

### 2.3. Did conflict sensitivity work?

A key challenge when undertaking **conflict-sensitive evaluation is the issue of agency or causality** – *to what extent and how did the integration of conflict sensitivity prevent conflict or positively influence conflict in the intervention context?* For example, a WASH partner NGO may be working in a remote village to provide equitable access to water resources to two ethnic groups who have historically competed and clashed over water access. Following the successful implementation of the intervention, evaluators using interaction indicators find that there has been a decrease in water-related incidents since the intervention started. The challenge of conflict-sensitive evaluation lies in finding out the reason for this change: *is this change a result of the project intervention? Of interventions by other actors operating at the same and other levels? Or of changes in the context that are unrelated to external actors?*<sup>9</sup>

In these situations, **‘good enough’ thinking is appropriate** as conflict-sensitive monitoring and evaluation can never provide absolute certainty. It is nevertheless important to anticipate the challenge posed by cause and effect when developing conflict-sensitive indicators. Good conflict-sensitive indicators often do not seek to address the interaction between the project and the context directly, but focus instead on more indirect factors influencing this interaction.<sup>10</sup> In relation to the above example, the question that a ‘good enough’ indicator would help us to answer is not ‘did my project contribute to a decrease in water-related clashes?’ Instead we might want to answer questions such as: *‘what are the historical trends of water related clashes in the context (seasonal and pre-intervention)?’* or *‘what has changed in the context beyond the new WASH intervention?’*

9 Saferworld, ‘Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding – A resource pack’, 2004, <https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/148-conflict->; Chapter 3, Module 3

10 Ibid.

11 See Saferworld, ‘Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding - A resource pack’, 2004, <https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/148-conflict->; pp. 27–29.

### 2.4. ‘Good enough’ conflict-sensitive M&E

Integrating conflict sensitivity into WASH M&E does not need to be a complex process and it does not require specialized expertise. A pragmatic approach can be adopted to support a light touch integration of conflict sensitivity when monitoring WASH interventions in FCCs. For example, participatory and community-based feedback mechanisms or Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) processes can be leveraged as effective conflict-sensitivity M&E tools to gather data about conflict dynamics and relevant interactions with programming.<sup>11</sup> Established data collection platform such as the **WASH Bottleneck Analysis Tool** can be applied to support conflict-sensitive M&E. Another pragmatic way to integrate minimum required conflict sensitivity into M&E is by **using existing WASH indicators and disaggregating by relevant categories**. The disaggregation of data by age, sex, and relevant categories to WASH–conflict interactions (e.g. geography, ethnicity, etc.) is essential to ensure the monitoring of equity, often a key dimension of conflict and already common practice in WASH programming in FCCs. **UNICEF equity focus** can provide a useful entry point to strengthen the conflict sensitivity of M&E, when differences in access to WASH services or perceptions of exclusion from these services are causing or worsening conflict. For example, a typical WASH indicator such as ‘number of children accessing handwashing facilities in school A’ can be disaggregated by geography/ethnicity and help to identify and monitor disparities and exclusion that may be causing grievances about the prevalence of disease among children belonging to marginalized minority communities.



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*As noted in the CPA Guide, the **WASH Bottleneck Analysis Tool (WASH BAT)** is a relevant platform and process to analyse relevant WASH–conflict interactions and monitor contributions to resilience and peace in the WASH sector and system strengthening interventions in FCCs. Its new modules for risk analysis and additional criteria for emergency and fragile contexts include indicators that can support the collection of relevant data.*