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“Proof of Concept”— Learning from Nine Examples of Peacebuilding Evaluation

A Report on the 2011 Peacebuilding
Evaluation Evidence Summit

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By Andrew Blum and
Melanie Kawano-Chiu



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Introduction

In a field that specializes in dialogue, consensus building, and finding solutions to complex challenges, surprisingly absent is an open exchange on a fundamental element of peacebuilding: the determination of whether or not an intervention has “worked.” Yet the reality is that the power dynamics inherent in evaluation make a lack of dialogue among funders and implementers understandable. Moreover, ever-increasing pressures to demonstrate effectiveness, consistently constrained budgets, and shifting and occasionally ill-defined standards of what counts as credible evidence are creating significant challenges for even the most sophisticated organizations in regard to monitoring and evaluating their initiatives.

In the midst of these dynamics, peacebuilding organizations are nonetheless identifying creative ways to address evaluation challenges in conflict-affected contexts. To learn from these efforts, the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) and the Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP) convened the first Peacebuilding Evaluation: Evidence Summit in December 2011. The idea for the Summit originated from discussions during the first year, 2010 - 2011, of the Peacebuilding Evaluation Project: A Forum for Donors and Implementers (PEP). With the support of USIP, the PEP set out to address some of the challenges organizations face in evaluating their peacebuilding programs and projects in conflict-affected settings. In the first twelve months, PEP enabled honest and transparent conversations about the power dynamics inherent in evaluation; triggered new partnerships; increased consensus on potential solutions to challenges in evaluation and impact assessment particularly in peacebuilding contexts; published a USIP Special Report [“Improving Peacebuilding Evaluation”](#) and an AfP Lessons Report [“Starting on the Same Page;”](#) and sparked new projects to improve the practice of evaluation, including the Evidence Summit and the Women’s Empowerment Demonstration Project.

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The day-long Evidence Summit was held at USIP headquarters in Washington, DC. The premise of the Summit was to build on success. Specifically it sought to showcase credible efforts at evidence gathering and evaluation and to bring together various actors within the peacebuilding community to provide input on how the evidence of impact can be made even stronger.

More than 170 people expressed interest in attending the Summit, which eventually accommodated almost seventy participants. Clearly there is demand for dialogue on evaluations that goes beyond funders’ evaluation guidelines or the submission of a final evaluation report. It is also clear that individual conversations are not happening organically and regularly.

Panelists and audience members at the Summit included representatives from the US Agency for International Development, the US State Department, the World Bank, the United Nations, the International Development Research Centre, and other major nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), foundations, and evaluation consultancies. In addition to US, Canadian, and European participants, participants from Kenya, Israel, Ireland, Iraq, Thailand, and the Philippines attended.

Prior to the Summit, a review committee selected nine organizations, out of nearly thirty that responded to a call for submissions, to present evaluations to an audience of donors, evaluation experts, and practitioners. Presentations were made by:

1. Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC)
2. CDA Collaborative Learning Projects and Human Systems Dynamics Associates
3. Search for Common Ground
4. Early Years—the organization for young children
5. Friends of the Earth Middle East
6. Mercy Corps
7. Building Markets (formerly Peace Dividend Trust)¹
8. Brandeis University, Acting Together
9. Pact, Kenya and Act!

Each presentation was followed by focused and structured feedback from a panel of commenters that included donors, practitioners, and evaluation experts and a broader conversation with Summit attendees. The challenges and tensions surrounding evaluation were not resolved at the Summit, but the rigorous discussion led to some consensus on both helpful and problematic dynamics as well as possible solutions to maximize the effectiveness of evaluations under a range of real-world constraints. By presenting and critiquing these nine cases, the Summit provided tangible examples of effective peacebuilding evaluation as well as insight on how evaluation can be improved further.

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The Evidence Summit illustrates a trend away from talking about the challenges of peacebuilding evaluation and what might be possible toward talking about what is being done and how tensions between ideal and feasible evaluation practices can be resolved. To accelerate this trend, which we consider a healthy one, this report summarizes major themes and key findings of the first Evidence Summit, presents the nine evaluation presentations in the form of case studies, and provides guidance for practitioners on holding additional Evidence Summits.

¹ At the time of the Summit, the organization was called Peace Dividend Trust. In this report, we use their new name: Building Markets.

Synthesis of Key Issues Discussed

The richness of the day-long discussions among almost seventy participants makes it impossible to present a full summary here. Instead, this section presents some of the key issues that emerged through the lens of the set of relationships that are at the heart of evaluation processes. Each of these relationships gives rise to important challenges, tensions, and opportunities that were discussed repeatedly at the Summit.

Relationship #1: Implementer <> Donors

Unsurprisingly, much of the discussion at the Summit centered on the relationship between implementers and donors.

- At the most basic level, the relationship between donor and implementer arose in regard to funding evaluations. Many of the evaluations presented at the Summit were possible only because organizations were able to find supplementary funding or repurpose existing funds. While the good news here is that such supplementary funding does exist, this raised questions about how effective evaluation can be made routine across a wider variety of programs. In particular, there was discussion on whether and how a certain percentage of project funds should be devoted to evaluation and/or whether donors should develop dedicated funds for evaluation independent of particular projects.

More generally, while efficiencies can always be found, it was clear from the presentations that sufficient funding is required to make methodologies more rigorous, conduct effective conflict analysis, establish evidence-based theories of change, ensure evaluations are used, and take other steps to improve evaluation practice.

- The tension between accountability to donors and organizational learning within implementers was at times on stark display at the Summit. One organization, for instance, in discussing their mixed-method evaluation, was clear that the objective, quantitative evaluation had been useful with donors, but the more rich qualitative assessments had been used most in program planning and implementation within the organization. Even when methodologies were praised for their ability to generate learning, the question was often asked, “Would these results convince my donor?”

There was interesting discussion, although no consensus, on whether these two goals are simply irreconcilable, perhaps even requiring distinct evaluation processes with different methodologies. On the other hand, one speaker called for a more fundamental shift from a model of evaluation as judgment to evaluation as dialogue between donor and implementer. A key outcome of this dialogue, according to another participant, should be a more sophisticated understanding of what results are realistic to expect from evaluations.

- Summit participants also discussed communication of results from implementers to donors. As organizations become more committed to evaluation, they learn more sophisticated methodologies. But all evaluation results must eventually be communicated to individuals who are not experts in the methodology. Therefore methodologies, however sophisticated, must produce simple, jargon-free results. As one participant noted, we must make complexity comprehensible.
- Finally, it should be noted that tensions in this relationship surfaced at the Evidence Summit itself. Feedback we received noted that at times the Summit did not overcome, but instead illustrated, the power imbalances between donors and implementers. In particular, some felt that the “live” conversation in front of donors and an audience made them more cautious and less willing to share openly. Moving forward, the organizers are working on ways to better create “safe spaces” for both donors and implementers to interact.

Relationship #2: Implementer <> Community

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Two considerations arose in regard to the relationship between implementing organizations and the communities in which they work.

- Proper evaluation methodology can conflict with the values and established operational procedures of organizations working with communities in tense areas or on sensitive topics. Evaluation can also disrupt important programming. A clear understanding of the goals and methods of the evaluation process are crucial to successfully manage this tension. Nonetheless, it was clear from the presentations and discussions that at times the value of more rigorous methodologies must be sacrificed in order to maintain effective programming and good community relations and to protect the values of the organization.
- In several cases, organizations could not report on activities they had implemented due to security risks or political sensitivities. Risks like these are so uncertain and pose such dangers that they often overwhelm other considerations, such as proper evaluation or transparency. Therefore, it is important for organizations to have clear criteria and a set process in place to judge whether or not information can be made public.

Relationship #3: Evaluator <> Researcher

At several points during the Summit, participants raised potential areas for complementary work and collaboration between evaluators and researchers.

- Organizations face a real challenge when they undertake complex evaluations of their local staff's capacity, particularly for gathering, managing, and analyzing large amounts of data. Field staff are always pressed for time and cannot be expected to be social scientists. As a result, many at the Summit called for more creative efforts to link NGOs and academics in ongoing, structured partnerships—as opposed to the ad hoc collaborations that emerge now.
- The researcher-evaluator relationship also arose in relation to the question of moving beyond project-level evaluations to assess broader efficacy questions. In regard to field-wide learning, for instance, how does the field learn not that a particular project was ineffective but that a broader peacebuilding strategy did not work? Or that a set of peacebuilding projects in a given region did or did not work in the aggregate? Addressing this “double loop learning” question requires a broader research focus, and a different set of research skills, than a narrow project-level evaluation. Similarly, it was noted that to develop effective “theories of change,” a much broader knowledge base than project evaluations can provide is needed. Developing these theories of change requires more basic information on social dynamics and social change.

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Relationship #4: Evaluator <> Implementer

Mirroring broader discussions in the evaluation field, participants raised interesting issues regarding the relationship between evaluators and implementers.

- There was significant discussion about the pros and cons of internal versus external evaluators. More than one individual talked about the capacity that was built, change that was generated, and learning that happened as a result of keeping evaluation work internal. Evaluators refer to this as “process use,” in comparison to “findings use.” The evaluation process itself creates these positive changes.²

However, internal evaluation does cost the evaluation some objectivity and some credibility in the eyes of donors, board members, and other external audiences. To address this concern, one organization used an internal model but added an external oversight group to ensure quality and objectivity. These, and other peer review models, do hold some promise to creatively manage the internal/external tension.

