

# HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IN VIOLENT CONFLICT

**A Toolbox  
of Conflict  
Sensitive  
Indicators**

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# HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IN VIOLENT CONFLICT

A Toolbox of Conflict  
Sensitive Indicators

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# PREFACE

In January 2012, the Summer Institute of Peacebuilding (SIP) brought together Catholic Relief Service's (CRS) Emergency and Peacebuilding communities of practice. The SIP was meant to better connect peacebuilding with humanitarian response work, including better integration of the peacebuilding principles and approaches with humanitarian response programming, and an increased understanding of the humanitarian response community's sectors and tools by those who focus on peacebuilding.

CRS generally differentiates between working on conflict, addressed by the justice and peacebuilding sector, and working in conflict, which the humanitarian response (and sometimes development) sectors often face. CRS' staff is increasingly aware, however, that a lack of intentional connection between the two sectors can result in a negative impact on humanitarian response program beneficiaries, especially in a context of rapid onset violent conflict or the threat of violent conflict. Emergency programming in such contexts at least must be conflict sensitive—grounded in good and regularly updated conflict analysis and implemented so as to “do no harm.”

Emergency programming also includes activities that should elicit greater cooperation and more holistic CRS programming in pursuit of Integral Human Development (IHD). Certain activities merit greater attention for shared learning and further exploration:

- Assessments & Analysis
- Early Warning–Early Response Systems
- Capacity building for conflict sensitivity and protection
- Equitable delivery of integrated services for community resilience and recovery
- Monitoring, evaluation and learning methods for documenting achievements and lessons learned
- Beneficiary accountability mechanisms

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This guidance tool came about when two CRS communities of practice, peacebuilding and emergency response, decided to step out of their respective silos. To do so meant more than “thinking out of the box,” a simple letting go of the bureaucratic mindset. Instead it reflected a conscious choice to pool and focus their collective energies on how to operationalize their good intentions at promoting justice and peace in a meaningful way.

Over the course of a four-day workshop, participants wrestled together with complex issues, learning from each other how to respond to emergencies involving violent conflict. Unbeknownst to them, their efforts presaged the new agency strategy; they integrated what would become a core competency, peacebuilding, into what would be designated as one of the agency’s three signature programming areas, emergency response and recovery.

The result, this guidance tool, reflects not only their shared commitment to think creatively but also their willingness to be held accountable, especially to the people whom they serve.

Many people contributed to making this publication possible. Among them, the author, Leslie Wingender, deserves the deepest expression of gratitude. Leslie managed to write drafts of this publication all the while juggling another part-time job and completing her graduate studies in the Conflict Resolution Program at the Georgetown University Department of Governance.

Several CRS staff members also helped in the guidance tool’s conception as well as in reviewing its multiple drafts, including Jennifer Poidatz, Tom Bamat, Guy Sharrock, and Carla Fajardo. In addition, Anne Street of CAFOD, our sister Caritas agency in the United Kingdom, provided invaluable feedback to ensure the guidance tool was consistent with industry best practices. Lastly, Ashley Rytter and Joshua Tong of the Overseas Operations Communication Unit took the publication to the finish line, shepherding it through the various iterations of proofing, layout, design and printing.



# INTRODUCTION

Emergency preparedness and response require rapid programming combined with quick, almost reflexive decision-making, which can present numerous challenges to integration efforts at each stage of the project cycle. For example, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is challenging because it must be adapted to the pace and context of humanitarian response work.

The 2012 SIP centered on developing practical tools to facilitate integrating conflict sensitivity into the full humanitarian response project cycle. Participants stressed the importance of carrying out sound assessments and analysis as sine qua non for M&E systems. One of the SIP outcomes was a commitment to design clear indicators for conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding in humanitarian response programs. These indicators would be used by humanitarian response, justice and peacebuilding practitioners, as well as other sectoral technical advisors, to ensure that the processes and tools used to build staff and partner capacity are conflict sensitive.

CRS has nearly completed its new strategy (2013–2017): in which peacebuilding, governance and gender (PBGG) has been elevated to an agency-wide core competency. One of PBGG’s strategic objectives is to integrate sustainable practices that enhance peace and social justice in the communities CRS and partners serve, especially in the signature program areas—agriculture and livelihoods, humanitarian response and recovery, and health. The set of indicators presented here, therefore, is both a concrete deliverable from the 2012 SIP, as well as a meaningful contribution to the agency’s new strategy. The indicators will also ensure alignment with the new agency strategy by promoting incorporation of conflict sensitivity with existing capacity building tools and programming processes.

There is no need to create entirely new tools; many already exist. The SPHERE Project, Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response, contains indicators that, to a considerable extent, are already conflict sensitive. Practitioners from both sectors should adapt SPHERE, making its indicators more explicitly conflict sensitive while ensuring they remain practical and user-friendly.



The indicators presented below, along with their accompanying guidance, will enable humanitarian response and peacebuilding program practitioners to modify and harmonize the design and implementation of their respective interventions to capture synergies and reduce unintended negative impacts.

