

# Reflective PEACEBUILDING

A PLANNING, MONITORING, AND  
LEARNING TOOLKIT

WRITTEN BY

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THE JOAN B. KROC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE STUDIES,  
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME  
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## P R E F A C E

We hope that peacebuilding practitioners will find the contents of this *Toolkit* useful, practical, simple, yet capable of generating deep insights about peacebuilding impact, change and effectiveness.

The tools were designed by practitioners and scholar-practitioners for use at the community-level. They were developed over several years, as part of a learning collaboration between Catholic Relief Services (CRS) program staff in Southeast Asia, and faculty and students at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies. They have had hands-on testing with practitioners from around the globe.

The goal of this *Toolkit* is to improve peacebuilders' ability to be *reflective practitioners*; this involves enhancing peacebuilders' capacity to design and impact transformative change, and track and improve upon those changes over time, in unpredictable conflict contexts.

The tools themselves can stand alone or augment established design, monitoring, evaluation and learning systems and practices. They are intended to help focus on dimensions specific to peacebuilding work and provide practitioners with resources for enhancing their creativity in developing context-specific learning, monitoring and evaluation systems.

The overarching theme of the *Toolkit* is *learning before, during and after* implementation of peacebuilding programs. Chapters one to three explore the connections between learning and effective peacebuilding practice, and suggest practices for reflection and learning as individuals and communities. Ethical considerations for monitoring, evaluation and learning are the focus of chapter four. Chapters five through eight examine the types of change that peacebuilding practice promotes, and provide tools to further understand change, as well as to develop indicators to trace those changes over time. Planning for long-term change and scaling up activities are the subjects of chapters nine and ten. The *Toolkit* then turns to monitoring and evaluation practices in chapters eleven and twelve, and concludes with a chapter on documentation practices that can enhance learning.

We are grateful to the United States Institute of Peace's Grant Program for their support, which enabled us to refine, test and produce these tools in a formal toolkit. We want to thank our many colleagues for helping test tools and for contributing their excellent ideas and insights. Finally, we want to particularly acknowledge and thank Brenda Fitzpatrick for her editing skills, and Orson Sargado for assisting in the toolkit's production.

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# CHAPTER 1

## THE CHALLENGE OF PEACEBUILDING EVALUATION AND MONITORING



Many of you using this toolkit likely work for nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); in the past decade, the world of NGOs has programmatically engaged the call to respond more proactively and creatively to settings of deep social conflict, and build initiatives that promote peace and conflict transformation. At the same time the mainstay of NGO work—community development and/or relief work—has increased the explicit focus on evaluation, encouraged by the goal of using donor funding more effectively and efficiently.

Those who are engaged in development and peacebuilding work know that in the developing countries where NGOs focus their attention, open, violent conflict slows, if not destroys, community development projects, and is often a primary reason that extensive emergency aid and relief programs are needed in the first place. They also know intuitively that efforts to rebuild trust, encourage dialogue between conflicting groups, or heal divisions and wounds between them makes sense and makes a difference. However, the perplexing question posed by donors and practitioners alike remains: “How exactly do we measure the difference we hope we are making?” “How exactly do we measure peace?”

Evaluating peacebuilding creates complex challenges for a number of reasons. A few of the most important include the following:

- Peacebuilders work in highly-charged crisis settings that simultaneously demand both immediate action and thoughtful efforts to produce change to root causes. Deeper change goals require a long-term approach to deal with historical structural issues and injustices

not easily addressed or transformed in the crisis timeframe. Peacebuilders must find creative strategies to be effective in the moment of crisis, and, at the same time, consider changes across decades, all within tight project timelines and limited funding.

- Deep-rooted conflict contexts can easily and unpredictably spiral into unexpected renewed violence, destroying months, even years of peacebuilding work. Rarely do practitioners control the social or political events that affect their work; they must maintain the patience and vision to start over again.
- Peacebuilding requires the building of relationships and trust, without which little can be accomplished. Yet neither relationships nor trust are easily measured in objective or quantitative ways.
- Good peacebuilding practices are very similar to good sustainable development strategies; for example, building sufficient community participation and consensus is a requirement for both successful peacebuilding and successful development. It is not easy to distinguish development practice from peacebuilding.
- Sustainable peace requires a convergence of activities, and actors, in different spheres and at different levels, from local to global. It can be difficult, if not impossible, to attribute particular changes to particular processes or projects.
- Many peacebuilding projects include the **prevention** of destructive or violent conflict as a goal—yet how to measure a crisis that never erupted?

This **Toolkit** proposes a variety of ideas for evaluating and learning from peacebuilding projects, even in the face of these questions and challenges. It begins from the basic premises listed below.

First, we propose that peacebuilding is a complex, multifaceted process of change. Understanding and evaluating peacebuilding work requires a variety of tools and avenues of inquiry into how change processes operate; peacebuilding evaluation, therefore, cannot be a simple matter of measuring a final result.

Second, and closely related, our approach places special emphasis on **monitoring-** and **evaluation-as-learning**, rather than **evaluation-as-measuring results**, encouraging peacebuilders to build their capacity to learn about the change processes they promote. We support the development of **reflective practice**—building knowledge, understanding and improvement of practice through explicit and disciplined reflection.

Third, we suggest that learning is constant. In other words, it happens before, during and after projects, creating a clear link between monitoring, evaluation and learning. We do not understand evaluation as merely a form of assessment at the end of projects, but part of a learning process that requires continuous reflection.

Finally, given this focus on the reflective practitioner, we propose tools that we feel are accessible, “doable,” and can easily be incorporated into the intense, often hectic daily work patterns of peace practitioners. We have assumed that **the biggest challenge for practitioners concerns building disciplines that foster reflection, the explicit building of knowledge, and the development of theory**—three arenas of emphasis too often placed at the margin of the busy practitioner’s life.

We now turn our attention to the challenge of becoming a reflective practitioner.

## CHAPTER 2

### REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONERS



**K**ey to this toolkit is the idea of **reflective practice**. Practitioners are dedicated, hard-working people who think clearly and work hard to complete their proposed projects—so our use of the word “reflective” does not imply that practitioners do not think! Rather, we encourage people to think about their work in different ways through reflective practice. Specifically, we suggest that beyond hard work and solid planning, peacebuilders reflect explicitly on “how things work,” on what they have **learned from experience**, and on developing **experience-based theory**.

In the world of development NGOs or of peacebuilding generally, a **practitioner works** hard in the field, and the **theorist studies** the work in the field, but often with the luxury of considerable distance from the day-to-day demands of on-the-ground programs. Rare is the practitioner who thinks about, much less builds, theory, or the theorist who ventures to live under the duress of project timelines and demands. Sometimes this results in a very real tension between practice and theory; however, this **Toolkit** suggests that practitioners already possess and can continue to hone the capacities and skills often associated with theorists. This is the **reflective practitioner**: a person who includes time to dig into and elaborate the too-often implicit **theories of change** that guide his or her daily activity and projects. We believe this can happen through two simple disciplines: **demystifying theory** and **remystifying practice**.

#### Demystify Theory

Understanding theory, and seeing ourselves as theorists, is a matter of recognizing the pervasiveness of theory in everyday life. Theory should not be approached as abstract and intellectually difficult, for academics only. In fact, theory is straightforward:

a theory is an assumption about how something works, or a prediction of what will happen as a result of an action. Social change theories usually refer to one of two things:

- How are things connected and related?
- What is the peacebuilders' best guess about how such things “work” in the real world?

In the peacebuilding context, demystifying theory means making explicit the underlying assumptions about how things work, about how particular actions or processes create consequences, in environments of conflict and change. For example, we want to learn about how we impact social phenomena such as participation, trust, violence, respect, and so forth.

There is no magic formula for creating a good theory. It may come from hard work, sometimes luck, often from intuition based on experience in a given situation. To build a useful theory, it is, however, vital for peacebuilders to pay close attention to what they do know, to their assumptions about peacebuilding, conflict, and social change, and to things that are often taken for granted.

Suggestions for nurturing the discipline of theory building include the following:

- **Be descriptive** — Push yourself to describe how you think things relate and why an activity may encourage something you hope to build or discourage something you hope to avoid.
- **Be annoyingly inquisitive** — Keep asking yourself and others *why* you think a process works the way it does and *how* you have chosen to do it, given your hoped-for outcomes.
- **Be predictive** — Suggest, draw and identify the cause-and-effect relationships of actions and results you think are connected. Does doing **A** and **B** help create **C**?

- **Be systemic** — Go beyond cause-and-effect to look at the wider context and history. Cause-and-effect thinking predicts that action **A** will produce result **B**; systemic thinking not only observes that, in a particular setting, **A**, **B**, and **C** tend to be present when a particular pattern emerges, but also asks, “What else is going on in this context?” “What visible and invisible factors are combining in the overall system to produce this result?”
- **Be comparative** — Relate your problem, your analysis, your ideas and theory to what others have proposed. How do the explanations of others compare to your experience?
- **Be wild** — Many of the most powerful theories in history have emerged when somebody suggested an idea that “broke out of the box.” Try out ideas even if at first they seem wild. Remember, a theory is not *The Truth*, just a guess about how things work that needs to be tested.

## Remystify Practice

For seasoned practitioners, project implementation is an intense round of daily tasks and logistical matters required to complete activities on time. Life may seem full of details and deadlines, with precious little opportunity to reflect, much less develop theory. Remystifying practice does not mean seeing daily activities and details as unimportant, but rather sharpening capacities that are too often left unattended. Peacebuilding work and practice pose an interesting puzzle to be approached with curiosity. Peacebuilding, in its essence, is an extraordinary opportunity, the challenge of being engaged in nurturing complex and positive social change. There is so much to be learned, and sustaining continuous learning requires peacebuilders to remain curious about how it “all really works.” For the curious, practice is a mystery, not just a job or an endless succession of details.

How to sharpen this sense of mystery and curiosity? A few suggestions:

- **Keep asking why** — Ask *why* not only about the nature of the project, but about *how* particular activities are related to project outcomes. How and why are they connected?
- **When you ask why, listen for “because”** — When people, especially local partners, explain why they think something works the way it does they often start their explanation with some form of “because.” Listen carefully for this explanation. Dig deeper. Go beyond the initial “because” to find the reasons and unspoken ideas behind the rationale. This often leads to uncovering unspoken assumptions and implicit theories of change.
- **Learn from failure** — When things do not go the way you hoped they would, find an opportunity to stop, think, and reflect at a deeper level. The great gift of failure is that it so often promotes learning, while the tragedy of success is that it is easy to assume things happened exactly as expected and neglect the opportunity to learn. Take advantage of failure to frame it as *learning*, not disaster.
- **Watch carefully for the unexpected** — Little things along the way that almost go unnoticed and unexpected changes often provide insight into the complexity of the change process. Become attentive to these moments.
- **Discuss your projects with different people** — Too often peacebuilders talk only with like-minded people. The more diverse the range of people you talk to about your ideas and projects, the more likely you are to encounter other perspectives and other ways of explaining change processes, in turn greatly increasing your curiosity about how things really are working.



## TOOLS FOR REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONERS

- **Keep a journal**

A journal can be a running notebook of experiences, ideas, conversations, and insights. The key is to find some way to keep track of your learning and experiences, which later can be useful for building ideas toward theory and deeper learning.

- **Keep a small notebook of theories**

If a journal feels like too much on a daily or weekly basis, try keeping a small notebook handy where you track only your ideas about emerging theory. This does not have to be polished—just track the ways you link things. For example:

*More contact with community = great trust;  
When women meet alone they tell truth in a different way;  
When youth are not visible in village, violence is about to erupt.*

- **Start a collection of popular sayings, proverbs and insights**

Try to keep a small notebook for insights you hear from everyday conversations. Sometimes these may be old proverbs or sayings, and sometimes someone in conversation will capture a complex problem in a great little twist of words. Later your collection will be a useful starting point for examining local ideas and theories more closely. Everyday conversation can be an excellent source for inspiring reflection. For example, of political changes in Liberia, the people used to say, “Same taxi, different driver.” A proverb sums up a Somali perspective: “What old people see, seated at the base of the tree, young people cannot see even from the branches.”

- **Add a new section to your trip or monthly reports**

Most NGO workers have to submit some kind of reporting. Often these can be repetitive and dry accounts of activities and accomplishments. Try adding a little reflective or theory spice! Develop a small section of every report where you describe the theory of the month, or ideas worth testing.

- **Add a ‘theory tester’ to your team**

Add and/or rotate among your team members the role of “theory tester,” who will interview team members about their theories of change, helping the team to watch for and further develop theories that are often unspoken in the program.

- **Create monthly or yearly theory sessions**

Meetings happen on a regular basis. What rarely happens is for a project team to make time to “think theory” alongside their practice. Add an hour a month or one special meeting a year where you, as a team, try to make more explicit your theory (or theories) from experience.

- **See Chapter 6 for more tools to help uncover your implicit theories of change**

## CHAPTER 3

## LEARNING COMMUNITIES



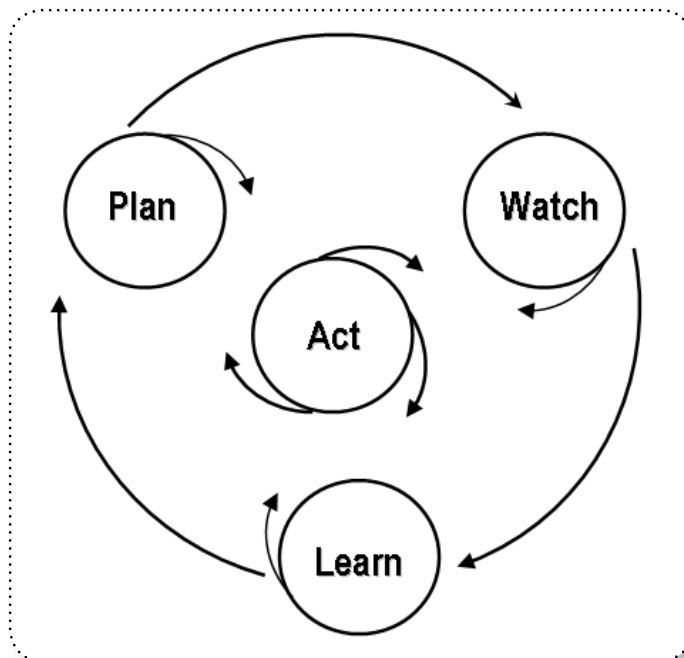
Peacebuilding practice is enhanced by regular reflection and learning. Learning is an individual as well as a group or organizational activity—the people and systems surrounding peacebuilders can help or hinder their ability to reflect on, analyze, react to, and apply information and lessons about peacebuilding. We need to remystify practice not only as individuals, but also as communities of peacebuilders.

Peacebuilding practitioners can develop regular practices and systems for reflection and learning as part of a simple cycle. In Box 3.1, a model of this cycle places peacebuilding activities and actions at the center, akin to the eye of a storm. The eye does not stay in one place but moves over time as the pressures, within and outside, shift. Conflict environments are notoriously dynamic, affecting our actions, what is possible and what is needed.

Around the eye, feeding into it, are three closely related stages of a cycle: plan-watch-learn. In planning, we decide what to do, how to do it, and why, based on our analysis of the context. We then closely watch our actions and the evolving context. In the learning phase, we reflect on what is happening, sift and integrate lessons and adapt our actions.

In this model, planning affects action, which directly affects future planning and action. **Responsiveness becomes a strength**, not an indication of a lack of planning or follow-through. Adaptations demonstrate that lessons and experiences were learned and applied.

This action-reflection cycle can be used on its own, or within development project cycles, which have assessment, design, monitoring and evaluation stages. For example, CRS has integrated this cycle into its project cycle, particularly the

**BOX 3.1 ACTION-REFLECTION MODEL**

Source: based on Lederach's work with the Nairobi Peace Institute and NCKK, 2001.

**BOX 3.2 LEARNING IS... DIGESTING**

- Finding something new to enhance or change the direction of a program, or affirming the current direction;
- Analyzing the dynamics of broad change;
- Reflecting on why it is happening;
- Figuring out what to do next and doing it.

monitoring phase, which is depicted in Box 3.3. The action-reflection cycle is intentionally short and should be a regular learning forum where peacebuilders and other stakeholders can engage and discuss particular actions, or changes in the context. For ideas about how to do this, see the **Tools** section.

**Benefits from Learning**

Busy schedules and the perceived or real limits of what donors will fund often constrain peacebuilders' ability to find time to reflect. However, there are very concrete benefits for peacebuilding programming using a learning approach.