2 Michael Quinn Patton, *Essentials of Utilization-Focused Evaluation* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2012), 142.

- More than one presentation raised the fundamental question of where evaluation begins and program implementation ends. Discussion, for instance, of formal and informal monitoring and evaluation strategies, and building a culture of inquiry and reflection within projects, challenged the idea that evaluation is necessarily an external process that is done *to* projects. This is in line with a broader trend in the field of evaluation. Evaluation practice is now seen not just as conducting evaluations but also as an ongoing effort to improve evaluative thinking and reflective practice.

Concluding Thoughts

There is little doubt that the pressure will continue to mount on organizations to demonstrate impact and to learn from and improve their peacebuilding practice. In response, across the peacebuilding field, donors, implementers, researchers, and evaluation specialists are finding innovative, scalable, and conflict-appropriate ways to demonstrate impact and learn from programming successes and failures at the project, program, and country levels. It is unlikely that more advanced evaluation methodologies alone will improve peacebuilding interventions, but as a community we can evolve our practice based on evidence and work to change the peacebuilding evaluation environment in a way that enables that evolution. The nine case studies below are a reflection of these efforts. Combined, these cases bring into sharp relief what is now possible in peacebuilding evaluation as well as the field-wide challenges that must be overcome if we are to continue to make progress.

Case Studies

The nine case studies appear in the order they were presented at the Evidence Summit. They ask a broad range of questions and employ a diverse set of methodologies. The Summit was not designed to compare the *relative* efficacy of different methodologies. Rather, based on the reflections of the organizations presenting and conversations at the Summit, we summarize the methodologies' strengths, identify potential challenges and pitfalls, and pull out key takeaways to inform the design of future evaluations.

Case Study 1: Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict: The Impact of Network-Based Programming on Conflict Prevention

Summary

Given its nontraditional peacebuilding model, the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) needed a nontraditional evaluation methodology. Despite high levels of complexity, attribution challenges, and a steep learning curve, GPPAC was able to assess the contributive impact of its network through Outcome Harvesting, a variation of the Outcome Mapping approach developed by the International Development Research Centre, and both tap into and build capacity within its local partners.

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Overview

Organization

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) is a worldwide civil society-led network seeking to build a new international consensus on the prevention of violent conflict. GPPAC works to strengthen civil society networks for peace and security and to link local, national, regional, and global levels of action. It consists of fifteen regional civil society networks with the common goal of preventing armed conflict.

Program Evaluated

The evaluation presented at the Evidence Summit was not of a project but of the GPPAC initiative itself. GPPAC's theory of change is based on the premise that when peacebuilding civil society organizations work together through regional and global networks, the capacity of civil society to contribute to preventing violent conflict increases. GPPAC decided to evaluate four strategies: Network Strengthening and Regional Action, Policy and Advocacy Work, Action Learning, and Public Outreach.

Evaluation Strategy

At the start of their evaluation planning, GPPAC acknowledged that as a network of networks, impact is the product of a confluence of factors and is therefore diffuse and often hard to trace. As a result, GPPAC decided that many traditional evaluation methods were not well suited to their work. Instead, they chose a method termed Outcome Harvesting, a variation of the Outcome Mapping approach developed by the International Development Research Centre.

To focus the evaluation, GPPAC assessed one specific outcome: the change in the behavior, relations, and actions of actors that GPPAC believed it had influenced. The heart of the evaluation was an Outcome Harvesting process that collected data from GPPAC members through the following set of prompts:

- In a sentence, summarize the change in a given social actor. That is, which social actor did what was new or different?
- Describe who changed, what changed in their behavior, relationships, activities, or actions, when, and where.
- Briefly explain why the outcome is important.
- How was the outcome a result—partially or totally, directly or indirectly, intentionally or not—of GPPAC’s activities?

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This data gathering process was combined with a set of review, substantiation, analysis, and use support strategies.

Given that the evaluation looked at a full range of GPPAC programming, the findings are too complex to summarize here. GPPAC did report on some top-line lessons, including: 1) the need to sow many seeds as not all activities will create results; 2) causality can be partial, indirect, or unintended, but still significant; and 3) outcomes harvested repeatedly can show both impact and processes of change.

Considerations on the Methodology

Strengths

- Outcome Mapping has proven a useful methodology to investigate complex change processes. For GPPAC, the methodology was appropriate since as a complex network its impact is the product of interactions between networks, members, and stakeholders. Thus, in an environment where establishing causality and direct attribution was not possible given GPPAC resources, the Outcome Mapping approach created a means for GPPAC to communicate its contributions to its stakeholders and funders.

- Two core features of the Outcome Mapping method were the use of strategy and performance journals and a focus on change rather than attribution. GPPAC reported that together these created a reflective space that enabled them to capture key strategic decisions and their effect on outcomes and addressed their challenge of having to attribute impact or results to a single organization. They found the method a more natural way to talk about results, one that is closer to the reality of GPPAC’s work. Additionally, the evaluators noted that this reflective practice got staff members, who often saw monitoring and evaluation as a burden, more easily involved in the evaluation process. A specific outcome of this process was the creation of an on-line, interactive database that allows the continuous gathering of outcomes through submissions by GPPAC members. As noted above, Michael Quinn Patton refers to this as “process use,” the idea that going through the evaluation process can create important shifts in an organization toward more reflective practice.³

Challenges and Pitfalls

- All three parties involved—respondents, evaluators, and funders—needed to become familiar with and build capacity for Outcome Harvesting and Outcome Mapping. GPPAC reported that there is a learning curve. As a result, it was agreed that the use of Outcome Harvesting requires a willingness, openness, and commitment on the part of funders and implementers to learn and internalize the approach and effectively communicate the results to audiences who know nothing about the method.
- Related to this is the difficulty in gathering large amounts of qualitative data from very different organizational and cultural contexts. There is an inherent tension between the openness required to allow partners to report on their own outcomes and compiling and making sense of the data at an aggregate level. GPPAC reported a key challenge was synthesizing all the rich qualitative information into more quantitative information, suitable for reporting. One commenter in particular saw the GPPAC design as leaving too much room for individual expression. He emphasized the importance of being deliberate about the outcomes one is looking for and grounding those choices in a strategic planning process.
- Although acknowledged at the onset, this method does not allow an organization to identify clear, attributable outcomes. While some participants appreciated the openness of GPPAC in acknowledging that they were setting aside the attribution question, some Summit participants found the absence of direct, or even probable, attribution a significant limitation.

³ Patton, *Essentials of Utilization-Focused Evaluation*, 142-43.

Key Takeaways for the Organization and the Field

- The tension between complexity and attribution is real and cannot be wished away. This is evidenced by the fact that GPPAC considered the evaluation methodology to be more in line with how they actually work and how they believe they are creating results. The evaluation allowed the organization to wrestle with the idea that causality can be indirect and partial but still significant. GPPAC now plans to design evaluations that include more elements of systems theory and explore further some of the causal relationships uncovered in this evaluation.
- Process matters. GPPAC found the evaluation useful not just for the information gathered but also for how it changed behavior within the organization. The evaluation increased the organization's commitment to reflective practice.
- There were many recommendations at the Summit to make the Outcome Mapping methodology more cost-effective and more user-friendly to new users, including the development of easy-to-understand terms. The general issue that *all* evaluation results will eventually need to be reported to individuals with no expertise in the underlying methodology should be taken into account when designing and choosing evaluation methods.

For more information on GPPAC and this evaluation, visit [www.outcomemapping.ca/projects/files/54_en_Issue paper 5 Ch5.pdf](http://www.outcomemapping.ca/projects/files/54_en_Issue%20paper%205%20Ch5.pdf).

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For more on this methodology, visit the Outcome Mapping Learning Community at www.outcomemapping.ca.

Case Study 2: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects and Human Systems Dynamics Institute: Peacebuilding in Kosovo— The Difference in Preventing Violence?

Summary

To determine if peacebuilding programs contributed to a marked lack of violence in certain communities during the riots of 2004 in Kosovo,⁴ CDA Collaborative Learning Projects and Human Systems Dynamics Institute completed a research and systems-based meta-analysis. This study did not focus on specific projects or programs. Instead, by conducting research on the impacts of peacebuilding interventions beyond just their own programming, the organizations involved sought to shift impact assessment from the programmatic to the strategic level.

Overview

Organization

CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (CDA) is a nonprofit organization committed to improving the effectiveness of international actors who provide humanitarian assistance, engage in peace practice, and are involved in supporting sustainable development. The Human Systems Dynamics Institute (HSDI) applies lessons from complexity and chaos theory to inform innovative practice and theory in human systems. The work of HSDI is currently being applied in organization development, peacemaking/conflict resolution, education, evaluation, performance management, leadership, and personal growth/development.

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Program Evaluated

This evaluative study examined first the overall dynamics in Kosovo and then peacebuilding programs and work implemented by CARE International⁵ and other local and international NGOs, municipal governments, and international organizations. While the goals and theories of change varied, all programs and projects aimed at decreasing violence and tension within Kosovo.

