



WATER AND CONFLICT: A TOOLKIT FOR PROGRAMMING

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Addressing Climate Security: Toolkits for Action
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What's new/what's the same?

2014 Toolkit

- Building on evidence on linkages between water security, conflict, and cooperation
- Links to key issues and sectors, like agriculture, migration, and governance
- Applying conflict sensitivity and Do No Harm approaches
- Lessons learned from past programming



2023 Toolkit

- Broadened to include:
 - WASH service delivery in the midst of conflict
 - Links between water security and peacebuilding
- Addition of cross-cutting issues and Administration priorities
- Conflict integration framing
- More recent programming examples
- Conflict Analysis guide

TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

Purpose: This toolkit explains the connection between water management and key risk factors associated with conflict, provides avenues for addressing those links, and suggests ways to incorporate conflict integration into **Water Security, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WSSH)** programming.

Four main sections:

- Background on water and conflict
 - Cross-cutting themes
- Cross-sectoral considerations for water programming
- WSSH best practices and programming strategies
 - Monitoring, evaluation, and learning
- Conflict analysis guide

Annexes: USAID strategic priorities and a table summarizing considerations and resources for each stage of the USAID Program Cycle



LINKAGES BETWEEN WSSH AND CONFLICT

Conflict prevention and WSSH programming

- Water-related disputes can trigger new conflict, exacerbate existing conflict, and/or act as multipliers of conflict risk

Conflict impacts on WASH service delivery

- Conflict can significantly compromise access to safe WASH services through direct and incidental impacts

WSSH, stabilization, and peacebuilding

- Improving water resource management and providing timely and affordable WASH services can help support livelihoods, reduce inequality, and increase trust in governments



CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

- Advancing WSSH and proactively mitigating conflict risks requires addressing multiple cross-cutting issues in relation to water throughout the program cycle:
 - Governance/institutional challenges
 - Gender and marginalized populations
 - Climate change
 - Data and transparency



Photo credit: USAID/Pakistan

CROSS-SECTORAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR WATER PROGRAMMING

Understanding interdependencies between WSSH, conflict, and other development sectors is important for incorporating conflict integration, mitigating conflict risks, and advancing programming for expanding access to water and sanitation.

- Disaster risk reduction
- Human migration and demographics
- Agriculture and food security
- Energy
- Health and wellbeing
- Environment and ecosystems



Photo credit: Morgana Wingard for USAID

Best practices and programming strategies



Programming related to conflict prevention

- Strengthen local water agencies to improve self-sufficiency (Nigeria: E-WASH)
- Support community-led water management initiatives (Kyrgyzstan: WUA Support Program)
- Leverage nature-based solutions for resilience (Southern Africa: Resilient Waters Program)

Programming in conflict-affected contexts

- Promote flexibility and coherence of humanitarian-development-peace assistance (Philippines: MRP and SURGE)
- Identify opportunities to strengthen inclusive water governance (Niger and Burkina Faso: TEV:RISE II)
- Enhance public engagement to prevent gender-based violence (South Sudan: Integrated WASH/GBV)

Programming related to peacebuilding and stabilization

- Increase access to sustainable WASH services (Haiti: WATSAN)
- Strengthen water governance structures and institutional capacity (South Sudan: WRAPP)
- Facilitate meaningful participation in water planning (Jordan: CBIWDM)

CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND WATER

- Conflict analyses are tools to help practitioners diagnose and respond to context-specific conflict dynamics.
- They assess patterns of grievance and resilience, account for emerging issues and trends, and identify key actors and their interests.
- Key information areas to diagnose and respond to water and conflict dynamics include:



Broader conflict context



Gender considerations



Socio-economic considerations



Conflict damages and recovery



Institutional considerations



Accounting for emerging issues



Environmental considerations



Understanding key actors



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MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING (MEL)

- **Monitoring:**
 - Capture early warning indicators and perception-based information
 - Use alternate methods, including third-party monitoring
- **Evaluation:**
 - Consider conflict dynamics in designing evaluations
 - Use developmental evaluations
- **Learning:**
 - Study past evaluations and update theories of change



KEY TERMS

Water security, sanitation, and hygiene (WSSH) encompasses water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), as well as water resources used for supporting ecosystems, livelihoods, and industry (e.g., irrigation and hydropower). WSSH is fundamental to achieving prosperity, health, stability, and resilience.

Conflict sensitivity is the ability of an organization engaged in any kind of intervention to:

1. Understand the conflict dynamics in the context in which it operates, particularly with respect to inter-group relations;
2. Understand the interaction between the intervention and the conflict dynamics in the context; and
3. Act upon this understanding in order to minimize unintended negative impacts and maximize positive impacts of the intervention on the context of conflict.

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.

PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

- This toolkit explains the connection between water management and key risk factors associated with conflict, provides avenues for addressing those links, and suggests ways to incorporate conflict integration into WSSH programming.
- Primary audience:
 - Implementing partners for water programming
 - USAID staff
 - Other stakeholders who work to advance the whole-of-government White House Water Security Action Plan, the US Government Global Water Strategy, and the associated USAID Agency Plan
- Intended to guide design, implementation, and MEL across all USAID WSSH programming, but especially aligns with Strategic Objective 4 of the 2022 Global Water Strategy: *Anticipate and reduce conflict and fragility related to water.*

PROGRAMMING RELATED TO CONFLICT PREVENTION

Key takeaways:

- Strengthen local water agencies to improve self-sufficiency (Nigeria: E-WASH)
- Support community-led water management initiatives (Kyrgyzstan: WUA Support Program)
- Leverage nature-based solutions for resilience (Southern Africa: Resilient Waters Program)



PROGRAMMING IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED CONTEXT

Key takeaways:

- Promote flexibility and coherence of humanitarian-development-peace assistance (Philippines: MRP and SURGE)
- Identify opportunities to strengthen inclusive water governance (Niger and Burkina Faso:TEV:RISE II)
- Enhance public engagement to prevent gender-based violence (South Sudan: Integrated WASH/GBV)



PROGRAMMING RELATED TO STABILIZATION AND PEACEBUILDING

Key takeaways:

- Increase access to sustainable WASH services (Haiti: WATSAN)
- Strengthen water governance structures and institutional capacity (South Sudan: WRAPP)
- Facilitate meaningful participation in water planning (Jordan: CBIWDM)



— ANNEX: CASE STUDIES



NIGERIA

- **Context:** Rapidly urbanizing places across Nigeria lack access to clean water and WASH; effective state agencies are essential to ensure access
- **Program:** E-WASH → 5-year program to strengthen state water corporations.
 - Helped 5 utilities modernize bill collection and monitor water quality
- **Lessons:** Local capacity underscores conflict prevention; COVID-19 created chance to promote regular handwashing



KYRGYZSTAN

- **Context:** A WUA was created to resolve management problems but conflicts persisted due to perceptions of inequitable water distribution
- **Program:** The USAID WUA Support Program
 - strengthened 110 WUAs in improving financial transparency
 - provided resources to construct a permanent diversion dam
- **Lessons:** Increasing agricultural water supply support livelihood security and reduces risk of conflict; Strengthening WUAs improves long-term water management



SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Context:** The Limpopo River Basin is under stress from pollution, overpumping, and climate change effects → cross-scalar cooperation is need to minimize conflict risks
- **Program:** The Resilient Waters Program increases water security and improves transboundary water management through
 - providing grants to local orgs to conduct adaptation activities
 - coordination with authorities to map aquifers and monitor water levels
- **Lessons:** Building resilience requires strengthening local capacity; coordinating data collection early creates sustainable collaborative processes



PHILIPPINES

- **Context:** Armed conflict besieged Marawi City and internally displaced 90% of the city's population, adding pressure on host communities
- **Program:** Marawi Response Project (MRP) and Strengthening Urban Resilience for Growth and Equity (SURGE)
 - collaborated with local governments and the private sector to assist IDPs
 - upgrades water infrastructure as demanded locally
- **Lessons:** Pairing short-term response with longer-term economic revitalization helps build resilience and social cohesion; collaborating with private sector can lead to faster recovery of economic livelihoods



NIGER & BURKINA FASO

- **Context:** Both countries have low rates of access to safe WASH and are susceptible to conflict and displacement from political instability, armed conflict, and climate-induced floods and droughts
- **Program:** The TerresEauVie (TEV) Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced (RISE II) activity
 - mapped water access and groundwater supply
 - established communal guidelines for natural resource protection
- **Lessons:** Engaging stakeholders across water, food, and land can build cooperation; adapting to changing circumstances in conflict-sensitive ways is essential (e.g., the program's use of COVID-specific gender analysis)



SOUTH SUDAN

- **Context:** Over 60% of South Sudan's population practices open defecation, and women and girls are particularly vulnerable to gender-based violence (GBV)
- **Program:** The Integrated WASH/GBV project worked with communities to
 - build WASH infrastructure
 - encourage women's leadership in water management
- **Lessons:** Addressing gender norms in WASH requires multiple approaches (e.g., raising community knowledge, increasing women's leadership, and providing WASH items and dignity kits); Enhancing infrastructural support for women contributes to reducing real and perceived conflict



HAITI

- **Context:** Haiti has one of the lowest rates of access to improved WASH and water-borne diseases have worsened due to the 2010 earthquake and Hurricane Matthew in 2016 → grievances increase the risk of conflict
- **Program:** The Haiti Water and Sanitation Project (WATSAN) improved WASH access by
 - strengthening training for nine water and sanitation institutions
 - supporting municipal water utilities to function as independent businesses
- **Lessons:** Making utilities more resilient to future natural disasters requires encouraging self-sufficiency; leveraging digital technology empowers institutions to maintain critical data that sustain water services



SOUTH SUDAN

- **Context:** Following two decades of civil war, South Sudan faced many challenges in providing equitable access to safe WASH, which can turn existing tensions into conflict
- **Program:** The Water for Recovery and Peace Program (WRAPP) in South Sudan provided water services for peacebuilding through
 - building community water management committees
 - offering training in gender equity
- **Lessons:** Consulting with local stakeholders when building water points can improve transparency and shared understanding; emphasizing equity helps ensure communities have an interest in sustaining water supply services



JORDAN

- **Context:** Jordan is water scarce and faces water losses from leaks, theft, and other violations; the arrival of Syrian refugees since 2013 has increased water demand and tensions between people
- **Program:** The Community-Based Initiatives for Water Demand Management (CBIWDM) project helped strengthen capacity for community-based organizations (CBOs) in 135 communities by
 - helping to operate loans to fund water-saving projects
 - increasing community involvement in managing demand
- **Lessons:** Improving water use efficiency builds resilience; involving host communities and integrative planning bolsters local capacity