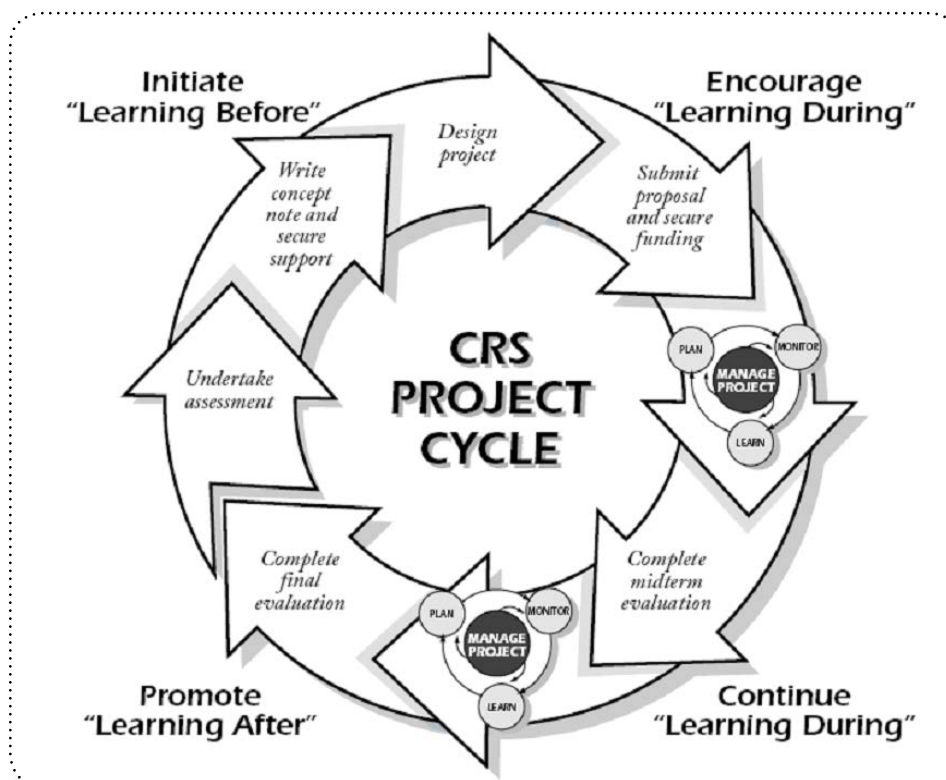
Benefits practitioners have seen from regular reflection include:

- Helping projects and programs keep-up with unexpected events;
- Promoting creative thinking and responses amongst staff and partners;
- Providing opportunities to strengthen relationships and partnerships outside of finance-related visits;
- Enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of programs;
- Providing opportunities to enhance organizational capacity and maximize limited staff and financial resources.

**Learning communities** can strengthen a learning approach by encouraging practitioners to carve out time, space, and resources for regular learning, and by enriching the learning itself. Learning communities can involve various circles of people, depending on the purpose of the learning event. We have found it fruitful at different times to include all staff on a team, as well as partners, community members, scholars, government officials, and representatives of funding agencies, when reflecting on program interventions. The example below explains how our own CRS-Kroc Institute learning community functions; this community involves CRS program staff, regional technical staff, country representatives, community-based partners, Kroc faculty and students. Ideas for documenting learning, an important practice of the CRS-Kroc institute learning community process, are explored in **Chapter 13**.



## BOX 3.3 ACTION-REFLECTION WITHIN THE PROJECT CYCLE



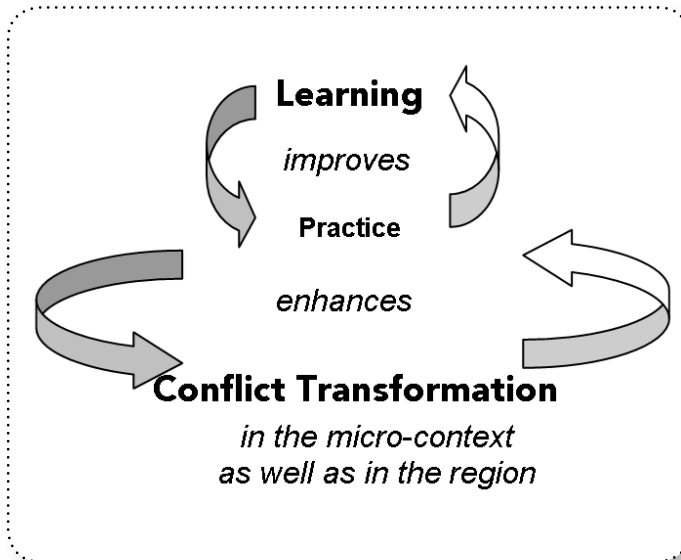
Source: Stetson et al, 2004.

### Example: Learning as a Community The Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies and CRS SEAPRO Story

Catholic Relief Services (CRS), a faith-based agency, works on development and peacebuilding at the community or grassroots-level in the Southeast, East Asia Pacific Region (SEAPRO), among others. The Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame is an academic center that conducts research and offers academic programs focusing on peacebuilding. Mutual interests and kinship for peacebuilding, and desire to learn from and improve practice, led to the creation of a **Learning Alliance**.

In the Learning Alliance, we blend reflection on field experiences, shared by field staff and partners, with scholar-practitioner insights. Field experiences and academic resources are brought together in mutually enhancing spaces for reflection and learning, to improve practice and the transformation of conflicts (see Box 3.4).

Three learning spaces have proven to be particularly important. The first is an annual, region-wide "CRS SEAPRO Peacebuilding Technical Commission Meeting." The meeting brings programming staff and partners from around the region together for a week of joint reflection on experiences, with systematic inputs and accompaniment from Kroc faculty. Each year, staff bring back examples of how they have worked with ideas from the previous year's meeting. The discussions are

**BOX 3.4 THE LINK BETWEEN LEARNING AND PRACTICE**

A third space for reflection is located at the Kroc Institute, at the University of Notre Dame. Peacebuilders from SEAPRO, whether CRS staff or partners, have the opportunity to spend up to four months (an academic term) as visiting fellows at the Kroc Institute. During this time, fellows participate in the academic life of Kroc, reflect on their own experiences, and document lessons or develop new tools for practice.

The Learning Alliance has produced changes in CRS SEAPRO peacebuilding practice, and *the contents of this toolkit are a direct product of our mutual advances and learning about planning, monitoring and learning over time!*

documented in “learning documents” that capture central ideas, challenges and insights.

A second learning space is created within country-program field offices, with Kroc Institute Masters students working as interns with CRS staff and partners. The interns contribute to learning by gathering and analyzing information about the context and peacebuilding practice in areas of mutual interest. Staff, partners and interns work together to plan and process the information. The new diagnostics, tools and insights that are developed are then used and shared in future programming. For example, a partner organization in Cambodia is developing a new component for their youth peace education curriculum in order to fill a gap identified during a Kroc intern’s field research on youth attitudes.



## TOOLS FOR LEARNING COMMUNITIES

- ***Create space and a supportive culture for learning***

Set aside time weekly to reflect as individuals on your work; include learning goals in job descriptions; recognize creative ideas and contributions; apply reflective practitioner ideas as a group.

- ***Gather and listen to experiences***

Hold small group discussions after major events to process what went well, identify problems and future actions; hold a “write-shop” to document experiences; tell colleagues about your work and problems you’ve encountered and listen to their ideas; hold quarterly team meetings to discuss what you are learning about change in your programming, and how to build “change upon change.”

- ***Seek outside learning***

Invite experts to join your learning meeting and contribute; attend workshops; read; talk to other practitioners about their experiences.

- ***Develop formal and informal systems to share problems and learning***

Talk with co-workers in different sectors about problems, actions and lessons learned; include a short “lessons learned” or “ideas worth testing” box in every report; develop a strategy for documenting and sharing your learning outside of the organization and with stakeholders.

- ***Draw conclusions***

In each report, suggest next steps based on the “lessons learned” or “ideas worth testing;” at the end of reflection sessions identify concrete recommendations.

- ***Create an accessible organizational memory***

Develop a series of learning documents (video, audio or written); keep a searchable library of your learning documents; cross-reference documents; keep a wall of “lessons learned” and periodically sort them as a group activity.

- ***Apply the learning***

Integrate new ideas into future strategy plans; document or list new innovations that come out of reflection sessions that are acted upon.

*Source: Adapted from Britton, 1998, and Slim, 1993.*



## CHAPTER 4

## ETHICAL PRACTICE



Conflict environments are difficult and complex. Peace practitioners frequently confront ethical dilemmas, from challenges in planning to evaluating interventions. Rarely are there clear right or wrong answers; more often, the different possible responses to a dilemma reflect competing values. For example, do you choose to pay people for their time in an interview, when paying them may bias what they tell you? Or, do you stop monitoring visits to a partner organization, if partner staff tells you that your repeated monitoring visits suggest you do not trust them?

Two common ethical dilemmas are presented in Box 4.1; one focuses on the project design phase and the other on the evaluation period. These scenarios can be used to stimulate discussions with peacebuilding colleagues about identifying and responding to ethical dilemmas in practice. Utilizing a learning approach, you can use these examples to practice recognizing ethical dilemmas and to develop a process for resolving them. As you read the dilemmas in the box, identify the values you think are important and design ways to respect those values in practice.

Decisions about how to respond to dilemmas are made by weighing the situation, the cultural norms, values and experiences of those involved, as well as the values at stake. Organizations often develop principles that articulate the most important values to guide their decisions. Common principles include: being responsible to others; being accountable to others; maintaining personal integrity and competence; ensuring everyone is treated equitably; ensuring that people's basic rights and dignity are respected. For example, in *Dilemma 1* (Box 4.1), you might decide that personal integrity is the highest value and decline to respond to the RFP in order to maintain your integrity. Alternatively, you might argue that your responsibility

**BOX 4.1 WHAT ARE THE ETHICAL ISSUES HERE?**

**DILEMMA 1.** You have been working for some time on a peacebuilding idea you know is needed. It will involve a multi-year process of developing community rapport with key, but low-profile opinion shapers who many consider to be radical elements of the conflict. You are convinced trust must be built with these leaders on several sides of the conflict. It will be a slow process and will require a great deal of learning along the way. You begin some informal contacts and become more convinced. You decide to lay out the idea as a five-year proposal. Just as you begin to write the first draft, a new Request for Proposals (RFP) from a large government funder, with big dollars attached and an urgent and short timeframe, comes across the email. Your immediate impression is that their approach is not only peripheral to real needs you see, but may even get in the way of what you feel is most important. Within a few hours, headquarters sends a quick memo about the RFP, the financial benefits it would bring the organization, and the fact that your office is best placed to develop the proposal and implement the RFP. What are the ethical issues here? How might you address them?

**DILEMMA 2.** You are part of an evaluation team hired by a donor to assess an NGO's peace initiative. During a long set of interviews with key people in this multi-year effort, significant negative feedback, along with many positive aspects of the project, emerged. Many community members feel that the initiative has been influenced by and developed too closely with the interests (and even family members) of a powerful politician in the country. You believe the alignment of some of the project implementers with this politician is a weakness in the overall process, affecting the outcome negatively. The director of the agency catches wind that you are including observations of these weaknesses in your final report. She speaks to you about how you should write up the report, imploring you not to mention several key findings so directly. She feels it may put them at risk, both financially and politically. What are the ethical issues here? How do you handle them?

to the community is paramount, and respond to the RFP because, while the content of the RFP is not ideal, you might be able to work with the donor to address community needs more effectively in the future.

Ethical dilemmas may have many solutions; discussion can generate creative options for putting values and principles into practice. Ethical dilemmas often manifest themselves as a vague uneasy feeling. You may feel uncomfortable about not being able to involve all of the parties to a conflict in planning a project, for example. Or, you may find that your activity has accidentally created bad feelings with a group that was unintentionally left out and wonder how to respond. Discussing ethical concerns with colleagues can contribute to a healthy learning environment and to ethical and sound practice.

### *Ethical dilemmas in Evaluation*

Particular ethical dilemmas often arise during evaluations, because resources may depend on the outcome. These ethical issues generally arise in two broad areas: 1) the protection and care of people; 2) the integrity of the evaluation or learning process itself.

### *Protection and care of people*

People and relationships are the core of peacebuilding, and it is essential to care for and value people in both planning and evaluation. Issues to watch for include:

- **Undue Stress:** Asking people to reflect on difficult or painful circumstances may risk causing them emotional distress. For example, interview questions about a conflict might trigger traumatic experiences. Perhaps the location of the interviews, such as a school, was a site of terrible fighting. Try to ask questions and arrange your interviews in ways that do not cause undue emotional stress, and keep a list of resources for local trauma support that you can share.

- **Coercion:** People may feel coerced into participating in an evaluation process because a donor has requested it, even if they do not feel comfortable talking about the conflict in the community or about the people involved. Participation in evaluations should be voluntary, not coerced.
- **Confidentiality:** Fear of repercussions may prevent people from expressing their opinions freely during evaluations if respondents' identity will be disclosed. Ensuring that participants in evaluation interviews are not named and identifying information is not revealed is an easy and important way to help ensure their security.
- **Protection:** Peacebuilding activities necessarily occur in areas where there is conflict, often violent conflict. Participation in an evaluation may entail risks if travel through insecure areas is involved, or if participants from a particular group are not welcome in the area where the meeting will take place. All possible efforts should be made to ensure that people involved in an evaluation are safe—this may mean adjusting the timing of the evaluation if the conflict is escalating, or preparing emergency evacuation plans for drivers, participants and evaluators.
- **Realistic expectations** People who participate in an interview or focus group discussion may expect that their recommendations regarding future plans and how money is spent will automatically be followed. It is therefore important to clarify with participants the purpose of the interview and of the evaluation, and the results they can realistically expect. Meeting with the community after the evaluation to discuss the outcomes is another way to ensure that people understand the purpose of the evaluation and are not disappointed.
- **Share findings.** Sharing findings with communities returns the information to the community from where

it originated, and allows participants and others to validate the findings and, if necessary, further articulate collective concerns. It also demonstrates respect.

- **Respect:** Evaluations should treat people, the work they have done, and the organizations they work for, respectfully.

A quick list of basic considerations for protecting and caring for people is included in the **Tools** section.

### **Integrity of the Evaluation Process**

Evaluation processes frequently raise ethical dilemmas because people are concerned that future project funding, and/or their professional reputations ride upon the outcomes. For example, people may have particular agendas, such as to present the project in a positive light in order to secure continued funding, or to highlight negative aspects in order to bring a project to a stop. In other situations, stakeholders worry that evaluations may negatively affect their work; perhaps peacebuilders have worked over time to build up trust in a community, and fear that an outside evaluator may upset this relationship (**Dilemma 2**, above). Designing an evaluation process that is balanced, critical and sensitive to the multiple stakeholders can be a challenge. Some of these dilemmas may be resolved by designing and utilizing a “monitoring as learning” and “evaluation as learning” approach, which is described in **chapters 11** and **12**.

Guides and strategies to help you respond to ethical dilemmas are presented in the **Tools** section of this chapter. For example, standards of propriety have been developed by The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation to ensure that evaluations are conducted ethically (1994). Sources of additional ideas can be found in the **Resources for Further Learning** section. See particularly the guidelines developed by the American Evaluation Association, the Canadian Evaluation Society and International Alert.



## TOOLS FOR ETHICAL PRACTICE

### Suggestions for the Protection and Care of People

- Avoid causing people undue stress
- Avoid coercion
- Guarantee confidentiality
- Ensure everyone involved with the evaluation will be safe (during and after)
- Set realistic expectations for participants
- Share your findings with the community and the people you interviewed
- Be respectful
- Avoid over-visiting particular areas and causing participant fatigue

### Strategies for Responding to Ethical Dilemmas in Evaluation Processes

- Identify basic principles to guide the evaluation process and stick to them
- Frame any major issues that arise as a collective problem to be dealt with
- Be clear about the purpose of the evaluation
- Communicate regularly with all stakeholders
- Plan and document your evaluation process in detail
- Address issues in a timely way
- Increase the stakeholders involved in decision-making
- Establish decision-making procedures that all stakeholders agree with
- Consult experts for advice
- Honor your own integrity

*Source: Adapted from Church & Rogers, 2006.*



## CHAPTER 5

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND  
FOUR DIMENSIONS OF CHANGE

In this *Toolkit*, the concept of **conflict transformation** provides a guiding framework for the learning approach. How does transformation differ from the commonly used term **conflict resolution**? From our perspective, while the terms have much in common, and at times are used interchangeably, they create different guiding metaphors.

With **resolution** as a guiding metaphor, the focus is on finding a nonviolent **solution** to a problem—the presenting issue. The goal is to find answers to problems and to end something that is causing pain or difficulty. The **lens** of resolution focuses on immediate or recent episodes of conflict and on the **content** of the conflict. It is, of course, important to resolve immediate problems; however, quick solutions that do not take account of deeper underlying issues and patterns may provide temporary relief, but miss important opportunities for pursuing constructive and wider change.