This guidance tool adapts a sample of 15 SPHERE core and sector-specific indicators to be more conflict sensitive yet practical and user-friendly. Indicators were chosen from each of the six core and four sector-specific standards to demonstrate the full range in which conflict sensitivity can and should be applied in humanitarian response. It is important to note that these are **modified SPHERE** indicators, intended to serve as **samples only** and by no means should be considered standard or mandatory indicators. They represent **examples**, which with simple modifications CRS staff can easily adapt to better suit a program's specific context, needs and priorities.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The indicators in this guide are presented in the same order as found in SPHERE, beginning with core standards and continuing with sector-specific standards. Following the sample indicator templates at the end of the guide, a list of references provides suggested key readings, materials and tools that can further assist practitioners in integrating conflict sensitivity into their work. Within each SPHERE category one or two indicators were chosen based on the extent to which the program responses the indicators measured might affect a violent conflict associated with the humanitarian response setting. The modified indicators and accompanying guidance are intended to enable humanitarian response program practitioners to the design and implement interventions so that they reduce any unintended negative impacts and promote positive impacts in the particular context. Each sample indicator template is organized as follows:

**STANDARD** The SPHERE Core or Minimum Standard under which the indicator is located.

**INDICATOR** The modified indicator with explicit conflict sensitive language added and **highlighted in bold and italics**.

**RATIONALE** A brief explanation about the purpose of the modified indicator.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES** A quick reference point to the indicator can be applied, in which areas of the program cycle, or in what program within CRS.

**GUIDANCE NOTES** Practical steps, options and ideas for how staff can make sure the result, measured by indicator, is met.

Finally, humanitarian response and peacebuilding practitioners are encouraged to adapt the templates and guidance provided here to create their own indicators, as needed, to meet the context and operational exigencies of the implementing environment. The references listed in the annexes at the end of this guide provide additional technical support for adopting best practices.

## CORE STANDARDS

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### CORE STANDARD 1

#### PEOPLE-CENTERED HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

*People's capacity and strategies to survive with dignity are integral to the design and approach of humanitarian response.*

**INDICATOR:** By inviting and including the most vulnerable and marginalized in the assistance programming process, disaster-affected people conduct or actively participate in regular meetings on how to organize and implement the response.

**RATIONALE:** Empowering the voiceless to participate more actively should reduce the inequities that contribute to the creation, or reinforce the existence, of structural causes behind a conflict. It also generates broad local ownership for the program. Active engagement of the most vulnerable and marginalized will ensure that tangible needs at the community and household level are addressed in a concrete way, as well as foster human dignity and social justice among the affected population.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** Throughout the project cycle, from preparedness through evaluation

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** Acknowledge any overlap between the disaster-affected people and existing divisions within the local society. Identify who has what (kind of) assets and how access to these (think in terms of vulnerability) is connected to the existing systems and structures of the context.

Consider any demographic barriers (e.g., women, the elderly or youth) or identity groups (i.e., members of a particular ethnicity, race, religion, etc.) within the larger beneficiary group face when trying to gain access to or participating in the meetings. For example, the travel time required or distance to the meeting may prohibit women and the elderly from attending the meetings due to cultural restrictions or physical limitations.

Possible community-based participatory mechanisms include but are not limited to: forming or building the capacity of Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) groups as well as other community-based organizations, including host population representatives, to play a more integral role in distribution committees.

Ensure that participants' expectations are not raised unduly with regard to the assistance to be received, by clearly stating the aims of the program and the role that regular participation plays in its implementation. This process will also prevent perceptions of favoritism.

Refer to the 'Good Enough' conflict analysis conducted at the preparedness phase (or an updated conflict assessment) to understand and be aware of the relationships within and between the different beneficiary groups as well as their interaction with non-beneficiary groups. Questions to consider include:

Is there a risk of the assistance program creating or exacerbating conflict within or between communities?

How can this be mitigated through local participation?

In the monitoring phase, develop indicators that will flag any unintended consequences of the program's focus on a particular beneficiary group.

## CORE STANDARD 2

### COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

*Humanitarian response is planned and implemented in coordination with the relevant authorities, humanitarian agencies and civil society organizations engaged in impartial humanitarian action, working together for maximum efficiency, coverage and effectiveness.*

**INDICATOR:** The agency's response takes into account the capacity and strategies of other humanitarian agencies, civil society organizations and relevant authorities, strengthening the institutional capacity of indigenous actors **and investing in forming a platform for greater coordination and harmonization of efforts as well as building healthier relationships between relevant stakeholders.**

**RATIONALE:** Understanding the relationship between the various actors and the particular humanitarian response context will help avoid duplication of efforts among international actors and any unintentional bias toward certain local partners, organizations or communities. Building relationships between strategic partners and communities will increase the likelihood of social and environmental sustainability.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** During the preparedness and assessment stages

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** Refer to the actor mapping section in the conflict assessment, or if none exists conduct an actor mapping exercise to avoid duplication and to understand the relationship between the implementing agencies and the host and disaster-affected communities.

For each actor, outline their respective capacities, strategies and various relationships. Questions to consider include:

Are the humanitarian agencies targeting a certain group or groups?

Is there favoritism?

Do civil society organizations represent certain identity (e.g., ethnic, religious or regional) groups?

Do the local/national authorities favor a particular group or side?

How would you characterize the relationships before the crisis?  
After?

Consider the capacity of local civil society organizations, including faith- and community-based organizations, and the consequences of including or excluding them in the assistance effort. Note that each organization will have its own biases and affiliations.

If the agency lacks capacity in the local language of the disaster area, consider obtaining an interpreter or creating a position for a local community liaison who can work between the agency and the local community.