Evaluation Strategy

The study focused on cumulative impacts rather than outcomes of specific projects and was conducted not for donor accountability purposes but for learning. Consequently, the team began its inquiry by trying to understand the determinants and dynamics of violence and the absence of, or resistance to, violence. They then assessed how peacebuilding work may have

4 See International Crisis Group, *Collapse in Kosovo*, Europe Report No. 155 (April 2004), 16.

5 CARE is a leading humanitarian organization fighting global poverty.

contributed to the absence of violence. The team used an inductive methodology of field-based listening to a broad range of people through open-ended questions. This approach was chosen to ensure that the impacts of peacebuilding activities were considered. In addition, because there was no universally accepted definition of peacebuilding, the team utilized an inductive approach to define the scope of activities that would be evaluated and assess, again without a prescriptive list, how these related to all the factors that enabled communities to resist violent conflict.

Initially, CDA used both qualitative, in the form of seven case studies, and quantitative methods to collect data and then used a particular systems approach applicable in complex situations with multiple stakeholders and interventions to identify situational dynamics and broader patterns. This is consistent with Patton's approach in *Developmental Evaluation* that applies complexity concepts to "complex environments for social interventions and innovations."⁶ The team broke the process into the following phases:

1. Mapping of interethnic violence: to identify trends in and nature of violence by region and provide a basis for analyzing the significance and absence of violence through interethnic crime statistics from 2002 to 2006.
2. Workshops with practitioners and policymakers: to support the definition of categories of violence, the development of hypotheses regarding factors based on participant experiences, and the preliminary mapping of peacebuilding work and identification of the theories of change associated with that work.
3. Development of seven case studies: focused on a comparison across high/low peacebuilding support, high/low levels of violence over time, violence/no violence through twenty to forty semi-structured individual interviews and small groups in each community.
4. Analysis and consultations: through cross-case comparisons to identify patterns, collaborative analysis in consultations with local actors. Qualitative methods were used to identify variables and patterns across the cases. In addition, systems thinking frameworks and tools were applied, including system dynamics and the Human Systems Dynamics' Container, Difference, Exchange (CDE) Model (see full report linked below, or "Complexity Models and Conflict: A Case Study from Kosovo" by Glenda Eoyang and Lois Yellowthunder for more information on methodology). This systems-based analysis permitted the identification of how and why peacebuilding interventions had intended and unintended effects.

I7

The team chose a particular systems approach because they believed that a linear model would misdiagnose the highly complex, interactive relationships among various factors that led to the absence of or resistance to

6 Michael Quinn Patton, *Developmental Evaluation: Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2011).

violence. The systems model was grounded in the premise that a) rather than isolating parts, it is important to understand how the parts interact and relate to each other to produce a system's behavior over time and b) patterns are important to understand, not as separate events, but rather as representations of underlying dynamics that generate patterns.

In addition to other observations, CDA and HSDI found that:

- Places with greater interethnic contact did not experience less violence. Comparatively, intraethnic social networks were more important in preventing violence.
- Peacebuilding programming had some important effects on interethnic relations but did not contribute significantly to violence prevention, again for a number of reasons:
 - i. Programs failed to transform individual ties into networks of civic engagement.
 - ii. Programs failed to address key driving factors of conflict. Rather, they focused on return of refugees and internally displaced persons and democracy building and overlooked critical grievances that undermined interethnic relationships, key actors, and key geographic areas.
 - iii. Strategies that focused on promoting multiethnicity and returns as the core of peacebuilding had the unintended consequence of increasing divisions.
- Lowered tension in the short term may have been adaptive and avoided impending outbreaks of violence, but the lower levels of apparent tension led international actors to take action that actually increased the risk of violence.
- A number of "simple rules" (e.g., "protect my family" or "protect my property") guided individual actions and generated the patterns of conflict behavior seen in Kosovo, but peacebuilding interventions in Kosovo rarely aimed to affect these rules.

I8

Considerations of the Methodology

Strengths

- The majority of evaluations start by looking at the program or project and only later at its effects. This study, however, made context the starting point—thereby preventing the privileging of peacebuilding, or any other program, in relation to other factors of influence. The research team started this process by interviewing community residents on perceptions *first* of violence and *then* of peacebuilding work in their communities. This nonlinear analysis of event data allowed the team to uncover important factors not related to pro-

programming and to develop small, subtle indicators of change. The analysis of peacebuilding efforts as one element of a larger conflict system produced insights into the interaction of programming with the other factors in the overall context and uncovered programmatic “blind spots.” It also allowed for the assessment of unintended impacts of peacebuilding programs.

- A macro-evaluation or assessment of cumulative effects of peacebuilding at this level offers an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of strategies, even if it cannot assess the effects of particular programs or determine which implementation strategies of a particular approach are most effective. It also facilitates consideration of many factors that influence the observed outcomes by grouping the programs together based on their theories of change and then identifying what worked and what didn’t to find scalable patterns.
- In general, CDA and HSDI noted that systems thinking allows for an understanding of how seemingly disparate pieces fit together and, in this case, to find areas where programs should focus. This systems-based analysis provided, in particular, insights into how local behavior influences area-wide patterns. It also revealed the reasons for greater or lesser impact by identifying the levels, points, or times interventions catalyzed change and connections between *peace writ little* and *peace writ large*.

Challenges and Pitfalls

- Key characteristics of the CDA case study and human systems dynamics approach in highly interactive, dynamical situations that make this such a strong methodology may also make its application to a broad range of peacebuilding programs and/or projects challenging, at least in the current evaluation environment, where human and financial resources can be a deciding factor. While open-ended listening methods and systems analysis can be useful in project and program evaluations, they may not be sufficient for establishing accountability to donors based on predetermined indicators and “results.” Accordingly, it may be challenging to incorporate this methodology into an existing program with predetermined evaluation and accountability standards and/or criteria. In addition, this approach may not be appropriate if the evaluation focuses on identifying attribution for a specific outcome based on a specific program. However, in certain situations the dynamical complexity of a situation would lend itself to nonlinear, systems evaluation approaches.

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Key Takeaways for the Organizations and the Field

- The cumulative, complex adaptive systems framework informing the evaluation was helpful to understand impacts on *peace writ large*, permitting the identification of strategic-level impacts and gaps. The inquiry using this framework indicated that on a variety of levels peacebuilding programming and strategies did not contribute significantly to the prevention of interethnic violence and at times had the unintended consequence of increasing rather than diminishing divisions. This approach revealed that the original peacebuilding programming did not consider critical elements such as status, how

individual ties could be transformed into networks of civic engagement, or various factors affecting the relationship between Serbs and Albanians that have implications for amplifying or damping violence. A positive outcome was that many of these findings can be helpful in informing future strategic planning and program development.

- In the current state of the peacebuilding system as a whole, a client is willing to spend only limited time and resources on evaluation, so evaluations are first and foremost driven by pragmatism. Since research does not have the imperative of accountability, one can use the evaluative process to develop a sound understanding of the evolution of the conflict, rather than focus solely on the intervention. As the peacebuilding field moves toward becoming more evaluative in our overall thinking about programs and strategies, we also should be bridging the current gap between research and evaluation.
- The CDA inductive/ethnographic methodology and the human systems dynamics approaches to conflict analysis and evaluation are complementary. The CDE Model provides a framework for understanding the underlying dynamics of these complex systems. By understanding the conflict patterns and their underlying CDE conditions and constraints, organizations can generate strategies to shift these constraints to influence more peaceful patterns of interaction. Thus the model has the potential to connect analysis and action.
- The study findings highlighted a disconnect between the drivers of conflict and programming and strategies. One reason was the execution of the conflict analysis. The study revealed that the set of interventions observed did not coincide with what people were ready for. More than an instrument to inform the relevance of criteria, a conflict analysis that is taken from the perspective of local actors is critical for informing the theories of change that shape programming design. CDA and HSDI suggested that spending more time on their theories of change includes thinking about such things as the limits of their potential impact, the sources of different conflict analyses, and the biases that differing sources may create.

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For more information on this evaluation, visit www.cdainc.com/cdawww/pdf/book/cdapeacebuildingreportkosovo_Pdf4.pdf.

Case Study 3: Search for Common Ground: Social Transformation through Television in Macedonia

Summary

After five years of television programming in Macedonia, Search for Common Ground (SFCG) piloted a combination of evaluation and research tools – surveys, the formation of a control group, and the mapping of change. Willing and able to experiment with its methodology, SFCG was able to design a rigorous survey model, collect data from an adequate sample, and analyze data in such a way that the gaps in the program’s social change design were clearly identified and enabled the organization to apply new learning to its future programming.

Overview

Organization

Founded in 1982, Search for Common Ground works to transform the way the world deals with conflict - away from adversarial approaches and towards collaborative problem solving. Using a multi-faceted approach, including media initiatives and work with local partners, SFCG works at all levels of society to find culturally appropriate means to understand a society’s differences and act on the commonalities.

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Program Evaluated

Nashe Maalo, or “Our Neighborhood,” was a television series produced by SFCG-Macedonia aimed at promoting inter-cultural understanding among children with a view to transform conflict. The program ran from October 1999 to December 2004. All forty-two 30-minute episodes focused on the daily lives of eight children from Macedonian, Roma, Turkish, and Albanian ethnic groups, who live in the same neighborhood. If shifts in consciousness and ‘value-identities’ can be influenced via portrayals of salient social identities on a wide-scale through television programming, then mass attitudes will shift toward building a culture of peace.

Evaluation Strategy

To analyze rigorously the effects of *Nashe Maalo* on the conflict, and not just concentrate on the delivery of the intended outputs, the evaluation team innovated a new methodology to deal with multiple intended outcomes and the ever-growing pressure to know the contribution these made to the broader conflict, regardless of whether or not the program delivered its intended outcomes. The methodology was designed to assess impact, in spite of an absence of a thorough baseline study.

