development Evaluation Association recently published a guide for evaluation strategies in FCV contexts. The recommendations repeatedly emphasize the importance of flexibility and adaptability, including some of the mixed-methods and participatory approaches highlighted above.

A potential strategy advanced by the International Development Evaluation Association for evaluations where quantitative measures might be critical, but FCV dynamics might make in-person data collection difficult, are digital data collection tools. The downsides of using such tools can be significant—digital communication can be impersonal, FCV can endanger communication technologies, and there might be distrust that such technologies allow tracking or monitoring. Benefits for evaluators, however, include cost savings, safety, and easy access. Using such tools requires careful balance of the pros and cons.

4.5.3. Learning

Monitoring and evaluation can help USAID and partners to understand how and why an intervention or strategy was conflict sensitive, but conflict sensitivity requires acting on this information. Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) is a set of systematic practices to help improve development effectiveness, mitigate harm, and identify opportunities for peace during programming. CLA underpins conflict sensitive best practices by helping teams understand program successes and challenges and adapt existing programming under changing FCV dynamics. CLA activities include:

- Scenario planning
- Adaptive management for activities and strategies
- Joint site visits with internal and external stakeholders
- Portfolio reviews
- Pause and reflect sessions

Scenario planning is particularly relevant for this toolkit. It involves brainstorming FCV risks, peacebuilding opportunities, and challenges to help identify possible ways to adapt programming as needs emerge and the context changes (some of the key questions offered in the discussion on food systems-specific interventions in Section 4.3.3. provide an example of FCV risk brainstorms).

Adaptive management involves reflecting on learning and adjusting based on evidence. For instance, USAID's Pastoralist Areas Resilience Improvement and Market Expansion project built adaptive management into program design through budget flexibility, the use of crisis modifiers, and field-sources activities, which helped the program respond to emergent conditions (see the Sahel Regional Office case study in Section 6.2 for more on crisis or conflict modifiers). Adapting program designs to fit local conditions requires listening to stakeholders throughout the intervention. What may have worked in one context may not be transferable to other situations—which is why MEL practices must always be self-reflective. An analysis of a broad array of data and experiential learning can help shed light on the evidence and on lessons learned, ongoing successes and challenges, unintended consequences, and emerging opportunities and needs.

CREDIT: MARK WAMBUI, AFRICA LEAD. COMMUNITY LEADING MEETING

5. Conflict Sensitive Programming: Themes and Examples

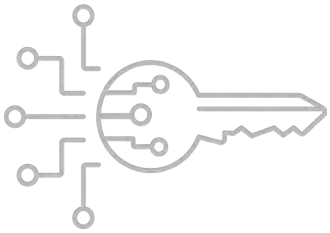
CREDIT: MOHAMMED ABDULLAH ADAN/PACT. SOMALIS HARMONIZING COMMUNAL RELATIONSHIPS PROGRAM

This section highlights conflict sensitive ToC and programming approaches from around the globe. These approaches can serve as springboards for brainstorming what makes best sense in your specific context, with the caveat that the way a program is implemented is often even more important than the program's technical design. ToC must be carefully rooted in the local context and be flexible enough to adapt through trial and error.

Key drivers increase or decrease the likelihood of conflict and violence. Programming that addresses poor governance, and a lack of social and economic interdependence, can be especially effective for addressing these drivers (Blattman 2022). For example, strengthening social cohesion can pave the way for less bias and misinformation between social groups, and increase the ability to work together towards common goals. Strengthening conflict mediation skills allows local disputes to be resolved without unnecessarily escalating into violence. Promoting economic interdependence is a powerful way to intertwine people's interests in a way that makes them less likely to engage in violence. Fostering political inclusion and public trust can directly address poor governance—specifically the unchecked concentration of power—by ensuring the meaningful participation of all people and by better holding governments accountable.

Depending on the FCV context, certain problems will resonate more than others. In an authoritarian regime, for instance, inequality in economic opportunity and issues around political exclusion and concentrated power are likely most salient. In displacement contexts, social cohesion between host communities and the displaced and economic opportunity and interdependence are likely to be particularly important. For farmer-pastoralist conflicts, fostering economic interdependence between these groups and conflict mediation/collective action by demarcating livestock corridors could be useful. For local-level conflict around natural resources, conflict mediation as well as other collective action and resource management approaches can be especially effective. These themes are not exhaustive, and there are no one-size-fits-all answers to conflict integration, but the authors hope these sketches are helpful for better understanding what conflict integration could look like in your context.

5.1. Problem: Low Social Cohesion



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Any FTF intervention that develops groups—from Farmer Field Schools and technical training to Village Savings and Loan Associations, community committees, etc.—can create opportunities for intergroup contact, a simple and powerful way to strengthen social cohesion.
- Training people with conflict mediation skills and supporting conflict mediation platforms is a similarly low-cost way to strengthen social cohesion and prevent conflicts from escalating into violence.

Social cohesion refers to the strength of relationships, social connections, and solidarity among groups in society. Low social cohesion can lead to divisions, mistrust, and the inability of people to solve problems together. When social cohesion is fractured, the lack of information shared between social groups and low levels of trust can make conflict more likely to escalate. In settings where social cohesion is low and the social contract is frayed, there are often few trusted actors to mediate conflicts.

POSSIBLE APPROACH: FACILITATING INTERGROUP CONTACT

Promoting intergroup contact is a promising way FTF programming can foster social cohesion. Intergroup contact is the idea that interpersonal contact can improve relationships across groups (Allport 1954). The intergroup contact hypothesis requires four key conditions: 1) equal status; 2) intergroup cooperation; 3) common goals; and 4) support by social and institutional authorities. Members of feuding ethnic groups who participate in vocational training together—where they have equal status as trainees and cooperate in training exercises—would meet three of the four conditions. It is important that the enabling environment does not severely disadvantage one group over another, such as through segregation. These conditions can strongly facilitate the impact of intergroup contact on positive outcomes such as tolerance, prejudice, and behavior change, but there is evidence that less structured interaction across groups is impactful as well.

MIXED-RELIGION SOCCER TEAMS HELP BUILD SOCIAL COHESION IN POST-ISIS IRAQ

- Program Details
  Innovations for Poverty Action researchers partnered with Nineveh Governorate Council (Strategic Planning Committee) and a local Christian non-governmental organization to evaluate the impact of mixed Christian-Muslim soccer teams on social cohesion and interactions between Christians and Muslims.
- Understanding The Context
  In post-ISIS Iraq, Christians distrusted their Muslim neighbors and supported local self-defense militias, a warning sign that the area could slide back into conflict. Their distrust stemmed from being violently driven from their homes and subject to mass atrocities during ISIS raids in 2014, and believing Muslim neighbors were complicit in the raids.

CREDIT: SALMA MOUSA. IMPROVING TOLERANCE THROUGH SOCCER POST ISIS IRAQ

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention

  On returning to their homes after displacement, Christians did not trust their Muslim neighbors, and there were signs the mistrust could fuel future violence. The interveners hoped that interpersonal contact across groups could reduce tensions and promote social cohesion across Christian and Muslim neighbors returning to their homes after war.

- Acting On These Understandings

  Research staff recruited 51 Christian soccer teams from Erbil and Qaraqosh and informed their captains that a local Christian-led non-governmental organization was working with a U.S.-based university to set up a soccer league for displaced people and returnees in the area. There were two conditions for participating: 1) all players had to agree to complete a brief survey on their displacement experience and their views on Iraqi society before and after the league; and 2) each team would be allocated an additional three players who might not be Christian. Teams in the treated group received three additional Muslim players, while those in the comparison group received three additional Christian players. To incentivize teams to participate in the soccer league, researchers hired professional referees, provided uniforms, reserved fields, and awarded trophies to the top three teams. Such incentives were successful in ensuring committed participation throughout the two months of the intervention. The study found that collaborative intergroup contact through sports effectively reduced discrimination across religions.

SUSTAINED INTERACTION BETWEEN TURKISH HOSTS AND SYRIAN REFUGEES STRENGTHENS SOCIAL COHESION

- Program Details

  Promotion of Economic Prospects for the Host Community and Refugees in Turkey (PEP) is financed through the German Federal Ministry and implemented through the German Aid Agency (GIZ).

- Understanding The Context

  Since 2014, Turkey has been hosting the world's largest refugee population, with more than 3.7 million Syrians granted temporary protection status. There are tensions between Syrian refugees and the Turkish host community, and the economic integration of Syrians remains limited.

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention

  The PEP program addressed known xenophobic hostility between Turkish and Syrian people and sought to address these tensions while also providing economic opportunity for all. Program staff learned through experience that one-off activities to promote interaction (i.e., picnics, site visits, film showings) did not work to reduce underlying frustrations.

CREDIT: RDAX. CLEANING MUSHROOMS IN A COOPERATIVE

- Acting On These Understandings
  PEP also found that sustained interaction, as well as pairing soft skills such as cooperation and tolerance with hard skills such as vocational training was effective. The PEP program promoted inclusive businesses by providing vocational training for Syrians and Turks in exporting. The program then placed Turks in Syrian firms and Syrians in Turkish firms.

POSSIBLE APPROACH: INVEST IN AND INTEGRATE CONFLICT MEDIATION

Mediators act as a third-party arbiter to reduce uncertainty across competing groups, promote communication among them, and ensure credible information is available that can erode misperceptions. Investing in and integrating conflict mediation can ensure FTF activities maximize their impact. Conflict mediation from trusted third parties can facilitate communication, reduce uncertainty and misperceptions, and ultimately lower tensions across groups.

COMPETING ETHNIC GROUPS BROUGHT TOGETHER THROUGH PEACE COMMITTEES AND CONFLICT LISTENING HUBS

- Program Details
  USAIDs' Tanganyika Conflict Mitigation and Reconciliation Activity brought Batwa and Bantu communities together to increase their agricultural production, access greater market opportunities, and mitigate conflict.

CREDIT: USAID. COMMUNITY BUILDING ACTIVITY

- Understanding The Context
  The conflict between Batwa and Bantu communities in the Tanganyika Province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo devastated agricultural production. In addition to impacting agriculture, the violence led to large-scale displacement, the massacre of families, and infrastructure destruction.

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention
  Conflict between Batwa and Bantu communities has led to high levels of mistrust, fractured social cohesion, and resulted in loss to agricultural production and livelihoods in the region. These communities need ways to resolve conflict without resorting to violence. They also need economic opportunities.

- Acting On These Understandings
  In the Democratic Republic of the Congo's Tanganyika province, FTF and the Tanganyika Conflict Mitigation and Reconciliation Activity leveraged agriculture activities—group farming and savings groups—to bridge conflict between rivalrous groups through economic interdependence and market opportunities. They also trained a network of 980 volunteers, including 180 peace committee members trained in conflict mediation. In addition, they established conflict listening hubs, whose members would hear about conflict dynamics or tensions at a more local level and refer people to the trained peace committees. The relationship between the peace committees and the listening hubs allowed the committees to mediate conflicts before they escalated into wider-scale violent conflict.

MERCY CORPS' FARM ACTIVITY IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO BRINGS DIVERSE GROUPS TOGETHER FOR DIALOGUES ON LAND REFORM AND BOLSTER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

- Program Details
  Mercy Corps partnered with the Dutch government on the four-year, $28 million Food Security and Inclusive Access to Resources for Conflict Sensitive Market Development (FARM) activity in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo. Components to the project included holding conversations and negotiations regarding land access, bolstering linkages between value chain actors, and investigating strategies for the agricultural sector to adapt to climate change.

CREDIT: THIERRY BIKUBA, LAND O LAKES VENTURE 37. FIGHTING THE FALL ARMYWORM

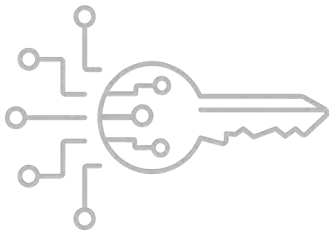
- Understanding The Context
  The region has experienced ethnic conflict with fighting for territorial control as well as tensions between farmers and pastoralists and land managers and sharecroppers.

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention
  The history of conflict among diverse groups over land access helped inform the first strategic objective of the program, which focused on bringing the government and citizens together to increase benefits to the target population from quality and accountable state services related to land use.

- Acting On These Understandings
  Mercy Corps engaged with peace and development committees at the village level, ensuring the committees were inclusive and representative of various stakeholders: farmers, pastoralists, diverse ethnic groups, land managers, and tenants. The committees served as forums for bilateral and collective negotiations around land access. The dialogue platform was used as a space to sensitize communities to legitimate land titling, resolve discrepancies between local government and customary authority, and ultimately secure titles. Metrics provided by Mercy Corps indicated measurable gains. There were 220 contracts signed, and nearly 1,200 individual customary titles delivered. In addition to a 34 percent increase in uninterrupted access to land, access was more evenly distributed across ethnic groups compared to control areas, which increased public confidence in their ability to withstand future shocks.

- More Details
  FARM Tracker and Green Climate Fund.

5.2. Problem: Inequality in Economic Opportunity and Low Economic Interdependence



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- FTF market systems programming can ensure participants are representative of the community, with special attention to marginalized groups.
- Supporting social protection is a way to bring economic resources to all, specifically focused on times of crisis when support can prevent people from backsliding into poverty.
- Both approaches are rooted in ensuring FTF programming can reduce economic inequality and foster economic interdependence.

Reducing economic inequality, especially when it occurs across group lines, can strengthen the middle class, reduce concentrated power, and address a core grievance often motivating violence. Inequality in access to authority, resources, and opportunity is a bedrock driver of conflict. Tensions rise when people's expectations for their lives are unmet, and especially when there is inequality in access to economic opportunity (Piketty 2013). Promoting economic interdependence is a powerful way to intertwine people's interests in a way that makes them less likely to engage in violence.

POSSIBLE APPROACH: PRIORITIZE INCLUSIVE MARKET SYSTEMS PROGRAMMING

Inclusive market-based programming can support peace goals by addressing exclusion and inequality across groups, shoring up ALL people's hope for a more promising and equitable future. Market systems development can play a significant role in strengthening a country's middle class, which can provide an important balance to elite power. With a careful eye to conflict sensitivity and inclusion, market systems programming can create ample opportunities for peace.

GASTROMOTIVA PROGRAM IN EL SALVADOR OFFERED SKILLS TRAINING AS VIOLENCE PREVENTION STRATEGY

- Program Details
  The WFP partnered with USAID's Crime and Prevention Project in El Salvador and Creative Associates International on the Gastromotiva project, which targeted returnees to the country for livelihoods training.