A conflict resolution standpoint is clear about what needs to be stopped—violence, for example. However, a conflict resolution framework does not always lead to clarity about what should be built in its place. *Conflict transformation*, on the other hand, focuses on change, addressing two questions: “What do we need to stop?” and “What do we hope to build?” Since change always involves a movement from one thing to another, peacebuilders must look not only at the starting point, but also at the goal and the process of getting from one point to another. While conflict resolution focuses on de-escalation of conflict and diffusion of crises, transformation allows for an ebb and flow in conflict, and sees the presenting problem as a potential opportunity to **transform the relationship** and the **systems in which relationships are embedded**.

Think of certain kinds of plants with active root systems, such as raspberry bushes or bamboo. The raspberry has a visible growth above ground (the content of the conflict); underneath the ground it is also alive, growing and expanding through a generative root system, and may send up shoots some distance from the original stalk. Similarly, the **relational context**, (or roots) of a conflict—which often involves identity, communication patterns, and power issues—under the surface continues to generate energy, even when it is not visible above ground. Conflict transformation, therefore, starts with a focus on relationships and the relational context, looking for the not-so-visible roots, the historic patterns and dynamics that create the visible signs of conflict, in the form of presenting issues and struggles “above ground.”

Conflict resolution and conflict transformation should not be seen as working in opposition; rather, conflict resolution represents a set of skills within a wider framework. Conflict transformation strives to ask questions in a **both/and** framework. Thus, “How do we *both* find creative responses to the presenting problem, *and, at the same time*, find strategies and approaches to address the deeper context?” Conflict transformation practitioners seek solutions by working with change in both the immediate and longer term, and at content and relational levels. The key to transformation is its continual focus on the question of change.

### Four Dimensions of Conflict Transformation

So what kinds of change does conflict transformation include? Social conflict inevitably creates four types of changes; these can be used to examine the kind of changes peacebuilders hope to promote.

In a variety of studies, many authors suggest that social conflict causes changes in four dimensions: the **personal**, the **relational**, the **structural** and the **cultural**. These dimensions are briefly summarized in Box 5.1.

#### BOX 5.1 FOUR DIMENSIONS OF CONFLICT

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Personal</b></p> <p>Conflict changes individuals personally, emotionally, spiritually</p>   | <p><b>Relational</b></p> <p>Refers to people who have direct, face to face contact. When conflict escalates, communication patterns change, stereotypes are created, polarization increases, trust decreases</p> |
| <p><b>Structural</b></p> <p>Conflict impacts systems and structures—how relationships are organized, and who has access to power—from family and organizations to communities and whole societies</p> | <p><b>Cultural</b></p> <p>Violent conflict causes deep-seated cultural changes, for example, the norms that guide patterns of behavior between elders and youth, or women and men</p>                            |

These **four dimensions** can help peacebuilders to articulate the changes they seek in conflict transformation and peacebuilding work, and as later chapters will show, they can be used in evaluation, learning, theory and indicator development.

The four dimensions are linked, and equally important, but different projects may emphasize one or another of these dimensions. A planning and monitoring system incorporating all four aspects is useful for directing where that focus should be. The four dimensions are explored in detail in the guided worksheets presented in the following Tools section.



## TOOLS FOR EXPLORING CHANGE IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

*The purpose of this tool is to provide a starting point, to help you think about which aspects of change you hope to create through your activity or program.*

Each of the four dimensions relates to change at a different level of impact and scope.

- Personal and relational dimensions propose change at individual, interpersonal and community levels, with a more immediate and local scope.
- Structural and cultural dimensions engage processes that impact institutions and wider social, political, or economic patterns; these represent broader, usually longer-term scope and impact.

The key in both project design and project evaluation is to think as clearly as possible about what kind of changes are proposed through particular initiatives or programs, and how impact will be seen and traced to the programmatic effort.

The four dimensions are interrelated, and many peacebuilding programs, particularly those that work at grassroots levels, focus their attention on the personal and interpersonal/community levels, often on the assumption that creating change at these levels will naturally lead to further changes at the structural and cultural levels. One of the challenges of peacebuilding evaluation, however, is to understand and test these assumptions about wider change.

This tool may sharpen your ability to do three things:

- 1) Be more specific about the kind of change (personal, relational, structural, cultural) your initiative is best suited to engage and encourage;
- 2) Develop greater clarity about possible indicators for that change—by developing greater clarity about exactly what change you are proposing
- 3) Identify the ways that one dimension of change may relate to another.

Remember, that quite often an initiative is proposed because you know the setting well and it just makes common sense. ***Trust your intuition and explore it.*** This tool raises broad questions for each dimension to help you probe more deeply.



## PERSONAL DIMENSIONS

Personal change generally occurs in two main categories, often linked. These are patterns or characteristics seen in individuals:

### *Attitude changes*

Attitudes are predispositions, the ways that people think about (often unconsciously), and approach a given topic, situation or relationship. In conflict settings, relevant attitudes frequently have to do with ingrained views about themselves, others (particularly those they perceive as a threat), and the wider context they live in.

Questions you might ask to clarify the changes you seek are:

- What attitudes currently increase the likelihood of destructive patterns of conflict?
- Which attitudes are specifically targeted for change through the proposed action or program?
- If this attitude changes, what difference will it make in the situation?
- How would you know the attitude has changed?
- How would you know the change might be related to the program activity?

Some attitudes that may affect conflict negatively: superiority, lack of respect, fear of contact with the other group, fear of sharing perspectives/views, prejudice or bias, and rigid, preconceived and narrow perceptions.

### *Behavior changes*

Beyond attitude, behavior means the way people actually act, responses they give, ways they express themselves and how they interact with others.

- What visible behaviors contribute to destructive patterns of conflict?
- Which of these is targeted for change through the proposed action or program?
- If this behavior changes, what difference will it make in the situation?
- How would you know the behavior has changed?
- How would you know the change is related to the program activity?

Examples of behavior changes that may improve the situation: reaching out to the other group, listening well, avoiding negative stereotypes in language, increasing contact with the other group, openness and transparency about feelings, expressing views without judgement, and reconsidering perceptions.



## RELATIONAL DIMENSIONS

"Relational" in this framework refers to people who have face-to-face relationships; that is, people who meet, interact, and are interdependent in everyday settings such as family, school, work, neighborhood, and local communities.

It also includes relationships that may not be "everyday" in nature, but that are important in reference to a wider conflict setting, like the meeting of key local or national leaders, or representatives of community, religious, or ethnic groups from different sides of a divisive conflict. The focus is on the actual relationship patterns between individual people who interact, as distinct from a relational pattern that is *structural* in nature. Many aspects of direct relationship may affect conflict and peacebuilding; a few that are often most important in constructive transformation are listed below.

### *Communication Patterns*

- What is the level of contact (regular, open or avoiding/restricted) between or among the "sides"?
- Do people have the capacity to express themselves accurately in conversation without fear, judgment, or restriction?
- Do people have the capacity to listen, that is, to hear accurately the concerns of others, without judgment?

### *Cooperation*

- What is the level of collaboration—both initiating and working together on—projects or goals that are important to both sides, and require cooperation from both sides for their success (little or none to robust and active)?

### *Decision-making*

- Do people feel they are adequately included in decisions that affect their lives and their communities?
- Is information-sharing open, accessible and equitable?
- Are decision-making processes clear and fair?

### *Conflict handling mechanisms*

- When conflict arises, are there appropriate and effective mechanisms by which it is handled?
- What patterns emerge when conflict escalates (e.g. does it move quickly from seemingly small incidents to sharp polarization)?
- Who are the key people who fulfill the peacemaker role in relationships, and are they adequately prepared?



## STRUCTURAL DIMENSIONS

The *structural* lens creates a *change focus* that moves beyond direct relationships, to relational patterns that involve and affect whole groups, a scope of inquiry that includes *structural patterns*—the way things happen over and over again—and *existing structures*. In other words, the time horizon includes both present and historical dynamics between or among groups, particularly where one group has been privileged and others marginalized. Assessment of existing structures requires a critical eye on formalized institutions established to meet shared social goals and serve people. How responsive are these institutions? How equitable? How successful in fulfilling basic human needs of all people in a given setting?

Structural change can be approached in many different ways. The following points of analysis can serve as a starting point.

### *Social Conditions (Keys: disparity, inequity, racial/religious/ethnic disadvantage)*

- What conditions and patterns have contributed to perceived and actual disparity in access to resources and power?
- Are there consistent patterns of marginalization and exclusion, providing greater privilege for some and disadvantaging others?
- Are there historic patterns of racism, sectarianism, or ethnic marginalization?

### *Procedural Patterns (Keys: lack of transparency, equality, access, participation, fairness)*

- Do people have equal access to information and understanding of decision-making?
- Are there groups who are (or perceive they are) consistently left out of political and economic decisions and processes that affect their communities?
- Are public processes (political, economic, social) equally understood by all, with clarity of goals, process, and adequate points of participation?
- Do all groups have an equal say in processes that affect the wider community and how they are established and conducted?

### *Institutional Patterns (Keys: lack of access, historical patterns)*

- Are the wider patterns identified above reflected in the function and maintenance of key social, political, and economic organizations, particularly those established to serve the wider public?
- Is there trust in primary service institutions by the groups they serve? If not, why?



## CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

The cultural dimension refers to even deeper, and often less conscious, patterns related to conflict and peace. Observations to note:

- Culture is fundamentally about how people make sense of things, in other words, culture is the process of how meaning is constructed and shared;
- Cultural patterns and understandings about conflict, appropriate responses to conflict, and peacebuilding are always present, though not always openly acknowledged;
- Every culture—whether organizational, small group, national or local—contains aspects that contribute in both destructive and constructive ways to conflict transformation;
- Cultural change is often very slow, (although widespread open violence can impact cultural resources quickly and deeply—for example the phenomenon of child soldiers may suddenly and profoundly erode an age-old tradition of respect for elders). For this reason, a program targeting cultural change may require a generational or longitudinal approach;
- Culture is embedded in all three of the other dimensions, and may be more difficult to isolate for evaluation purposes.

Dimensions of culture that affect conflict patterns and may vary significantly between groups include:

- Perceptions and understandings of ways to communicate, express feelings, and engage or avoid open conflict;

- Understanding of significant meaning structures like: “time,” “place and land” or “religious belief,” “respect and honor,” etc.
- Approaches to dialogue, reaching consensus, negotiation
- Views of authority, age, and gender as they relate to decision-making and representation
- Views about “proper” process, representation, healing, and revenge

These may provide useful starting points for thinking about which aspects of activities and programs are oriented toward cultural change. Bear in mind that outsiders should use caution when identifying aspects of culture as negative or positive.

### *Assessing Cultural Resources and Patterns*

- Identify cultural patterns that seem to have an impact, whether positive or negative, on how conflict is understood, approached, and handled;
- Identify what aspects of an intergroup conflict may be affected by cultural and worldview differences;
- Build an inventory with people in a given group or setting about what aspects of their culture contribute positively to the expression and handling of conflict, and which patterns appear to make it worse;
- Identify cultural patterns that have been affected by factors such as displacement or migration, population growth, conflict dynamics, and/or “modernization,” with particular attention to what aspects of traditional culture are strained by these elements, and what, if any, important traditions have been lost.

### *Program and Activities*

- Which aspects of peacebuilding/conflict transformation are partly or primarily oriented toward changing a cultural pattern?
- What are realistic timeframes to think about the cultural shift desired? For example, are components of the program working with generational change?





## CHAPTER 6

### THEORIES OF CHANGE

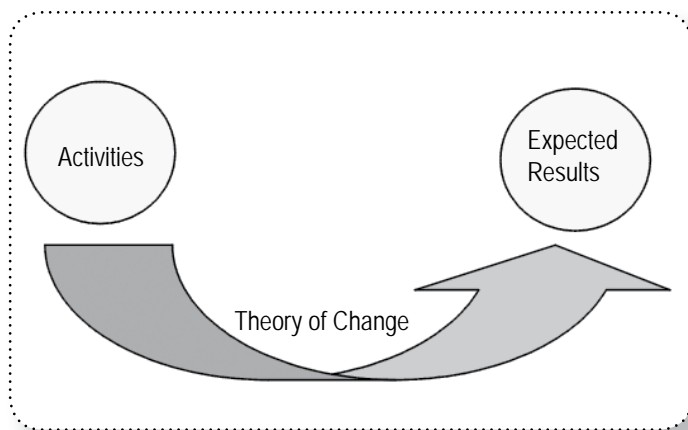


As noted in chapter two, a **theory of change** is simply an explanation of how and why a set of activities will bring about the changes a project's designers seek to achieve. Peacebuilding efforts often set goals, such as promoting nonviolent approaches to conflict, reducing intolerance, or encouraging reconciliation. These goals are pursued through activities such as conflict transformation workshops, inter-religious dialogues, or inter-ethnic community development projects. But how, specifically, are these activities supposed to achieve these goals? The answer to this question is the program's theory of change.

In demystifying theory, it is important to remember that a theory of change is not an academic hypothesis, but rather an everyday expectation about “how the world works.” When a person travels in a foreign country, he or she immediately finds that everyday expectations may not be fulfilled. A gesture to hail a taxi does not succeed, or subtle indications that a conversation should be kept confidential are misunderstood. A theory of change operates much like these working assumptions about the world, in that it is based on our expectations about how people and entities will respond or react to our actions. The realization that the theory of change is about these kinds of expectations is the first step towards demystifying theory.

#### **Theories of Change in Peacebuilding Projects**

A single project may incorporate multiple theories of change, especially if the project works to bring about changes at multiple levels or in multiple dimensions. For example, a peace education project might have one theory of change to explain how the attitudes or behaviors of students who complete the curriculum

**BOX 6.1 THEORY OF CHANGE**

are expected to change, and another to explain how these personal changes will change the structures or cultural practices in their communities or societies.

Since peacebuilding requires changes in multiple dimensions—personal, relational, structural, and cultural—it is useful to reflect on the theory of change for each of these dimensions as part of project planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

### Constructing a Theory of Change

“Constructing” a theory of change is often a matter of articulating an existing theory, rather than building it from scratch, as theories of change often operate beneath the surface of a project as implicit or unspoken assumptions. For example, a project that brings together members of conflicting ethnic groups for conflict resolution workshops might be assuming that inter-ethnic interaction will reduce stereotypes and intolerance; however, as experience has shown, even a well-designed conflict resolution workshop can sometimes increase intolerance if the groups are not ready, or if a recent incident has inflamed tensions. To avoid such problems, it is important to bring these assumptions to the surface as part of project planning, monitoring and evaluation.

**BOX 6.2 LOGFRAMES AND THEORIES OF CHANGE**

Giving attention to a project’s theory of change in project planning, monitoring and evaluation enhances program learning and increases its effectiveness. Many common planning tools are compatible with a theory of change approach. Logical frameworks (*logframes*), or project frameworks (*ProFrames*), are built on the idea that project activities should have a logical connection to the overall goal of the project. Thus, the theory of change can be seen as the backbone of a logframe, in that it explains how activities at one level are linked to results at another level; however, in spelling out the details of outputs, intermediate results, and objectives, which are often the focus of logframe planning sessions, the theory of change may easily get lost. Bringing the theory of change to the forefront of planning discussions can give them greater coherence and depth.

Discussions of theory of change can be fruitfully integrated at several points in the planning process. The first of these points is during a stakeholder analysis. Especially in situations involving deeply-rooted conflict, analysis of who the stakeholders are, and their interests in the situation are critical. Projects are often based on a number of assumptions about how various stakeholders will respond to activities or initiatives. Identifying these assumptions, considering whether they are valid, and refining them is a fruitful way to develop a theory of change for the project.

Consideration of theories of change can also be incorporated in discussions of logframe assumptions. The development of assumptions for logframes often focuses on negative external events which could undermine the success of a project, such as natural disasters or failure to obtain government approval. Identification of assumptions, can, however, be used as an opportunity to reflect on the underlying theories on which the project is based. Though the planning team will likely surface more assumptions than are ultimately included in the final logframe, the process can be used to help clarify the underlying theory of change.

Of course, it may not be easy to surface underlying assumptions, particularly in contexts of deeply-rooted conflict. For individual practitioners, trying to put into words exactly how their programs will contribute to peace can be overwhelming, while organizations may find that staff members or other constituents do not necessarily have congruent understandings of a project's theory of change.