Support the international clusters and advocate with donors at an interagency level for the standardization of packages, approaches, and geographic distribution.

## CORE STANDARD 3: **ASSESSMENT**

*The priority needs of the disaster-affected population are identified through a systematic assessment of the context, risks to life with dignity and the capacity of the affected people and relevant authorities to respond.*

**INDICATOR:** Rapid and in-depth assessment reports contain views that are representative of all affected people, including members of vulnerable groups and those of the surrounding population, **and this information is integrated into the program design.**

**RATIONALE:** Including perspectives of multiple beneficiary and non-beneficiary groups is a fundamental part of a conflict analysis and ensures conflict sensitivity throughout the program cycle. In particular, including this analysis will aid in identifying and reducing risks to effective implementation early on, prevent tensions from arising or being exacerbated by the program, and identify new opportunities for action.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** During the assessment and design stages, a 'Good Enough' conflict analysis is part of the rapid humanitarian response assessment phase and it focuses on rapid, simple and key questions. It can be the basis on which an in-depth conflict analysis is conducted and regularly updated in later stages of the intervention. See *Annex 1* and the *References* page for more information about a designing and conducting a 'Good Enough' conflict analysis.

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** If certain communities are difficult to access due to government restrictions, destroyed infrastructure or lack of agency time or resources, identify key informants who can assist in determining the needs of different community groups in the area. When the initial analysis is updated and a more in-depth assessment is conducted, make it a priority to obtain more specific information about these communities.

Link the analysis to the program design by first reviewing key parameters of the program in light of the conflict analysis and then assessing the risks of the implementation affecting or being affected

by the conflict. Later, identify areas where the program could reinforce peaceful outcomes and where the program should reconsider its activity to avoid exacerbating tensions.

This indicator focuses on obtaining and incorporating views from all “affected” people. However, viewpoints of other communities, such as neighboring households and host populations in the area, should be taken into consideration.

Use participatory and community-based structures when communicating with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries to obtain their views.

Implement a host community representation strategy which includes neighboring communities in the planning process. This is of particular importance in the case of displaced populations since their presence in the area has a direct effect on the host community.

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**INDICATOR:** In-depth assessment reports contain information and analysis of vulnerability, context, **conflict and local capacity making clear linkages between the impact of the programming and delivery of assistance on the relationships between affected and non-affected communities.**

**RATIONALE:** This information will improve the process of targeting the affected community by exposing any linkages between regional, ethnic, political or religious divides. Vulnerability may overlap with existing tensions; thus, gathering and analyzing this information within the broader context will prevent the program from inadvertently targeting specific groups whose relationship with other actors could exacerbate the conflict.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** During the preparedness, assessment and design stages

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** Use community-based structures to obtain information for the assessment. Make sure to assess early on host communities’ vulnerability or level of access to services to prevent creating or exacerbating tensions between the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in later stages of the program.



Develop selection criteria with communities to ensure that such processes are transparent and inclusive. Maintain a high level of community consultation and participation throughout the program to ensure awareness of why emphasis is placed on certain groups.

Understand that the program will affect the level and distribution of power between certain groups (the beneficiaries) through the delivery of assistance. Therefore, all aid must be accompanied by robust transparency and accountability mechanisms, such as complaints procedures and feedback mechanisms, to prevent or mitigate the potential abuse of power.

Update the conflict analysis and needs assessment regularly to capture the changing dynamics and context. Conflict is not static but fluid and constantly evolving; frequent updates will ensure the program design and implementation are responding to the context.

Options for how to update and deepen the conflict analysis and needs assessment include but are not limited to: consulting communities not a part of the original analysis; cross-referencing the agency's analysis with those of other organizations during the interagency coordination/planning meetings; using in-house staff or an external consultant to update the analysis; and holding “pause and reflect” sessions among the staff to obtain their experience and observations of the program's implementation and impact.

## CORE STANDARD 4: DESIGN AND RESPONSE

*The humanitarian response meets the assessed needs of the disaster-affected population in relation to context, the risks faced and the capacity of the affected people and state to cope and recover.*

**INDICATOR:** Program designs are revised to reflect changes in the context, risks and people's needs and capacities **through a frequently updated 'Good Enough' conflict analysis and incorporating the new information.**

**RATIONALE:** Updating the program design will ensure that the program adapts to the evolving conflict dynamics in the situation. Conflict dynamics can change quickly. When a Good Enough conflict analysis is conducted during the assessment stage, it can be readily updated and deepened in later stages.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** During the assessment, design, implementation and monitoring stages

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** Make sure that the Good Enough conflict analysis conducted at the beginning of the program is updated regularly. If other in-depth assessments were conducted during other phases, the information from these reports could be used to modify the program design.

Develop a risk matrix of possible conflict triggers and flashpoints, and consider how these can be mitigated through different program interventions. For example, in the analysis of systems and structures of the context, it may become clear that some conflict actors are co-opting or coercing key local stakeholders in the assistance effort. One potential mitigation measure would be to advocate with local authorities to respect the humanitarian effort or to seek support from local leaders and beneficiaries to resist unwelcome pressures.

