**The Challenges of Monitoring and Evaluating Conflict Sensitivity (1 June, 2016).**

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**What is Conflict Sensitivity?**

*Comment: Conflict sensitivity is an approach wherein an organisation understands the issues that divide societies, and the underlying reasons, in order to target programs that promote peace.*

There are three steps to a conflict sensitive approach:   
1) understand the context in which you operate (conflict analysis)   
2) understand the interaction between the program intervention and the context (YOU are part of the context!)   
3) act upon that understanding in order to minimize negative impacts (DNH) and maximize positive impacts on conflict

All phases: planning, design, implementation, M&E.

**Monitoring and evaluating with Conflict Sensitivity:** There is monitoring and evaluating in a conflict sensitive manner. And there is M&E of conflict sensitivity.

**Monitoring (Process) vs. Evaluation (Outcome) –** Conflict sensitivity involves both: monitoring the context and project influence in order to adapt programming, as well as evaluating the final impact (positive or negative) of the project and whether the project achieved its objectives (including being conflict sensitive).

**Monitoring:** In this field, there are generally two types of indicators:

1. Conflict/context indicators

* Conflict analysis (baseline)
* Changes in context (ongoing monitoring conflict and tension) to feed into programming decisions

1. Interaction indicators

* Is the MEAL framework conflict sensitive? Disaggregation of data (religion, gender, ethnicity – division and conflict lines)
* Interaction of conflict on the project: risks and mitigating risks
* Project effect on the conflict
  + Perceptions of the community
* Unintended consequences and effects

***Example 1: Conflict monitoring***

Following baseline conflict analysis, the context should be monitored for changes.

Sample query: Level of tension tension/conflict between group A and B

Indicator: a) # incidents of inter-ethnic violence, including physical attacks and attacks on property in three-month period b) % on perceptions of security and safety in communities

***Example 2: Making the MEAL framework conflict sensitive:***

Activity: Distributing IEC Materials for child protection awareness raising activity in Northern Shan

Risk: Different languages spoken in the communities. eg: In Namkham, host communities only speak Shan and IDP communities speak Kachin

Traditional Indicator:

a) Number of IEC materials developed and distributed

b) Number of community members attending community-based awareness sessions

Conflict Sensitive Indicator:

a) Number of IEC materials developed and distributed in each language

b) Number of members from each community attending community-based awareness sessions

Comment*: this activity and CS indicator is tangible, concrete, qualitative. The following risk is related to process/Conflict sensitive implementation:*

***Example 3: Conflict Sensitive implementation***

Activity: Training on Mine Risk Education with CSO

Risk: EAO misunderstand training and believe it is a mine *clearance* training, putting staff and participants at risk of tension and conflict

Mitigation: Adapt approach by using clear terminology or sharing of clear information and being transparent; conduct participatory approaches / consultations with community, and gain approval before conducting activity.

**Why do we gather Conflict Sensitive monitoring and evaluation data?**

* To keep on top of context and changing dynamics
* Inform program activities during program implementation
* Inform strategic decision-making
* Avoid programme challenges and find solutions (esp to foster peace, but at minimum DNH)
* Help strengthen relationships with beneficiaries, communities, and other stakeholders

**Challenges**

1. Mainstreaming: Institutional buy-in from both donor + organization
   1. Lack of understanding of importance
   2. Time and budget (incorporating C.S. into proposal development and budgets)
2. Level of analysis:
   1. Program/field (local) vs high-level (national)
   2. How to make theory applicable? Combining local context knowledge with theoretical knowledge
3. Sharing of information – what to do with the information?
   1. Internal – between staff. Focal point/consolidating information
   2. External – coordination/resources between organizations
4. Staff Capacity and resources:
   1. Ensure correct staff profiling to conduct M&E
   2. Context knowledge vs. Conflict sensitivity knowledge
   3. *Also internal sensitivity, especially if working with partners.*
5. Tools and data collection
   1. Data collection must be conflict sensitive
   2. Which tools? Indicators do not tell us everything!
      1. Triangulation of information: qualitative data collection necessary: FDG, KSI. (Misinformation and rumours are rampant in this country, cannot rely on one source)
      2. Frequency (time and budget…)
   3. Local understanding and perceptions of conflict sensitivity
      1. Take the time for consultations with community to understand their view of how the project affects their context (consideration of local view should be at the heart of conflict sensitivity)
   4. Who to undertake M&E? Staffing allocation/representation