## Ideas to Help Groups Develop Theories of Change

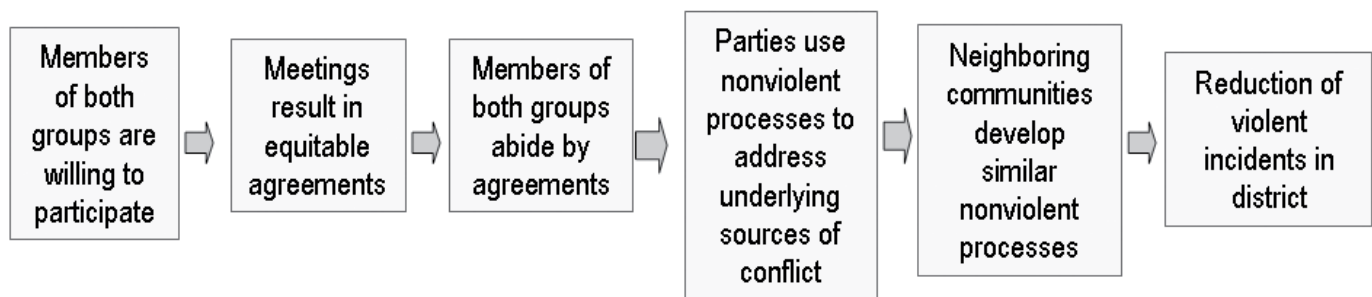
### Diagrams

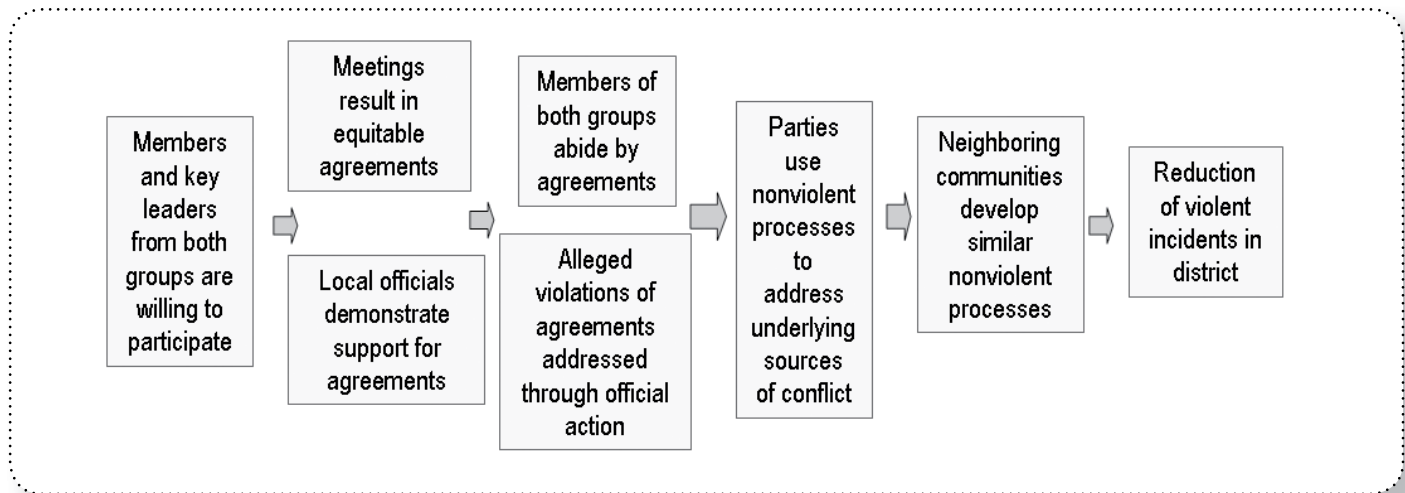
If a change process involves many steps between the project activities and the ultimate goal, a diagram can be very helpful in drawing out the theory of change. A diagram showing specific changes resulting from program activities, with arrows showing how these changes contribute to objectives and the broader goal could be used to identify potential weak links in the theory of change, as well as to develop indicators for the critical changes. One method for doing this is to have participants write changes that need to occur on index cards, and then these can be displayed on a board, where they can be arranged and rearranged to reflect the discussion.

Box 6.3 presents a draft theory of change diagram for a community mediation initiative in an ethnically divided community. This version of the theory of change represents an early draft rather than a final version. As such, it has some gaps and weak links. For example, the fact that an agreement is equitable is probably not enough to ensure that the members of both groups will abide by it. Thus, more thought may be needed about how to ensure compliance with agreements. Should the group work with local officials or the court system to improve the likelihood of compliance, or should it add additional program activities to strengthen this link?

As this illustrates, making the theory of change explicit can help the group identify further activities that may be needed as well as other actors or institutions that need to be involved in the program. This is the whole point of articulating a theory of change! As discussion continues, cards can be revised and more cards can be added to the chart. The chart does not have to move directly from card to card in a linear fashion, and can have branches that reflect multiple causes or effects. Box 6.4 shows one way the chart could be improved, but other approaches are also possible.

### BOX 6.3 A DRAFT THEORY OF CHANGE DIAGRAM FOR A COMMUNITY MEDIATION INITIATIVE



**BOX 6.4 A REVISED THEORY OF CHANGE DIAGRAM FOR A COMMUNITY MEDIATION INITIATIVE****Stories**

Stories from the field often encapsulate a program's theory of change in a concise narrative format. The process of listening to stories from project participants and reflecting on what they say about how the program has impact can be helpful in articulating a theory of change. One might lead a group discussion of the story through a series of questions based on the personal, relational, structural, and cultural framework. These might include:

- Who experienced change in this story?
- How did that change come about? What factors influenced it?
- How did personal changes have an impact on relationships, structures, and culture?
- How did changes in relationships affect personal behaviors, structures, and culture?
- What can we learn about change processes from this story?

**Outsiders**

Questions about a project from project outsiders can often stimulate fruitful reflection on a theory of change. They force project insiders to synthesize and summarize their knowledge about the program, and sometimes provoke new insights into a project's theory of change. For example, planning consultants may facilitate discussion of a program's theory of change to help formulate goals and strategies. Internal or external evaluators may also facilitate the construction of a theory of change as the first step in an evaluation, through a workshop or through interviews with a range of stakeholders. The evaluators then use the theory of change to identify key issues to explore in the evaluation. Project insiders can take advantage of these opportunities to explore and consolidate their theories of change.

You can also use ideas from chapter two to help identify and develop your theories of change as a reflective practitioner. More ideas about theories of change are available from sources listed in the **Resources for Additional Learning** section of the Toolkit. See, particularly: ActKnowledge and the Aspen Institute; Anderson and Olson (2003); Church and Shouldice (2003); Grantcraft; Kelman (1993); Leeuw (2003); Mackenzie and Blamey (2005) and Stetson et al (2004).



## TOOLS FOR USING THEORIES OF CHANGE

This tool provides ideas for how to start and continuously develop theories of change as part of a learning approach to planning, monitoring and evaluation. A key purpose of the tool is to encourage you to develop your theories of change as you develop your focus and activities. Two examples are included that use the conflict transformation dimensions of change at personal, relational, structural and cultural levels.

Every project or initiative has a starting point, a point of entry related to an issue that needs to be addressed. Our tool, however, suggests that no matter where you start, all the dimensions of change are potentially affected.

Worksheet 6.1 is a blank worksheet, outlining dimensions you may address; there is no sequential order in which you must address them. The blank tool includes: space to record an overall goal, how you might address this goal, and the theories of change that may be involved. Then the four dimensions appear horizontally, with spaces provided to note the focus of activities in each dimension, and corresponding theories of change.

In Worksheet 6.2, we have filled in some examples based on a typical peacebuilding initiative. This may provide a complete picture, but how do you get there? The next set of examples illustrate the process.

Worksheets 6.3a to 6.3d use the example of a project that aims to create wide policy change (structural dimension), regarding forestry use and indigenous rights. The sequence shown begins with the structural change and theory, then adds the personal, relational and cultural changes that will be needed to help accomplish the structural change.

Worksheet 6.4 returns to the original example, this time using a different starting point—the focus on personal change. The arrows show how the personal changes connect to relational, cultural, and structural (in this case sub-systemic) changes.

The challenge of this tool is thinking innovatively about the connection between goals, activities, and focus, and the too-often hidden theories of change. There is nothing magical about the development of the theory, and the result does not have to be perfect. The best approach is to simply state out loud what the project proposes and how it will work, then try to outline on paper the theory you have just verbalized. The magic lies in learning and connecting things.

To use this tool take note of the following:

- You can start with any category or level. The idea of having all of them on one sheet is to encourage you to think about change in all the different dimensions and how they are related.
- This tool can be used for planning new initiatives. It can also be used to re-examine existing projects, simply by placing the existing project elements in the various categories. You may discover that your project focuses more on one dimension than others. Ask “How do the dimensions relate in our project?” “Are we consistently not attending to particular dimensions?” “What would be required in order to address these missing dimensions?” (Note that generally speaking, peacebuilders have focused on personal and relational dimensions and have had less success finding and building good strategies for structural change.)

**WORKSHEET 6.1 THEORY OF CHANGETABLE (BLANK)**

|                     |          |            |            |          |
|---------------------|----------|------------|------------|----------|
| Overall goal 1:     |          |            |            |          |
| How?                |          |            |            |          |
| Theories of change: |          |            |            |          |
|                     | Personal | Relational | Structural | Cultural |
| Focus               |          |            |            |          |
| Theories            |          |            |            |          |

**WORKSHEET 6.2 SAMPLE THEORY OF CHANGE TABLE**

|  |  |  |   |  |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Overall goal 1: Increase capacity to prevent violence between Group A and B in communities Y and X, where most of the violence has taken place between youth of the different ethnic backgrounds.  |  |  |   |  |
| How? Conduct workshops with a focus on relationship-building and mediation skills with school teachers from both communities.  |  |  |   |  |
| Theories of change:  |  |  |   |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Most violence has been happening between youth in the two communities. Teachers are strategically located to know these students, hear about and recognize the early warning signals of problems, and act quickly.</li> <li>2) High schools are located in both communities. There has been little interaction between them. The youth involved in violence are located in different schools and each school is mostly made up of one ethnic group.</li> <li>3) If teachers from both schools develop better relationships and regular communication they can alert each other to signs of trouble.</li> <li>4) If teachers form teams from both schools to mediate the conflicts they have a better chance of bringing the key youth together and also connecting with their parents and the wider community.</li> <li>5) Increased communication, and coordinated mediation teams will create earlier response (prevention) and greater capacity to mediate successfully, lowering the level and frequency of violence.</li> </ol> |  |  |   |  |
|  | Personal   | Relational   | Structural  | Cultural   |
| Focus  | Skill building in conflict awareness, transformation, and mediation for school teachers  | Build relationships between teachers through attendance at a series of workshops<br><br>Create cooperative teams and mechanisms for regular communication          | Build cooperative systems of response between schools and communities that represent different ethnic groups  | Workshops will promote greater understanding of ethnic differences<br><br>Patterns of avoidance of each other and of dialogue, will be addressed with new approaches       |
| Theories   | Increased awareness of conflict patterns will create greater capacity to respond constructively and in a timely manner to signs of potential violence<br><br>Early response with dialogue and mediation skills will lower incidences of violence | Increased relationship and team building will facilitate greater cooperation<br><br>Greater cooperation between teachers will improve prevention of youth violence | Increased cooperation between the schools, initially through the teachers, will provide a wider and sustained capacity for conflict response in the wider patterns of violence in the community | Over time, increased cooperation and team work will lower level of racism<br><br>The pattern of revenge violence between groups will be replaced with patterns of dialogue |

**WORKSHEET 6.3a FORESTRY EXAMPLE: STARTING WITH STRUCTURAL CHANGE**

|  |          |            |   |          |
|--|----------|------------|---|----------|
| Overall goal 1: Achieve national policy change in forestry preservation that protects indigenous groups' access and rights       |          |            |   |          |
| How? Increase advocacy and dialogue/negotiation capacity between community groups and government representatives and legislators |          |            |   |          |
| Theories of change:  |          |            |   |          |
|  | Personal | Relational | Structural  | Cultural |
| Focus  |          |            | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build effective advocacy and dialogue between local indigenous community and national government;</li> <li>2. Pursue and effect policy change in national legislation that protects indigenous rights in forestry use</li> </ol>  |          |
| Theories   |          |            | <p>Policy change requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased clarity, voice, and organization of local community;</li> <li>More open, direct and respectful channels of contact and communication with government;</li> <li>Increased capacity for advocacy and dialogue skills;</li> <li>Clear strategy for effecting legislative change</li> </ul> |          |



## WORKSHEET 6.3b FORESTRY EXAMPLE: FROM STRUCTURAL CHANGE TO PERSONAL CHANGE

|  |  |            |  |          |
|--|--|------------|--|----------|
| Overall goal 1: Achieve national policy change in forestry preservation that protects indigenous groups' access and rights       |  |            |  |          |
| How? Increase advocacy and dialogue/negotiation capacity between community groups and government representatives and legislators |  |            |  |          |
| Theories of change: Structural change goal requires personal change (example)  |  |            |  |          |
|  | Personal   | Relational | Structural   | Cultural |
| Focus  | <p>Increase understanding and skills for dialogue with government;</p> <p>Increase will and skill of government officials to dialogue with community</p>   |            | <p>1. Build effective advocacy and dialogue between local indigenous community and national government;</p> <p>2. Pursue and effect policy change in national legislation that protects indigenous rights in forestry use</p>  |          |
| Theories   | <p>Better organized community creates clearer goals</p> <p>Clear goals provides basis for stronger advocacy and dialogue</p> <p>Increased skill in negotiation with official government representatives creates more impact for change goals</p> <p>Increased understanding of indigenous views increases willingness to dialogue;</p> <p>Increased willingness to dialogue creates greater commitment to change</p> |            | <p>Policy change requires:</p> <p>Increased clarity, voice, and organization of local community;</p> <p>More open, direct and respectful channels of contact and communication with government;</p> <p>Increased capacity for advocacy and dialogue skills;</p> <p>Clear strategy for effecting legislative change</p> |          |

**WORKSHEET 6.3c FORESTRY EXAMPLE: FROM STRUCTURAL CHANGE TO RELATIONAL CHANGE**

|  |          |  |   |          |
|--|----------|--|---|----------|
| Overall goal 1: Achieve national policy change in forestry preservation that protects indigenous groups' access and rights       |          |  |   |          |
| How? Increase advocacy and dialogue/negotiation capacity between community groups and government representatives and legislators |          |  |   |          |
| Theories of change: Structural change requires relational change (example)   |          |  |   |          |
|  | Personal | Relational   | Structural  | Cultural |
| Focus  |          | Increase the level of contact, exchange and respect between community and government   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build effective advocacy and dialogue between local indigenous community and national government;</li> <li>2. Pursue and effect policy change in national legislation that protects indigenous rights in forestry use</li> </ol>  |          |
| Theories   |          | <p>Increased contact increases potential for making case</p> <p>Increased respect builds greater chance for successful negotiation</p> | <p>Policy change requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased clarity, voice, and organization of local community;</li> <li>More open, direct and respectful channels of contact and communication with government;</li> <li>Increased capacity for advocacy and dialogue skills;</li> <li>Clear strategy for effecting legislative change</li> </ul> |          |

**WORKSHEET 6.3d FORESTRY EXAMPLE: FROM STRUCTURAL CHANGE TO CULTURAL CHANGE**

|  |          |            |  |  |
|--|----------|------------|--|--|
| Overall goal 1: Achieve national policy change in forestry preservation that protects indigenous groups' access and rights       |          |            |  |  |
| How? Increase advocacy and dialogue/negotiation capacity between community groups and government representatives and legislators |          |            |  |  |
| Theories of change: Structural change requires cultural change (example)   |          |            |  |  |
|  | Personal | Relational | Structural   | Cultural   |
| Focus  |          |            | 1. Build effective advocacy and dialogue between local indigenous community and national government;<br><br>2. Pursue and effect policy change in national legislation that protects indigenous rights in forestry use   | Local community groups overcome fear and timidity in dealing with official leaders<br><br>Official leaders seek participation and views of indigenous groups                                     |
| Theories   |          |            | Policy change requires:<br>Increased clarity, voice, and organization of local community;<br>More open, direct and respectful channels of contact and communication with government;<br>Increased capacity for advocacy and dialogue skills;<br>Clear strategy for effecting legislative change. | Increased community confidence will decrease fear<br><br>Increased contact and exchange will increase respect for participation of local groups and consulting them prior to legislative process |

**WORKSHEET 6.4 STRATEGY STARTING WITH PERSONAL CHANGE**

|  |  |   |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Overall goal 1: Increase capacity to prevent violence between Group A and B in communities Y and X, where most of the violence has taken place between youth of the different ethnic backgrounds.  |  |   |  |  |
| How? Conduct workshops with a focus on relationship building and mediation skills with school teachers from both communities.  |  |   |  |  |
| Theories of change:  |  |   |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Most violence has been happening between youth in the two communities. Teachers are strategically located to know these students, hear about and recognize the early warning signals of problems, and act quickly.</li> <li>2) High schools are located in both communities. There has been little interaction between them. The youth involved in violence are located in different schools and each school is mostly made up of one ethnic group.</li> <li>3) If teachers from both schools develop better relationships and regular communication they can alert each other to signs of trouble.</li> <li>4) If teachers form teams from both schools to mediate the conflicts they are have a better chance of bringing the key youth together and also connecting with their parents and the wider community.</li> <li>5) Increased communication, coordinated mediation teams will create earlier response (prevention) and greater capacity to mediate successfully, lowering the level and frequency of violence.</li> </ol> |  |   |  |  |
|  | Personal   | Relational  | Structural   | Cultural   |
| Focus  | Skill building in conflict awareness, transformation, and mediation for school teachers  | Build relationships between teacher by attending a series of workshops<br><br>Create cooperative teams and mechanisms for regular communication                     | Build cooperative systems of response between schools and communities that represent different ethnic groups   | Workshops will promote greater understanding of ethnic differences<br><br>Patterns of avoidance, of each other and of dialogue, will be addressed with new approaches      |
| Theories   | Increased awareness of conflict patterns will create greater capacity to respond constructively and in a timely manner to signs of potential violence<br><br>Early response with dialogue and mediation skills will lower incidences of violence | Increased relationship and team building will facilitate greater cooperation.<br><br>Greater cooperation between teachers will improve prevention of youth violence | Increased cooperation between the schools, initially with the teachers, will provide a wider and sustained capacity for conflict response in the wider patterns of violence in the community | Over time, increased cooperation and team work will lower level of racism<br><br>The pattern of revenge violence between groups will be replaced with patterns of dialogue |

## CHAPTER 7

### CREATING INDICATORS



Indicators have a bad reputation in the eyes of many practitioners. Somehow they have come to be seen as burdensome, nearly impossible donor requirements. Too often indicator development happens at the last minute when a proposal is due, and project designers rush to find something that seems adequate. It is too bad that this is the case. Indicator development can actually be rather invigorating and often provides great insight, even energy, for a program, because indicators require you to think creatively about what you really want to learn.