Consider any positive or negative changes in the connectors and dividers between different affected communities and non-affected communities. For example, if two communities were able to positively

work together as part of the initial program design, one option would be to further strengthen that relationship throughout the remainder of the program. If, however, the relationship between two communities worsened due to increased tensions, and if the program worked with only one community, consider engaging with the non-beneficiary community to explain or reexamine the program objectives and prevent further tensions.

Develop contingency plans based on the possible triggers and flashpoints that may arise or any tensions that were identified by the conflict analysis.

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**INDICATOR:** Program design includes actions to reduce people's vulnerability to future hazards and increase their capacity to manage and **mitigate** them. **Conflict sensitivity, focused on strengthening local institutional capacity, building healthy relationships and reducing inequities, is integrated into the program design.**

**RATIONALE:** Assistance programs should not simply put a Band-Aid on a broken leg. Instead they should promote the common good, protect the dignity of all individuals, and restore the entire range of their assets—natural, physical, financial, political, social and spiritual. Working to decrease people's vulnerability and strengthen their resilience will increase their ability to 'build back better' after the crisis.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** During the assessment, design, implementation and monitoring stages

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** Think beyond how the program meets the immediate needs of the targeted population. Questions to consider should revolve around the IHD framework involving who has access to which categories of assets, what systems and structures create barriers and/or opportunities for change and which shocks, cycles and trends threaten the population.

Consider integrating humanitarian and development objectives simultaneously as part of the program objectives. Focusing on both short- and more medium-term objectives will allow the team to create more robust and sustainable program designs.

Frequently reference the conflict analysis to identify opportunities to create positive changes in the delivery of assistance, despite fluid context dynamics. Analysis will help the program staff identify barriers that create vulnerability and opportunities for mitigating such obstacles.

Focus on the real-time evaluation of the program on beneficiaries—how people's needs are being met—and consider how self-help initiatives among the population can be encouraged and integrated into program objectives. This will reinforce people's sense of dignity and confidence to take collective action.

## CORE STANDARD 5: **PERFORMANCE, TRANSPARENCY AND LEARNING**

*The performance of humanitarian agencies is continually examined and communicated to stakeholders; projects are adapted in response to performance.*

**INDICATOR:** Programs are adapted in response to monitoring and learning information **consistent with the realities of the local context and responsive to the population's needs, aspirations and priorities for recovery and reconstruction.**

**RATIONALE:** This ensures accountability of the agency to its beneficiaries. It also provides the opportunity for the agency to assess its contribution to the population's needs, and to addressing conflict within the specific context they are operating.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** During the design, implementation and monitoring stages

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** While it is certainly important to have an M&E plan in place at the beginning of the program, any such system should focus on monitoring the relevance, effectiveness and quality of support. Similarly, conducting regular reviews of the plan is valuable insofar as they will allow staff to monitor progress and revise the program as needed based on evidence and local dynamics. Better yet, staff should set aside time for ongoing or daily reflections, which will also contribute to increasing the level of responsiveness in its programmatic efforts.

Fortunately, members of the CRS Humanitarian Response team have been developing a “blended” M&E plan with associated tools for guidance. It can be found in *Annex 2: Further Resources, Materials and Tools*, along with other useful guidance and practical tools.

Establish complaints and feedback mechanisms for the program when it begins. Another option is to create a post-distribution monitoring mechanism that tracks the quality of the agency's response as well as provides an indicator of any unintended negative consequences.

Reviewing information from these mechanisms will identify the positive and negative impacts of the program. Responding to the information from these mechanisms will include modifying overall program design and specific activities. Informing the beneficiaries of these changes will foster trust between the community and the agency. It will also increase the agency's credibility.

Frequent review will also allow the program to be forward-thinking and consider both its impact on the context and the context on its programming. This will enable staff to determine if and how any other activities can be implemented in the future. Staff can monitor changes in the context by identifying key comparison groups, which will also increase awareness of the different and perhaps adverse perspectives it needs to capture.

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**INDICATOR:** Accurate, **periodically** updated, non-confidential progress information is shared with the people targeted by the programmatic response and relevant local authorities and other humanitarian agencies on a regular basis. **The agency also shares the same information with host communities and non-beneficiary populations in nearby communities.**

**RATIONALE:** By sharing program progress information, the agency is promoting transparency and informing relevant actors—in both the beneficiary and non-beneficiary communities—of important decisions. This openness reduces tensions that may arise due to misperceptions arising as a result of poor information flow and unintentional miscommunication, which are all too common in conflict situations.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** During the assessment, implementation and monitoring stages

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** Establish a clear communication strategy. This can include appointing community intermediaries who can act as interlocutors. Their main purpose will be to explain the organizational program strategy to the community and listen and relay the concerns of the community to the agency.

The communication strategy should be based on a two-way dialogue between the agency and the communities. Working with local partners will enhance the feasibility and credibility of the agency in the particular area.

Include non-beneficiary communities or key representatives from this group as recipients of program progress reports. Simply making information about the program, the targeting criteria and its progress available and accessible to all parties will enable them to build better relationships between and within the different communities. Informing non-beneficiary or host communities of the program will enable them to explore alternative support if needed and not provided by the agency.

CRS has developed a Communications Toolbox, which offers practical guidance for program managers who want to communicate more effectively with—and thereby be more accountable to—program participants and community members. The tools are designed for both humanitarian response and development programs. The Communications Toolbox was inspired by CRS' programs in Haiti, where it was observed that relatively simple, low-cost activities aimed at ensuring transparent communication resulted in improved implementation and impact. This toolbox is available at [crsprogramquality.org](https://crsprogramquality.org).