- Context
  El Salvador has one of the highest homicide rates in the world and has received significant numbers of returnees in recent years who attempted to emigrate. USAID and other partners have focused on programming for youth who are vulnerable as targets and perpetrators of crime and susceptible to gang recruitment.

CREDIT: OSCAR LEIVA, CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES. UTILIZING COVER CROPS

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention
  Gastromotiva was notable for its focus on returnees—who are a particularly vulnerable group—and on how vocational training might provide a pathway for improving social standing.

- Acting On These Understandings
  While a review of the project noted its high labor intensity, it also highlighted how it might contribute to peacebuilding in El Salvador by: 1) enhancing status within a community; 2) providing empowerment and providing hope for the future; and 3) preventing recruiting by gangs or other armed groups.

- More Details
  Culinary Training in El Salvador.

IN NIGERIA, MERCY CORPS PROGRAM FOCUSES ON POULTRY VALUE CHAIN TO PROVIDE LOWER ENTRY BARRIERS FOR RETURNEES WHILE ALSO BUILDING SOCIAL COHESION.

- Program Details
  The Poultry Development for Resettlement program is a three-year, $1.4 million project funded by the Gates Foundation, with Mercy Corps as its implementing partner. Focused in Borno State in northeast Nigeria, it works to support livelihoods by strengthening connections between stages of the poultry value chain. A critical component was support provided to poultry entrepreneurs (called Mother Units), who partnered with a local company that produces varieties of poultry more resistant to disease and harsh conditions. The Mother Units received day-old chicks from the local company, along with training, and reared the birds for five weeks, before selling them to smallholder farmers, who no longer had to care for the poultry at their most vulnerable stage.

- Understanding The Context
  Borno State has felt some of the worst effects of the Boko Haram insurgency, which over the course of a decade has led to significant food insecurity, large-scale migration, disruptions to livelihoods and markets, and fraying of social ties. With many IDPs looking to return, the need is pressing to support agricultural livelihoods to bolster economic and food security gains.

CREDIT: IFPRI/MOTUNRAYO OYEYEMI. COMMUNITY HELPS RESEARCHERS BOOST NUTRITION

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention
  Instability and the existence of large numbers of displaced persons in Borno State helped shape the program in at least two ways: 1) Mercy Corps focused on poultry rather than larger livestock because poultry rearing requires less capital and generates income more rapidly; and 2) Mercy Corps targeted vulnerable households, primarily women, returnees, and IDPs.

- Acting On These Understandings
  The program mandated the use of the Village Savings and Loans Association structure, which required participants to undergo training and register their group to access loans and grants. Sixty-one such groups were formed, with women comprising more than 90 percent of members. Village Savings and Loan Associations work across social groups to promote social cohesion, and Mercy Corps research indicated individuals used the structure to provide financial support and build resiliency.

- More Details
  Revitalizing poultry market systems in Nigeria.

POSSIBLE APPROACH: SHORE UP SOCIAL PROTECTION

Social protection refers to policies and programs that provide support to sustain people during times of crisis, commonly through mechanisms such as social cash transfers, social insurance, in-kind transfers, and public works. Social protection systems can increase public trust and improve the relationship between citizens and the state. They can also reduce concentrated power by providing resources to all citizens in need and break cycles of poverty by cushioning the blow of shocks that would have otherwise entrenched cycles of poverty. Finally, in FCV contexts, robust safety nets can help mitigate the risk of further destabilization.

SOMALIA'S BAXNAANO PROGRAM PROVIDES TARGETED SUPPORT TO THE POOREST AND MOST UNDERSERVED RURAL POPULATIONS.

- Program Details
  In Somalia, the World Bank has funded the state-led *Baxnaano* program, a flagship social safety net launched following the adoption of Somalia's 2019 Social Protection Policy.

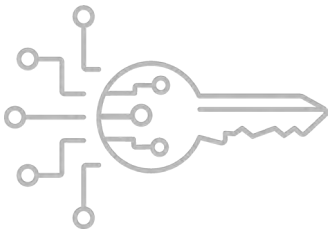
- Understanding The Context
  Two decades of conflict, weak governance, repeated extreme weather events, desert locust infestation, and now the COVID-19 pandemic have devastated the Somali economy, its social fabric, and state institutions. Decades of humanitarian assistance have not succeeded in lifting most Somalis out of poverty.

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention
  More sustainable approaches to managing risk and protecting people from poverty and inequality are needed in Somalia. A state-led social safety net targeted to those most in need can break with the protracted humanitarian relief model and focus on long-term, systems-based approaches to meeting people's needs.

CREDIT: MOHAMED TAHLIL, USAID/SOMALIA. WASHING BANANAS FOR EXPORT

- Acting On These Understandings
  Baxnaano delivers nutrition-linked cash transfers to 200,000 poor and vulnerable households with children under the age of five living in selected rural areas. Baxnaano is government-led and provides direct, rapid, and targeted support to the poorest, most underserved rural populations. The approach emphasizes strengthening the capacity of the local government.

5.3. Problem: Political Exclusion



KEY TAKEAWAY

- FTF can embrace "progress beyond programs" by identifying opportunities to advocate for more inclusive policies, encouraging processes with greater checks and balances on local elites, and promoting localization by devolving resources and political power to local actors.

Concentrated political power tends to exclude certain groups. Centralized political power, in which states and communities lack checks and balances on the powerful, are often a root cause of most sustained conflict and violence (Blattman 2022). Political exclusion means people can participate and exercise their voice in politics. Lack of public trust is a corollary to political exclusion and can often impact the effectiveness of service delivery and other government-run efforts, such as vaccination drives.

POSSIBLE APPROACH: SHAPE MORE INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE AND POLICY PROCESSES

More inclusive policies and processes can ensure people have a stake and trust in the institutions that govern them. That can help make these institutions more legitimate, meaningful, and ultimately effective. By finding creative ways to bring marginalized people into institutions lacking public trust, the institutions can become much more effective.

TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP TRANSFORMS THE LEGITIMACY AND IMPACT OF DISASTER RISK REDUCTION COMMITTEES

- Program Details
  In the post-conflict Chittagong Hills Tract area of Bangladesh, a Resilience Food Security Activity found ways to integrate traditional leadership into Disaster Risk Reduction committees at the local and national level, gaining legitimacy that improved both local governance and Disaster Risk Reduction committee outcomes. USAID/Bangladesh's Food for Peace-funded SAPLING program, led by Helen Keller International with technical support from Catholic Relief Services and Caritas, is working creatively alongside trusted local actors to ensure disaster response does not suffer in this context.

- Understanding The Context

  Chittagong Hill Tracts is a region in Bangladesh historically impacted by porous borders, instability, and armed conflict. More than two decades of fighting formally ended in 1997 with the signing of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord, but social, economic, and political integration is a work in progress. The remote and hilly region remains wary of outside involvement, with low levels of trust in an area prone to cyclones, flash flooding, and landslides.

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention

  Since early 2017, USAID's SAPLING activity has been working with the Government of Bangladesh's Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) at all administrative levels in its working area. These committees are set up nationwide to support disaster preparedness and response, with roles and responsibilities defined under the Government's Standing Orders on Disaster. But as Chief of Party Treena Bishop said, "Our team quickly recognized a gap—the [Standing Orders on Disaster] mandates who should occupy the seats on the DMCs, but in a multi-ethnic area such as the Chittagong Hill Tracts, this shoe didn't fit properly. In the region, Bishop said, "Traditional leaders are life-long representatives of people from 11 different ethnic minorities. To be effective and sustainable, we need to train these highly respected local leaders to support their communities in times of disaster and systematically include them in Disaster Management."

CREDIT: ASHRAFUL ISLAM. HAFIZA KHATUN TEACHING SAFE PESTICIDE USE

- Acting On These Understandings

  SAPLING began collaborating with each of the 26 union-level DMCs in their programming area to include traditional leaders. They found a quick and creative solution for creating a more inclusive committee by encouraging DMCs to fill their "open seats" with traditional leadership. Today, these DMCs boast membership of 103 traditional leaders. But SAPLING did not stop by influencing their programming area. Their next step was to broadcast their success to the national level. They recommended the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief systematically include seats for traditional leadership on the local DMCs. Their advocacy worked. The government accepted this proposal and incorporated it into the revised Standing Orders on Disaster, approved in late 2019. Thanks to this policy change, traditional leaders must now be included on DMCs throughout Bangladesh, systematically increasing political inclusion for ethnic communities nationwide.

LAND TENURE POLICY REFORM CAN PROMOTE INCLUSION AND SUPPORT CONFLICT PREVENTION AMONG FARMERS AND PASTORALISTS.

- Program Details

  In Niger, national land tenure policies hinder access of pastoralists to pastureland and water, resources essential to support for their livelihoods. The TerresEauVie activity worked to secure grazing land and animal corridors through participatory processes that brought all users together to agree how to manage resources. The activity then trained land commissions on how to register land property and provide official deeds for land use, while also supporting new land tenure policies at the national level.

- Understanding The Context
  Since the 1990s, land policy in Niger has favored farmers over pastoralists. This policy inflames tensions between farmers and pastoralists over land disputes and access to grazing land.

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention
  While TerresEauVie focused on local-level efforts to secure grazing land and animal corridors through participatory processes, it also recognized that national-level policies were impacting its goal to improve natural resource management. To best address this problem set, TerresEauVie needed to operate at all levels.

- Acting On These Understandings
  The TerresEauVie activity worked to secure grazing land and animal corridors through participatory processes that brought all users together to agree on how to manage resources. The activity then trained land commissions on how to register land property and provide official deeds for land use, while also supporting new land tenure policies at the national level.

CREDIT: USAID COMMUNITY PARTICIPATING IN TERRES EAU VIE MEETING

POSSIBLE APPROACH: DEVOLVE RESOURCES TO LOCAL ACTORS

Designing inclusive policies is one potential approach. Shifting power to local actors is another. Decentralizing power and resources to the local level can prevent and mitigate conflict (Nygård et al. 2017). FTF programs can invest in the capacity of local actors to increase the quality of local decision-making and effectiveness of local resource management. This approach is underscored by USAID's localization agenda, which focuses on shifting power to marginalized and underrepresented groups and promoting space for them to influence and exercise leadership over priority setting, activity design, and implementation, and measuring and evaluating results.

Local actors may include local governments but can also include community-level structures and associations, civil society organizations, or private sector actors. When "local actors" refer to local governments, it will be important to identify if supporting devolution is appropriate. For instance, when a government has overly centralized power, devolution likely responds to citizens' demands and addresses grievances. However, devolution could also be a tool by leadership to reinforce patronage networks and other undesirable outcomes. It will be important to carefully understand local context and identify what is appropriate.

KENYA'S PARTNERSHIP FOR RESILIENCE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH SUPPORTS LOCAL DECISION-MAKING IN MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

- Program Details
  The Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth (PREG) is a USAID collective impact model that works with and through county government teams and in partnership with county governments in Northern Kenya.

- Understanding The Context
  Kenya's devolution process, enshrined in its 2010 constitution, redistributed resources in a way that gave the historically marginalized northern regions significantly more political control (Mogaka 2017). PREG operates in these historically marginalized areas of northern Kenya.

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention
  PREG is facilitating the promise of devolution to lift up historically marginalized people in northern Kenya. It also facilitates capacity building and support for local governments to serve constituencies as effectively as possible.

- Acting On These Understandings
  PREG's localized structure reinforces devolution and the redistribution of resources, and it strengthens capacity at the local country government level. PREG has developed a cross-partner cadre of support that works side-by-side with local governments. The model contributes to local county governments plans and budgets, providing them with greater control over local development decisions.

CREDIT: POLICY LINK. KENYANS LEARNING IN CLASSROOM

THE PARTNERSHIP FOR RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE IN SOUTH SUDAN SUPPORTS COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE ACTION DESPITE THE ABSENCE OF GOVERNMENT

- Program Details
  The Partnership for Recovery and Resilience (PfRR) in South Sudan is another cross-donor collective impact model that fosters local ownership and collective action.

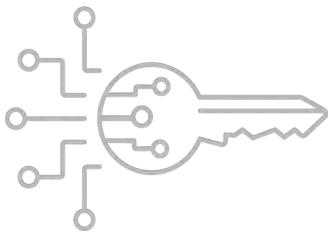
- Understanding The Context
  After decades of humanitarian relief aid and with a fragile peace deal in South Sudan, donors realized they need to move away from fractured, year-on-year humanitarian assistance and towards a more sustainable approach that strengthens resilience.

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention
  Donors came together to establish collective outcomes and identify several community focal areas where they would focus resources. They also began joint work planning together in these specific communities to break the protracted humanitarian relief cycle.

- Acting On These Understandings
  PfRR developed local champion groups—faith, traditional and community leaders, and occasionally local government—to provide feedback and set programming priorities. This savvy approach gave local communities the ability to chart their development path, even in a context where USAID could not work directly with the government. The local champion groups also fostered local decision-making and collective action at the local level in a way that puts communities front and center, despite a challenging political context.

CREDIT: POLICY LINK. SOUTH SUDAN FARMERS TRANSPLANT SEEDLINGS

5.4. Problem: Natural Resource Competition



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Environmental peacebuilding and information services can mitigate local resource competition pervasive in FTF priority countries.
- Information services reduce uncertainty and ensure people have the information they need to make the best decisions.
- Environmental peacebuilding, by providing opportunities for collective problem-solving, similarly reduces uncertainty and demonstrates the benefits of working together and ultimately avoiding violence.

It is important to note that resource scarcity alone does not cause conflict, although scarcity may increase the risk. However, certain conditions can lead to conflict over resources. For example, rumors between two ethnic groups might misrepresent each group's willingness to attack each other, and stereotypes might perpetuate the narrative that the other group is aggressive and seeking to control resource use. Small accidents might cascade into more devastating conflict due to the lack of credible information shared between groups about their actions and intentions. Efforts that reduce uncertainty between rivals, identify credible mediators, and/or otherwise create rules and accountability around resource management can mitigate conflict risks associated with resource competition.

POSSIBLE APPROACH: ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEBUILDING AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

Environmental peacebuilding integrates natural resource management into conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Natural resource management efforts that promote collective action to reduce the risks of conflict can be labeled "environmental peacebuilding" even if they aren't referred to as such. Collective action refers to when people work together to achieve a common goal. Collective action around resource use, natural resource management, and environmental peacebuilding might be used interchangeably for similar programming around conflict prevention and bringing people together to share natural resources. These efforts aim to bring people together around a shared "enemy" such as climate change impacts and/or together over the need to share resources in a way that fosters peace and collaboration.