Indicators are like a specialized set of lenses—they help bring into focus what you want to watch for and study in greater detail. A few simple questions are a good starting point:

- What do you want to learn about?
- How will you see whether the expected results of your activities actually occurred?
- How will you see the proposed outcome or change you hope to promote?

Remember to relate your indicators specifically to the changes you are proposing, beginning at the activity level. For example, if five meetings were planned between community leaders from two sides of a conflict, did all of these meetings take place? If not, why not? Were there logistical delays, or did some of the representatives refuse to meet?

For deeper learning, use indicators to assess the outputs and impacts that your activities, in this case the meetings, were to facilitate. For example, you may have proposed that by holding five meetings trust would increase between the communities. What are the signs that trust has increased? How do the

members of the communities know that trust has improved between them?

By asking these questions and taking the time to work with the community, you will often find that you improve your ability to identify indicators along with your capacity to sharpen the theory and approach you are using. Concepts such as trust are embedded in the local context and local meaning structure; thus indicators must also be embedded in the local context through participatory indicator development. Meaningful indicators require input from the local context. For example, in the Kenyan Rift Valley, locals see members of different ethnic groups riding in the same bus as an indicator of trust. Outsiders cannot tell the groups apart by sight.

Indicators correspond to the different levels and types of change you pursue. Some indicators may track the really big outcomes and impact, for example, a change in national policy. Others may track important learning about how something is happening. This might require indicators that focus more on process, for example, tracking the ability of an organization to adapt to changes in the environment in order to effectively pursue a national policy change. Or, tracking the effectiveness of different strategies intended to generate support for a policy change. Think about developing indicators for your higher-level or longer-term objectives as well as for your more immediate, short-term activities.

### **Some Guidelines for Indicators**

- Be specific and clear about outcomes and how to measure them; remember that vague outcomes are hard to see.
- Identify the processes you want to learn about, then think carefully about how you will see and track the process.
- Develop more than one lens—several ways to understand the process, theory and outcome. Use a variety of methods, from interviews, to tracking incidences of a phenomenon you are watching, to

observing peoples' action and behaviors. For example, see the variety of possible indicators for inter-religious tolerance within public institutions and communities that appear in Box 7.1.

- Think creatively about context and culture. Ask the people and partners you work with to help you develop indicators for the changes you are trying to promote.
- Consider carefully the timeframes of change. Some changes may happen more quickly, others require a much longer time frame. You may need different indicators, or lenses, to see these short and longer-term timeframes.
- Watch for the unexpected. Just because something did not happen the way you expected does not mean that deep learning is not taking place.
- Be careful with nice phrases and correct jargon. Probe what is “really going on” at a deeper level. Participation in a joint community workshop, for example, may not be an indicator of trust, but just an indicator that people have learned what to do to receive a per diem.

Two tools are included in this chapter. The first tool outlines a number of possible indicators before and after a workshop, and before and after three years. Notice how the box comments ask deeper questions about the indicators and meaning. You can use a similar format to brainstorm and probe your own indicators. Few indicators are foolproof, but you can develop ones that represent your best guesses about how you will know things have changed. The second tool is the theory of change framework from the previous chapter, this time with an extra row at the bottom where you can identify indicators matching your theory of change and the focus of your activities. The indicators you develop would help to determine if your theory of change is occurring as you had thought it would.

**Remember, few indicators are foolproof—they are just “indicators!”**

**BOX 7.1 POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF INTER-RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE****In Public Institutions:**

- Legal system accommodates religious differences, for example re. inheritance
- Equitable representation of both groups in elected government, civil service
- Respectful, accurate description of religion in schools
- Religious leaders engaged in dialogue (inter-religious council established?)
- Equitable policies, use of resources within department of religious affairs
- Government solicits input on inter-religious policies
- Religious symbols and dress accepted in public institutions
- Official holidays of both groups (formal recognition at national level)
- Inter-faith prayer rooms in public buildings
- Anti-discrimination policy passed
- Minority religious community allowed to build religious buildings
- National program for tolerant schools promoted officially by Ministry, increased number of schools participate

**In Communities:**

- Communities celebrate each others' holidays and events (ex. funerals)
- Children play together
- Inter-religious marriage
- Existence of inter-religious council to solve disputes
- Initiatives from community groups to address inter-religious issues
- Communities have shared physical spaces
- Media promotes tolerance (positive stories of inter-religious cooperation, reduced use of stereotypes and loaded language, voices of minority groups heard)
- Community members report feelings of religious tolerance
- Reduction in inter-religious violence



## TOOLS FOR CREATING INDICATORS

### INDICATOR BRAINSTORMING QUESTIONS

This tool provides an example of possible indicators developed for a project in which an organization proposes to hold three conflict transformation awareness workshops over a one-year period. The trainings will be held with women from two religiously-divided communities, with the goal of increasing trust. Indicators like these can be brainstormed with stakeholders. The indicators you develop can also be mapped onto your theory of change in **Worksheet 7.1**.

Questions for brainstorming:

- o How can we visualize trust?
- o How can we measure or see trust at the end of the first workshop? After one year? Five years? How do we know if trust is increasing?

**Critical Questions:**  
Why do they participate?  
Per diem? Instructions  
from leader? How can  
we measure authenticity?

#### After 1<sup>st</sup> Workshop

- Number who participate (attend, speak) from each group
- Participants agree on agenda
- Socializing during meeting, breaks
- Open, active participation
- Participants reveal themselves (express opinions, concerns)
- Participants develop an action plan
- Joint community projects
- Pre/post change in attitude

If participants only  
interact with their own  
group is it just human  
nature, not animosity?

There appears to be  
circular relationship  
between trust and  
cooperation—do we  
use signs of  
cooperation as  
indicators of trust?

Look for shifts in  
thinking. Could  
we use a social  
distance survey to  
measure?

#### After 3 Workshops (1 Year)

- Letting children play together
- Meetings outside the 3 formal workshops
- Working together on a common agenda
- Volunteering for continuing initiatives
- Socializing outside meeting
- Joining women's meeting and lending circle
- Participation in each other's rituals and ceremonies
- Consistent and voluntary attendance
- Fewer provocative activities
- More geographic mobility—can move in areas that previously were not open to them because of lack of trust

**Critical Questions:**  
Does increased  
interaction always  
mean increased  
trust?

How can we  
measure what  
happens outside the  
workshop? What  
can we observe  
directly? What do  
we learn from  
people telling their  
own stories?

How can we measure  
"voluntary"?

How can we measure  
"provocative"?

Think through how  
to measure this—  
what are  
implications for  
planning?



## WORKSHEET 7.1 CREATING INDICATORS TO FIT YOUR THEORIES OF CHANGE

|                               |          |            |            |          |
|-------------------------------|----------|------------|------------|----------|
| Overall goal 1:               |          |            |            |          |
| How?                          |          |            |            |          |
| Types and theories of change: |          |            |            |          |
|                               | Personal | Relational | Structural | Cultural |
| Focus<br>(Activities)         |          |            |            |          |
| Theories                      |          |            |            |          |
| Indicators                    |          |            |            |          |



## CHAPTER 8

### BASELINE DEVELOPMENT



The challenge of building a baseline for monitoring- and evaluation-as-learning lies in answering very specifically the question “**What do we need to learn?**”

When this question is asked so directly, it is immediately obvious that evaluation strategies must be initiated at the beginning of the planning process, not just at the end of a project. In peacebuilding, this point is particularly important because so many of the things peacebuilders need to learn and understand better are not easily measured. So peacebuilders must think carefully about both the learning process and the changes their activities are promoting.

Let us take an example.

In a given community, there has been a pattern of violence along religious lines. A peacebuilding project will work to increase trust between key leaders on both sides, by inviting them to a series of workshops to raise awareness about their experiences of the conflict, and to explore their assessments of what can be done. The project’s designers hope that by providing an opportunity for relationship-building and exchange, the leaders will improve their understanding of each other and communicate more clearly and regularly, which will, in turn, help diminish violence.

Notice a few of the potential underlying theories of change:

- Trust increases when people come to know each other better;
- Trust increases when people have more awareness of how each side has experienced the conflict;
- When contact and communication increase, understanding and empathy increase;

- Increased contact, understanding, and trust will help prevent violence.

Given this range of potential theories of change, notice the importance of tailoring the baseline specifically toward learning about the ideas promoted in the initiative.

- If the designers of this project want to learn whether increased contact helps to build trust and better communication, and if it diminishes violence, they will need to know how much contact these particular leaders had before the workshops, and how much they had once the workshops were over. In other words, they need to know whether new patterns of contact between people emerged;
- If they want to see whether violence diminished, they need to have a clear picture of the levels and patterns of violence before the workshops;
- If they want to know whether trust has increased, they will need to develop indicators of trust, to measure what levels of trust existed before and after the project.

Our point here is that a meaningful peacebuilding baseline does not consist of general statistics about the situation. It requires specifics related to what practitioners need to learn in a particular situation. Some of these factors may be easily counted; for example, a baseline may indicate that key leaders never met at any time in the three years before the project (but after the project they met once a month). For others, such as trust, a great deal of work with people in the context will be required to develop indicators. How do people in that setting know that trust was missing, and then increased? What are the signs to look for? (The example in the previous chapter explores these questions.) Again, the key point here is that a baseline can contribute to evaluation-as-learning if it is incorporated into the design and learning process from the outset, to provide a point of comparison.

It is worth noting that there are evaluation strategies, such as “Most Significant Change” (Davies & Dart, 2005) that focus on evaluation-as-learning and utilize stories of change to examine impact without a baseline.

## CHAPTER 9

## PLANNING WITH THE INTEGRATED PEACEBUILDING FRAMEWORK



Planning and analysis can be done deductively or inductively, or both approaches can be used in complimentary ways. Inductive approaches to planning build up to general ideas or principles from the specific details of the program context, and experiences. For example, you may develop a general programming methodology based on pilot programs in three neighborhoods. Or, you might use Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) for an inductive, community-based information gathering, analysis and planning process. The reflective practitioner process that is described in chapter 2 is an inductive, theory-building process that is based on daily experiences.

Deductive planning refers to drawing conclusions about what needs to be done in programming based on general ideas or principles. Frameworks or deductive planning tools can bring into focus particular dimensions of change that are important for peacebuilders to consider in programming. One such tool that practitioners have found very helpful is Lederach's *Peacebuilding Integrated Framework* (1997). It is a tool that provides general ideas, or principles, about change to assist in planning for transformation. Another tool practitioners can use is the Reflecting on Peace Practice matrix (see Anderson and Olson, 2003). Interestingly, both of these tools were developed using inductive methods. We include the Integrated Framework as a planning tool here because it can help stimulate peacebuilders' thinking about how their activities can impact multiple levels of change in the short-term as well as the long-term.

## Using the Integrated Framework to Help Plan Interventions

It is said that “what we look for is what we see.” The **lenses** that peacebuilders look through determine what comes into focus. In planning for transformative change, practitioners can use the Integrated Framework to sharpen program design based on an analysis of the immediate issues that they face as well as the relational and systemic context, while at the same time thinking through the time horizon of program planning.

The Integrated Framework identifies four **levels** at which peacebuilding activities are directed: **issues**, **relationships**, **subsystems** and **systems**. In Box 9.1, the four levels are presented by the nested ovals on the left (vertical) axis. These four levels complement the **four dimensions of change** discussed in chapter 5, and bring an additional focus in two particular areas. The framework adds a specific focus on the immediate, concrete **issues** (behaviors, actions) such as fighting between youth gangs, which peacebuilders are looking to confront and stop through their interventions. These are the immediate problems and crises that demand immediate responses.

The framework also brings **subsystems** into focus. The sub-systems lens centers on the area between the relational and systemic, or structural, levels. It asks: “Who are the people to which peacebuilders have access and who are *responsible for the community*?” The people and institutions at the sub-systems level provide an entry point to wider systemic change—in other words, working at the sub-system level is a way to begin to effect structural or cultural change on a small scale.

The Integrated Framework highlights that in planning transformative interventions, it is important to address immediate issues and crisis as well as work towards structural change.

Planning for transformation also requires thinking through the time horizons of change. Work at the four levels (issues, relationships, subsystems, systems) often requires different amounts of time. The horizontal axis of the Integrated

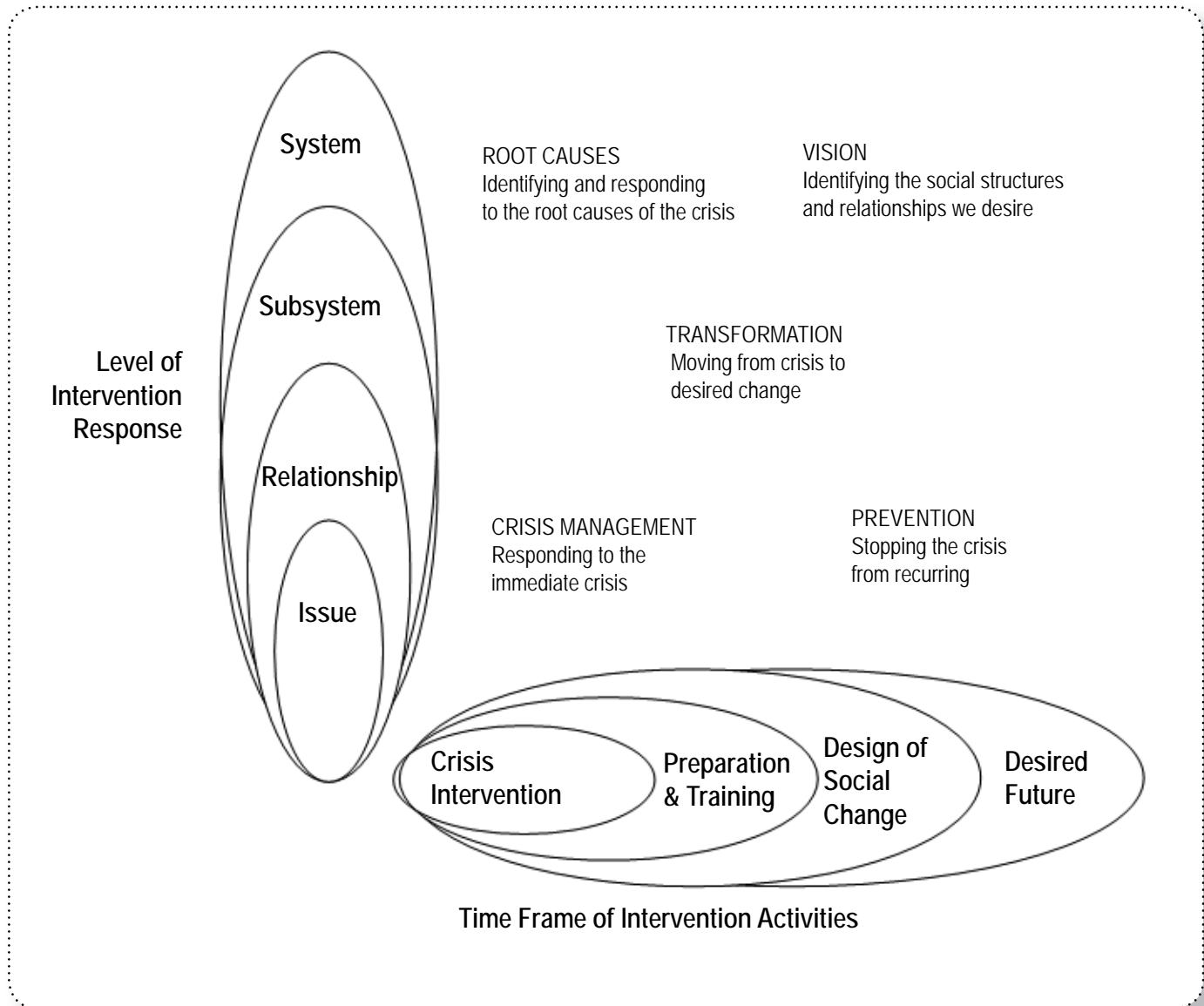
Framework shows a series of ovals that represent planning and implementation of activities.