The final evaluation combined two research approaches. The first included a representative sample survey (1202 children of the age of 8-15 interviewed,

plus the same number of parents, located in six regions) and a series of 16 focus group discussions, providing respectively an audience profile, and an account of changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviour. The aim was to define the results achieved by the programme at the level of intended outcomes (changes in attitudes, knowledge and behaviour), using a partial baseline of the situation before the conflict drawn up by Search. Gaps in baseline data were addressed by asking survey respondents to recall how things were before the television program aired. The second component, used a "Mapping of Change" approach which attempted to answer the "so what?" question by mapping the links between the project's outcomes (intended and unintended) and changes in relations in the country. This is done by defining the extent to which new social models had been assimilated; the extent to which new forms of interaction had taken place; and the extent to which opportunities had been created for better relations, in the event that conflict should escalate once more.

Results revealed the television show became a part of children's everyday life, was watched and discussed by the family as a whole, and had very positive impacts on children's views of themselves and others, overcoming stereotypes, and learning to live together. However, children did not appear to translate their new knowledge into changes of behavior towards children from other ethnic groups. The evaluators concluded that the reason *Nashe Maalo* did not cause concrete changes in behavior and action in children was because of deeply engrained group think and cultural stereotypes and because the program was not followed up by sufficient outreach and similar programs that targeted other members of the community.

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Considerations on the Methodology

Strengths

- Given the need to assess the impact of the program a posteriori, the approach was innovative in its use of surveys and focus groups. The evaluation also addressed how well the project had matched up to the theories of change and provided a series of lessons learned and insights on SFCG's program assumptions and their applicability.

Challenges and Pitfalls

- As with any evaluation that uses the stand-alone method of self-reporting, while a fundamental and valuable methodology, it does not allow for independent, observed behavioral change. Using empirical data in addition would increase the understanding of how the program affected changes in behavior.
- One commenter noted that the results from the survey and case studies could have been weaved together for an easier and more comprehensive understanding of the program's impact and reach.

Key Takeaways for the Organization and the Field

- Based on the evaluation results, which revealed while the television show was highly popular, it did not behavioral change automatically, SFCG learned that media alone does not bring about behavior change and societal conflict transformation needs to incorporate different actors at different levels. The organization is now working at various levels to foster social behavioral change through multi-level programming and working with additional partners.
- Although the evaluation methodology revealed the program's theory of change was correct, the outcomes framework and intended goals outreached the theory of change. Several commenters noted resisting the need to respond to a resource-limited donor environment is just as important as investing in solid theories of change.

For more information on this evaluation, visit www.sfcg.org/sfcg/evaluations/macedonia.html.

Case Study 4: Early Years—the organization for young children: The Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference Program

Summary

One of the largest randomized control trials ever conducted in preschool settings, this evaluation examined the work of Early Years to increase awareness and positive attitudes and behaviors among Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. This somewhat controversial and usually costly approach showed significant impact and results and appealed to Early Years' donors and their constituencies, but valuable learning from questions that were not asked and potential internal capacity building were lost.

Overview

Organization

Based in Northern Ireland, Early Years is a cross-community, community development organization focused on child education and the promotion of child rights. Founded in 1965, it has over 150 staff working on community-level child education projects in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Project Evaluated

The Respecting Difference program was designed to increase awareness of diversity and difference among young children (three to four years old) and promote more positive attitudes and behaviors towards those who are different. The project included cartoons, the Respecting Difference curriculum, a resource pack and training for teachers, partners, and other youth workers, and support from Early Years specialist staff.

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Evaluation Strategy

The centerpiece of the evaluation was a cluster randomized control trial (RCT) led by an external university-based researcher. The study included 1,181 children aged three to four years in 74 settings, 868 parents, and 232 practitioners. In addition, four indepth, qualitative case studies were produced. The goal of the qualitative research was to track the perceptions and experiences of stakeholders and to examine in richer detail the delivery of the program.

The results of the RCT showed that the project had a significant impact on several measures of children's ability to respect difference compared with the normal preschool curriculum. Children showed increased socio-emotional development, increased cultural awareness, and increased desire to join cross-cultural activities. These effects were robust for the characteristics of the child and of the setting where the curriculum was developed. Early Years reported that due to methodological issues only tentative findings resulted from the research on the adults in the study.

Key findings of the case studies were: practitioners highly valued the training and ongoing specialist support; parents welcomed the opportunity for their children to learn about respecting difference; committed leadership within the setting where the curriculum was delivered was crucial; and integration of the various aspects of the project across different settings was important to successful implementation.

Considerations on the Methodology

Strengths

- While the Evidence Summit was not designed to produce a rigorous peer review of the evaluation methodology, the RCT discussed here appears to have been carefully constructed and implemented. The methodology included true randomization, sufficient power, and credible instruments to measure the change in attitudes among the children.
- The benefit of this methodology, according to Early Years, was that it produced a simple, powerful measure of impact, which was important for their engagement with donors and with skeptics who believed that introducing these issues to young children would be counterproductive.
- The inclusion of the qualitative research broadened the appeal of the research and generated crucial buy-in from staff members, parents, and educators. The results of the qualitative research, Early Years reports, were more important for stakeholders on a day-to-day basis.

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Challenges and Pitfalls

- The first key challenge was the financial and other costs of the RCT. Due to the disruption caused within the schools and the complexity and cost of the research, the evaluation was necessarily a one-off initiative. It was not a process that could feasibly be repeated at regular intervals to create ongoing learning. The organization continues to evaluate their programs but now primarily uses more qualitative, participatory approaches.
- The use of external researchers created problems. Early Years had to balance the demands of the research with their own community development principles and the dynamic nature of the projects being assessed. In addition, the researchers needed to do their own learning of the work of Early Years. Finally, Early Years noted that the design limited research capacity building within the organization.
- Early Years reported that the qualitative research did not capture the richness of the program, nor the full impact, especially with parents. The bulk of the resources for the initiative went to the RCT. The qualitative research was not given equal emphasis, which may have created some of these shortcomings.

Key Takeaways for the Organization and the Field

- RCTs are useful to answer simple, fundamental questions. In this case, the core questions were whether peacebuilding work with very young children would be counterproductive, or, even if not counterproductive, whether it could ever create meaningful results. Also, a lot of money was being spent on an alternative curriculum that did not mention conflict issues at all. In such a situation, very strong evidence is needed to convince stakeholders to change practice.
- RCTs also create a simple, credible way to discuss impact with non-experts and those outside the sector, including donors and politicians. And Early Years reported that the research was useful in leveraging additional funding.
- The evaluation also showed that RCTs are less useful in creating ongoing learning or program improvement. It is clear that different methodologies are required to meet the needs of different audiences. The qualitative research was more useful for a broad range of Early Years' stakeholders. This is further evidenced by the fact that Early Years now uses more participatory, qualitative research techniques as opposed to repeating the RCT process.
- As a commenter noted in summing up the lessons from the evaluation, evaluation is about formal, systematic research, but added that systematic research needs to be deployed both to demonstrate impact and to improve the program.

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For more information on this organization and evaluation, visit www.early-years.org/mifc/.

Case Study 5: Friends of the Earth Middle East: Good Water Neighbors

Summary

Through both formal and informal and external and internal evaluation means, Friends of the Earth Middle East sought to measure the impact of their work to foster dialogue and mutual understanding in cross-border communities. While the informal monitoring process allowed for extensive learning within the program staff, the external evaluation was helpful in assessing the attitudes of the program stakeholders and meeting donor accountability needs.

Overview

Organization

Friends of the Earth Middle East (FoEME), a member of Friends of the Earth International, is a trilateral organization with offices in Jordan, Palestine, and Israel. The organization focuses on environmental peacebuilding through shared water resources. It has over sixty-five paid staff within the region and hundreds of volunteers and community coordinators in the areas where it works.

Program Evaluated

Good Water Neighbors seeks to use mutual dependence on water as a basis for dialogue and cooperation between Jordanians, Palestinians, and Israelis. The project includes youth “water trustee” groups, adult forums to support cross-border cooperation, “Neighbors Path” eco-tours to educate on water issues, and mayors’ networks to support municipal-level cross-border cooperation and problem solving.

Evaluation Strategy

FoEME discussed an integrated set of evaluation strategies. They presented a two-by-two matrix of formal/informal and internal/external strategies. The formal strategies included surveys of activity participants (youth participants, adult activists, and participants in the Neighbors Path eco-tours) and control groups and semi-structured interviews with key decision makers in the communities where activities were implemented. The evaluation sought to determine whether FoEME activities had contributed to: 1) promoting awareness of water issues within the participating communities, and 2) improving relationships between neighboring communities.

Overall, in regard to the youth programming, FoEME reported that the evaluation showed a positive impact on attitudes on both environmental topics and peacebuilding compared with the control group. The exception was that the surveys did not show a change in the level of knowledge about water issues. The level of impact was different among Palestinian and Israeli

participants. There was a greater change among Israeli participants in personal relations between neighbors, while there was a greater change among Palestinian participants in cooperation on water issues.

The Neighbors Path surveys indicated that the tours helped increase the participants' understanding of water issues, of the need to share water resources, and of coexistence. The adult surveys showed that over 90 percent of adult participants believed that FoEME activities were a strong means of showing mutual respect across borders. The surveys, however, were not able to capture the change in adult attitudes.