The following are examples of some of the communication tools included in this toolbox: SMS, suggestion boxes; community meetings; public bulletin boards where communities can post questions or comments; community radio or interlocutors. Choice of a tool or tools will depend on what is most appropriate and relevant in the context.

## CORE STANDARD 6: AID WORKER PERFORMANCE

*Humanitarian agencies provide appropriate management, supervisory and psychosocial support, enabling aid workers to have the knowledge, skills, behavior and attitudes to plan and implement an effective humanitarian response with humanity and respect.*

**INDICATOR:** Staff and volunteers' performance reviews indicate adequate competency levels in relations to their knowledge, skills, behavior and attitudes and the responsibilities described in their job descriptions. **Conflict sensitivity competencies are included in periodic staff performance evaluations.**

**RATIONALE:** One of the top challenges in implementing humanitarian intervention in emergency crises is for staff to understand the context in which they operate. Building the capacity of the program staff around conflict sensitive practices and knowledge enhances their ability to engage, initiate and identify barriers and opportunities for their program, as well as fosters greater sustainability of the program during design, implementation and monitoring stages.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** During all stages, from preparedness through evaluation

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** Provide a packet of information for new staff at the beginning of the humanitarian response, which includes a summary of the local context, description of the conflict dynamics and key conflict flashpoints. This will increase staff awareness of the agency's commitment to integrating conflict sensitivity in the larger operation.

Job descriptions and evaluation criteria for recruitment of program staff should include knowledge, skills and experience in applying conflict sensitivity to the humanitarian imperative. Specific knowledge might include an understanding of how Do No Harm and SPHERE interact, the IHD framework (or its equivalent for external candidates), identification of conflict flashpoints, and previous experience with applying conflict analysis tools.



Organize meetings among humanitarian response and justice and peacebuilding staff so that the latter can provide technical support to the former during the assessment, analysis and design of the program and subsequent monitoring and evaluation phases. If face-to-face meetings are not feasible for whatever reason then, at a minimum, peacebuilding, governance and gender (including protection) technical advisors should be involved in humanitarian proposal development and review. In particular, regional technical advisors can either be on site or support efforts virtually from a distance.

# MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE PROMOTION

## WASH STANDARD 1:

### **WATER SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH) PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION**

*WASH needs of the affected population are met and users are involved in the design, management and maintenance of the facilities where appropriate.*

**INDICATOR:** There is a system in place for the management and maintenance of facilities as appropriate, and different groups contribute equitably **based on an assessment of their capabilities and vulnerabilities**.

**RATIONALE:** Increasing the capacity of different groups within communities contributes to building resilience and leads to increased security and restoration of their dignity. Program staff should be aware of the potential challenges and opportunities particular groups face in the community, based on the conflict analysis and assessments conducted prior to engagement.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** WASH operations; design and implementation stages

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** A gender assessment/analysis should be used and referenced so that impacts on women, men, girls and boys are incorporated into the management and maintenance plan.

Consider the capabilities and vulnerabilities of different groups in terms of their access, user and transfer rights to water and other natural resources as well as public decision-making processes around their governance. In addition, consider security issues associated with access, use and management of these resources and the mechanisms developed to ensure the security of vulnerable groups. Finally, apply this information in designing interventions that address gender (and other inter-group) inequality and inequities.

Develop the maintenance plan in communicating with the beneficiary community. Part of the assessment should focus on the resources available to non-beneficiaries and their perceptions of the program. Issues such as waste disposal and water supply can directly impact access to natural resources. Furthermore, perceptions of exclusion, if certain needs are considered to be less acute than those of others, can lead to resource-based conflicts.

Foster healthy relationships with the host or non-beneficiary communities by including them in the informational meeting and planning sessions.

Complaint mechanisms are set up for this particular program so that all users can safely express any grievances with the program and have access to dispute resolution mechanisms.

## **SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT STANDARD 1: COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL**

*The affected population has an environment not littered by solid waste, including medical waste, and has the means to dispose of their domestic waste conveniently and effectively.*

**INDICATOR:** All waste generated by populations living in settlements is removed from the immediate living environment on a daily basis, and from the settlement environment a minimum of twice a week **creating an environment that promotes human dignity through local participation of the community and among the neighboring population.**

**RATIONALE:** During and after a crisis in the midst of chaotic and disastrous situations, decent living conditions for the affected population is crucial to fostering a sense of human dignity. By identifying opportunities for solid waste disposal and engaging host populations in the process, the program will contribute to fostering healthy relationships.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** WASH operations; design and implementation stages

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** Consider the capabilities that the affected community has to take part in the removal of waste. Work alongside partner organizations that may have a better understanding of the local and cultural norms around cleanliness and waste disposal. Consider reaching out to community leaders within the affected community to increase understanding of the cultural and social dynamics that can limit or facilitate the implementation of the project.

Create a clear communication strategy for the particular elements of the waste disposal management. Be sensitive to the impact of such a program on individuals, in particular those (mostly likely women) responsible for household management. Refer to the livelihoods assessment to understand who in the household has the responsibility and authority to encourage participation in this waste disposal program.