Program activity often begins with a period of days, or even months, of **crisis intervention**, when practitioners respond to immediate, short-term crises. A **preparation and training** phase, designed to improve capacity to respond to the relational and systemic context follows, and may last a year or two. During the third phase, the focus shifts to **design of social change**, developing theories of change—assessing how to make the journey from “where we are” to “where we want to be” over five to ten years. Simultaneously, there is the need to look at **generational change** and the vision of where we want to go “so that our grandchildren do not suffer in the same ways;” the long-term vision identifies what we need to build towards in the short and medium-term. In planning, it is important for peacebuilders to know where they are going—to have a vision and develop plans for intervention based on that vision.

It is good practice to begin your planning by building on lessons and insights already learned, such as those captured in the Integrated Framework. As reflective practitioners, your intervention plans will be shaped by the context, and will change as you “act,” “watch” and “learn.”

The remainder of this chapter looks at ways to use the Integrated Framework with logical frameworks in planning.

**BOX 9.1 PEACEBUILDING INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK**



Source: Adapted from Lederach, 1997.

## Using the Peacebuilding Integrated Framework with Logframes

As noted in chapter six, **logframes** (or **proframes**) are standard development planning and management tools used by many implementing and donor organizations. Logframes are designed to ensure that project activities contribute to project objectives and overall program goals (see Box 9.2). Logframes usually have either four or five levels. If there are five levels, they specify:

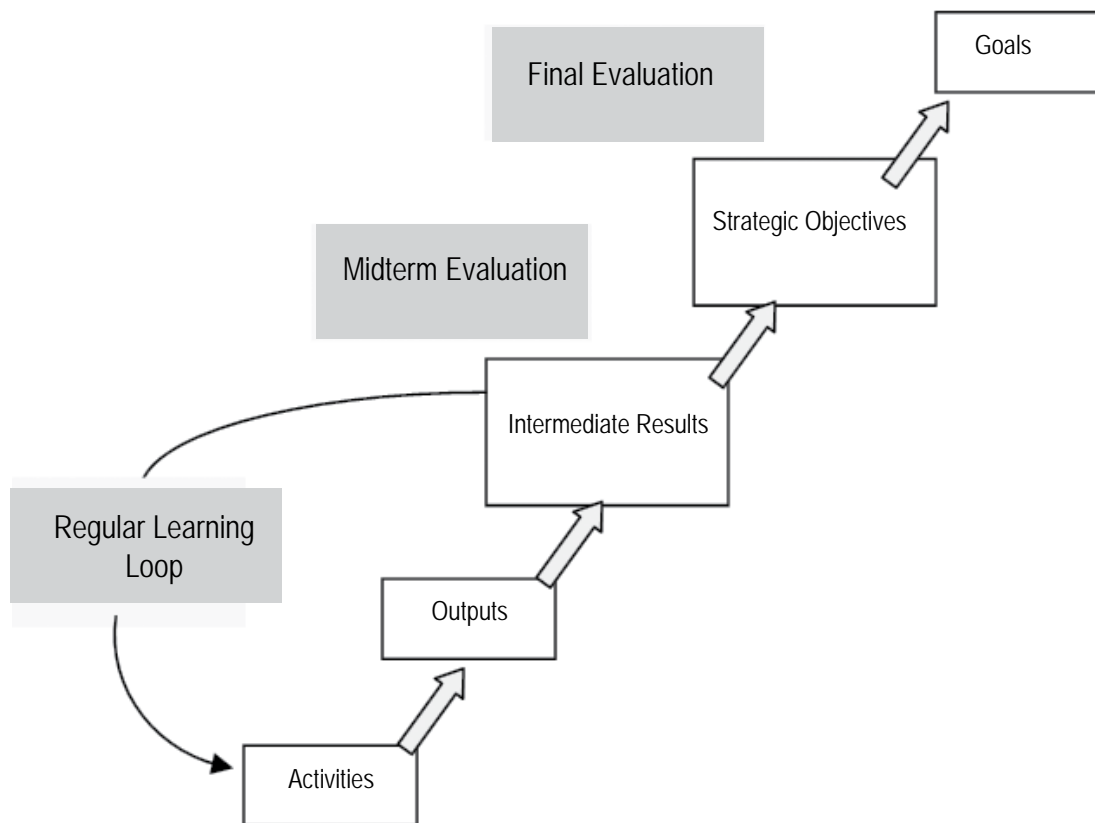
- 1) **Activities** – actions that will be undertaken in the project, such as conflict mediation training;
- 2) **Outputs** – services that have been delivered as a result of the activities, such as the building of mediators’ knowledge and skills;
- 3) **Intermediate Results** – early, observable indications that the activities and outputs have led to positive change, such as when the training participants actively mediate disputes in the community;
- 4) **Strategic Objectives** – the changes project designers are trying to achieve through interventions during the lifetime of a particular project (usually over 3-5 years), such as a reduction in disputes leading to violence; and
- 5) **Goals** – the long-term changes sought (over 5-10 years or more), such as “sustainable peace.”

The development of peacebuilding logframes can be enhanced by pairing the logframe with the Peacebuilding Integrated Framework (Box 9.3 shows the overlap visually). Both the integrated framework and the logical framework force practitioners to be explicit about their theories of change in the process of program and project planning, by prompting project designers to ask “why” questions, thereby helping to uncover assumptions and encouraging a deeper understanding of existing conflict dynamics and the dynamics the project aims to promote. Such as: “Why will mediation training activities lead to less violence in the community?”

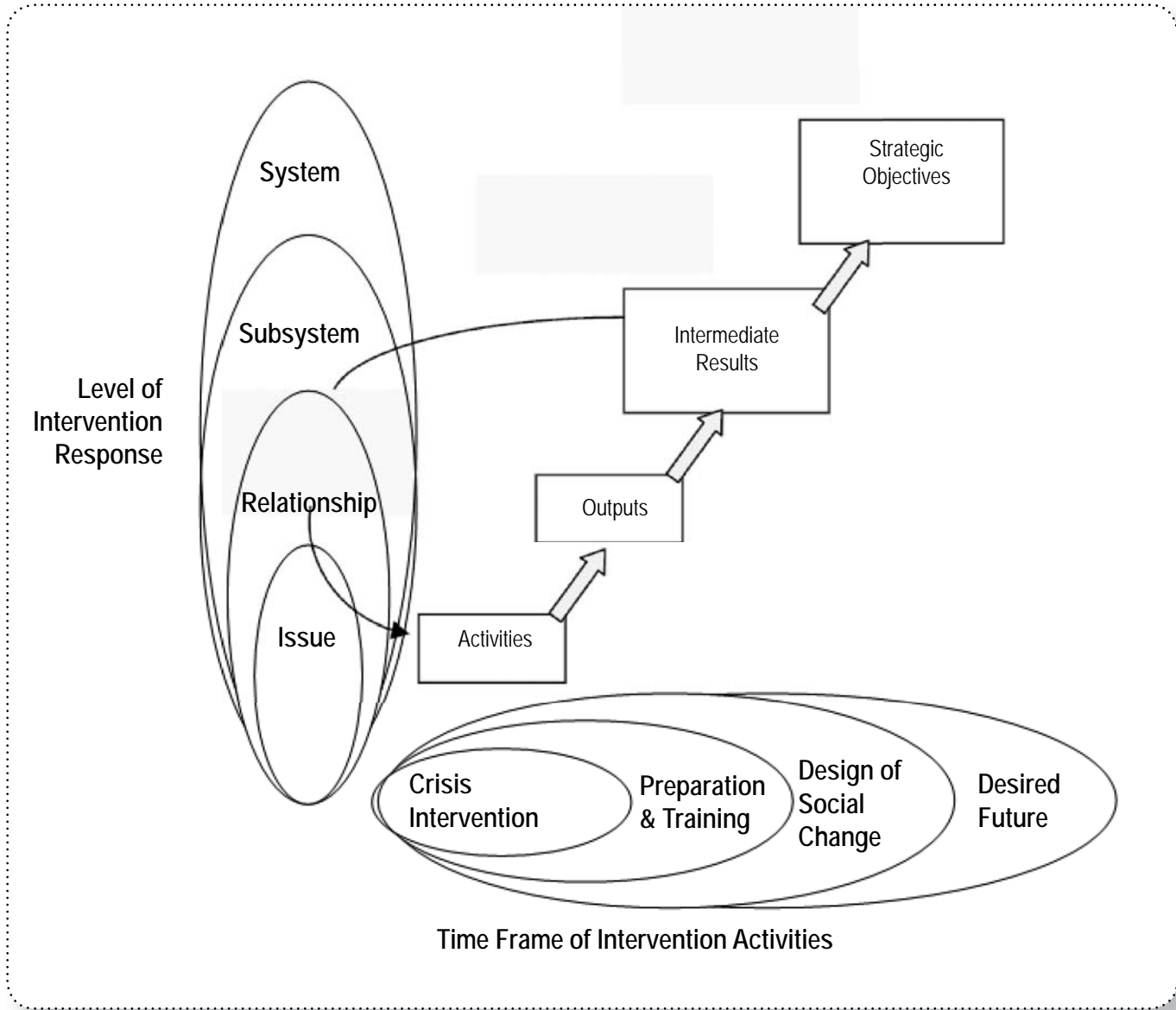
The Integrated Framework provides lenses to see how issues relate to relationships, subsystems and larger systems in a single, connected “nested” frame. Using the framework encourages peacebuilders to design interventions that are level-specific, but also strategically impact the whole. Similarly, logframes invite peacebuilders to think strategically about how activities relate to objectives and goals (and vice versa). They also both highlight the need for good diagnostics and analyses of the root causes and manifestations of various conflict issues.

Using a learning approach, problems in project implementation force practitioners to revisit the theory (or theories) of change. In Boxes 9.2 and 9.3, this is shown as a learning feedback loop between the Intermediate results and the activities. If something did not happen, you can become more explicit about what needs to change and how the project can best intervene to promote these changes. Even when projects are successful, it is important to dig deeper and ask why. The first question is: Was the project successful? The answer may be “yes, because...” or “yes, but...” Following-up the “buts” and “becausees” can lead to significant learning. Examining theories of change is a process of critical analysis and learning.



**BOX 9.2 LOGFRAME PLANNING**

**BOX 9.3 COMBINING THE INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK WITH THE LOGFRAME**



## CHAPTER 10

# SCALING UP IMPACT



### *What is Scaling Up?*

Most peacebuilding projects are quite small compared to the complex problems they seek to address. Though dedicated to reducing violent conflict and building peace in society, peacebuilding organizations rarely have the resources, staff, or persuasive power to bring about these broad social changes on their own. Yet often, their innovative approaches have proven effective and could have great impact if they were more widely implemented or integrated with other projects or programs. Efforts to enhance the impact of a project by enlarging it or linking it with broader initiatives are often referred to as **scaling up**.

Scaling up generally occurs in one (or both) of two dimensions. The **geographical scope** of a project can be expanded from the local to the national or even global level, as programs are replicated in new places, either by new chapters of the same organization or by independent organizations. The **target audience** can also be expanded from individuals, to institutions, or to the public at large. The combination of these two dimensions provides a range of options for scaling up, as shown in Box 10.1 below.

**BOX 10.1 EXAMPLES OF SCALING UP**

|                           |                 |   |   |   |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---|---|---|
| <b>GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE</b> | <b>Global</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• citizens of several countries</li> <li>• international coalitions or networks</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN and its agencies</li> <li>• international NGOs</li> <li>• multinational corporations</li> <li>• international donor agencies</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• global social movements</li> <li>• international media</li> </ul>  |
|                           | <b>National</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• members of several communities across country</li> <li>• coalitions or networks of small groups</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• government agencies</li> <li>• ministry of education</li> <li>• national religious organizations</li> <li>• truth commissions</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• national media events</li> <li>• national news</li> <li>• social movements</li> <li>• cultural events</li> </ul> |
|                           | <b>Local</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• members of community</li> <li>• small groups</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• schools</li> <li>• police</li> <li>• religious congregations</li> <li>• local businesses</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local newspapers</li> <li>• community-wide events or rallies</li> <li>• advocacy campaigns</li> </ul>            |
|                           |                 | <b>Individuals</b>  | <b>Institutions</b>   | <b>Public</b>   |
|                           | <b>AUDIENCE</b> |   |   |   |

As Anderson and Olson observe in *Confronting War*, programs often choose between strategies that emphasize “more people” and those that focus on “key people.” However, when programs work on issues at the socio-political level, they tend to be most effective when “more people” and “key people” strategies are combined. Thus, combining work with both institutions and the public may be needed to effectively scale up impact.

## Strategies for Scaling Up

Organizations can use a variety of strategies to enhance their impact on a wider scale. Perhaps the most obvious way is for the organization itself to expand, bringing the project to new individuals or communities. To cite one well known example, during the 1990s, NGOs in Bangladesh scaled up their micro-credit programs by extending services to participants in new districts across the country, with the Grameen Bank eventually extending micro-credit services globally. In this case, the basic approach to scaling up was to move up the left column of the chart, continuing to work with individuals on a wider and wider geographic scale.

Though it can be very effective, this strategy for scaling up is not appropriate, or even possible, for all projects, because of the considerable financial, managerial, even political challenges it presents. For this reason, organizations have explored alternative approaches to scaling up, to increase their impact without necessarily having to increase the size of the organization. Many of these strategies rely on the organization's real or potential leverage with similar organizations, government entities, international organizations, the media, or other key actors. As shown in the chart below, these strategies fall into four broad categories.

Scaling up strategies are one way to bridge the gap in peacebuilding between efforts focussing on personal and relational change, and work for structural and cultural change. As we have seen, there are many possibilities for scaling up, beyond simple replication of a project in a new location; by considering these various strategies, project designers can develop creative ways to work with other organizations or entities to enhance impact.

## Incorporating Scaling Up Strategies into Planning, Monitoring and Learning

It is important to consider potential strategies for scaling up impact from the very beginning, during project planning. If you use a logframe for your planning, consider scaling up strategies as you discuss how project outcomes are linked to objectives, or even how objectives are linked to goals. At both these levels, scaling up strategies, such as seeking to influence key institutional actors, could significantly increase the organization's ability to bring about change,

Potential to scale up may be lost or diminished if a project is designed without consideration of a scaling up strategy. For example, a community mediation program might gain considerable sustainability if the courts or the police could easily refer cases to it. If program planners would like see such referrals as a primary source of cases, they should design the program from the outset to ensure a smooth referral process. They could even involve the courts or police in program design, to make sure the programs would be able to work together effectively.

Even if you do not make specific plans for scaling up the project, but only consider potential strategies in general terms, having potential scaling up possibilities in mind could provide a useful point for reflection during program monitoring activities. For example, if replicating a project in other communities is a possible path for scaling up, program staff might make note of the interest expressed in the project by members of other communities or staff from other organizations, and also watch during implementation to see what role local relationships and patterns of interacting played in the project.

For further information on scaling up, read the pieces by Jocelyn DeJong (2004), Stuart Gillespie (2003), or Peter Uvin, Pankaj Jain and David Brown (2000), listed in the **Resources for Further Learning** section of the Toolkit.