PILOT PROGRAM IN MELLIT AND UMMKEDDADA LOCALITIES IN NORTH DARFUR USED COLLABORATIVE AND INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES

- Program Details
  The one-year pilot "Improving Community Resilience in the Face of Conflicts and Environmental Shocks:

Mellit and Umm Keddada Localities in North Darfur State" was funded by USAID and implemented by Chemonics in 2017 and 2018. The project implemented a variety of climate change adaptation interventions designed to improve natural resource management, enhance livelihood strategies, and reduce local conflicts.

- Understanding The Context
  North Darfur has been severely affected by recurrent drought and land degradation, which has had adverse effects on livelihoods and food security. Low-intensity, resource-based conflict is common, with farm boundaries, water resources, and animal thefts often acting as instigators. Land tenure has also sparked conflict, with informal systems that privilege local tribes making it difficult for outsiders to be granted rights.

CREDIT: USAID SUDAN. YOUTH DRINKING CLEAN WATER

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention
  The pilot addressed the risks by: 1) strengthening peacebuilding activities at the local level, with a focus on engaging women and youth; 2) improving natural resource management to reduce tensions between users; and 3) increasing the resilience of the food production system and food security in support of livelihoods and coexistence.

- Acting On These Understandings
  Specific strategies used in the pilot program included: 1) establishing a "higher committee," with subcommittees for peace, water, rangelands and forest, microfinance, women, and youth; 2) organizing exchange visits and intercommunity dialogue sessions between village clusters; 3) organizing training events on peacebuilding, climate change adaptation, natural resource management for women and youth, local leaders, farmers, pastoralists, and the specialized committees; and 4) conducting technical interventions to support climate change resilience, such as distribution of drought-tolerant crops.

- More Details
  Addressing Conflict and Strengthening Stability in a Changing Climate in North Darfur.

LOCAL CONVENTIONS AND BYLAWS IN BURKINA FASO REDUCE VIOLENCE BETWEEN FARMERS AND PASTORALISTS

- Program Details
  In Burkina Faso, the National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International (NCBA CLUSA) developed local conventions and bylaws between farming communities and pastoralists.

CREDIT: JAKE LYELL. WOMAN FEEDING CHICKEN, BURKINA FASO

- Understanding The Context
  In Burkina Faso, longstanding conflict between farmers and pastoralists was rooted in the lack of agreement on pastoral corridors and rules and standards to guide people's land use. The uncertainty and lack of information and rules between groups allowed violence to escalate.

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention
  NCBA CLUSA identified that community-based work between farmers and pastoralists was necessary to reduce violence.

- Acting On These Understandings
  The groups identified and mapped pastoral corridors in order to reduce conflict between these two groups. The groups then came together and wrote up local conventions and bylaws in order to develop shared rules around managing their land and the corridors.

USAID TOOL KIT

Environmental peacebuilding resources

- Pathways to Peace: Addressing Conflict and Strengthening Stability in a Changing Climate
- Lessons Learned from Resilience and Peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa
- An Assessment of Mellit and Umm Keddada Localities in North Darfur State, Sudan
- Lessons Learned from the Peace Centers for Climate and Social Resilience
- Relationship-building Key to Reducing Conflict over Water and Grazing in Ethiopia
- Lessons Learned from PEACE III: A Mid-cycle Portfolio Review

POSSIBLE APPROACH: BOLSTER INFORMATION SERVICES

Information services provide information to individuals and communities that face specific shocks. This information is designed to affect decision making among affected parties in order to reduce the impacts of these shocks. Information systems may be used to provide information about climate, conflict, or other hazards individuals and communities face. For example, climate information or conflict early warning services can provide critical information that tamps down on both real and perceived local resource competition. This is especially true when information services are paired with participatory, community-led approaches.

LISTENING HUBS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO PROVIDE LOCALIZED CONFLICT EARLY WARNING INFORMATION

- Program Details
  In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Tanganyika Conflict Mitigation and Reconciliation Activity set up 10 hubs to detect early signs of conflict and enable early intervention. This activity was described earlier as an example of integrating conflict mediation into programming, but it is also an excellent example of how to shore up information services and specifically conflict early warning.

- Understanding The Context
  Conflict between the Bantwa and Buntu people is long standing, with devastating impacts on agricultural production, livelihoods, and broader well-being.

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention
  Localized conflict early warning information could alert peace committees and conflict mediators about bubbling FCV dynamics before it was too late. Mediators needed even more localized "ears on the ground" to tell them about tensions before they escalated.

- Acting On These Understandings
  Peace champions manage ten listening centers to address intercommunity issues and conflicts, such as crop theft, killing of animals, rising tensions in villages, and multiple claims on chiefdom of areas. These are reported to peace committees and other relevant actors so they may be mediated before they escalate.

CREDIT: USAID. OMARI FIELD COORDINATOR SPEAKS WITH MANONO COMMUNITY MEMBERS

UGANDA'S EKISIL II INTEGRATED CLIMATE INFORMATION SERVICES INTO NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT EFFORTS IN KARAMOJA

- Program Details
  In Uganda's Karamoja region, the EKISIL II activity is integrating climate information services into a broader set of natural resource management efforts with local pastoralist communities. The climate information services help address local resource competition by reducing uncertainty and misperceptions. This integrated activity is providing information services in a way that ends up reducing both climate and conflict risks.

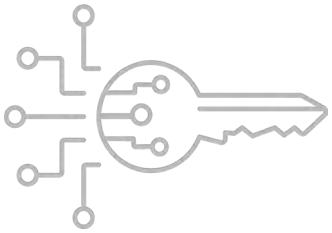
- Understanding The Context
  Karamoja is a marginalized region with a complex and long-running history of violence. It is also prone to climate risks that elevate FCV risks among local pastoralist communities.

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention
  Climate information services are a powerful supplement to wider natural resource management efforts with local pastoralist communities. They provide reliable, timely climate information that allows people to make informed decisions and know others in neighboring communities have similar information.

- Acting On These Understandings
  The EKISIL II activity is integrating climate information services into a broader set of natural resource management efforts with local pastoralist communities.

CREDIT: KATEM CONAL POLAKIEWIECZ/USAID. FARMERS SELLING AT JINJATO MARKET, UGANDA

5.5. Problem: Psychosocial Support Needs



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- FCV often leads to trauma and unique psychosocial support needs.
- Psychosocial support is a low-cost way to ensure both programming and people can maximize their potential while also contributing to violence reduction.
- Depending on the context (i.e., a refugee camp or marginalized areas with high unemployment), jobs in and of themselves can be a powerful boost to psychosocial well-being too.
- USAID's Integrating mental health and psychosocial support into youth programming: A Toolkit provides more insight and programming options on this topic.

Experiences with FCV can create unique needs for psychosocial support that stand in the way of people's well-being and make them more likely to engage in violence. For instance, trauma and related disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder can hamper people's decision-making skills, with decisions being based on emotion, and alter their risk tolerance. Traumatic events are also related with anxiety, depression, and other mental health struggles, which can stand in the way of a fulfilling life. USAID's Integrating mental health and psychosocial support into youth programming: A Toolkit provides more insight and programming options on this topic.

POSSIBLE APPROACHES: INVEST IN PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

Integrating psychosocial support into FTF activities can unlock people's potential and programming gains while also potentially reducing FCV dynamics. These approaches are effective in combination with other interventions, such as cash transfers or livelihoods training, which makes them an excellent fit for integration into FTF programming. Meanwhile, livelihoods programming can contribute to psychosocial well-being, especially in contexts where employment opportunities are limited.

IN LIBERIA, COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY MAY REDUCE VIOLENCE

- Program Details
  This study follows 999 high-risk men in Liberia who received various treatments: eight weeks of low-cost therapy, $200 cash, both, or a control group. A decade later, men receiving therapy or therapy with cash were about half as likely as the control group to engage in various antisocial behaviors, including robbery, drug selling, and street fights—far exceeding predictions. Impacts were concentrated in the highest-risk men, and most robust from therapy with cash.

- Understanding The Context

  Liberia emerged from 15 years of civil war and instability in 2003. At the outset of the study, in 2009, the country had enjoyed a fragile order for six years. Among threats to peace, the government and United Nations mission were particularly concerned with poorly integrated ex-fighters and other young men involved in crime and drugs. They also worried about political violence, as high-risk men had launched riots, were growing involved in election violence, and had been targets for mercenary recruitment into West African wars (Blattman and Annan 2016).

- Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention

  Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is an approach for reducing self-destructive beliefs and behaviors and promoting positive ones that could be helpful for men engaged in violent and risky behavior. CBT-informed therapies try to help patients become more conscious of harmful thoughts, especially inaccurate or negative thinking. They help subjects recognize these thoughts, allowing them to respond to everyday situations in more constructive ways.

- Acting On These Understandings

  High-risk men in Liberia receiving eight weeks of low-cost CBT with or without cash transfers were half as likely as a control group to engage in violence (i.e., street fights) as well as to sell drugs or steal. Impacts were most robust for the group receiving therapy and cash. CBT can slow down thinking patterns and improve harmful beliefs and behaviors that in turn reduce violence and criminality among adolescents and young adults.

CREDIT: MORGANA WINGARD, ONE. FAMILY HARVESTING CROP, LIBERIA

ROHINGYA REFUGEES IN BANGLADESH RECEIVE STRONG BOOST TO PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING FROM LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES

- Program Details

  In three Rohingya refugee camps of Bangladesh, employment also has a powerful impact on psychosocial wellbeing. Livelihood opportunities are more impactful than cash transfers for improving psychosocial well-being, especially among men. This randomized evaluation found that employment in refugee camps improved psychosocial well-being, particularly among men, while a weekly cash provision of equal value did not improve psychosocial wellbeing.

- Understanding The Context

  In Rohingya refugee camps, Rohingya have limited freedom of movement and opportunities to work. Yet livelihood opportunities are potentially very meaningful for people whose everyday life has been turned upside down and rarely includes paid work.

CREDIT: WINROCK INTERNATIONAL. FISHERMEN SELLING PRAWNS, BANGLADESH

- **Recognizing Interaction Between Context And Intervention**
  Rohingya refugee camps offer very few work opportunities. For these refugees, formal employment is illegal, and informal work in cities is difficult to obtain due to mobility restrictions. In addition to extreme un/under-employment, this population suffers in many other dimensions. Of the sample studied, more than 75 percent studied qualified as depressed.

- **Acting On These Understandings**
  Work improved psychological well-being. The psychosocial index of refugees employed significantly increased compared to the control group and these effects were much larger than those found from a year-long psychoeducation program for Rohingya refugee mothers implemented around the same time in the same camps. Employment improved psychosocial well-being at a magnitude four times greater than impact from the equivalent amount of cash received but with no work. The subcomponents of the psychosocial index also significantly increased from the employment offer beyond the income effect.

5.6. Conclusion

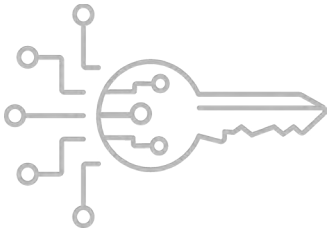
Many of the programming approaches outlined above highlight the importance of bringing people into both political processes and economic opportunity. When it comes to managing FCV risk, the more people from across groups can participate and intertwine their interests together, the better.

Many of the programming approaches outlined above—from early warning and information services to psychosocial support, intergroup contact, and conflict mediation—have the greatest impact when paired with livelihoods and markets-based programming. It is striking that these conflict integration components thrive when layered with the kinds of livelihoods and economic opportunities that FTF provides. What is more, these interventions are almost always low cost. FTF is a natural space for these worthwhile approaches that can help reduce conflict risks while simultaneously better meeting FTF core goals around poverty, malnutrition, and food security.

6. Resilience and FCV Contexts

CREDIT: FELIX MASSI. WOMEN FARMING IN FUNYALA VILLAGE PILOT PROJECT

Strengthened resilience among people and systems is a core objective of the GFSS. Resilience is integrated across the FTF initiative and is essential for achieving development results in the complex risk environments we operate in today. Bringing resilience and conflict integration together is especially powerful because we know people do not experience conflict and violence alone. They face a range of threats, from climate change and pests to economic shocks and conflict and violence. Pursuing conflict integration while also managing the broader risk environment is essential for reducing hunger, poverty, and malnutrition in today's crisis-prone world.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Resilience is a key objective of the GFSS, and resilience is integrated across all FTF investments.
- USAID's resilience framework includes conflict and violence as key risks people are facing as part of a broader set of risks.
- Bringing resilience and conflict integration together is especially impactful since people do not experience conflict and violence alone—they live in complex risk environments.

There are several key takeaways specific to thinking about resilience and conflict integration. First, the resilience framework focuses on shocks and stresses. It can be tempting to think about conflict and violence as a shock or stress, but conflict and violence can be better conceptualized as a system. Second, it is important to identify how FCV

dynamics disrupt resilience capacities. For example, a business owner's access to capital might be stymied by rebel looting, or an elder might lose local authority after years in a refugee camp. In these settings, a range of factors often undermine resilience capacities. Understanding conflict and violence as part of a system—not just a shock or stressor—and what this means for resilience capacities is crucial in order to ensure GFSS objectives can be achieved and sustained.

Multi-risk perspectives matter because shocks people face are interrelated and reinforcing. The inability to manage them can create feedback loops that elevate further FCV risks and drive instability. A comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach that strengthens resilience and manages the interrelated and compounding risks people face in their lives is crucial for addressing the complex challenges that create fertile ground for FCV.