The presence of a settlement can cause conflict with the host community. Continual dialogue between the affected and host communities can reduce any negative perceptions of the displaced population in the host communities' land. Having a local voice or voices from a non-beneficiary community can also mitigate tensions arising from the program.

Consider local initiatives for small- and micro-enterprise development. Likewise, consider whether host communities already have a disposal management mechanism that could be incorporated into the settlement. Building and reinforcing connectors between the communities is important for forming healthy relationships and promoting human dignity in a context where many have been marginalized or traumatized.

# MINIMUM STANDARDS IN FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

## FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION ASSESSMENT

### STANDARD 1:

#### **FOOD SECURITY**

*Where people are at increased risk of food insecurity, assessments are conducted using accepted methods to understand the type, degree and extent of food insecurity, to identify those most affected and to define the most appropriate response.*

**INDICATOR:** Food security and livelihoods of individuals, households and communities are investigated to guide interventions (see guidance notes 3–9) **with particular attention to issues of equity along lines of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion and region of origin, and their relationship to the context's structures and systems.**

**RATIONALE:** Incorporating an equity lens into the assessment will assist in identifying “horizontal inequalities” within the targeted community and enable the program staff to design a program that will avoid exacerbating any intergroup tensions and identify opportunities to address inequalities.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** Livelihood and food security operations; assessment and design stages

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** If not already linked, connect the livelihood assessment (Rapid Rural Appraisal, Participatory Rural Appraisal, Participatory Learning Appraisal) to a conflict analysis to identify drivers and causes for food insecurity among individuals, households and communities. The next iteration of CRS ProPacks is expected to include more conflict-sensitive livelihood assessment tools, at both the household and community levels. To the extent possible, avoid a multiplicity of tools for assessments and analysis, which can complicate rather than simplify CRS humanitarian response in the field.

Consider the impact of food security assistance and delivery mechanisms on conflict dynamics not only at the individual and household level but also at the community, regional and national levels.

Consider underlying root causes to the food security and livelihoods situations of the most vulnerable groups, and take time to consider how existing systems and structures impact these groups.

Reflect on how the intervention will either increase or decrease beneficiaries' resilience to future shocks. A particular focus should be on building capacities, and this can be informed by the conflict and livelihood analyses.

## FOOD SECURITY STANDARD 1: GENERAL FOOD SECURITY

*People have a right to humanitarian food assistance that ensures their survival and upholds their dignity that as far as possible prevents the erosion of their assets and builds resilience.*

**INDICATOR:** The choice of cash, vouchers or a combination of these is based on thorough assessment and analysis (see *Food security – cash and voucher transfers standard 1* on page 200 in the SPHERE Handbook) **that includes equity considerations such as gender, so that the agency can assess how its programs will impact different beneficiaries differently.**

**RATIONALE:** Providing cash and/or vouchers as part of a program intervention presents an opportunity to increase beneficiaries' human dignity. These tools create flexibility and choice for different food options. Using a combined livelihood/conflict assessment to decide which tool(s) to use will enable humanitarian response and peacebuilding practitioners to gauge the broader impact of the program on the situation and vice versa. (While there is no intentionally designed combined livelihood/conflict assessment tool, livelihoods assessments have already been explicitly combined with conflict assessments, or conducted through a Do No Harm or conflict lens.)

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** Livelihood and food security operations; assessment, design and monitoring stages

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** Considerations include how cash or vouchers might exacerbate any tensions within the targeted community—for example, if women are given the cash, how will men respond?—and the security

aspect of using cash. Innovative programming, such as mobile or SMS cash transfers, should be considered to reduce the possibility of theft or violence.

Use conflict analysis to determine the impact of cash and/or vouchers on the local markets, as well as to assess the sustainability of such programs. For example, the analysis should contain information about the economic impact on the conflict or vice versa. Consider flagging conflict flashpoints that may compromise the program in the future, and create a contingency plan for such a scenario.

Look into the specific relationships within communities (between women and men, youth and elders, and different ethnicities) and identify ways the program can capitalize on positive relationships and connectors between groups or foster better relationships.

Continuously monitor the impact of the cash and/vouchers by updating the conflict analysis, with a particular focus on power and equity, both of which will be impacted by them.

# MINIMUM STANDARDS IN SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS

## SHELTER AND SETTLEMENT STANDARD 1: STRATEGIC PLANNING

*Shelter and settlement strategies contribute to the security, safety, health and well-being of both displaced and non-displaced affected populations and promote recovery and reconstruction where possible.*

**INDICATOR:** Shelter and settlement solutions to meet the essential needs of all the disaster-affected population are agreed with the population themselves and relevant authorities in coordination with all responding agencies (see *guidance note 1*). **Host communities and non-beneficiary groups are engaged in the planning of temporary and permanent settlement.**

**RATIONALE:** Shelter and settlement decisions contain significant power and equity implications for the affected and host communities and the regional and national population at large. Explicit efforts to understand the context while designing these interventions will allow the agency to identify opportunities to build positive relationships between communities directly and indirectly involved in the program.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** Refugee, IDP programs, livelihood and food security operations; assessment, design and monitoring stages

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** It is imperative to include the communities hosting or neighboring the affected population in the strategic planning of its settlement. The conflict analysis should include a section highlighting any tensions between these communities because of limited access to natural resources, land use, or decision-making based on identity politics.