**BOX 10.2 STRATEGIES FOR SCALING UP IMPACT**

| MODE                                       | COMMON STRATEGIES  | PEACEBUILDING EXAMPLES   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Expanding Options</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrating that an approach that many thought would not work is feasible</li> <li>• Implementing a pilot project to test a new approach on a small scale before applying it more widely</li> <li>• Developing and/or using new technologies</li> </ul>   | Communities in conflict areas in Mindanao declared themselves “Zones of Peace” to reduce militant violence; many thought this would not work, as similar efforts had failed in the past, but after some successful efforts, other communities soon made similar declarations         |
| <b>Expanding Coverage</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replicating a project in new areas or with new partners</li> <li>• Training other NGOs or entities to use a program or approach</li> <li>• Using mass communication or the media to communicate with a large audience</li> <li>• Building a network among other organizations or individuals around a common issue</li> </ul> | Radio soap operas that addressed issues of inter-ethnic conflict and reconciliation in Burundi were broadcast on several stations and reached an estimated 82% of the population, promoting dialogue and reflection on peace issues  |
| <b>Expanding Institutional Involvement</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Propagating a project to another institution or entity with a wider reach</li> <li>• Advocating for changes in institutions</li> <li>• Global networking</li> </ul>   | A peace education curriculum that proved effective in a several local schools in Albania was implemented nationwide when the Ministry of Education approved the curriculum   |
| <b>Expanding Approach</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inter-sectoral integration</li> <li>• Developing upstream or downstream programming</li> </ul>  | A conflict resolution (CR) program that worked with college students on a violence-prone campus learned through its work that college administrators needed CR training to address violent issues on campus; the program expanded to integrate work with students and administrators |



## TOOLS FOR SCALING UP

### *Questions to Consider*

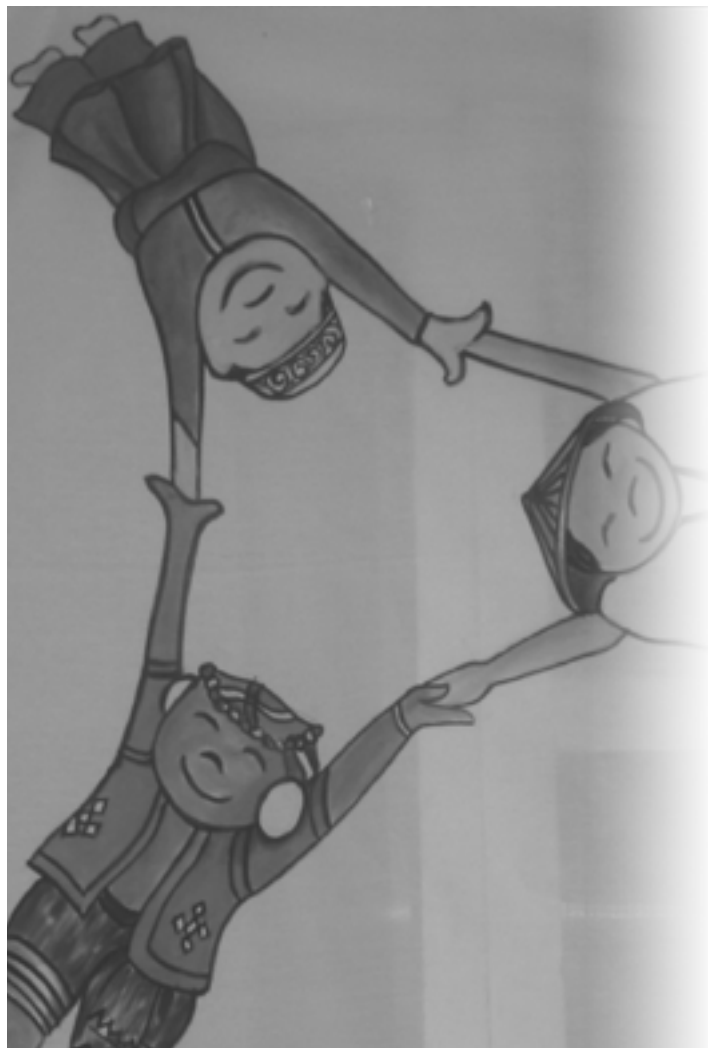
- Could this project be repeated in other communities? (Or is its success tied to highly localized conditions?)
- Would media attention to this program improve its impact? If so, is it attracting this attention? Why or why not?
- Could the project easily be replicated by other organizations? If so, are other organizations seeking to replicate it? Why or why not?
- What other actors, whether they be individuals, organizations, institutions, or agencies, could carry the impact of the project to a wider audience or link it with peace initiatives on other levels? How can the project build links with these actors?
- What actors have proven to be critical to success during project implementation? How can ties with these actors be strengthened?
- What level of action is needed (local, national, international)?





## CHAPTER 11

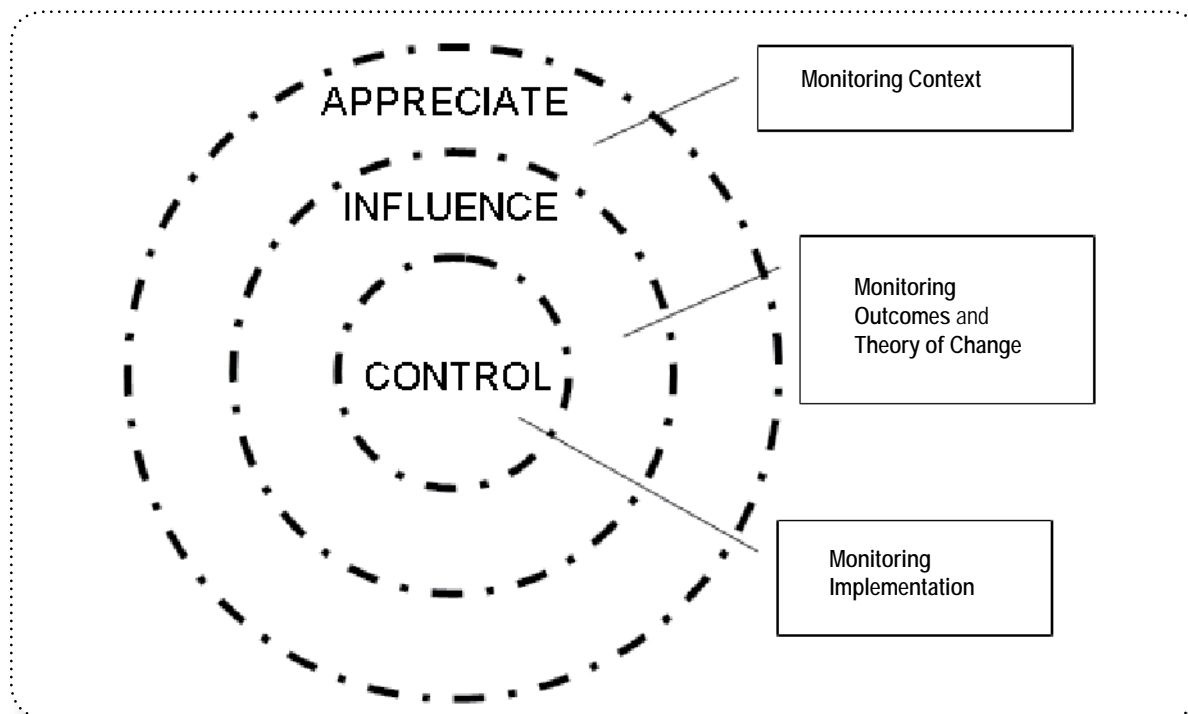
### MONITORING AS LEARNING



Donors often require extensive regular monitoring reports, such that project staff often focus the time they spend monitoring on tabulating data and writing reports. While these are important components of the overall monitoring process, they may not produce learning to inform project decision-making and enhance project implementation or evaluation.

If monitoring is viewed as a learning opportunity for project staff, additional aspects and benefits come into focus. First, while project implementation data is important, peacebuilders must not only *collect*, but also *interpret* this data. An important learning opportunity is missed if monitoring data is simply forgotten once the report has been sent. It is often possible to interpret data used to measure progress in several ways; discussion among project staff of multiple interpretations can promote greater learning. For example, a team might discuss whether the repeated and ongoing attendance of participants from opposing groups at a series of training events was due to authentic commitment on behalf of the participants, or to monitor the “other side,” or some other factor. Second, the monitoring field-of-view should range beyond the pre-established indicators. Events in the field, comments from partners, and stories of success or failure may provide significant insights into the progress of the project, and into strategies for improving it; however, this type of information may not fit neatly into indicator frameworks. Monitoring systems can be designed to be flexible enough to accommodate diverse information from the field, for example by regularly collecting and incorporating stories.

## BOX 11.1 MONITORING LEWIS' THREE DIMENSIONS OF THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT



Source: Adapted from Lewis, 2001

## The Monitoring Environment

To maximize the value of monitoring beyond project activities and outcomes, peacebuilders should regularly consider the working environment—events and circumstances that are not part of the project itself, but that may influence its success. David Lewis' simple but useful diagram distinguishes three dimensions of the working environment that need to be monitored (Box 11.1). As Lewis points out, project managers often focus project monitoring on the areas in the center where they have control, at the expense of monitoring other external factors which can have enormous importance for the project.

### Monitoring Implementation

The center circle, “control” is the focus of most conventional monitoring. It includes aspects of the project that are within the organization's control, such as staffing, budgeting, planning

activities, and setting objectives. This type of monitoring provides feedback mainly on **implementation**. Is the project being carried out in accordance with the project plan? Are the progress indicators (those determined during project planning) being met? For example, an organization seeks to encourage nonviolent resolution of community disputes by establishing a local mediation center. To monitor implementation of this project, and how the center is progressing, staff would want to know: how many local people have been trained in mediation? How many cases are being brought to the center?

### Monitoring Outcomes and Theory of Change

The circle of “influence” represents aspects of the working environment that the organization has some “leverage” over, but cannot control directly. These include the activities and actions of a broad range of other actors, including: other organizations,

donors, government agencies, the media, the business community, and community groups or other partners.

Monitoring the circle of influence involves monitoring the project's **outcomes** and **theory of change**—is the project generating the anticipated changes? In other words, is it having the desired influence?

Gathering this feedback requires openness to several forms of learning. Indicators of expected program outcomes can be monitored and compared to baseline data; however peacebuilders also need to be alert to other information which may be relevant for decision making or strategy. For instance, revealing indicators—either of success or failure—may not be foreseen during project planning, but may emerge during implementation, or stories from partners might suggest that the project is having significant unintended consequences which deserve attention. A sample tool is provided in the **Tools** section, which provides a matrix for discussing the four dimensions of change with stakeholders. This tool is meant to be used in interviews, in which you would ask stakeholders for stories about positive or negative changes (at the personal, relational, structural and cultural levels) that have occurred in the community that they think were related to the project.

The mediation center, for example, is intended to encourage nonviolent resolution of disputes in the community. The theory of change might be that disputes which formerly would have been addressed violently will instead be brought to the center. To test this theory of change, it would be important to know whether the kind of disputes being brought to the center might have led to violence if they had not been mediated. Indicators to monitor this will not be easy to devise, however, project staff might look for patterns in the cases being brought to the center. Are there indications that potentially violent disputes are being mediated? For example, are cattle rustling cases, which previously resulted in violence, now being brought to the center? Why or why not? Exploring this question can provide important insights into whether the theory of change is sound.

Monitoring systems can be developed to pay attention to the surprises or unexpected events that may improve programming. In order to do this, you will need to develop a “serendipitous

lens” and open your vision to what is happening on the periphery.

### Monitoring Context

The outer circle, “appreciate,” represents broad political, legal, social, and cultural factors over which an organization has virtually no control or influence, but which play a major role in a program’s success. Monitoring of these factors is sometimes referred to as **context monitoring**. Organizations sometimes neglect context monitoring because they do not expect to see any impact of their activities on the wider context during project implementation. The goal of context monitoring, however, is not to determine the impact of the project on the context, but to appreciate the impact of the context on the project! Perhaps changes in the context require changes to the project. Assumptions about context are often spelled out in logframe-style project plans; monitoring these assumptions is one form of context monitoring. Conflict environments are notoriously unpredictable, however, and it can be difficult during planning to envision all possible scenarios, so peacebuilders must be sensitive to developments beyond the assumptions specified in the plan.

In the case of the mediation center, context monitoring might involve keeping abreast of legal regulations that affect the types of disputes that can be mediated, identifying how cultural and social attitudes toward mediation affect the center’s effectiveness, or monitoring news stories about mediation that might influence local perceptions of the center. While the mediation center cannot control these external factors, it needs to be responsive to changes in them.

Points to think about in monitoring the environment are:

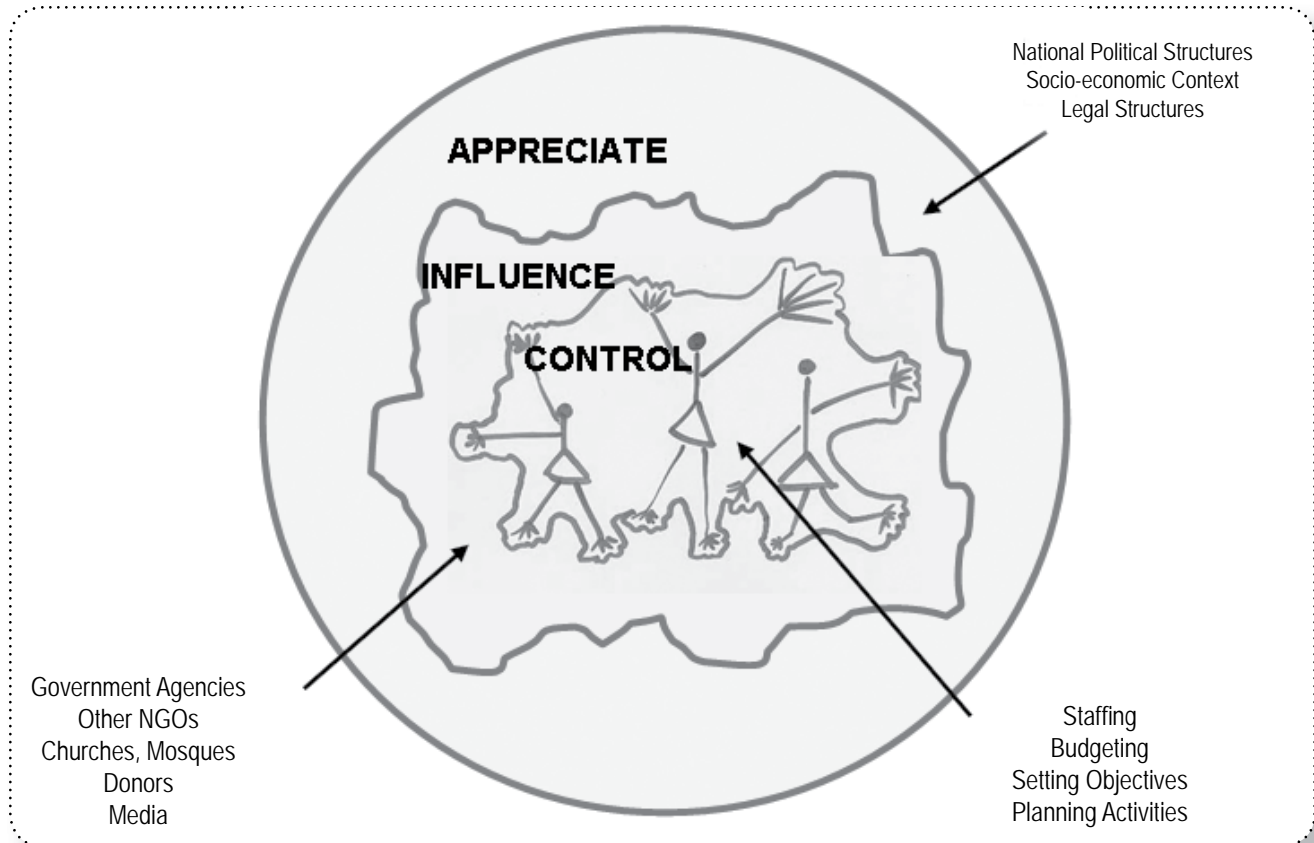
**1) The strategic use of resources.** As violence ebbs and flows, different skills are required and different actors (politicians, local/international NGOs, lawyers, etc.) are prominent and influential in different phases. Regular analysis of the situation may suggest where to most constructively focus your efforts. Apply different skills at different phases of conflict, and be selective about where you spend your time and energies!

**2) Collaboration.** Use your strengths, and don't assume you do not have any influence on the national or global—this is rarely true. You can look to combine the benefits of being an insider with links to outsiders or vice versa, for example by working with diasporas. Look for strategic partnerships to achieve your objectives.

**3) Be aware of changing patterns of global violence and peacemaking.** Know and understand changes at an international level because they may affect the local power balance and patterns of violence.

As Lewis also points out, the three circles shift constantly, so that windows of opportunity to influence broader structures continuously open and close. Through context monitoring, an organization positions itself to take advantage of opportunities to effect positive change. For example, the local court system might express interest in handling some cases through mediation, presenting an opportunity for the mediation center to extend its impact and increase its sustainability—but only if program staff were aware of this interest through monitoring. Thus, the reality of program implementation may be more like Box 11.2.