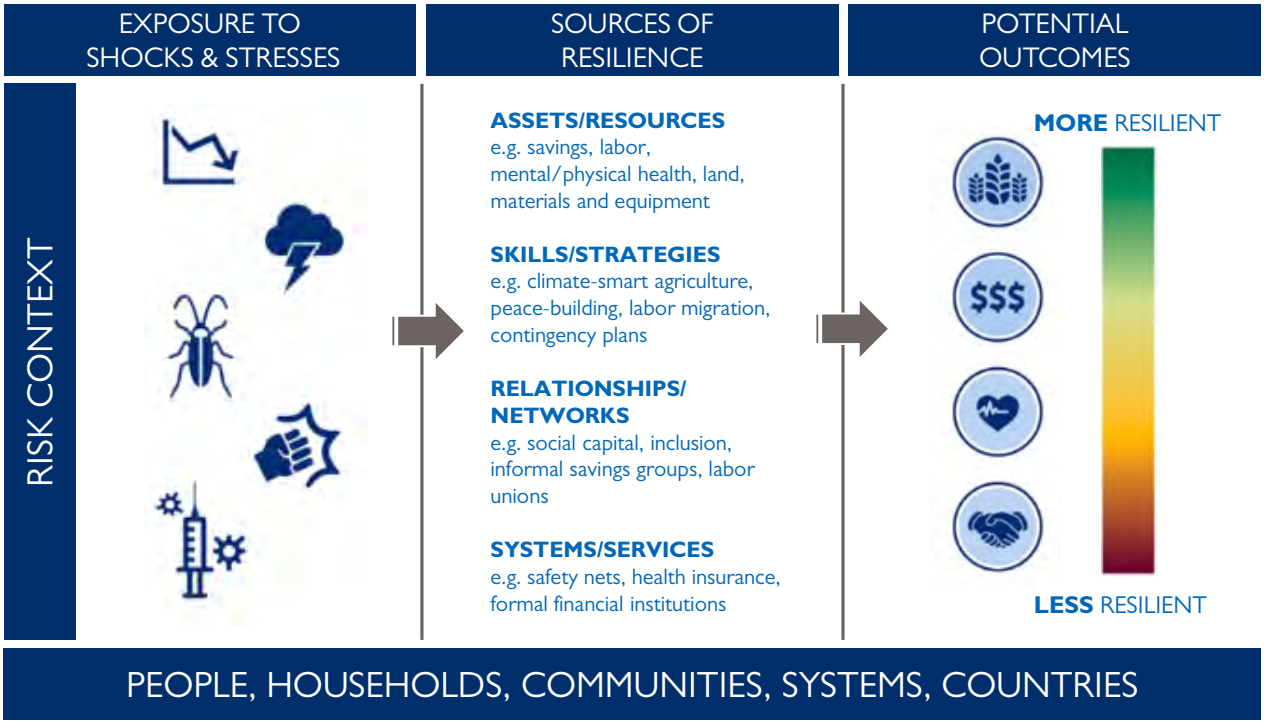
6.1. Resilience 101

Resilience is the ability to manage adversity and change in a way that protects well-being and inclusion. There are several key parts to USAID's resilience framework (see below). First, resilience is always in relation to shocks and stresses to the system. Shocks are acute, short to medium-term events that undermine well-being; stresses are longer-term pressures that undermine well-being. Risk is the potential for an uncertain event or trend to have adverse consequences.

USAID Definition: Resilience

Resilience is the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.

Resilience Conceptual Framework



Source: Adapted from Tango International.

Resilience capacities allow people and systems to achieve improved well-being in the face of shocks and stresses. The phrase "sources of resilience" and "resilience capacities" are used interchangeably in this resilience framework. Resilience capacities include "hard" or economic capacities such as livelihood diversification, financial services, assets and access to markets, as well as "soft" or social capacities such as conflict mediation skills, women's empowerment, social capital, and aspirations for the future. In fact, these resilience capacities were all identified in the 2018 Resilience Evidence Forum Report as resilience capacities that were found to transcend contexts. Resilience efforts seek to strengthen resilience capacities, manage risks, and foster faster recovery and long-term adaptation to be prepared for future shocks and stresses.

Well-being outcome(s) are the final key concept in the resilience framework. Thinking about and measuring resilience always depends on at least one well-being outcome, which could include economic standing, malnutrition, or community-level stability. When aiming to strengthen resilience, the goal is to identify resilience capacities that matter most in the face of shocks and stresses and design programming to strengthen these capacities, which improves well-being outcomes that are the focus of the program.

6.2. What Defines a Resilience Approach?

With hunger metrics rising and global policymakers recognizing the gravity of the challenge, it is imperative for FTF programming to strengthen resilience. For USAID, that means several key changes from business as usual. In a resilience approach, recurrent crises are treated as development priorities instead of just humanitarian risks. Given the enormous costs for avoiding the issue, it is imperative to strengthen resilience through multi-sectoral development investments and lift people from the need for recurrent humanitarian spending.

The second feature of a resilience approach is that shocks and stresses are recognized as perennial features of the environment and planned for accordingly through adaptive and flexible programming. Third, a resilience approach uses local contextual information to understand which capacities matter most in that context. Finally, resilience approaches are designed and implemented across sectors and the humanitarian, development, and peace assistance (HDP) nexus. The problems people face in their lives are cross sectoral—strengthening resilience demands multi-sectoral approaches that bridge different types of assistance.

Resilience-strengthening efforts can reduce the likelihood of crises, the negative effects of crises once they break out, help affected populations better recover when they end, and invest in long-term adaptation and livelihood transformation strategies. Instead of returning to the same places with humanitarian assistance year after year, resilience efforts can harness local capabilities to manage adversity to strengthen well-being over time. But doing so requires effectively analyzing and navigating these environments.

6.3. Resilience and Conflict Sensitivity

A resilience approach can be a powerful and fitting response to today's crisis-prone world, but it is crucial FCV dynamics are contemplated while managing other risks. While FCV could be considered a shock or stress in the resilience framework, most human-made shocks such as conflict and violence may start with fragility and then progress into direct and protracted conflict and become longer-term stressors. Therefore, conflict and fragility are best understood as a system, which conflict sensitive resilience approaches must carefully consider.

6.3.1. Conflict Sensitivity and Shocks and Stresses

While it may be tempting to think of conflict as simply a shock, it makes best sense to consider conflict and fragility as a system. For example, gang violence may emerge because of weak local government but then take on a life of its own, with the complicity of local government and lasting for years. A gang may deplete the assets–a key source of resilience–of a local taxi driver through weekly bribes. Gangs may also start controlling streets, stoking fear, and taking bribes from people, which feeds poverty and disempowers people and social services, breaking down social and human capital–other key sources of resilience. The original shock–gang control of a neighborhood is part of a broader system of gang violence that constrains sources of resilience and takes a tremendous toll on well-being as long as gangs maintain power.

The initial shock, capacities, and well-being are all conditioned by the broader system that triggered conflict and violence and now allows them to endure. Carefully understanding the conflict context and the two-way relationship between resilience interventions and the context is essential for effectively strengthening resilience in fragile, conflict-affected, and violence contexts.

6.3.2. Conflict Sensitivity and Resilience Capacities

To develop a conflict sensitive ToC for resilience programming, designers will need to think carefully during the assessment phase and throughout implementation and evaluation about how FCV contexts may constrain, enable, or recast resilience capacities, and what the appropriate responses or livelihoods strategy should be. Strengthening the resilience of people, communities, and systems requires analyzing if and how the FCV context disrupts or could potentially disrupt resilience capacities. This requires understanding the complex dynamics around, for instance, how livelihoods operate in the face of conflict and violence. FCV contexts also demand identifying sources of resilience–such as explicitly building and measuring social cohesion, leadership initiatives, public trust, good governance, and psychosocial wellbeing–often overlooked and less prominently placed in other types of programming.

New and adaptive approaches may be necessary to strengthen resilience capacities in FCV settings such as:

- Investing in portable assets and livelihood opportunities for displaced people.
- Investing in new types of resilience capacities altogether, such as reconciliation and combatant reintegration.
- Investing in new opportunities for women's leadership in refugee camps.
- Strengthening social cohesion among groups, such as women's groups, pastoralists and agriculturalists, local leaders and influencers.
- Integrating or linking to local governance and anti-corruption measures.
- "Unlocking" resilience capacities undermined by conflict and violence, prioritizing psychosocial well-being which can then improve people's ability to engage in economic opportunities and access social services.

To integrate conflict sensitivity and resilience, programs must assess existing and potential conflicts and work with local systems actors and partners to brainstorm and together create ways to navigate these constraints and new realities that so often recast resilience capacities. This is crucial to ensuring food security goals and objectives can be achieved and sustained.

6.4. Evidence Summary

This section concludes the resilience chapter by highlighting the key resilience capacities that evidence suggests matters most in FCV contexts, with the caveat that this evidence base is nascent and continues to be built. Annex B reviews resilience evidence from FCV contexts in greater depth.

Access to markets, diversified, conflict-resilient livelihoods and access to assets, cash, and capital are the economic sources of resilience that early evidence suggests are especially important in FCV contexts. While diversified livelihoods are considered to be a source of resilience that transcends contexts, they also need to remain relevant in the midst of FCV. For instance, planting and managing livestock may both by impossible due to widespread displacement, making diversified livelihoods less useful than they might otherwise be. Access to cash and capital are important. Capitalizing traders or entrepreneurs can be a valuable approach to "unlock" economic opportunity. Remittances, social protection, and other kinds of cash transfers can similarly unlock economic opportunity and provide much-needed stability to households.

For social sources of resilience, social capital and social cohesion are especially important. People rely on social support networks for food, access to economic opportunities, and safety. Most people survive conflict largely due to their own ability and the support of their family and community social connections. Social cohesion among diverse groups is an important source of resilience in contexts where social bonds and community norms have often weakened considerably. Finally, psychosocial well-being and women's empowerment—particularly through education, earning and income, and controlling household budgets—are also key sources of resilience.

Again, this evidence is preliminary, and there is much more to learn in this field. Please see Annex B for more information.

CREDIT ROBIC UPADHAYAY, FTF NEPAL. FARMER DURGA THAPAS SELLS PRODUCE IN CHHAHARE NEPAL

7. USAID Mission Case Studies

CREDIT: USAID HONDURAS. RED PROGRAM

USAID missions are at different places in their journeys toward integrating conflict sensitivity into programming—some are considering first steps, others are quickly operationalizing various strategies, still others have sophisticated conflict sensitive tools. This section highlights the progress of five:

- USAID/Honduras
- USAID/Sahel Regional Office
- USAID/Kenya
- USAID/Ethiopia
- USAID/Bangladesh

The discussion presented in this section is based on interviews conducted with USAID Mission staff held in August and September of 2022.

7.1. Honduras

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Context:** Droughts in agricultural regions have led to movement towards urban centers, which has elevated potential for violence. These conditions have in turn driven out-migration
- **Conflict sensitivity tools:** Conducted a VCAF and workshop to integrate findings; Mission Order on conflict sensitivity; establishment of Conflict Sensitivity Integration Hub

The intersection between climate change, agricultural shocks, migration, and violence in Honduras has been highlighted throughout this toolkit. It is only one component of the relationship between food systems and FCV dynamics active in the country—others include clientelism, disputes over land, and resource scarcity, among others.

USAID's Honduras mission has been proactive in recognizing FCV dynamics and is also notable for accelerating its efforts to emphasize conflict sensitivity. This has involved multiple recent steps:

- **Conducted a VCAF.** The Mission published its VCAF in the fall of 2022. The document included core elements associated with conflict analysis: detailed assessments of FCV dynamics as well as analysis of mitigating factors, and potential trajectories and triggers (see Section 4.1). It also included recommendations to facilitate the dispersion of conflict sensitive programming, including the following: 1) Emphasizing the importance of flexibility for mid-course

CREDIT: USAID HONDURAS. WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR IN OCTOPEUE. HONDURAS

adjustments for changes in context; 2) Supporting local partners beyond the standard five-year grant period to facilitate systemic change; 3) Underlining the importance of having champions at the staff and leadership level to increase accountability; 4) Advocating for the inclusion of Indigenous and Afro-descendent peoples as key advisors, and hosting professional development opportunities for these individuals to lead on the local and government level.

- **Workshop to elevate and mainstream VCAF findings.** The Mission hosted a VCAF Application Workshop with Mission staff to help launch discussions about the most salient findings of the VCAF and how to integrate conflict sensitivity into current programming.

- **Mission Order on conflict sensitivity.** The Honduras mission issued a Mission Order on how conflict sensitivity should be integrated into all new activities. The move elevates the concept, ensures implementing partners encounter the concept directly in procurement and award contracts, and allows time to develop approaches that reflect conflict sensitive and do-no harm principles.

- **Establishment of Conflict Sensitivity Integration Hub.** The mission has established a Conflict Sensitivity Integration Hub as part of a two-year project with FHI 360.* Early returns have been favorable. The Hub has worked with FTF partners to incorporate conflict sensitivity into planning and design activities that will inform implementation. In cases where Implementing Partners may have limited experience with conflict sensitive techniques, the Hub can also offer training or technical assistance.

CREDIT: HECTOR SANTOD/USAID. FARMER GROWING CASHEWS AND COFFEE PLANTS IN A NURSERY

* The activity has four objectives: 1) develop predictive and proactive analysis and knowledge creation on conflict sensitivity; 2) increase capacity building, training, technical assistance, and accompaniment; 3) build an evidence base and learning on conflict sensitivity to enable more effective policy and programmatic interventions; and 4) pilot conflict and violence prevention and conflict sensitivity activities as well as possible regional and cross-border activities should Hub activity expand to additional countries in the region.

Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility in South Sudan a Similar Initiative as Conflict Sensitivity Integration Hub in Honduras

The Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility (CSRF) in South Sudan supports the integration of conflict sensitivity into programs and projects by working closely with policymakers, donors, aid practitioners, and implementing partners. Like the Conflict Sensitivity Integration Hub established by the USAID/Honduras, the CSRF provides institutional and capacity building support to partners that may have limited experience integrating conflict sensitivity into projects or programs.

CREDIT: POLICY LINK/USAID. FARMING FOR RESILIENCE

Key lessons include:

- **Consistent training helped normalize the process.** Discussing challenges associated with conflict sensitivity can be challenging. CSRF's open forum helped provide a space for participants to reflect and acknowledge challenges at the organizational or programmatic level. By providing consistent training to a range of implementing partners, donors and domestic actors, CSRF helped create a community of support among practitioners and leadership by normalizing the process of reflecting and analyzing challenges with integrating conflict sensitivity.

- **Organizations need long-term support to define their own problems and design solutions.** As organizations work to integrate conflict sensitivity, additional challenges and opportunities will inevitably arise. CSRF takes a participatory approach to identifying problems and solutions throughout the entire process. This requires a flexible design for CSFR so they could effectively tailor the pace of work and engagement for each organization based on present capacity.

- **Available staff foster meaningful relationships.** Building relationships at each level was pivotal to supporting system-level changes and developing the visible and local leadership crucial for staff to be willing to take risks. Building relationships takes time, and this sustained approach requires a well-equipped in-country team to develop deep contextual awareness required to earn the trust of local organizations. That CSRF was available and acknowledged as a source of knowledge meant participants were more likely to engage with CSRF on challenges and opportunities.