It should be emphasized that FoEME presented these formal external evaluation methods as part of their overall strategy of monitoring, evaluation, and reflective practice. Their internal evaluation strategies, including monthly internal reporting mechanisms, quality checks against log frames, and work plans, are reported regularly while the informal evaluation strategies, such as managed communication systems, are more integrated into day-to-day activities and don't have concrete, reported outcomes.

Considerations on the Methodology

Strengths

- FoEME reported that it received the most feedback and learned the most from its informal, or internal, processes. This was the case in part because the organization develops very clear work plans with strong indicators, therefore making ongoing monitoring easy. Continuous internal evaluations helped FoEME receive feedback on essential programming design and change the design mid-project cycle, thereby strengthening its programming. The external evaluations were able to provide some evidence that FoEME was on the right course. The strong learning culture within FoEME strengthened the organization's ability to leverage these external evaluations.

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Challenges and Pitfalls

- FoEME noted that several factors limited the impact of their external evaluations, including timeframes, namely, the difficulty in identifying long-term impacts over a short timeframe, budget limitations, and problems finding evaluators who can work in a culturally sensitive way in three different cultural contexts. FoEME reported that an important lesson learned was the need to commit to educating external consultants on both the organization and the contexts where activities were being implemented. They also noted that given the sensitive political context, they could not talk about the results of some activities.
- Commenters noted that while the external evaluations reported could be very informative, and provide a good reality check, they may not have been rigorous enough to convince some donors of clear impact.

Key Takeaways for the Organization and the Field

- Several commenters noted that this type of internal and informal monitoring is often not convincing to donors, who need more rigorous evidence. Such rigorous evidence is eventually necessary as well to provide a more substantive reality check within the organization itself. FoEME noted that they continue to learn about evaluation and improve their evaluation practices. It will be interesting to see if the organization can maintain their strong internal learning practices while integrating more substantial, more rigorous external evaluations into their systems.
- Overall, the most important contribution of FoEME's presentation was to raise interesting questions about where program management stops and evaluation starts. A key takeaway for many participants was the idea that informal monitoring and evaluation can be a key component of an overall learning strategy. Moreover, it was clear that FoEME's work on internal processes such as program design and routinized monitoring has made their evaluations more valuable because learning systems can absorb the findings of these efforts.

For more information on FoEME and this evaluation, visit www.foeme.org/www/?module=projects.

Case Study 6: Mercy Corps: Building Bridges to Peace in Uganda

Summary

To evaluate both a desired set of outcomes and a program's basic theory of change that increased economic interaction increases stability, Mercy Corps used a mixed-methods approach that included household surveys and focus groups. Focus group discussions were built around three structured participatory impact assessment tools, including Conflict and Resource Mapping and Scored Community Relationship Mapping. Despite resource constraints and large amounts of data to analyze, Mercy Corps was able to test the ideas behind their programs and tangibly measure impact.

Overview

Organization

Mercy Corps is one of the larger US-based development organizations, with annual expenditures of roughly \$250 million. The organization works in a broad range of development sectors in over thirty-five countries. The program evaluated here was implemented by Mercy Corps' Youth and Conflict Management Program.

Program Evaluated

The Building Bridges to Peace program in Uganda's Karamoja region was implemented to build peace in agro-pastoralist communities through a set of economic and peacebuilding activities. The program's theory of change argues that building economic relationships across lines of division increases stability because people will see tangible, concrete economic benefits from cooperation and thus place a higher value on cooperation than conflict.

The program's activities were designed to strengthen livelihoods and encourage economic interaction between groups with a history of violence. Livelihood projects included small dams, agricultural projects that supported joint farming on land that had previously been inaccessible due to insecurity, and joint rehabilitation of local roads and markets. Economic activities were complemented by peacebuilding initiatives designed to build trust, improve relationships, and strengthen local conflict management mechanisms. These included training of local leaders in conflict management, joint monitoring of violent incidents, and community dialogues.

Evaluation Strategy

Mercy Corps staff used a mixed-methods evaluation methodology. The team conducted surveys of 413 households in communities where they worked as well as comparison communities where they did not work. In addition, qualitative research was conducted through the use of focus groups and participatory assessment techniques, such as Conflict and Resource Mapping.

According to Mercy Corps, the use of the mixed-method approach allowed them not only to credibly claim program impact through the use of surveys and comparison groups but also to gather descriptive program information and learn more about the mechanisms of program impact through qualitative research.

The purpose of the evaluation was two-fold: first, to see if the program produced the desired set of interdependent outcomes, including increased security, improved relationships between communities in conflict, and improved access to resources, and second, to test the program's basic theory of change, that increased economic interaction increases stability.

The findings of the evaluation were: 1) security improved across the sub-region over the life of the program; 2) communities where the program was implemented experienced improved access to resources, increased perceptions of security, increased trust between adversarial communities, and strengthened intercommunal ties compared with communities where the program was not implemented; and 3) the quality of relationships between communities significantly improved, particularly in terms of trust levels and perceptions of relationships between the conflicting communities.

Considerations on the Methodology

Strengths

- A strength of the method was the clear articulation of a theory of change. Chris Blattman recently noted that impact evaluation should, "test ideas, not programs."⁷ Mercy Corps' clear and simple articulation of their theory of change allowed them to test more general ideas about the linkage between economic relations and conflict as well as their specific program approach.
- A second strength of the method was its commitment to a mixed-methods approach. The use of comparison groups in the surveys allowed for a relatively strong claim to program impact even as the situation in the region was improving overall. Alternatively, qualitative research allowed the creation of more rich, detailed knowledge on a nuanced and complex topic. It also allowed inquiry into the mechanisms of program impact that could not be illuminated through the survey work.

Challenges and Pitfalls

- Mercy Corps and Evidence Summit participants discussed several challenges and potential issues with the evaluation strategy. Several related to the complexity of the evaluation. According to Mercy Corps, they were overwhelmed

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7 Chris Blattman, "Impact Evaluation 3.0?," September 2, 2011, <http://chrisblattman.com/2011/09/02/impact-evaluation-3-0>

with data, did not budget enough time and resources for data analysis as opposed to data collection, and tried to answer too many questions. A related challenge was that of developing strategies to collect and analyze the qualitative data as rigorously as the quantitative data.

- Discussants at the Evidence Summit raised two additional issues related to the integrity of the evaluation. The first was the longstanding issue of whether an internal or external evaluator provides a more credible assessment, all else being equal. Commenters noted that external evaluators are both more objective and may see things that program team members do not. Normally, it is argued that an internal evaluator increases the chance that the organization will use the lessons from an evaluation. Mercy Corps said that this was the case but noted in addition that a key reason to keep the evaluation work internal was to build evaluation capacity across the full organization.
- Second, commenters noted that little was said in the evaluation on how participants were selected. This is crucial not only to develop credible comparison groups but also to manage the problem of participants telling evaluators what they want to hear in order to secure additional funding.
- The difficult issue of funding was raised as well. Mercy Corps was able to conduct a more in-depth evaluation than is usual because it received supplementary funding on top of the program funds. This raised questions about how to increase the rigor of impact evaluation when supplemental resources are not available, particularly given the limited funding typically available for monitoring and evaluation.

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Key Takeaways for the Field and Organization

- Mercy Corps noted that the evaluation was a “proof of concept moment” for the organization. They noted that the evaluation showed that, although challenging, the impact of peacebuilding programs *can* be evaluated.
- The evaluation highlighted the importance of the analysis done prior to the evaluation. As noted above, the well-articulated theory of change was vital to the effectiveness of the evaluation. A rigorous conflict analysis can help narrow the key questions that should be asked through an evaluation, lessening the problem of data overload.
- The evaluation illustrated the challenge of conducting effective evaluations under staff capacity constraints. It was noted that field staff should not be expected to be social scientists. Challenges related to the analysis of data and the development of rigorous qualitative research strategies, for instance, led Mercy Corps to ask how stronger relationships could be developed between practitioners and academics.

- Clearly, funding is crucial. The fact that there was supplementary funding for this type of work is a sign of progress. But more thought needs to be given to how such funding can be made a routine part of program implementation and how equally credible evaluations can be done at less effort and cost.

For more information on this program and to access the full evaluation, visit www.mercycorps.org/resources/improvedsecurityinpastoralistcommunitiesthroughpeacebuildinginuganda.

Case Study 7: Building Markets: The Peace Dividend Marketplace

Summary

To better understand the link between job creation and new contracts won through an online business portal in Afghanistan, Building Markets conducted interviews with business owners who received new contracts. The interviews showed a clear link between the creation of jobs and new contracts. However, the focused nature of the interviews limited learning and information about other aspects of the program.

Overview

Organization

Building Markets' mission is to contribute to peace, stability, and economic growth by building markets and creating jobs. The Peace Dividend Marketplace approach is one strand of Building Markets' effort to create "equitable peace dividends" in postconflict environments by encouraging international actors to procure locally.

Program Evaluated

The premise of the Peace Dividend Marketplace in Afghanistan was that encouraging local procurement creates jobs and increases capacity of local businesses, thus leading to a better functioning economy and broader stability in the long run.

The project developed a directory of local suppliers, offered a bespoke business matchmaking service, distributed tenders and other information about business opportunities, ran matchmaking events, undertook market research, offered training on procurement, and advocated to encourage large buyers to procure locally. Each of these services was designed to increase linkages between local suppliers and significant buyers of goods and services in Afghanistan.