### BOX 11.2 WORKING TO EXPAND THE CIRCLES



*Illustration by Brenda Fitzpatrick*

**BOX 11.3 LESSONS FROM PRACTICE: MONITORING FOR LEARNING AND CHANGE IN MINDANAO**

Mindanao has experienced armed conflict since the 1970s. There are at least four armed (revolutionary) groups; more than 120,000 people have been killed and close to 2 million have been displaced since the 1970s. Most of the conflict-affected areas are the poorest regions in the Philippines. In 1996, CRS formed a Peace and Reconciliation Program to respond to the conflict and support peace. After a number of years of programming, the team was challenged to **design a monitoring and evaluation system that was consistent with its peacebuilding values, principles and goals.**

The Peace and Reconciliation Team developed the following **guiding principles**:

- Focus on process
- Monitoring for learning
- Ensure stakeholder participation and ownership of the process
- Monitoring becomes a part of the peacebuilding process (a safe space to gather together different actors)
- Documentation of experiences and learning is a key feature
- Monitoring and evaluation linked with theory/ies of change and principles of the program

The Team then looked to develop their monitoring for learning process. They held an initial workshop to define indicators with partners. They designed and held baseline processes for each community. After an initial round of feedback, they harmonized and refined their reporting and monitoring system and developed a toolkit that was tailored to the program needs. The monitoring tools include collecting basic information about events, as well as collecting information on the theories of change and the types of changes people were experiencing at the personal, relational, cultural, structural and spiritual levels.

#### **Key Elements in Designing Monitoring for Learning in Mindanao**

- Move beyond using Results Framework/Proframes for project design, and use them to track change as a core element of the Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) system
- Develop an M&R calendar that meets the information requirements of different stakeholders (partners, communities and donors)
- Improve the M&R process by which data are captured, subsequently processed into “information,” and finally reported and disseminated as “knowledge” (e.g. involve communities in discussion what types of change happened as a result of activities, and what contributed to the change process)
- Identify appropriate data collection tools and design them to be useful, meaningful and user friendly
- Reconsider the roles of different stakeholders (partners, project officers, project managers) in the M&R process to improve flow and involvement
- Ask a lot of questions
- Analyze how the program builds change upon change



### TOOLS FOR MONITORING CHANGE (STORY MATRIX)

| PROGRAM TYPE/<br>ACTIVITIES | WHERE CHANGE HAPPENS                                 |            |
|-----------------------------|--|------------|
|                             | PERSONAL   | RELATIONAL |
|                             | STRUCTURAL   | CULTURAL   |
|                             | STAKEHOLDER(S) INTERVIEWED:<br>DATE:<br>INTERVIEWER: |            |

## CHAPTER 12

### EVALUATION AS LEARNING



Evaluation processes present important opportunities for learning—opportunities which are often missed in practice. One reason for this is that accountability to donors often plays a predominant role in shaping project evaluations, limiting examination of issues that might benefit practitioners or other peacebuilders. In addition, organizational systems for learning from evaluations are often weak, reinforcing the perception that evaluations are mainly done for outside stakeholders, not for the project implementers and participants.

This chapter offers suggestions for enhancing the learning potential of evaluations. It does not offer the basics on designing and conducting evaluations—manuals such as *Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs*, by Cheyanne Church and Mark Rogers, provide detailed explanation of evaluation methods. Instead, it focuses on ways to facilitate greater learning from evaluations.

#### Monitoring vs. Evaluation

Manuals on project cycle management often elaborate on the differences between monitoring and evaluation; however, drawing a sharp line between monitoring and evaluation may hide the fact that both these processes are designed to promote organizational learning.

One difference which is sometimes pointed out is that monitoring occurs during a project, while evaluation occurs after the project has been completed. Though this may be true in practice, many kinds of evaluation can also be done during a project, alongside monitoring. Evaluation findings, like monitoring findings, can then be used to adjust project activities or objectives.

Another difference sometimes suggested is that monitoring is done internally by program staff, while evaluation is done by external consultants. Again, this difference reflects common practice, but internal evaluations do exist, and may even constitute the primary form of evaluation in some organizations. (Of course, if the use of external interviewers or facilitators is required to maintain confidentiality or a degree of objectivity, the evaluation cannot be implemented solely by the organization's staff.)

From the perspective of organizational learning, the main difference between monitoring and evaluation is the wider range of methods available in an evaluation process, and the broader scope for learning that these methods allow. A good evaluation uses rigorous methods, whether they are quantitative methods (such as random selection) or qualitative methods (such as in-depth interviews). Evaluations may compare conditions over an extended time period, contrast project participants with others who did not participate, or compare the strategies used with alternative possible strategies, to determine the project's impact. As a result, evaluation methods may reveal patterns that organizational staff had not noticed, or may confirm their observations about the effect of various internal and external factors on the program's success.

## Designing Evaluations for Learning

One way to maximize the learning potential of evaluations is to give careful attention to projected evaluations as early as the project design process. An evaluation plan is often developed as part of a project proposal, and while some donors may require specific evaluation systems or tools, others allow the implementing organization significant input into the shape of the evaluation process. In this case, project designers should take advantage of this opportunity by thoroughly considering what kind of evaluation is most likely to promote needed learning about the project.

A central design question concerns the overall objectives of the evaluation. Church and Rogers identify several distinct objectives which could guide evaluation of a peacebuilding project, including:

**Appropriateness:** Are the theory of change and strategy for the project appropriate for, and relevant to, the particular conflict situation?

**Strategic Alignment:** Is the project in line with the wider mission and principles of the implementing organization?

**Management and Administration:** How well is the project organized and run?

**Cost Accountability:** How are funds utilized and accounted for in implementing the project?

**Implementation Process Appraisal:** What is the quality of the process used in seeking to bring about transformation?

**Output Identification:** Were immediate, tangible results identified in the project plan achieved?

**Outcome Identification:** What changes occurred as a result of the project (positive and negative)?

**Impact Assessment:** What was the wider impact of the project on the surrounding environment?

**Adaptability or Change:** Can changes achieved by the project adapt over time to new contexts or new challenges?

As Church and Rogers note, a single evaluation does not need to address all of these objectives, and, in fact, it would most likely be too expensive to implement such a comprehensive evaluation. Hence, practitioners must prioritize their learning needs. For example, if a project involves a new approach or technique for promoting interaction between conflicting parties an implementation process appraisal might be most useful. If an existing approach is being tried for the first time in a new and highly volatile post-conflict situation, an evaluation focused on appropriateness consideration might yield the most fruitful results. A well-thought-out evaluation plan demonstrates to



prospective donors that the project team understands the importance of evaluation and seeks to use it to improve the practice of peacebuilding.

## Learning from Evaluations

Practitioners can develop processes for utilizing and disseminating evaluation findings to foster greater learning. Evaluation findings can be “used” in several ways. For example, they may be used to make specific decisions about whether to continue a program, or what strategies to pursue. Such use is often called **instrumental**. For an example of how an evaluation was used to enhance team learning and program re-design in Mindanao see **Box 12.1**. Even if the findings do not influence specific decisions, they may affect the way people think about issues or programs. This is sometimes referred to as **conceptual use**. Finally, evaluations are sometimes undertaken primarily to confirm what program managers or external stakeholders already believe to be the case, in what is sometimes referred to as **ritual** or **symbolic use** of evaluations. These uses are not mutually exclusive, and a single evaluation process may contain elements of all three kinds of use.

Efforts to improve learning from evaluations within an organization often focus on increasing instrumental use of evaluation findings. Evaluations may be tailored to address specific questions facing project managers, and evaluators may be encouraged to make specific recommendations for action, even perhaps to suggest ways to implement these recommendations.

Practitioners should also not overlook ways to enhance the conceptual uses of evaluation findings. In the long run, conceptual uses of evaluations often prove to be the most important, as ideas learned through evaluation become more widely known to the organization’s staff, partners, and the peacebuilding community. Practitioners can encourage conceptual use in several ways:

**Use participatory evaluation approaches:** Partners who are involved in planning and implementing an evaluation will gain new perspectives on the project and better appreciate its goals and strategies. When an evaluation is completed, sharing

### BOX 12.1 LESSONS FROM PRACTICE: DESIGNING AN EVALUATION FOR LEARNING IN MINDANAO

The Peace and Reconciliation Program in Mindanao went through an evaluation at the end of the second phase of its program. Due to organizational flexibility, the evaluation team was comprised of two external evaluators, and three locals who represented different sides of the conflict (Muslim, Christian, and Indigenous Peoples). The evaluation design was created with inputs from partners.

Stakeholder consultations, a collective assessment and analysis of the context, as well as recommendations on direction and design of the program from the evaluation produced ideas for the next phase of programming. The program then underwent an extensive designing/redesigning phase that involved stakeholders, particularly to design a new monitoring and reporting system (described in Box 11.3).

results with partners can also provide an opportunity for mutual learning.

**Disseminate results:** Whenever possible, peacebuilders should consider disseminating evaluation findings to the communities where they work and the peacebuilding community more broadly. The internet has made it possible to disseminate written reports cheaply and widely. Meetings with members of the local communities can also be arranged to discuss evaluation results. Of course, peacebuilders must be particularly careful not to breach confidentiality or compromise relationships by releasing or discussing certain evaluation findings.

**Reflect on other evaluations:** In recent years a number of websites have begun to post evaluations of peacebuilding projects. These sites include:

ALNAP Evaluation Reports Database -  
<http://apps.odi.org.uk/erd/default.aspx>

CR Info - Completed Evaluations -  
[http://www.crimo.org/action/recommended.jsp?list\\_id=882](http://www.crimo.org/action/recommended.jsp?list_id=882)

DAC Evaluation Resource Center -  
[http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,2966,en\\_35038640\\_35039563\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,2966,en_35038640_35039563_1_1_1_1_1,00.html)

Search for Common Ground Evaluations - [http://www.sfcg.org/sfcg/sfcg\\_evaluations.html](http://www.sfcg.org/sfcg/sfcg_evaluations.html)

These evaluations not only provide insights into the achievements of peacebuilding projects in a wide range of settings, but also suggest models for new projects and for innovative approaches to evaluation.

**Consider evaluations of other projects during project planning:** One of the most overlooked uses for evaluations is as a resource for project planning. Evaluations of similar projects can provide insights into potential obstacles, likely outcomes, and implementation strategies.

Additional resources for learning about evaluations are in the **Resources for Further Learning** section of the Toolkit. Note especially: Church and Rogers (2006), Fast and Neufeldt (2005), Stetson et al (forthcoming) and van de Putte (2001).

## CHAPTER 13

### DRAWING OUT LESSONS



Practitioners can enhance individual or team learning by using a documentation process to help distill lessons from their experiences. At the same time, the documentation that is produced can enhance learning by capturing, retaining and sharing knowledge about peacebuilding practice. Although many organizations and peacebuilders speak about the importance of best practices and organizational learning, documentation is often not integral to peacebuilding programs. This chapter explores what makes a document a **learning document** and provides suggestions for enhancing documentation-reflection processes.

#### **Characteristics of a Learning Document**

**Synthesis:** A learning document should contain not simply “information,” but “knowledge”—this implies a synthesis of enough experience or data that lessons or broad principles can be drawn, and comparisons can be made.

**Format:** The appearance, structure, and presentation of a learning document are important. A learning document should be accessible and practical for practitioners. Be creative with written documentation formats, and take advantage of CDs, videos, digital recordings and other mediums to provide learning documentation for people who prefer to learn orally or visually.

**Use and distribution:** Regardless of content, a document only becomes a learning document when someone learns from it and feeds it back into his or her work. The storage

and process of distribution may make a document useful or not useful. For example, by using a book or video as the basis of a workshop, you can bring its lessons from one context to another. Different types of documentation will be distributed according to the audience; documents that are meant to raise awareness usually are mass distributed; on the other hand, documents designed to deepen a team's learning about a particular subject might be distributed to a smaller number of team members.

**Content:** A learning document should be demand-driven; that is, it should deal with subjects that are directly relevant to programs and practitioners. Documentation that addresses needs or provides solutions is guaranteed to be used and reused.

**Impact:** A learning document should stimulate action and change. Sometimes, the very process of documentation can create change, by creating feedback that improves project design and strengthens the change process. Documentation of learning as part of on-going monitoring and evaluation processes can provide justification—evidence—for needed adjustments to peacebuilding projects. For example, participatory documentation that involves exchange visits between community members can generate new ideas and insights that improve programming.

**Process:** Often the greatest learning lies in the process of creating synthesis, rather than in the final product. For example, the Manobo people of Mindanao, who are engaged in documenting their customary laws, place as much value on public participation in the process as on the actual document. They believe that “participation of the people is very important if you want them to learn,” to feel a sense of ownership, and find meaning in it. They believe it is better to document their own customary laws than to have an outsider do it, because they do it from the heart, from the standpoint of an indigenous spirituality that “cannot be owned by those who are not indigenous.”

**Learning from everyday documents:** Be alert to the learning that may be found in documents you may not think of as learning documents. For example, a great deal of learning may be embedded in project proposals, which are often shared and peer-reviewed. Similarly, routine reports may include significant learning, which can be highlighted on page one (as suggested in chapter two).

### BOX 13.1 STORYTELLING AS A DOCUMENTATION PROCESS: LEARNING WITH FIELD WORKERS IN WEST TIMOR

*Excerpts from an interview of Philip Visser by John Paul Lederach*

*Conflict as the Beginning of Peace* was produced to document best practices from CRS and partners' experiences integrating peacebuilding with relief for East Timorese refugees in West Timor. The book consists of short stories narrated by field staff of CRS partner organizations, and also contains a one-page synthesis of lessons learned.

**JPL: Where did the idea for this begin?** PV: I asked myself, "Where does the knowledge reside?" Eventually the idea came that those with experience, the field workers, who stand in the interface between aid and people, should tell a story to capture their knowledge. Although Indonesia has an oral culture, every single one of the approximately 40 field staff wrote at least one story. Something empowering in the experience made them want to write.

**Did you encounter any resistance?** No. The entry point was the management of the partner organizations; we came to a common understanding of the project, and I trusted them to convey it to their field staff. Ownership among the field staff was built over time.

**Did they know where the story was going?** At the beginning we didn't even have a book in mind. We explained the project and the role of the field staff, so they understood themselves as authors within a bigger group of authors. We provided guarantees that we wouldn't publish anything without their approval.

**How did you get from stories to lessons?** We set up a process in which everyone could contribute whatever they could. To provide focus, we asked for stories in which the tellers were directly involved in solving a problem or conflict. After the stories were written, we held a workshop for the authors. People worked in pairs, telling their stories to each other, as a way of seeing the gaps and the details that needed to be added, as a way of adding the richness back in. The workshop produced a more nuanced version of the stories. It was a way of maximizing the oral tradition, while connecting it to the written record.

**What is the difference between report writing and story-telling for lessons?** We encouraged people to tell about their experience; we tried not to impose rules and standards—the workshop was supposed to be fun. The guidelines focused on asking encouraging, open questions. It was also important that after re-telling the stories, we asked people how they felt—field staff are rarely asked how they feel. This pushed the workshop to a different level, and enriched the telling of the stories.

**What was the analytical process of distilling the lessons?** The workshop took the process far enough that I could finalize the categories; the overall analysis has editorial freedom based on analysis done at the workshop. The nine principles of the book were not produced at the workshop, but they were based on the workshop output; a smaller working group could have validated them if there was time.

**What were some of the key lessons from this process?** You cannot see this process as just one workshop; you must think about it as a project. It should not be handled only at a program level, but should be given the weight of management support to value and validate the experience of field workers. ... The process must be structured to empower people. There is knowledge and wisdom in every story, but we have to put the stories together to draw good practices. There must be an analysis and synthesis process.



## TOOLS FOR LEARNING DOCUMENTATION

These questions are designed to help you reflect on the purpose and methodology of your documentation process. Think through the questions and discuss as a team.

| QUESTIONS  | NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS |
|--|------------------------|
| <p><b>Learning Purpose and Content</b><br/>           What do you want to learn more about?<br/>           What needs or issues will you address?<br/>           Where or with whom does the knowledge reside?</p>   |                        |
| <p><b>Process</b><br/>           Who will learn during the documentation process?<br/>           How can you design your documentation process to enhance learning?<br/>           Whose voices will you capture?<br/>           How will you ensure their voices are respected?</p> |                        |
| <p><b>Synthesis</b><br/>           Who will help analyze the information?<br/>           How will you analyze the information?<br/>           What type of synthesis do you hope to produce – Better Practices?<br/>           Principles? Recommendations?</p>                      |                        |
| <p><b>Format</b><br/>           How can you creatively present the final product?<br/>           What format will you use? (appearance, structure, presentation)</p>   |                        |
| <p><b>Impact</b><br/>           How will this learning document stimulate action?<br/>           What can you do to increase the changes brought about during or after the documentation process?</p>  |                        |
| <p><b>Use and Distribution</b><br/>           Who will use this learning document?<br/>           How can you improve the format to fit your audience?<br/>           How can you make sure people can find your documentation?</p>  |                        |

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING

ActKnowledge and the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change *Theory of Change Website*, <http://www.theoryofchange.org/>

Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP, *Evaluation Reports Database* - <http://apps.odi.org.uk/erd/default.aspx>

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