7.2. Sahel Regional Office

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Context:** Violent extremism is widespread; the population is extremely young and is especially vulnerable to recruitment from violent extremist organizations
- **Conflict sensitivity tools:** Flexible programming (i.e., crisis modifiers), inclusive development with a focus on diverse, marginalized groups, and creative, conflict sensitive activities such as TerresEauVie

The USAID Sahel Regional Office is based in Dakar, Senegal, and provides long-term development assistance for Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Chad, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and Mauritania. People in the region are faced with multiple drivers of instability in the food system. In parts of the region, the already arid climate is facing some of its driest conditions in years. The pressure on agricultural production and water resources is expected to become worse due to climate change, resource scarcity, and violent conflict. More children already die because of unsafe water and sanitation conditions in the Sahel than in any other part of the world.

In certain locations, the conditions can present opportunities for violent extremist organizations. The demographics in the region also skew young—for example, in Burkina Faso, more than 50 percent of the population is under the age of 18. Violent extremist groups such as Al Qaeda, Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims), the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, and Boko Haram recruit more easily among this young and often poor and marginalized population.

CREDIT: PARTNER-WFP 2013. TRANSPORTING FOOD BY RIVER IN BURKINA FASO

The challenging environment forces the Sahel Regional Office to be flexible in responding to changing circumstances. The volatility can show up in unexpected ways—in the last decade, the number of internally displaced people in the Sahel increased from 217,000 at the end of 2013 to 3 million in January 2023, 1.8 million of whom are in Burkina Faso.

- **Adaptive management and crisis modifiers.** Adaptive management is part and parcel of conflict sensitive programming. Crisis modifiers are a tool that can add flexibility to activities by allowing for the injection of emergency humanitarian assistance into ongoing development efforts. Burkina Faso has a few examples of crisis modifiers: 1) USAID's TerresEauVie activity used the crisis modifier to improve water supply in Barsalogho commune, in the face of an influx of thousands of IDPs fleeing conflict. 2) Youth Connect activated their Crisis Modifier to increase livelihood opportunities and provide psychosocial support to both IDPs and host communities.

- **TerresEauVie Activity.** The five-year TerresEauVie activity, which aims to improve water and land resource outcomes in Niger and Burkina Faso, includes conflict sensitive approaches. One part of the activity in Burkina Faso addressed how insecurity has contributed to exacerbating conflicts over access to resources TerresEauVie focuses on local level efforts to secure grazing land and animal corridors through participatory processes using local land charters as a pacification instrument for a better land use. It worked to secure grazing land and animal corridors through participatory processes that brought all users together to agree on how to manage resources. The activity then trained land commissions on how to register land property and provide official deeds for land use, while also supporting new land tenure policies at the national level.

CREDIT: TERRES EAU VIE. MAYOR OF CADAKORI, NIGER, DEMONSTRATING NEW PUBLIC WASHING STATION

7.3. Kenya

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Context:** Communities living in arid and semi-arid lands face a variety of threats that can result in conflicts between farmers, herders, and different ethnic groups
- **Conflict sensitivity tools:** PREG is an example of the Mission's collective impact model for USAID partners and activities supporting devolution, locally led development, cohesion and peaceful co-existence among communities within Kenya and across the border

FCV dynamics in Kenya and East Africa can be tied to multiple interrelated factors, including access to land and water resources, economic marginalization, threats to livelihoods, and climate stress, among others. USAID/Kenya and East Africa have adopted multiple strategies that demonstrate not only an understanding of the local context but also directly address FCV dynamics.

Devolution—which in Kenya has resulted in shifting power and responsibilities from the national government to 47 county governments—is an important component of USAID's strategic approach in the country. While devolution has had significant benefits at the local level, it also poses challenges that heighten FCV dynamics. A recurring problem is elite capture, where powerful local actors dominate subnational political institutions as well as the economic resources that have been shifted to local governments. USAID has recognized the issue and published guidance for improving subnational political competition through participatory mechanisms.*

* In the Kenyan context, devolution has led to a significant increase in financial resources for regions such as Marsabit County in the northern part of the country. Despite the efforts, surveys indicate that citizens do not necessarily feel devolved institutions will lead to a reduction in FCV dynamics (Scott-Villiers, 2017).

CREDIT: POLICY LINK. KENYA CLASSROOM

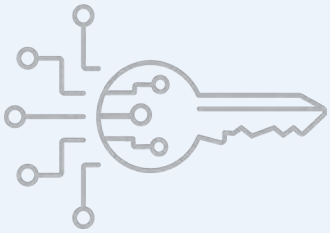
- **The Agile and Harmonized Assistance for Devolved Institutions (AHADI) Activity**. The AHADI activity recently closed, but it encouraged transparent and accountable governance (i.e., land tenure regimes, youth unemployment, ineffective delivery of social services) so that Kenyan communities are better resourced to counter violent extremism and political turbulence. In addition to AHADI, Kenya's CDCS repeatedly highlights the importance of strengthening political, economic, and social systems as a strategy for preventing elite capture.

- **Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth (PREG).** PREG focuses on maximizing the benefits of devolution and locally led approach while programming against the potential problems. PREG is a coordination platform that brings together different voices and approaches (USAID implementing partners, local and national government actors, Kenyan institutions, and development practitioners) to generate collaboration. With a geographic focus on Kenya's arid and semi-arid lands—areas that have been historically characterized by recurrent drought, FCV dynamics, and marginalization by government—PREG activities vary by county. Infrastructure, agricultural value chains, water resources, conflict resolution and peace-building are all targets for repeated investments, but a recurring theme is developing structures that help create common agendas and mutual trust.

- **Cross Border Community Resilience Project (CBCR)**. In addition to Kenya's internal FCV dynamics, the country borders mainly conflict-affected neighbors that lead to complex cross-border dynamics. The cross border areas are interconnected and historically faced economic marginalization. The CBCR focuses on helping communities in cross-border clusters across Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, and Uganda. It aims to foster social cohesion, support livelihoods and reduce FCV dynamics by prioritizing local development organizations to drive development and resilience agenda and building their capacity to work together with other cross-border clusters in the region.

CREDIT: PABLO DELVAUXX. BOMA PROJECT GRADUATES. WOMEN BUILDING RESILIENCE IN NORTHERN KENYA

7.4. Ethiopia



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Context:** In addition to ongoing civil war in Tigray, Ethiopia is experiencing several hyper-local conflicts rooted in ethnic, religious, political, or livelihoods-related grievances
- **Conflict sensitivity tools:** Development of Conflictipedia for understanding local context, co-creation workshops, conflict sensitivity trainings, and conflict practicums with partners in inclusive development

Ethiopia faces multiple FCV dynamics across different scales and geographies. While the civil war between the government and rebels in the Tigray region in northern Ethiopia has captured recent international attention, USAID/Ethiopia encounters a constellation of hyper-local conflicts that defy easy categorization. Some are motivated by religious grievances and political considerations to disputes over livelihoods and several other forms of local-level grievances. Against this background, USAID/Ethiopia has developed multiple strategies for ensuring its activities demonstrate conflict sensitivity, many of which have been implemented in FTF programming. Prominent tools include:

- **Creation of an Ethiopia Conflictapedia.** The VCAF, discussed in Section 4.1, is a tool for understanding country-wide dynamics. Because USAID/Ethiopia encounters many smaller conflicts, it has developed its own fit-for-purpose tools. One is the creation of a compendium of local conflicts that it regularly updates—a Conflictapedia. Started in 2019 and organized geographically, the resource provides insights into manifestations of local conflict dynamics. Drivers of conflict are included, as are geographic overlays. The ultimate goal of this tool is to help programming designers and implementers to understand the changing context while staying informed about the issues of immediate concerns and the major patterns of FCV dynamics.

CREDIT: NENA TERRELL, USAID ETHIOPIA. HEALTH EXTENSION SERVICES

- **Co-creation workshops.** After the release of Notice of Funding Opportunities, the Mission has convened co-creation workshops with implementing partners to discuss issues with significant influence on programming outcomes. Conflict has been the subject of extended discussion, along with gender and water management issues. Staff from various locations have been included to ensure consistency in approaches across borders. This is one of the Mission's strategies for ensuring implementing partners appreciate the nuances of FCV dynamics in Ethiopia. Since FCV was emphasized from the outset, implementing partners had time to consider how they would tailor their efforts from the beginning.

- **Conflict practicums.** Another strategy the Mission has pursued to ensure implementing partners understand the nuances of FCV dynamics in Ethiopia is a conflict practicum. The Mission held conflict sensitive aid trainings among USAID staff as well as implementing partners. Following the training for implementing partners, the Mission developed a conflict practicum so partners could directly apply the insights they learned from the conflict sensitivity training into practice. They were able to identify many practices that likely had unintended consequences and did not capitalize on opportunities for peace. The Mission has employed different strategies for ensuring implementing partners appreciate the nuances of FCV dynamics in Ethiopia.

Inclusive development on rangeland and peace councils. The Ethiopian context has strong traditional gender norms that influence women's participation in agricultural activities. USAID/Ethiopia has succeeded in promoting gender equity into FTF programming and resilience activities. Interviews indicate that the voices of women and youth have been institutionalized into rangeland or peace councils. Community-level groups have proven most successful in implementing the voices of women and youth to help resolve local disputes.

CREDIT: ESHETAYEHU TEFERA, USAID POLICY LINK ETHIOPIA. VEGETABLE FARMING TARGETING GIRLS

7.5. Bangladesh

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Context:** Rohingya refugee crisis in Cox's Bazar district and post-conflict environment in the Chittagong Hill Tracts
- **Conflict sensitivity tools:** Inclusive markets and private sector engagement; creative programming empowering traditional leadership in disaster risk reduction governance structures in the post-conflict Chittagong Hill Tracts; considering more expansive conflict integration strategies for the Rohingya crisis and beyond

Nearly one million refugees fled to Bangladesh at the end of 2021, one of the highest refugee totals worldwide. The majority are Rohingya that have fled persecution in the Rakhine state in neighboring Myanmar. The Rohingya refugee camp in Cox's Bazar district is the world's largest refugee camp.

The influx of refugees creates challenging dynamics between refugees and the host community in Cox. On the one hand, while refugees receive donor attention and food aid, host community members who may be struggling themselves do not receive similar support. On the other hand, refugees do not have freedom of movement or the ability to gain employment in Bangladesh, and levels of depression in the camps remain very high. Xenophobic tensions are rising as the impact of refugees also distorts markets and hurts the competitiveness of local businesses.

Similar dynamics exist in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, a region in Southeast Bangladesh historically impacted by porous borders, instability, and armed conflict. More than two decades of fighting formally ended in 1997 with the signing of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord, but social, economic, and political integration remains a work in progress. This remote and hilly region remains wary of outside involvement, with low levels of trust in an area prone to cyclones, flash flooding, and landslides.

CREDIT: ASHRAFUL ISLAM. HAFIZA KHATUN ADVISES FARMERS ON HOW TO SAFELY USE PESTICIDES

- **Creative Programming.** The Mission has pursued creative, conflict sensitive programming in the Hill Tracts. USAID's SAPLING activity has been working with the Government of Bangladesh's Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) at all administrative levels in its working area. These committees are set up nationwide to support disaster preparedness and response, with roles and responsibilities defined under the Government's Standing Orders on Disaster. But in the Hill Tracts, traditional leaders are life-long representatives of people from eleven different ethnic minorities. To be effective and sustainable, these highly respected local leaders needed to be involved in disaster response. SAPLING began collaborating with each of the twenty-six union-level DMCs in their programming area to include traditional leaders immediately. They found a quick and creative solution for creating a more inclusive committee by encouraging DMCs to fill their "open seats" with traditional leadership. Today, these DMCs boast membership of 103 traditional leaders. They then recommended the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief systematically include seats for traditional leadership on the local DMCs. Thanks to this policy change, traditional leaders must now be included on DMCs throughout Bangladesh, systematically increasing social inclusion for ethnic communities nationwide.

- **Inclusive Markets and PSE.** USAID/Bangladesh has also prioritized renewed private sector engagement, linking it with good governance principles. While USAID's Bangladesh Mission does not necessarily frame its efforts through a conflict sensitive lens, its focus on inclusive markets brings in marginalized group to market opportunities and can ultimately address inequality in access to economic opportunity.

Moving forward, the Mission is interested in expanding its conflict integration efforts in light of the Rohingya crisis and beyond. It is also looking to focus more strategically on HDP coherence.

CREDIT: MORGANA WINGARD. INCREASING PRODUCTION AND NUTRITION IN BANGLADESH

8. Overarching Key Takeaways

CREDIT: MARGO SULLIVAN, ACDI/VOCA. INCREASING LOCAL MAIZE YIELDS AND REVENUES

This toolkit concludes with several takeaways to keep front and center as you move forward with designing and implementing FTF programming in FCV contexts. These steps are the cornerstone to increasing the impact of conflict sensitive programming in the face of the compounding crises and challenges we encounter today.

Conduct Conflict and Violence Assessments

The better we understand the connections between conflict and food systems, the better we can meet our FTF goals. Carefully understanding the context is the first and most critical step to strengthening resilience and inclusive agriculture-led growth in FCV contexts. Understanding the context includes, but is not limited to, understanding the history of a place (and recognizing that history will be understood differently by different groups), the causes and logic of violence, and opportunities for building peace. For FTF programming, special attention is needed to understand how the dynamics that fuel conflict interact with agriculture, the food system, and different groups (e.g., seeds, supply chains, crop management, storage, and markets). Since conflict-affected and fragile contexts are highly dynamic, conflict assessments may quickly go out of date. It will be important to frequently collect information from multiple sources, including perception information from different groups and segments in society.

Always Begin with Conflict Sensitivity

Conflict sensitivity is essential across all FTF programming, and it is a key first step in conflict integration. Conflict sensitivity builds on a fundamental best practice: it centers on carefully understanding the context and the two-way relationship between programming and the context. The goal of conflict sensitivity is to both minimize potential harms and maximize opportunities for peace. There are always opportunities for food and agriculture investments to be leveraged towards peace. We can identify specific ways in which FTF programming can create opportunities to bring communities together (or at least not exclude them) as well as ways in which planning programming might lead to diversion, substitution or other conflict and corruption-related consequences.

Recognize the Complex Risk Environment and Build Resilience

In addition to conducting conflict analysis, it is important to understand the multi-risk environment to build resilience. Multisectoral resilience approaches can improve well-being and livelihoods in FCV contexts while also addressing conflict drivers and promoting peace. By managing multiple risks at once, programming can better respond to the problems and realities people face in their day-to-day lives. Conflict sensitive approaches that strengthen resilience through multisectoral investments are the best way to help people recover from current crises and ensure that they are prepared for the next, inevitable, crisis as well.