Evaluation Strategy

Between January and March 2011, Building Markets conducted interviews with 146 businesses that had won contracts during the project. The data was collected through 45-minute interviews about job creation effects, business operating environments, and the effects of winning a contract. The goal of the evaluation was to better understand the link between winning a contract and job creation.

The evaluation obtained several findings about the nature of job creation. For instance, the evaluation found that smaller businesses were more likely to hire workers after winning a contract. More generally, the evaluation allowed Building Markets to understand how businesses add and reduce capacity to

manage the process of contracts from start to end. The evaluation also found that the terms “employed” and “unemployed” are often not meaningful in Afghanistan. Instead, there is much more of a continuum as workers are increasingly asked to work more as demand increases.

Considerations on the Methodology

Strengths

- The Evidence Summit was not designed to produce a rigorous peer review of the evaluations, but in general, the survey appears to have been well implemented. The data was checked for inconsistencies and problems, and follow-up interviews were conducted with businesses when problems emerged. This is good practice, although interestingly, Building Markets reported that the managers often became suspicious or annoyed when the return visit was conducted.
- The nature of the evaluation created strengths and weaknesses that are mirror images. The evaluation was quite focused, seeking to illuminate a single relationship, namely the link between winning a contract and producing jobs. The strength of this approach in this case was two-fold. First, the relationship examined was part of a well-specified theory of change. Second, the additional linkages in that theory, for instance, from jobs to stability, are not only plausible but also well supported by other research.⁸

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Challenges and Pitfalls

- The focused nature of the evaluation also limited what could be learned. The evaluation, for instance, was not able to draw firm conclusions on the impact of Building Markets’ activities themselves. There was no way to identify through the survey what role the business portal or procurement training, for instance, played in the businesses’ ability to win contracts. Building Markets did a good job of acknowledging these limitations in the evaluation report and did not claim too much or overstate results.
- The lack of control or comparison groups was noted. Interviewing businesses that did not win a contract either through purposive sampling or a randomization strategy would have improved Building Markets’ ability to answer a broader range of questions, including the impact of their own programs.
- Commenters also raised the issue that the evaluation was conducted internally and whether that may have biased results. Building Markets reported that while the evaluation was conducted internally, it was also peer reviewed

⁸ See World Bank, *The World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development*, <http://wdr2011.worldbank.org/fulltext>. The report argues throughout that providing jobs is a key component of post-conflict stability.

by an external committee. This is an interesting model that may allow organizations to garner the benefits of an internal evaluation while maintaining the credibility of an external evaluation.

Key Takeaways for the Organization and the Field

- As the field of peacebuilding evaluation develops, there is a place for focused evaluations that seek to answer a specific question in a rigorous way. Evaluations such as these should seek to answer questions embedded in a clear, well-supported theory of change.
- While true randomization is not always feasible, organizations should always think about including comparison groups in an evaluation design. In this case, it would not have been overly difficult to include businesses that had not won a contract. Doing so would have provided a fuller view of the link between contracts and employment.
- If an external evaluation is neither desired nor feasible, organizations should think creatively about different ways of establishing the credibility that an external evaluation provides. A peer review group is one possibility.
- Finally, on funding, Building Markets reported that the evaluation was made possible because, due to efficient operations, there was spare market research budget. Organizations should be alert to opportunities to work with donors to repurpose funds for evaluation work that become available through efficient implementation.

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For more information on Building Markets and this evaluation, visit www.buildingmarkets.org/products-services/job-creation.

Case Study 8: Acting Together: Reflections on Peacebuilding Performance

Summary

To document and assess activities at the intersection of peacebuilding and performance, a team from Brandeis University's program in Peacebuilding and the Arts and Theatre Without Borders developed and analyzed fourteen case studies of performances conducted in varying contexts and stages of violent conflict. Although the case study methodology required a period of learning for the artists involved, it was a valuable first step in examining an approach to peacebuilding that is in some ways well established and in some ways being revived and repurposed.

Overview

Organization

Acting Together on the World Stage is a collaboration between the Peacebuilding and the Arts program at Brandeis University and Theatre Without Borders (TWB). Brandeis University is a small research university near Boston, Massachusetts that describes itself as a community of scholars and students united by their commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and its transmission from generation to generation. Theatre Without Borders is a network of theatre artists committed to international theatre exchange. Brandeis and TWB created the project Acting Together on the World Stage to research the contributions of theatre and ritual to conflict transformation.

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Program Evaluated

Though the nature and content of the performances varied, all were artist-/community-based theatrical works and/or ritual performances aimed at creating works of beauty and artistic/spiritual power and contributing to transformation of conflict. The initiative is based on two assumptions: 1) the arts and cultural practices can be crafted to support communities to address violence and oppression; and 2) peacebuilding performance would make more robust contributions to the transformation of conflict if practitioners better reflected on their own and others' work and if exemplary practices were better documented and shared.

Evaluation Strategy

The study originators chose an approach based on case study methodologies and an ethnographic-style analysis of themes that emerged from the case studies. The choice to analyze a variety of performances and performance types allowed the study originators to discern cross-cutting themes and patterns.

The study team conducted interviews to identify how artists conceptualize excellence in their work, facilitated discussions of performances through the prism of peacebuilding theory and practice, and gathered data about the effects of the activities on people involved in the performances, on those who witnessed the performances, and on the larger communities and societies. The study team then created and analyzed fourteen case studies that resulted in the identification of shared themes.

The study revealed evidence that performances offer communities affected by conflict ways of understanding the complexity of the issues they face, for instance, by expressing the need for justice in its restorative as well as retributive aspects and by resisting abuse of power in ways that are creative rather than solely oppositional. The most effective cases combined artistic integrity and collaboration with cultural institutions committed to social change, which generally were able to reach broader audiences.

Considerations on the Methodology

Strengths

- By taking a more open-ended research approach that allowed for patterns of meaning to emerge, the study originators were able to discover a range of cross-cutting themes and suggest a general theory of change that might be useful for those engaged in the intersection between peacebuilding and the arts.

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Challenges and Pitfalls

- Writing rigorous case studies that required artists to consider their work through the lens of conflict transformation and to look for evidence of outcomes proved to be a challenge for the performers who participated in this study. This may be the case for any evaluation participant who is not familiar with the required evaluation methodology or with the conceptual frameworks of the peacebuilding field.
- Given the large pool of case studies, the research became expensive to complete and the volume of data challenging to analyze. Accordingly, the study team suggested commissioning additional researchers who would be paired with an individual artist. This may allow for the collection of more in-depth information from the performers and a more rigorous critical review of the case studies.

Key Takeaways for the Organization and the Field

- This study offers an approach to assess the contributions to peacebuilding of an entire field or subfield. Its originators assert that there is value in large-scale research projects (in contrast to program-level evaluations), because such large-scale projects can generate understanding of the potential of a field as a whole and also generate frameworks that bring two fields into a mutually respectful relationship.

The results of this study were released in a two-volume anthology, a documentary film, and a toolkit, which are currently being used in college and university classrooms and peacebuilding training programs for practitioners, educators, and policymakers in the arts and peacebuilding fields. For more information and to access materials on the project, visit www.actingtogether.org.

Case Study 9: Pact, Kenya and Act!: Community Engagement in Cross-Border Peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa

Summary

After several years of peacebuilding work in the Horn of Africa, Pact, Kenya and Act! felt there was a lack of documented evidence on whether their conflict transformation interventions worked as well as an absence of critical reflection on their programming. Pact, Kenya and Act! used Action Research to examine how their work was producing change, to enrich learning, to test assumptions, and to strengthen the program's underlying theories. After indepth training, which was preceded by the development of the program's theories of change and conflict analysis, the evaluation process helped the team improve its ability to learn and to gather information from traditionally untapped stakeholders. The process also gave their stakeholders and partners greater understanding of, and generated buy-in for, the programs and uncovered differences in cross-cultural norms among the implementing partners.

Overview

Organization

Pact is a nonprofit, mission-driven organization delivering support to people most in need while building the technical skills and capacity of those people to help themselves. Act! is a Kenyan NGO that facilitates institutional development of civil society organizations so that communities are empowered to independently address challenges and constraints facing them.

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Program Evaluated

Peace II is a five-year conflict transformation program that started in 2007 and covers the "northern arc" border region of Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Sudan. At the regional level, this program aims to enhance African leadership in the management of conflict within the Horn of Africa and to improve the ability of communities and community-based organizations to respond to conflict. The main objectives are to strengthen cross-border security through local community security initiatives and to contribute to cross-border peace committees' ability to prevent, mitigate, and respond to conflict.

The program has four theories of change: 1) co-managed development projects with shared tangible results will foster strategic relationships and lasting peace networks; 2) increasing common understanding of conflict-related societal breakdowns and traumas will increase leadership's likelihood to avoid future violent conflict; 3) key groups can be empowered to respond proactively to conflict; and 4) communities well equipped to deal with conflict will actively contribute to peacebuilding structures capable of preventing and responding to conflict.

Evaluation Strategy

Pact and Act! decided that Action Research was an appropriate methodology for their purposes given that the reflective nature of the methodology took advantage of the strong oral tradition in the region and the social role external actors could play in asking potentially controversial questions. The strategy also allowed for the development of self-reflective skills among local leaders in another sphere. For the Pact and Act! team, these considerations meant developing a process in which peacebuilders examined their own theory and practices systematically and carefully.