Including community leaders in the discussions will incorporate their concerns (e.g., depletion of local supply of natural resources, access to and use of land, or inter-communal tensions) and will improve the program design. Furthermore, their buy-in will reduce the likelihood of conflict and foster a more stable, enabling environment for the program.



Identify and implement creative ideas for a connector project or projects (e.g., constructing a community school or well) so that the non-beneficiary community will benefit from engaging with this project.

# MINIMUM STANDARDS IN HEALTH ACTION

## HEALTH SYSTEMS STANDARD 4: HEALTH FINANCING

*People have access to free primary healthcare services for the duration of the disaster.*

**INDICATOR:** Primary healthcare services, **which incorporate mechanisms to ensure adequate levels of access, equity and security**, are provided to the disaster-affected population free of charge at all government and non-governmental organizations' facilities for the duration of the disaster response.

**RATIONALE:** Although a basic humanitarian principle is to provide free access to health services, the local context may often prohibit certain groups within the affected community from freely, equitably and safely accessing such services. Strengthen the institutional capacity of a government willing to deliver free health services that meet quality standards through the use of incentives and a partnership-based approach. If the government is unwilling and/or unable, work with community members, organizations and other humanitarian agencies to advocate for increased, more equitable access to better quality healthcare in the temporary environment.

**WHERE THIS APPLIES:** Health and medical operations; preparedness, assessment, design, implementation and monitoring stages

**GUIDANCE NOTES:** In the context of an incapable or hostile government that cannot or will not provide free services, consider providing cash and/or vouchers redeemable at health clinics. If the government is unwilling, identify reasons for this and consider any linkages to the identity profile (e.g., ethnicity, race, religion, etc.) of the benefitting community.

Consider ways to increase the quality of service provided if fees are removed by paying incentives to health clinic staff, providing additional medical supplies or offering technical support.

Create monitoring and evaluation indicators that measure the levels of access, equity and quality of the healthcare services. Review monitoring results frequently to revise planning if conflict arises between the service providers and the affected community.

In the evaluation stage, consider ways that the free services provided throughout the disaster will change when the funding ends or the crisis subsides. Focus on strengthening the institutional capacity of the local government structures so that the services will be sustained in an economically viable way after the program ends. Avoid creating dependency.

## ANNEX 1:

### **CONDUCTING A ‘GOOD ENOUGH’ CONFLICT ASSESSMENT**

The assessment phase of a humanitarian response is a critical time to incorporate conflict sensitivity, but it may be challenging to do so because of time pressures and logistical and security restraints. Therefore any conflict analysis must be practical and easily understood by field staff not trained in conflict sensitivity.

Table 1 below outlines a suggested ‘Good Enough’ Conflict Assessment that can be readily incorporated into the multi-sectoral assessment usually conducted at the beginning of the assessment stage. Including these questions in the first assessment will improve program design. More in-depth conflict analysis that draws on this initial ‘Good Enough’ analysis can be conducted at the program start-up or re-design stages. For information on when and how to conduct such an analysis, please refer to Annex 1 and 2 of the *How to Guide to Conflict Sensitivity*.

**TABLE 1: SUGGESTED ‘GOOD ENOUGH’ CONFLICT ASSESSMENT\***  
*Rapid conflict analysis for use in first-phase assessment*

CONFLICT CONTEXT
What is the history of the conflict in the area being assessed?
What is it about and how long has it been going on?
What groups are involved?
What divides these groups (e.g. caste, tribe, neighborhood affiliation) and what connects them (e.g. shared cultural practices, local peace initiatives)
Where are the conflict-affected areas geographically located?
Does conflict get worse at any particular time or period (time of day, season, during elections, during religious festivals etc.)?
What are the best, worst and most likely scenarios for the future of the conflict?
What does each scenario depend on?
POTENTIAL PROGRAM IMPACTS
How will the selection of beneficiaries relate to what connects and divides this community?
Are processes to assess needs and select beneficiaries transparent and well publicized?
Will the community be involved in this selection?
What are community and other local actors’ perceptions of the identity of project staff?
Does your agency have any role (real or perceived) in the conflict?
Do your partner agencies (local or international) have any role (real or perceived) in the conflict? What are their relationships with other actors? How are they perceived by the beneficiary community?

\*This is taken from Annex 1 of Nona Zicherman, with Aimal Khan, Anne Street, Heloise Heyer and Oliver Chevreau, *Applying conflict sensitivity in emergency response: Current practice and ways forward* by ODI Humanitarian Practice Network paper No. 70, October 2011, p. 21. Available at <http://www.odihpn.org/hpn-resources/network-papers/applying-conflict-sensitivity-in-emergency-response-current-practice-and-ways-forward>

## ANNEX 2:

### FURTHER RESOURCES, MATERIALS AND TOOLS

**CONFLICT SENSITIVITY MATERIALS AND TOOLS:** Key resource guides for how to apply and implement conflict sensitivity. Reference tools (specific tables, annexes or charts) from these key readings are highlighted to provide quick references and examples of applying conflict sensitivity.

- » Africa Peace Forum, Center for Conflict Resolution, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies, Forum on Early Warning and Early Response, International Alert, Saferworld, **Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: A Resource Pack**, London, 2004. Available at <http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/publications/conflict-sensitive-approaches-development-humanitarian-assistance-and-peacebuilding-res>

Chapter 2 contains information about conflict analysis and Annex 1 of Chapter 2 provides summaries of 15 conflict analysis frameworks. This can be useful for those looking to see which type of conflict analysis to apply in their intervention.

- » Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, **How to guide to conflict sensitivity**, February 2012. Available at [http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/sites/default/files/1/6602\\_HowToGuide\\_CSF\\_WEB\\_3.pdf](http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/sites/default/files/1/6602_HowToGuide_CSF_WEB_3.pdf)

While the 2004 Resource Pack (listed above) provides ample information about conflict sensitivity in all stages of the programming cycle, this how-to guide is shorter and provides more practical application for conflict sensitivity.

The Risk Matrix (on page 25) provides examples of potential conflict flashpoints and mitigating measures, which can be used as a reference for program staff thinking and reflecting about the impact of their intervention.

Annex 1 is a selection of conflict analysis tools that practitioners can use in order to capture different aspects of the conflict and humanitarian response context.

Annex 2 provides a table that outlines the steps and action needed to conduct a 'Good Enough' conflict analysis.

- » Morel, Dominique and Hagens, Clara. 2012. **Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning in Emergencies: A resource pack for simple and strong MEAL.** Available at <http://www.crsprogramquality.org/publications/2013/2/16/monitoring-evaluation-accountability-and-learning-in-emergen.html>

This resource pack is an expanded version of an earlier CRS publication, M&E in Emergencies: Tips and Tools by Loretta Ishida and others. It includes nearly a dozen brief tools, standards and guidelines for M&E humanitarian response professionals in the field:

- » Geoff Heinrich, David Legee, and Carrie Miller. **“A User’s Guide to Integral Human Development,”** Catholic Relief Services, 2008. Available at [http://www.crsprogramquality.org/storage/pubs/general/IHD\\_userguide.pdf](http://www.crsprogramquality.org/storage/pubs/general/IHD_userguide.pdf)

The IHD matrix (on pages 14–15) provides solid questions about how to apply the IHD framework. These questions can be easily incorporated into a conflict analysis or vice versa.

- » Nona Zicherman, with Aimal Khan, Anne Street, Heloise Heyer and Oliver Chevreau, **Applying conflict sensitivity in humanitarian response: Current practice and ways forward by ODI Humanitarian Practice Network paper No. 70**, October 2011. Available at <http://www.odihpn.org/hpn-resources/network-papers/applying-conflict-sensitivity-in-emergency-response-current-practice-and-ways-forward>

Annex 1 is a suggested ‘Good Enough’ conflict analysis table that provides a short list of important questions. This can easily be incorporated into a rapid assessment.

Annex 2 is a Post-Distribution Monitoring Checklist that can be referenced by staff during the monitoring phase of the program.

Table 1 (on page 15) provides a list of best practices for conflict-sensitive humanitarian response and can serve as a reference for program staff who need practical steps for applying a conflict sensitive approach.

**OTHER RESOURCES AND READINGS:** Important papers from within the field about the debate on conflict sensitivity

- » Anderson, Mary. *Do No Harm: How aid can support Peace – or War*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. Boulder Colorado, 1999.
- » Barbolet, Adam and Rachel Goldwyn, Hesta Groenewald and Andrew Sherriff, “*The Utility and Dilemmas of Conflict Sensitivity*,” April 2005. Available at [http://www.berghof-handbook.net/documents/publications/dialogue4\\_barbolet\\_et al.pdf](http://www.berghof-handbook.net/documents/publications/dialogue4_barbolet_et al.pdf)
- » Catley, Andy and Alula Iyasu. *Moving Up or Moving Out? A Rapid Livelihoods and Conflict Analysis in Mieso-Mulu Woreda, Shinile Zone, Somali Region, Ethiopia*. 2010. Feinstein International Center and Mercy Corps. Available at <http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/289.pdf>
- » CDA, “*Local Perceptions of International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations*,” CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, Inc., 2011. Available at <http://www.oecd.org/development/incaf/48697077.pdf>
- » *Emergency Capacity Building Project, Impact Measurement and Accountability in Emergencies: The Good Enough Guide*, 2005. Available at <http://www.ecbproject.org/inside-the-guide/view-the-good-enough-guide>
- » Frankenberger, Timothy R. “*Can Food Assistance Promoting Food Security and Livelihood Programs Contribute to Peace and Stability in Specific Countries?*” Working Paper, 17 Aug 2012.
- » Frankenberger, Timothy R., with Tom Spangler, Suzanne Nelson and Mark Langworthy. “*Enhancing Resilience to Food Insecurity amid Protracted Crisis*,” Working Paper, 17 Aug 2012.
- » Jaspers, Susanne and David Maxwell. “*Food Security and livelihood programming in conflict: a review*,” Humanitarian Practice Network at ODI, March 2009 Number 65.
- » OECD, *International Engagement in Fragile States: Can’t we do better?* OECD Publishing, 2011. Available at <http://www.oecd.org/countries/somalia/48697077.pdf>



- » OECD, *Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations*, OECD, Paris, 2007.
- » Rogers, Mark, Aaron Chassy and Tom Bamat, *“Integrating Peacebuilding into Humanitarian and Development Programming,”* Catholic Relief Services, 2010. (See Appendix 2 for an example of how conflict sensitivity was applied to a CRS development project in Azerbaijan.)

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