Identify Windows of Opportunity and Peace Dividends

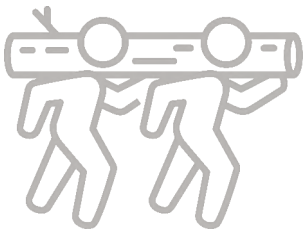
Even in violent contexts there are almost always windows of opportunity; time periods up ahead where things calm down, or buffer regions of relative stability where we can find creative ways to leverage what is working well and find opportunities for peace. For instance, the private sector can drive investment and job creation in even the most challenging contexts, and displaced people are often highly skilled and can contribute to the local economy.

Windows of opportunity emerge within the food system and across scale and time. For instance, programming can focus on the household level to maintain food security (e.g., storage and processing) when violence is rising, or movement is restricted. When freedom of movement resumes, interventions can adapt to focus on systemic impacts on the food system (e.g., land titling, water access, social cohesion). Beyond windows of opportunity, FTF investments can be leveraged for peace if we think creatively about how they can accomplish important goals like strengthening social cohesion, reducing inequality and grievances,

increasing trust, sharing information, and creating positive relationships between citizens and government. For instance, support for a community land trust can create new rules for sharing land between farmers and pastoralists and demonstrate the benefits of collaboration for both parties. Investments in agricultural and livestock extension services can build trust between citizens and government around shared problems. By contributing to a more peaceful environment, FTF programming is more likely to achieve its core goals.

Prioritize Adaptive Management

Conditions within conflict-affected areas can change rapidly and without warning. It is critical to build operational plans and strategies that make sense within unpredictable environments so pivots can be made when necessary. FTF programming should incorporate CLA, including pause-and-reflect sessions focused explicitly on climate implications, and draft Assessment and Authorization documents to incorporate shock-responsive and other adaptive management language to enable programming pivots in response to changing conflict dynamics, such as crisis modifiers. Missions can also develop scenario and contingency planning, or different programming zones based on permissiveness. By increasing the likelihood of ongoing engagement by practitioners, such planning can ensure development gains are not lost.



Work with and through Local Systems and Partners

Working with and through local food systems is more important than ever in fragile, conflict-affected and violent contexts. Locally led development and direct partnerships with local leaders, networks, groups, and institutions is critical in fragile and conflict-affected places. It is also more complicated, especially when in some contexts USAID cannot formally partner with government actors. This may mean working with and through both formal and informal markets, informal governance, and non-traditional local actors, including private sector actors outside the usual suspects, and a diverse set of local partners—from farmers, community leaders, women, men, and youth to government officials, traders and the private sector—with special attention to strengthening social cohesion and the relationship between citizens and their government. Choosing local leaders, networks, groups, and institutional partners must be grounded in conflict sensitivity. Transition awards and opportunities like Local Works offer innovative ways of working with local actors, while co-creation processes can also be designed to promote feedback and local ownership. Throughout the program lifecycle, the Local Systems Framework offers an overarching approach to engaging with local systems. The 5Rs (Results, Roles, Relationships, Rules and Resources) framework and CLA writ large also provide useful ways to assess local context and provide guidance on program design and monitoring.

Ensure Humanitarian, Development, and Peace Assistance Coherence

Promoting coherence across humanitarian, development, and peace assistance is key for working in fragile and conflict-affected places. People living amid conflict and violence do not think in terms of sectors or kinds of assistance: they think about the problems they face in their lives. Coherence across humanitarian assistance, development assistance, and peace assistance in pursuit of collective outcomes whenever and wherever possible is critical for maximizing the impact of interventions in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

In 2022, USAID's Resilience Leadership Council developed a set of key principles for pursuing humanitarian, development, and peace assistance coherence:

- Uphold and respect humanitarian principles to ensure HA remains unhindered and effective.
- Plan jointly and seek a common agenda.
- Create and strengthen communication, coordination, and learning platforms across different kinds of assistance.
- Strategically sequence, layer, and integrate humanitarian, development, and peace assistance where appropriate.
- Promote shock-responsive programming and data-driven adaptive management.
- Champion conflict integration and opportunities for enabling or building peace where possible.
- Ensure programming is with, by, and through local partners and systems

Resources

- USAID Programming Considerations for Humanitarian and Development Assistance Coherence During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Humanitarian Development Coherence White Paper | Education in Crisis and Conflict Network
- OECD DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus
- HDP Programming Considerations for the Partner Community
- Shock Responsive Programming and Adaptive Mechanisms
- Strategy Development: Scenario Testing and Visioning | USAID Learning Lab
- Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development

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10. Annex

Earlier sections introduced USAID documents and resources that provide important context for this toolkit. Some of the more prominent are included here in the Annex as an immediate reference for USAID staff. These include the full text of Cross-Cutting Intermediate Result 9 as well as some of the USAID analysis tools that can be used to understand local context.

Annex A: GFSS Cross-Cutting Intermediate Result #9: Enhanced Integration of Conflict Sensitivity, Peacebuilding, and Social Cohesion

Every choice made by implementers risks exacerbating the conflict dynamics, fragility, and risks of violence that exist within host communities—but they can also create or make use of opportunities for peace. Building on these opportunities can strengthen resilience, foster collaboration, and mitigate the risks of future violence and conflict. To best strengthen food security, conflict sensitive programming decisions are critical. In the context of food systems, conflict sensitive programming can include a broad range of practices, among them addressing inequality in access and control over productive assets, tackling cultural barriers that affect women's empowerment and agency, fostering dialogue and strategies to resolve land and water conflicts, and strengthening communities to resolve rangeland management issues and conflicts caused by migration. Another way FTF investments can be conflict sensitive is by strategically promoting coherence with humanitarian and peacebuilding activities taking place in the same location.

EXAMPLES OF HOW FTF INVESTMENTS ARE ALREADY INTEGRATING CONFLICT SENSITIVITY INCLUDE:

- **Leveraging political economy analysis to inform the design of FTF food security and resilience activities**—for example, by identifying the root causes and triggers of conflict and violence in countries and regions, along with opportunities for building peace and social cohesion. This includes a context-specific lens on cross-cutting factors such as gender, age, land and water resources, livelihoods, migration, and pressure on natural resources, systems that support social cohesion, local governance, and others as applicable.
- **Integrating inclusive development and conflict analysis into activities to best serve women, youth, LGBTQI+, and other marginalized groups**—for example, by applying a "do no harm" analysis, and ensuring these groups have equal access to productive land and water resources, market access, financial services, improved technologies, and that safety and security measures are considered in program design and risk mitigation and response strategies.
- **Integrating women's empowerment into analysis and programming as leaders and positive actors for change**—for example, by supporting women's participation in policy and leadership roles, preventing and reducing gender-based violence and exploitation of women and girls in agriculture and food systems, and ensuring their exposure to risk associated with conflict and violence is considered in risk mitigation and response strategies.
- **Leveraging agriculture activities**—for example, group farming, savings groups, rangeland and watershed

management committees, and strengthening natural resource governance systems and structures to *bridge differences between communities in conflict and build social cohesion.*

- **Incorporating peacebuilding directly into FTF activities**, for example, by facilitating conflict resolution dialogue among food systems stakeholders, supporting participatory land-use planning, and strengthening collective action activities related to natural resource use and management.
- **Ensuring HDP coherence** through interagency collaboration, joint planning, and supporting a common U.S. government agenda. This includes developing context-specific programming strategies to integrate conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and social cohesion across the HDP nexus—for example, by integrating shock-responsive mechanisms relative to conflict, sequencing, and layering—integrating humanitarian and development programming in a conflict-affected environment, strengthening local systems, and ensuring development programming does not undermine humanitarian principles.

Annex B: Evidence on Resilience in FCV Contexts

This section summarizes some key sources of resilience most relevant to FCV contexts. It is essential to begin the activity design process with a careful focus on the local context and which resilience capacities and sources of resilience fit best. This is also important for adaptive management throughout the program cycle.

That said, there is growing evidence that many sources of resilience are effective in almost any context. Initial evidence also demonstrates which matter most in FCV contexts. This summary is not exhaustive and certain factors, such as psychosocial support needs, certainly matter more than current evidence can confirm. While further investigation of these takeaways is essential, and certainly the nuances and details need to be localized, this evidence offers a helpful starting point for identifying and thinking about resilience capacities in your country or region and the FCV context.

ECONOMIC SOURCES OF RESILIENCE

Access to markets is an important resilience capacity in FCV contexts and also one of the key capacities that transcends contexts from the 2018 Global Resilience Evidence Forum Report. A 2019 Devex piece shares Mercy Corps findings that access to markets and portable skills and assets are important for resilience. A 2019 Feinstein Center study focused on South Sudan similarly finds that markets also play a critical role in recovering from conflict.

Diverse and conflict-resilient livelihoods are also an important resilience capacity. A Global Hunger Index research study published in 2018 points to the importance of developmental approaches and livelihoods efforts among displaced populations. A Mercy Corps 2018 report found that diversifying livelihoods does not improve food security outcomes amidst conflict; conflict-resilient livelihood strategies are needed instead.

Productive assets, and specifically access to cash and capital, is an important resilience capacity in FCV contexts as well as the 2018 Evidence Forum Report. Mercy Corps' 2018 Wages of War report points to the importance of access to cash and capital. Further evidence suggests the acquisition of more portable assets, such as livestock, contribute to greater resilience in the context of conflict (BIFAD 2020).

SOCIAL SOURCES OF RESILIENCE

Social capital is a key resilience capacity that transcends contexts from the Resilience Evidence Forum (2018) review, and this is especially true in FCV contexts. Mercy Corps' 2018 Wages of War report points to the importance of strong social safety nets in Syria. A 2017 Feinstein Center report finds social networks are a critical source of resources and opportunities in conflict-related crises (as well as a source of exclusion for others). A 2019 Feinstein Center study focused on South Sudan finds that social support networks are crucial for food, access to economic opportunities, and negotiation of safe passage during protracted crises. A 2019 Devex piece shares further Mercy Corps findings from Northeast Nigeria of the particular importance of strong social connections. Most people survive conflict largely due to their own ability and the support of their family and community social connections.

Women's empowerment, especially through education, earning an income, and controlling household budgets, is also an important resilience capacity. A 2018 Wilson Center article argues that women's well-being, education, and control of household budgets are the most significant determinants of food security. Mercy Corps' Wages of War report points to the importance of female and youth income earners in Syria.

Social cohesion among diverse groups is an important source of resilience in FCV contexts. A 2019 United Nations Environment report finds that a water catchment project taking place amid herder-farmer conflicts that also fostered collective action improved well-being outcomes and specifically reduced conflict tensions. And yet, social bonds, community norms, and functioning law-and-order institutions are unfortunately often weakened during conflict and violence.

Psychosocial wellbeing is an especially important resilience capacity for people in FCV contexts. FCV can lead to loss of motivation, feelings of helplessness, and addiction to drugs and alcohol. The REAL Award's Resilience Rapid Learning Series evaluates emerging evidence on how to build resilience in protracted crises and conflict-affected settings. This series documents promising program approaches and contextual insights through research, case studies, and technical analysis. Some examples include layering psychosocial activities, women's empowerment, and governance into other types of group activities and market training.

Annex C: Leveraging Broader Analysis Tools for Conflict Analysis

This section briefly defines a risk and resilience assessment and includes links to tools and resources. To develop effective, measurable resilience-building strategies, practitioners must consider the complex interactions that exist between risks, people, and the socio-ecological systems in which they live. These interactions occur at various spatial and temporal scales and are inherently dynamic.

When shocks hit a system, they do not occur in isolation; rather, they interact with multiple factors that can compound their impact and provoke downstream effects. For example, a hurricane might have a larger negative impact on a struggling community with poor infrastructure and few social safety nets than on one with more robust infrastructure and government response mechanisms. It might also provoke increased future risk by destroying flood protection infrastructure that protects people from storm surge. Due to these complex interactions, improvements in resilience capacity often demand multiple long-term changes across various systems, such as markets, governance structures, and social norms.

A risk and resilience assessment provides a means for practitioners to better understand the complex factors that influence resilience to shocks and stresses in each context. This process is critical to developing and improving a theory for effecting change on which resilience-building strategies can be based. Risk and resilience assessments can be conducted over a range of levels of effort and for a variety of reasons, including: 1) to inform program design, development, and adaptation; 2) to improve monitoring and evaluation of a program with relation to specific resilience metrics; and 3) to increase awareness and understanding of staff and partners of the value and practicalities of adopting a resilience approach.

USAID has developed guidance and examples of risk and resilience assessments for Missions, such as this Bangladesh example. It has also supported the REAL series on risk and resilience assessments for its partner community.

Finally, REAL specifically produced a case study from Northeast Nigeria on what is different about conducting a risk and resilience assessment in a conflict-affected context.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The sampling strategy in a protracted crisis is likely based on snowball sampling and other adaptive approaches.
- Considering the diversity of communities in a protracted crisis, they might also require more breadth and less depth across sites.
- The availability, reliability, and quality of secondary data in a protracted crisis is likely much weaker and will require both resourcefulness and willingness to move forward with "good enough" data. Examples include qualitative methods such as focus group discussions and key informant Interviews, and hosting events that generate and validate data.
- The timeframe for the STRESS process in a protracted crisis may require a longer time horizon and flexibility considering site access challenges, the need for exploratory data collection approaches, and internal challenges such as gaining buy-in and capacity-strengthening.
- More funding may be needed to address security constraints, longer timelines, and other costs to adapting to challenging conditions.
- Access to field sites may be heavily restricted, requiring flexibility with the STRESS timeline and creativity with data collection approaches.
- Team capacity-strengthening is especially important in a protracted crisis, considering staff turnover and the high demands on frontline staff.
- Participatory learning assessment tools are very important amidst a protracted crisis, where participants are especially vulnerable and other forms of data are limited. Participatory methods can help empower those most affected by conflict and crisis.
- Conceptual challenges might crop up in a conflict affected protracted crisis and humanitarian setting, where many diverse actors and approaches all operate in the same space. System-thinking and resilience concepts may be especially foreign to humanitarians, while conflict and peacebuilding vocabulary may not quite line up with resilience vocabulary.