Three themes were focused on: collaborative peace system strengthening, sector response unit strengthening, and trauma healing and social reconciliation. In total, fifty-five action researchers were selected from Somali project partners based on at least five years of experience in peacebuilding, interest in participating, and English literacy. Participants underwent training for ten days, during which external facilitators also helped them develop specific research questions. For ongoing support, the Center for Peace and Action Research in Wajir, Kenya provided mentoring throughout the project.

Considerations on the Methodology

Strengths

- The process of deep self-reflection allowed the research team to not only learn from the project but also test long-held assumptions about cultural attitudes, including whether or not one's own culture was predominantly a culture of violence or a culture of peace. The process also created a safe space for local partners and the program implementers to step out of those culture norms for a moment. For instance, in the Somali cultural context, the research team discovered that expressing personal feelings is seen traditionally as betrayal of the wider community. In particular, women, who due to caste system norms in Somalia did not have a space to express their thoughts, now were able to express their feelings about their role in peacebuilding.
- The inclusion of the organizations' internal teams has made them more reflective and see themselves as a part of the change needed to build stable peace. As a result, they are taking more direct initiative to address problems they have identified.

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Challenges and Pitfalls

- The method was deeply rooted within the organizations' structures. As a result, the methodology could not provide the objectivity that an external evaluator could.
- As with most new procedures and processes, the staff needed to be made familiar with this methodology and also increase their ability to adopt a more objective research perspective given the nature of the oral cultures in

the area. Pact and Act!, addressed these issues by closely mentoring the researchers on both framing the research questions and data collection processes. These methods, however, are time and budget intensive and require careful consideration of research design and data collection strategies from the beginning.

Key Takeaways for the Organization and the Field

- For the Pact and Act! team, the participatory and cyclical nature of the method enabled not just learning by doing but also deeper ownership of and confidence in future programming decisions. This has enhanced local capacity to generate evidence on program effectiveness and led the team to deeper ownership of their peacebuilding programs. The research teams are now using additional action learning methods to address other challenges in their communities.
- The method worked best when it was integrated into the entire project as ongoing monitoring, not just as a final evaluation at the end of the project. The team recommends starting with a clear strategy for framing questions and documenting results, a strong mentorship structure, and clear consensus among stakeholders on the goals of the initiative.

For more information on this program, visit www.pactworld.org/cs/global_programs/more/peace_ii.

The Evidence Summit – A Model for Learning and Dialogue

To facilitate learning in other parts of the United States, or in other regions of the world, this section provides some guidance on organizing an Evidence Summit. Organizing a Summit is a significant commitment. Some factors to consider before deciding to hold an Evidence Summit include:

- Is your organization familiar with the peacebuilding field and the dynamic of evaluation within that context?
- Does your organization have the capacity to convene peacebuilding stakeholders in your region?
- Does your organization have the physical capacity to host a large-scale, full-day event?
- Do you have sufficient financial and human resources to facilitate a six-month planning process and day-long event?

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Goals and Structure

An Evidence Summit offers a unique opportunity to learn from real-world evaluations. However, specific goals can vary. Possible goals include:

- Gauge existing regional expertise on peacebuilding evaluation in general and specific methodologies in particular.
- Assess whether there are evaluation methodologies that best address the specific conflict context and dynamics in your region.
- Explore the particular dynamics between donors and peacebuilding efforts in your area.
- Strengthen relationships between implementers, donors, academics, and evaluators in your area.

The specific goals of an Evidence Summit will and should change the structure of the event. Based on AfP's and USIP's goals and the current state of peacebuilding evaluation, ultimately, AfP and USIP decided that learning should be framed through nine presentations on an organization's most successful evaluation efforts to date. This was followed by feedback from a

panel of donors, practitioners, and evaluation experts and then rigorous and open discussion with audience members.

To facilitate analysis of all nine presentations, each break-out session, including the plenary and closing sessions, had two note takers. The notes allowed the organizers to synthesize the information presented and the dialogue that followed for those who did not attend the Summit.

Given the risks presenters take in sharing their projects and evaluations, a critical element in the Summit was the creation of a safe space for open and honest discussion. Thus, to the extent possible, AfP and USIP aimed to create an inclusive planning process with presenters and panelists and to jointly agree on guidelines for confidentiality and attribution. More generally, it is important to emphasize at every opportunity the need for mutual respect of different perspectives.

Participant Selection Process

For AfP and USIP, the premise of the Summit was to improve evaluation practices by learning from past evaluation efforts. The selection of these “best efforts” was based on a process that included an open call for submissions and an independent selection committee. The call for submission clearly stated the goals and format of the Summit and the responsibilities of each presenter. The call also indicated that participation in the Summit meant engaging in a process that would involve critical and insightful input on the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation methodology presented. The nine organizations that were ultimately selected to present at the Summit spent significant time providing clear explanations of the project being evaluated, the evaluation methodology used, and the areas of the evaluation that were effective or could be improved.

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The quality of learning and reflection at the Summit depended in large part on the feedback provided by panelists as well as the broader discussion with the audience. At the USIP-AfP Peacebuilding Evidence Summit the discussant panel included a donor, an evaluation methodology expert, and a peacebuilding practitioner. Discussants were chosen from various funders, government agencies, multilateral agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and evaluation consultancies to bring a variety of perspectives to the discussion. Each panelist was given a set of guidelines with logistical details for the Summit and questions to guide their feedback and input. AfP and USIP tailored the guidelines based on whether the panelist was a donor, evaluation expert, or practitioner. Each panelist also received the presentations and the actual evaluation documents in advance to allow them to prepare their comments.

Planning Support

If an Evidence Summit would be a useful tool for learning in your community of practice or region, please contact the Alliance for Peacebuilding at

afp-info@allianceforpeacebuilding.org for more detailed information, step-by-step guidelines, and access to the actual documents used in the planning, preparation, and implementation of the USIP-AfP Peacebuilding Evidence Summit.

Appendices

Appendix One: Summit Attendees

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization
Allen Nan	Susan	Associate Professor	School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University
Alvarez	Priya	Evaluation Specialist	UN Women
Aref	Suzan	Head of Women Empowerment	Iraqi Women's Empowerment
Arnold	Matthew	Senior Program Officer of Results Monitoring	The Asia Foundation
Ayindo	Joseph Babu	Senior Program Advisor	Act!, Peace II Program
Barazanji	Raya	Program Officer	US Institute of Peace
Base	Marsha	Director for Planning and Evaluation	American Friends Service Committee
Berg	Bob	Board Member	Alliance for Peacebuilding
Blair	Meredith	Associate Director of Research	Humanity United
Blum	Andrew	Director of Learning and Evaluation	US Institute of Peace
Brusset	Emery	Director	Channel Research

Castro	Loreta	Executive Director	Center for Peace Education, Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict
Chassy	Aaron	Senior Technical Adviser, Civil Society and Governance	Catholic Relief Services
Chigas	Diana	Co-Director, Reflecting on Peace Practice	CDA Collaborative Learning
Cohen	Cynthia	Program Director	Peacebuilding and the Arts
Cole	Beth	Director of Intergovernmental Affairs	US Institute of Peace
Del Rosso	Stephen	Program Director, International Peace and Security, International Program	Carnegie Corporation of New York
Diamond	Louise	Founder	Global Systems Initiatives
Duggan	Colleen	Senior Program Specialist	International Development Research Centre
Feroah	Thom	President and Chairman of the Board of Directors	Underwood Foundation
Fitzpatrick	Siobhan	Chief Executive Officer	Early Years – the organization for young children
Fernando	Maurice	Student (Note taker)	School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University

Gleicher	Ariel	Intern PEP (Note taker)	Alliance for Peacebuilding
Graham	Jennifer	Program Officer	Mercy Corps
Greenberg	Melanie	President and CEO	Alliance for Peacebuilding
Hamasaeed	Sarhang	Program Specialist	U.S. Institute of Peace
Heady	Lucy	Economist	Building Markets (formerly Peace Dividend Trust)
Hewitt	Joe	Team Leader, Technical Leadership Team	U S Agency for International Development, Conflict Mitigation and Management
Himmelfarb	Sheldon	Director, Center of Innovation, Media, Conflict and Peacebuilding	US Institute of Peace
Hunter	Mary-Ann	Senior Lecturer	University of Tasmania
Kamau	Hannah	Senior Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning Manager	Pact Kenya
Kawano-Chiu	Melanie	Program Director	Alliance for Peacebuilding
Kidd-McWhorter	Elizabeth	Organizational Growth and Development Officer	Institute for Inclusive Security
Knapp	Roxanne	Intern (Note taker)	Alliance for Peacebuilding
Kohler	Julilly	Board Member	John M. Kohler Foundation

Ladnier	Jason	Deputy Director, Planning Office	The Department of State, Conflict Stabilization Operations
Lazarus	Ned	Post-Doctoral Fellow	School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University
LeBaron	Michelle	Director and Professor	University of British Columbia Program on Dispute Resolution
Lempereur	Alain	Professor	Brandeis University, Heller School
Levine	Carlisle	Associate	KonTerra Group
Lund	Michael	Senior Fellow	US Institute of Peace
Lupton	Amber	Founder	Safe Conflict Project
MacLeod	Carrie	Professor	Expressive Arts and Conflict Transformation, European Graduate School
Manojlovic	Borislava	Student (Note taker)	School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University
McGraw	Katherine	Director	Peace and Security Funders Group
Mescioglu Gur	Gul	PhD Student (Note taker)	School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University
Mohamed	Zedan	Program Assistant	US Institute of Peace
Nashat	Bidjan	Strategy Officer	World Bank