Annex D: Conflict Sensitivity Tools, Resources, and Checklists

Conflict Sensitive Activity Design Tool

Considerations
Review and Supplement Analyses
Are there recent USAID conflict analyses or other relevant analyses (PEAs, gender, land tenure, education, health, CVE, etc.)? What information exists regarding existing conflict dynamics, identity issues, etc.? Have needs assessments incorporated perceptions of violence and conflict?
Are there relevant conflict or sectoral analyses from other donors/organizations that may inform activity-level design (e.g., key actors, relationships, power dynamics, capacities of partners, etc.)? Has any Do No Harm analysis been conducted at local community level to inform target areas/populations and local needs?
What has happened since the last conflict analysis or PEA? What stage of the conflict is the country in (is there ongoing violent conflict?) Is the activity likely to work with one of the perpetrator or victim groups? What are target communities' perceptions of the USG? Donors? What is the history of conflict and violence in this area? Is there anything recent we need to be aware of?
How might USAID engage local stakeholders in this initial review phase? What government support is probable for this design? Is there a need for a different geographic or sectoral focus, based on volatility or insecurity?
Are lessons learned and implications of past programming clear? What specific local expertise may be useful for the design? Does engaging them in analyses at this stage preclude them from bidding on the solicitation? Are other donors already working in this sector/area? How will coordination with them work?
Select a Mechanism
Is the mechanism flexible? Can option years be used? Will that period allow for proper scoping of the activity and/or allow for possible extension if things go well?
What funding structures are associated with each mechanism? Fixed fee, performance-based reimbursement, grants under contract, etc.? How do they affect start-up, rapid response, and options for flexibility?
What potential triggers, such as elections, may affect procurement timing? How long will the selected mechanism take to award? Are conflict dynamics expected to change significantly?
What type of local grant process can be built into the mechanism? Are there specific parameters for grantee solicitation within the mechanism? Is the mechanism type the most likely to encourage applicants with requisite experience working in and on conflict?
If selecting an IDIQ or LWA, how many years remain? Do the pre-selected IPs within the IDIQ/LWA have strong conflict/peacebuilding qualifications and/or have the capacity to integrate a conflict sensitive lens?
Develop the Solicitation: Scope or Activity Description
What impacts/results will the activity have? What is the potential impact of the activity on conflict dynamics? How will interventions contribute to addressing root causes of conflict and contribute to peace and stability?

Considerations
Is there an existing conflict analysis that can be used as a baseline or is the bidder to plan for one during start-up? If so, request that bidders outline their approach to conducting conflict analysis that addresses gender and identity dynamics in relation to the context.
Is the situation post-conflict or pre-conflict, or is the conflict still "hot"? How does this change implementation options and risks for USAID and IPs? Ask bidders to identify these issues and include a mitigation plan.
Which local actors will benefit from the activity? How might their involvement mitigate or exacerbate conflict dynamics? Are there groups that are excluded from the activity? Are there conflict actors who may be legitimized through their participation in the activity?
Are markets still accessible? Is access restricted/prevented by or for specific groups? Are resources being controlled and dominated by one group?
How will activity operations affect identity (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, former combatants, etc.) dynamics relating to the conflict context?
What resources (skills, services, goods, etc.) will the activity distribute? How, where and why? Are they appropriate for the context? Are resources inadvertently supporting conflict and armed actors? Will authorities or illicitly armed/ criminal groups seek to manipulate or control access to services or activities?
Where will the activity source materials, supplies, and staff from? How will resources be distributed? Will resources be distributed along the lines of existing divisions in society? Is there inadvertent support for one group over another? Or possible perceptions of such support?
Will the language of the activity (activity name, logo if appropriate, articulation of desired results, etc.) resonate with diverse identity groups when translated into local languages? Will services be provided in a language that makes them accessible to all?
Will the planned timing of activity interventions (consultations, training, distributions, etc.) coincide with any of deep-rooted patterns of mobilization identified in the conflict analysis? Is it worth asking IPs to develop scenarios and mitigation plans around unexpected events?
How will the activity leverage local capacities and build on existing commitment to own and lead interventions? What opportunities for peace identified in the conflict analysis can be leveraged in design?
Where are conflict "hot spots?" Will people be put at risk by participating in activities? Are there particular risks for certain identity groups?
How might the activity location impact dynamics of conflict or peace? What messages might the activity location send the various groups?
How is access to goods and services affected by the activity location?
What could go wrong and what tensions could erupt due to our intervention? (Such as where we distribute, which communities we serve first, how we communicate about our response, any feedback mechanisms used, who we hire.)
Additional Solicitation Sections
Background: Include an examination of existing conflict dynamics, dividers, and connectors as identified through analyses. Identify pertinent identity dynamics and issues and how these interact with the conflict context.
Objectives: Acknowledge how the activity objectives are anticipated to accomplish the desired change and the theory of change. Show correlation between the results framework and the objectives of this activity. Are the objectives written in a way that promotes a conflict sensitive response?
Case Study: Consider including a case study for bidders to demonstrate their application of a conflict sensitive approach.

Considerations
Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning: Incorporate illustrative indicators for conflict sensitivity; require a plan for adaptive management. Ask for specific approaches to inclusion of partners and beneficiaries in data collection efforts. How will learning be shared and adapted to the program?
Reports: Require reporting on progress towards integration of conflict sensitivity into implementation practices as well as processes used with partners and beneficiaries. Consider the frequency of reporting needed given changing dynamics.
Key Personnel: What skills will be needed among staff and partners – language, regional expertise, etc.? Who may face security risks? Do KP have experience in conflict-affected, violent and criminal settings?
Management Plan: How does the management structure allow for rapid response as needed?
Instructions to Offerors: Consider whether to request annexes related to conflict sensitivity and Do No Harm approaches, such as asking offerors to respond to a scenario, or to outline their approach to and experience with conflict sensitivity. Include criteria for adapting to contextual changes as they arise.

Conflict Sensitive Project Design Tool

Considerations
Project Design Planning (PDP)
How will conflict dynamics affect achievement of the project purpose? How will achievement of the project purpose impact conflict dynamics?
Has the Mission conducted a conflict analysis or a Do No Harm (dividers and connectors) analysis? If not, will further analysis be needed? How will the Mission plan to continually monitor the context?
What are the Mission's plans in the absence of a conflict analysis? Is a full conflict analysis (e.g., CAF 2.0) or a "rapid" analysis needed? If so, when should it be conducted and where should it focus to best inform the design process?
What additional information about local actors will be needed, including their gender dynamics, identity issues, relationships among actors and relationships between actors and USAID?
Is a G2G mechanism being considered? What are the risks and opportunities when working directly with the government? How will this impact existing conflict dynamics?
Project Appraisal Document (PAD): Context (root causes underlying development problem; circumstances/conditions that may affect outcomes)
How does the development problem and its root causes affect and/or interact with the conflict and violence dynamics in the local system?
What is the history of conflict and violence in this geographic area? Is there anything recent we need to be aware of?
What are the identity dimensions of the violence or conflict context? Are special considerations needed to certain identity groups as implementers, change agents, and partners?
Are there new conflicts or tensions arising, who is most at risk?

Considerations
Which conflict dynamics, key actors, and projected trajectories are most concerning and need to be monitored or addressed?
Have the results of the gender analysis been referenced throughout the Project Appraisal Document, specifically, in the Project Purpose (if gender is a major focus of the project), Context section, Project Description, Summary of Conclusions from Analyses, and the Project MEL Plan? (Required by ADS 205)
PAD: Summary of Conclusions of Analysis (including Conflict Analysis)
What analyses exist that show understanding of the propensity for violence or conflict context relative to development activities? If none exist, is a conflict analysis needed?
What other analyses might provide an understanding of the conflict environment (e.g., gender analysis, political economy analysis)?
How have the results of the gender analysis, along with other analyses, been used in developing the theory of change that describes how the Project Purpose will be achieved? (Required by ADS 205)
PAD: Project Purpose (key result to be achieved and one indicator)
If a traditional sector development project, how will it interact with violence or conflict dynamics? Can it incorporate specific considerations or approaches to mitigate potential for conflict? If a peacebuilding-focused project, how is it incorporating cross-sectoral approaches into conflict mitigation?
How might the project reduce conflict drivers and dividers and strengthen mitigators and connectors?
Is at least one performance indicator conflict sensitive?
PAD: Relationship to Mission's CDCS and Results Framework
How does the conflict sensitive nature of this project support achievement of other DOs and perhaps the CDCS Goal in the Mission Results Framework?
PAD: Project Description (ToC, understanding of how the process of change will occur and USAID's intentions for working directly or indirectly on this change)
Does the project description demonstrate an understanding of the conflict context, including gender dynamics and other identity groups?
How does the ToC take the conflict context into consideration? Are there adjustments necessary to make the theory of change more conflict sensitive?
Do the critical assumptions and risks consider the conflict context? How will the assumptions be measured?
How will the ToC be adapted to changes in the conflict context (e.g., increased levels of violence)?
PAD: Other Leveraged Resources (local actors to build local ownership and sustainability)
Does the project design reflect the conflict-related work of other local or international actors in the targeted areas or in the local system? How can we leverage and/or coordinate with their work to enhance conflict sensitivity? Consider the "perception" of other international actors.
Does the plan for identifying and engaging local actors, including all gender identities, facilitate broad, meaningful, and consistent engagement and sustainability?
Are there local actors perceived by communities as biased, corrupt, or complicit in the conflict? If so, will engaging these actors enhance their legitimacy? Can this risk be mitigated?

Considerations
If applicable, are resources from other donors integrated in a manner that will enhance the achievement and sustainability of conflict sensitive or peacebuilding (if appropriate) outcomes?
PAD: Performance Management and Implementation Plan
Do ongoing activities or their indicators need to be adjusted to ensure conflict sensitivity?
Who will be responsible for monitoring conflict sensitivity at the Mission? Are there management structures in place to ensure regular review of project activities for conflict sensitivity?
Do Mission staff and implementing partners require conflict sensitivity capacity building?
PAD: Project MEL Plan
Are there conflict sensitive indicators to monitor achievement of the project purpose and its theory of change? Are they disaggregated by sex and other important factors?
Are there key indicators in place to monitor changes in the conflict context and gender dynamics? How will monitoring data inform project planning and implementation decisions?
Is conflict sensitivity incorporated into the Mission's CLA plan?
How does the Mission anticipate sharing learning relative to the conflict context and with whom?
How will the project-level (outcome) evaluation ensure conflict sensitivity in its core questions?
Is there a need for third-party monitoring at the project level?
PAD: Financial Plan
Are there specific triggers, such as elections, that are expected to cause violence and may require flexible funding options? How will such options be built in? What requests may be needed?
Is there funding set aside for any additional (external) support needed to assess conflict dynamics or conflict sensitivity at the project level (e.g., from USAID Washington)?
Are Mission administrative and financial policies conflict- and gender-sensitive? Is conflict sensitivity considered when making financial, budgetary and audit decisions?
Is there a budget for learning events, external evaluations or third-party monitoring to reflect on impact of the conflict context and conflict sensitive programming across Mission DOs? Is there flexibility in case of potential increased costs for implementation if violence erupts?
PAD Annexes
Does the Project Logic Model illustrate the conflict sensitive ToC?
Are there conflict analyses that the Mission is using for decision making?
Are there indices examining the conflict context that should be considered (e.g., Peace Index)?

Source: Drawn from ADS 201 Project Development Plan (PDP) and Project Appraisal Document (PAD) guidance.

Annex E: MEL Challenges and Best Practices in FCV Settings

Challenges 1-3 affect all sectors in conflict settings; challenges 4 and 5 are more specific to direct peacebuilding.

MEL Challenge	Best Practice Responses
1. Insecure operating environment (e.g., multiple armed groups, unpredictable flare-ups of fighting, frequent population displacements, etc.) makes it dangerous to conduct MEL. MEL data collectors may be unable to physically visit a project site for security reasons, and security enhancements will draw unwanted attention to MEL teams and any local interviewees. Violence in geographic areas where certain groups live may result in under-sampling of those groups in MEL studies.	1a. Use technology to gather evidence of results (e.g., phone interviews, SMS messages, photography, video, remote sensing device) to ensure hard to reach areas are consistently part of the dataset. 1b. Use proxy indicators to measure results (e.g., number of tin-roof huts in an IDP returnee village as a proxy measure for returnee family units with livelihood improvement). 1c. Use existing data where possible.
2. Projects identified as U.S. government-affiliated may carry significant "baggage" in conflict settings that make local actors suspicious of project MEL. U.S. policies in the setting or actions elsewhere in the world can create perceptions of bias and even suspicion among one or more of the conflicting parties and reduce access for MEL data collection. If an American MEL specialist is used (especially with repeat visits), local beneficiaries may fear reprisals for "talking to the CIA." Suspicions may arise about the purpose of the data collection and how the collected data will be used.	2a. Involve local partners, who have established trust and credibility with the conflicting parties and local populations, in MEL planning, data collection, and data analysis. 2b. Hire and train individuals from the conflict setting's different tribal/ethnic/religious groups as project staff or MEL data collectors to facilitate access and trust. 2c. Add a set of MEL questions to a locally accepted, regularly occurring data collection effort (e.g., focus groups, surveys, community meetings) 2d. Use local languages (not only the national language) to collect data. 2e. Use existing data, including other donors' if possible.
3. Projects in conflict zones are often launched rapidly to respond to small windows of opportunity, leaving little time for baseline data collection needed to measure project impact. Trust and access for performing baseline data collection takes time to develop in conflict zones, as does data collection itself. Baseline data from secondary sources may not be seen as reputable by the parties to conflict and local project partners.	3a. Implement a rolling baseline by building baseline data collection into the start of individual activities, rather than trying to do one, large baseline at the start of the project. 3b. Use backward mapping to reconstruct the baseline after the project launch has finished. 3c. When baseline data collection is not feasible, ask participants to self-assess the degree of change before the intervention to the present time (e.g., Compared to before, to what extent has this project increased your desire to interact with other groups?).

MEL Challenge	Best Practice Responses
4. There is management demand for quick wins and early "peace dividend" results in conflict projects that often support processes which need considerable time to yield concrete outcomes. For example, projects supporting a peace process that yields a signed peace agreement; or a national truth and reconciliation process that produces a final report and reparations to victims; or a disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration effort that results in reintegrating ex-combatants into their villages.	4a. Break longer-term data collection processes into multiple milestones and indicators to show intermittent progress (linked to intermediate steps in the TOC's causal chains). 4b. Establish quick results targets in the MEL Plan (e.g., at least one tangible "peace dividend" delivered in each targeted community by Day 90 of the project). 4c. Attach geographic coordinates to gathered indicator data so maps can be created showing weekly, monthly, or even "real time" progress toward results.
5. Peacebuilding activities tend to target outcomes of a more qualitative nature, such as changes in attitudes, perceptions, and feelings. People act on their perceptions in conflict zones; therefore, it is critically important to measure how a project has influenced what people perceive is reality.	5a. Employ triangulation: three sources of data, methods, or approaches to assess the same phenomenon (comparing perceptions data to "objective" data on conflict phenomena) 5b. Use data collection methods that capture attitudes, changes in behavior, and perceptions: focus groups, participant diaries /drawings, surveys. 5c. Convert the qualitative change into a rating scale (e.g., 1-5) to compare across contexts.