Oatley	Nick	Director of Institutional Learning Team	Search for Common Ground
Otto	Nathan	Founder	Safe Conflict Project
Papagapitos	Ariadne	Program Officer	Rockefeller Brothers Fund
Rabin	Orlee	Regional Management Coordinator	Friends of the Earth Middle East
Reiling	Kirby	Conflict Specialist	US Agency for International Development, Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation
Ricigliano	Rob	Director	Peace Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Rodriguez	Darynell	Program Manager Policy and Advocacy	Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict
Roig	Julia	President	Partners for Democratic Change
Rummel-Shapiro	Stefan	Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor	UN Peacebuilding Support Office
Sadiq	Zainab	Head	Al-Mustaqbal Center for Women
Shepard	Jonathan	Evaluation Specialist	US Agency for International Development, Office of Learning Evaluation and Research
Sloan	Britt	Research Assistant	US Institute of Peace

Stine	Kelsi	Program Officer	Project on Justice in Times of Transition
Vaughan	Jenny	Program Officer of Conflict Management	Mercy Corps
Vinck	Patrick	Director-Program for Vulnerable Populations	Harvard Humanitarian Initiative
Walmsley	Pauline	Director of Knowledge Exchange	Early Years – the organization for children
Wilson	George	Program Manager	US Agency for International Development, Office of Transition Initiatives
Wilson-Grau	Ricardo	Consultant	Ricardo Wilson-Grau Consulting
Yellow-thunder	Lois	Associate	Human Systems Development

Appendix Two: Summit Agenda

Peacebuilding Evaluation Project: Evidence Summit

Wednesday, December 7, 2011, 9 am – 5 pm
United States Institute of Peace
2301 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC

It is well known that key stakeholders in the peacebuilding field face significant challenges in monitoring and evaluating their initiatives. Increased pressure to demonstrate effectiveness, constrained budgets, and rising standards of what counts as credible evidence all must be managed. But it is also the case that organizations are identifying creative ways to address these challenges. The Evidence Summit has been organized to learn from these efforts. The goal of the Summit is two-fold:

- To showcase organizations' most successful efforts at evidence gathering and evaluation.
- To bring a diverse group of practitioners, policymakers, and methodologists together to provide input on how the evidence of impact can be made even stronger.

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The premise of the Summit is to build on success. By identifying, critiquing, and then disseminating these successes, it provides tangible examples of how evaluation can and is being improved in the peacebuilding field.

The day-long event is primarily devoted to a series of break-out sessions. In each session, representatives from a total of nine organizations, chosen through a competitive review process, each present what they consider their most successful effort to assess the peacebuilding impact of one of their initiatives.

The cases presented at the Evidence Summit cover:

- The approach used to prevent, manage, or recover from violent conflict
- The appropriately applied evaluation methodology
- The manner in which the collected data was analyzed to determine the success of the approach
- The observed strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation methodology

- A description of what the organization did in response to the evaluation results

The representatives then receive a constructive critique from a panel of donors, implementers, and methodologists on strategies for strengthening their efforts. This is followed by a facilitated discussion with the audience on broader lessons for the peacebuilding field.

**9:00 am –
10:15 am**

Plenary Presentation

Moderators:

- » Melanie Greenberg, President and CEO, Alliance for Peacebuilding
- » Andrew Blum, Director of Learning and Evaluation, United States Institute of Peace

Evaluation Presentation:

- » *Outcome Mapping and Conflict Prevention* by Darynell Rodriguez, Program Manager Policy and Advocacy, Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, and Ricardo Wilson-Grau, Consultant

*Evaluation Methodology Used:
Outcome Harvesting

Panelists:

- » Stephen Del Rosso, Program Director, International Peace and Security, International Program, Carnegie Corporation of New York
- » Jonathan Shepard, Evaluation Specialist, Office of Learning, Evaluation and Research, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- » Aaron Chassy, Senior Technical Advisor, Civil Society and Governance, Catholic Relief Services

10:15 am –
10:30 am

Break

10:30 am –
12:30 pm

Break-out Session 1A

Evaluation Presentations:

- » *Peacebuilding in Kosovo* by Diana Chigas, Co-Director, CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, and Lois Yellowthunder, Associate, Human Systems Dynamics Institute

*Evaluation Methodology Used:

Experimental use of human systems approach

- » *Nashe Maalo in Macedonia* by Nick Oatley, Director, Institutional Learning Team, Search for Common Ground

*Evaluation Methodology Used:

Interviews and mapping of change

Moderator:

- » Rob Ricigliano, Director, the Institute of World Affairs, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Panelists:

- » Jason M. Ladnier, Deputy Director, Planning Office, Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, United States Department of State
- » Colleen Duggan, Senior Program Specialist, International Development Research Centre
- » Priya Alvarez, Evaluation Specialist, United Nations Women

Break-out Session 1B

Evaluation Presentations:

- » *Peacebuilding in Early Childhood Programmes* by Siobhan Fitzpatrick, Chief Executive Officer, Early Years, and Pauline Walmsley, Director, Knowledge Exchange, Early Years

**10:30 am –
12:30 pm**

*Evaluation Methodology Used:
Surveys and economic analysis

- » *Cross-Border Reconciliation based on Shared Water and Resource Issues* by Orlee Rabin, Regional Management Coordinator, Friends of the Earth Middle East

*Evaluation Methodology Used: Informal community evaluation with participants and control group

Moderator:

- » Andrew Blum, Director of Learning and Evaluation, United States Institute of Peace

Panelists:

- » Meredith Blair, Associate Director of Research, Humanity United
- » Emery Brusset, Director, Channel Research
- » Julia Roig, President, Partners for Democratic Change

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**12:30 pm –
1:30 pm**

Lunch

**1:30 pm –
3:30 pm**

Break-out Session 2A

Evaluation Presentations:

- » *Building Bridges to Peace* by Jenny Vaughan, Program Officer, Conflict Management, Mercy Corps

*Evaluation Methodology Used:
Mixed methods, quasi-experimental design with surveys and focus groups

1:30 pm –
3:30 pm

Break-out Session 2A (Continued)

Evaluation Presentations:

- » *Peace Dividend Marketplace* by Lucy Heady, Economist, Building Markets (formerly Peace Dividend Trust)

*Evaluation Methodology Used:
Surveys and economic analysis

Moderator:

- » Susan Allen Nan, Associate Professor, School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University

Panelists:

- » George Wilson, Program Manager, Office of Transition Initiatives, USAID
- » Carlisle Levine, Associate, KonTerra Group
- » Matthew Arnold, Senior Program Officer of Results Monitoring, The Asia Foundation

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Break-out Session 2B

Evaluation Presentations:

- » *Acting Together* by Cynthia Cohen, Program Director, Peacebuilding and the Arts, Brandeis University, and Mary Ann Hunter, Senior Lecturer, University of Tasmania

*Evaluation Methodology Used:
Case studies and ethnographic analysis

- » *Community Engagement* by Hannah Kamau, Senior Monitoring, Evaluation Results and Learning Manager, Pact Kenya, and Joseph Babu Ayindo, Senior Program Advisor, Peace II Program, Act!

*Evaluation Methodology Used:
Action research

**1:30 pm –
3:30 pm**

Moderator:

- » Melanie Kawano-Chiu, Program Director, Alliance for Peacebuilding

Panelists:

- » Stefan Rummel-Shapiro, Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor, United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office
- » Ned Lazarus, Post-Doctoral Fellow, School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University
- » Elizabeth Kidd McWhorter, Organizational Growth and Development Officer, Institute for Inclusive Security

**3:30 pm –
5:00 pm**

Closing Session: Applying Learning at the Local, Organizational, and National Levels

Moderators:

- » Melanie Greenberg, President and CEO, Alliance for Peacebuilding
- » Melanie Kawano-Chiu, Program Director, Alliance for Peacebuilding

Panelists:

- » Bidjan Nashat, Strategy Officer, World Bank Independent Evaluation Group
- » Michael Lund, Senior Fellow, United States Institute of Peace
- » Joseph Babu Ayindo, Senior Program Advisor, Peace II Program, Act!

About the Organizational Partnership

In the summer of 2009, the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) and the Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP) launched the Peacebuilding Evaluation Project: A Forum for Donors and Implementers (PEP). Over two years, PEP has increased consensus on solutions to common peacebuilding evaluation challenges, informed the internal reorganization of evaluation practices for three peacebuilding organizations participating in PEP, and sparked new activities to facilitate improved evaluation practices, including the Women's Empowerment Demonstration Project (WEDP) and the first peacebuilding Evidence Summit. The wide distribution of two reports based on the PEP process, a USIP Special Report "Improving Peacebuilding Evaluation" and an AfP Lessons Report "Starting on the Same Page," has helped inform the broader field on these crucial issues. Through future PEP activities, USIP and the AfP will continue to work on improving peacebuilding evaluation.



UNITED STATES
INSTITUTE OF PEACE

2301 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C., 20037
www.usip.org



Alliance for
Peacebuilding

1320 19th Street, NW, Suite 401
Washington, D.C., 20036
www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org