Annex F: Data Collection and Analysis Approaches

What Tool/Data Can Tell You	Limitations
Tool: Survey	

• Surveys, within the limits of questionnaire length and sample size, can provide data on many factors related to conflict, including, but not limited to:
  • Awareness of interventions or conflict-related changes.
  • Conflict-relevant perception, attitudes, and beliefs
  • Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics that may interact with the context and intervention.
• Survey data can be analyzed to obtain the distribution of critical attitudes and information on relationships between conflict phenomena and other factors, including findings representative of population groups (depending on the sample).
	• Can be expensive to administer and analyze, especially when using sophisticated techniques to avoid response bias/obtain information on sensitive topics and requires highly trained enumerators and analysts.
	• Presents numerous security challenges in conflict environments.

Tool: Mini survey/informal survey	
• Beneficiary and stakeholder individuals and institutions can be surveyed for their uptake of peacebuilding tools, processes, and other capacity improvements, including via email. • This is among the simpler tools to deploy for MEL teams. • Informal surveys (e.g., person on the street, random polling) require minimal prep time. Survey questions are not followed precisely but guides do exist. More qualitative data is obtained; can be attitudinal and result in a higher probability of error. Could cause suspicions in a community, if not done inconspicuously. Serve as a means of collecting data without setting up formal surveys/interviews; some structure is helpful to ensure random selection. Structure for random selection could simply be talking with every third person waiting in line for the bus. If interview teams are unsure about demographics or safety in a particular neighborhood, could also be a way to casually talk to people to determine if location is appropriate to set up a focus group of sorts.	• Self-reported uptake needs to be verified to mitigate response bias. • Lag time between assistance and uptake. • Not representative/generalizable due to purposive sampling.

What Tool/Data Can Tell You	Limitations
Tool: Focus group discussions (FGDs), peer group discussions among youth	
• Dedicated to a particular topic; attended by homogeneous individuals. Small group of people (6-12). Guided by a moderator to discuss specific topics in a structured way. Useful for 'how' and 'why' questions; hypothetical questions ('what if'); 'what do you think/feel…'. • Group discussions, along with key informant interviews, allow for in-depth, open-ended exploration of complex themes and arenas, such as messaging, participation and engagement, views of governance, and community cohesion. • Group discussions are helpful because they may elicit better information on community dynamics than individual interviews. • Group discussions are also efficient because they can capture the perspectives of several people in each cohort (for focus group discussions) in one session.	• Biases in group discussions may be more pronounced because they are not anonymous. • They are labor intensive to implement, translate, transcribe, code, and interpret. • Aggregating such qualitative data to detect nuanced change over time is challenging. • They present numerous security challenges in conflict environments.
Tool: Community meetings/group informant interviews	
• Intended for gathering data from a relatively large group of people (25-50). Involves administering an individual interview protocol with more than one person at a time. The interviewer may ask a question, and then each person will answer it in turn. Typically, they feature quite basic questions about community conditions or delivery of program services.	• Lacks the structured, purposeful, guided interaction among participants that makes focus groups unique and valuable. • Have risks and level of required effort similar to FGDs. • Discussion may be dominated by a few.
Tool: Key informant interviews	
• Interviews focused on people significant to the program (stakeholders, key officials); a formal letter of request is often needed. Advantage: Information concerning causes, reasons, and/or best approaches is gathered from an "insider" point of view. Advice/feedback increases credibility of study pipeline to pivotal groups. May have side benefit to solidify relationships among evaluators, clients, participants, and other stakeholders.	• Time required. Relationship between interviewer and informants may influence the type of data obtained. Informants may interject own biases and impressions. Disagreements among individuals may be hard to resolve.

What Tool/Data Can Tell You	Limitations
Tool: Storytelling, drawing/painting	
• Stories help to elucidate the how and why of changes and can capture unanticipated outcomes. Can help non-literate populations tell their story.	• High element of trust is necessary to get people to open up about sensitive issues. Often an anthropological method and plenty of time must be budgeted. Could ask participants or staff to complete diaries, logs, or journals, which may require less trust • Must be mindful that specific images of conflict have the potential of retraumatizing people and thus must carefully select types of pictures one uses.
Tool: Observational methods, including GIS	
• Structured observation, along with administrative data, can be used to assess the existence and usage of services. • Remote sensing methods (such as satellite imagery) can provide information on which communities do and do not receive services such as electricity. • GIS provides real-time monitoring and reporting with special attention given to geographic locations of programs; can also be used for security surveillance. Used in Early Warning monitoring systems. • Before-and-after photographs are good to use as a proxy indicator. Can include components such as: comparison of target populations in different geographic locations, comparison of outcomes given a specified period—could even compare reactions of people.	• Observation is labor intensive and requires effort not only to design instruments, protocols, and coding schemes but to train data collectors. • Observation can be subjective, and the observer must take care to reduce bias, increase reliability, and ensure standardization across data points. • Observers may be at high risk in terms of safety and security. • Observer can influence behavior.
Tool: Community mapping (participatory)	
• Community mapping identifies community services, such as schools and health clinics, economic entities, and other opportunities for constructive engagement. • Because it is a participatory method, it is also a tool for empowerment and engagement with government, often with youth in particular.	• Community mapping is labor intensive. • Requires upfront planning to create base maps if they are not available. • Can bring risk to assessors, particularly in areas where a violent extremism threat exists.

What Tool/Data Can Tell You	Limitations
Tool: Administrative data	
• Administrative data (from government facilities and other service providers) can be used to assess the existence and usage of services; ideally, it should also be set up to capture the quality of services and user satisfaction. • Administrative data can be useful at scale.	• Requires reliable monitoring systems, data management systems, and standardized meta-data fields to be useful at scale. • Establishing community size and boundaries is important to assessing outcomes, as the degree of effect will be relative to the context.
Tool: Socioeconomic and political data (pre-existing)	
• Data derived from periodic household surveys, legal system databases, etc. are especially critical for understanding primary prevention arenas. • Potentially relevant data from local or national governments (and often donors) include income; government transfers to, revenue from, and gross domestic product in regions populated by the target group (if there is residential clustering); elected officials in local government; jobs or employment: business permits or registered businesses; schools and enrollment; health care facilities; land tenure; and welfare payments. • Many national statistical agencies conduct surveys that measure such dimensions of citizen status as employment, social welfare, voting, and political party participation. • Governments may provide records of arrests, detentions without charge, and human rights violations, along with policy and legal changes, and information on changes in security forces behavior. Human rights CSOs often collect such data, and, in some countries, human rights commissions do so. • The United Nations Refugee Agency and International Organization for Migration provides reports on IDPs and refugee movement in areas where they operate. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre aggregates displacement data from multiple sources, including the United Nations, to track displacement over time.	• May provide data at a subnational level but not necessarily at the city or community level. • May undercount those who are, by definition, socially marginalized. • No control over original methodology, reporting frequency. • Hard to align with activity's unique design, beneficiary population, etc.—for example, if survey/database does not record ethnicity.

What Tool/Data Can Tell You	Limitations
Tool: Expert panel	
• In programming areas with especially high data challenges, such as rule of law (and human rights, in particular), tapping a range of experts periodically to conduct a structured analysis of change is a practical approach. The panel of experts and stakeholders familiar with community dynamics would assess the current situation based on raw data, secondary sources, and their own expertise according to a framework developed to address key elements of changes in rights. Panel members rate the various dimensions on a scale to produce a summary of changes, and documentation of the discussion provides detail on the history, context, and dimensions of rights.	• Care must be taken in setting up expert/stakeholder panels, particularly in selecting experts or stakeholders to ensure that they have in-depth and complementary knowledge and can be objective. Panels need to be balanced to account for different viewpoints and well facilitated to ensure productive dialogue. • Construction of a high-quality framework, including dimensions, questions, and rating scales, along with briefing materials, is critical to reducing bias and obtaining reliable results.
Tool: Media monitoring/content analysis	
• Media monitoring can provide information that helps in targeting audiences and content for awareness building. • If data on incidents of violence are not available through the public datasets, peacekeeping missions, or police reports, media monitoring may be necessary. • Media reports can also provide the basis for discourse analysis of the rhetoric that fuels and sustains conflict or counters it.	• Labor intensive. • Requires upfront time to identify and standardize collection efforts. • To the extent that media monitoring must rely on national print newspapers, these may not adequately capture conditions far from the capital.
Tool: Digital analytics	
• Free and readily available site statistics—for example, from Google Analytics, Facebook Insights, and Twitter Analytics—should be cumulated and analyzed, along with counts of downloads, plays, listens, and any other platform-specific data. Data on reach and engagement—as captured through such measures as shares, retweets, mentions, and favorites—are especially important, as they go beyond visits and "likes" to indicate a wider and more engaged audience. • Additional tools include pop surveys/quizzes and content analysis of comments/discussion on the site.	• Some important data (e.g., location of participant, demographics) inaccurate or absent in restricted contexts due to use of anonymizing software. • Generally, only output or low-level outcome data available. • Raises concerns about informed consent. • Requires high level of technical knowledge and special software for some languages.

What Tool/Data Can Tell You	Limitations
Tool: Most Significant Change (MSC)	
• Can document examples of individual-level change, organizational and network development, advocacy, and policy change, providing outcome-level data. • Helpful for understanding diverse perspectives and emergent/ unanticipated outcomes (as well as planned outcomes).	• MSC works best in combination with other data collection and analysis methods that capture broader social or structural change.

Annex G: Guidance for Inclusion of Conflict Sensitivity in Evaluation SOWs

SOW Section	Considerations for Conflict Sensitivity

Purpose of the Evaluation	• If the evaluation is of a sectoral program operating in a conflict context, should the purpose of the evaluation include:
	  • information about the relational aspects of the activity and the context.
	  • lessons learned from programming in this setting. Lessons learned can inform future programs and decisions of USAID leadership, partner governments, and/or other key stakeholders.

Background: Description of the Problem and Context	• Include a summary of the conflict context and any conflict sensitivity considerations that were part of the project/activity design. For example, describe the possible impact of the conflict context on the larger development context. • Describe changes in the conflict context since the original design. • Consider which factors in the conflict context (original assumptions) might have affected the strategy/project/activity did or did not hold true.
Background: Description of the Intervention to be Evaluated and Theory of Change	• Include a summary of any substantive changes (modifications) in the evaluated strategy/project/activity related to the conflict context and when they were effective. Include an explanation of why these changes were made, especially if related to conflict sensitivity concerns. • Describe how the project/activity was intended to be conflict sensitive in terms of the ToC, expected results and processes.
Background: Summary of the Project/Activity MEL Plan	• Include any documents that shed light on MEL conflict sensitivity, regardless of whether conflict sensitivity and indicators for conflict sensitivity were considered/included in the original design. For example, what plans were made to monitor the conflict context?

SOW Section	Considerations for Conflict Sensitivity

Evaluation Questions	• Consider including at least one question or sub-question evaluating the conflict sensitivity of the project/activity, including both outcomes and process. This will help build data and evidence for the utility of CS. For example:
	  • The interaction between the conflict context and the project/activity.
	  • The relationship between conflict dynamics and identities, and how this relationship affected outcomes for different identity groups.
	  • Whether the implementing partner established local mechanisms to ensure conflict sensitivity and whether this was effective for all identified groups.
	• Impact Evaluation SOWs should specify the sub-groups to be included in the analysis of potential differential effects on key identify groups.
	• Include instructions for disaggregating data by relevant key identity groups in the conflict context.
	• Specify where an examination of gender dynamics is expected. Where appropriate, the evaluation questions can include a separate question aimed at evaluating the identity-specific effects of the activity or project and how these effects are related to the conflict.
	
	If you want evaluators to provide recommendations, describe what aspects of the program, project, or activity recommendations should address. This includes recommendations for improving the conflict sensitivity of current or future programming.

Evaluation Design and Methodology	• If an impact evaluation is desired, will this be feasible in the conflict context? Consider conducting an evaluability assessment to determine what type of evaluation is feasible. Alternatively, allow the evaluators to provide the optimum design with a detailed explanation.
	• Any known limitations that the conflict context might have on the data to be collected, including limits on where and when data can be collected.
	• Include expectations for the specification of research sub-questions regarding the interaction of conflict dynamics/context and the activity.
	• Include expectations that evaluation data be collected and analyzed with attention to different identity groups, and how gender intersects with other identities.
	• Request that all aspects of the design be discussed regarding conflict sensitivity; these will include such aspects as:
	  • Data collection methods—timing, enumerator recruitment, enumerator training, recruitment of respondents, instrument design, informed consent, locations, AV recording, etc.
	  • Data quality assurance processes.
	  • Data storage and transmission, including protection of PII.
	• Request the offeror account for ethical considerations related to conflict sensitivity, such as protocols for ensuring respondents are not harmed (especially if there are sensitive questions involved, respondents who fear for their safety, etc.), collection and safety of private data, how evaluators should represent themselves (to protect respondents and themselves).
	• What role, if any, will beneficiaries/local communities have in the design and conduct of the evaluation?

SOW Section	Considerations for Conflict Sensitivity
Deliverables and Reporting	• Consider what information will be shared with beneficiaries/local communities. How might this information best be shared (e.g., summary report, presentation, etc.)?
Evaluation Team Composition	• Consider matching the team composition to the key identity groups in the conflict context, including gender considerations. • Consider how to ensure equal access to positions and/or solicitations. • Consider the language needs and preferences of local groups. Does choice of language signal any bias? • Identify the amount of conflict expertise needed on the team. • Ensure that the local consultants can provide the needed cultural lenses. All team members need to be trusted counterparts. Consider what background and professional characteristics will increase the perception of the evaluators' legitimacy and impartiality by respondents from each key identity group, especially for the local evaluators selected for the team (political, familial, tribal biases, etc.). • Consider who can travel to the locations selected. Will everyone on the team have access? How might this affect the quality of data collected? • How might splitting up the team into two sub-teams, as per usual practice, affect the safety of the evaluators? The ability to collect data, or the quality of data collected?
Evaluation Schedule	• Consider the conflict context when determining how long it will take to collect data and when to collect it. For example, if all focus groups need to be disaggregated by identity group, this will take longer than when mixed focus groups are possible. It may take longer in conflict-affected environments to get permission to visit communities, set up interviews, focus groups, etc. • Consider the timing for data collection and whether dates or events are planned that might affect the evaluation. For example, are elections planned or seasonal weather events that might put the evaluation and respondents at risk or skew results?


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