Capturing Conversations Through Guided Observation

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The Justice and Security Dialogue Approach

Improving security by fostering trust between the community and security services

- Facilitates change through dialogue and other engagements
- Behaviors
- Stakeholder-driven, holistic and adaptive
- Previous: Nepal, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Tanzania and Burma, and elsewhere

Saaba, Burkina Faso
JSD in the Sahel

Currently:
• Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Tunisia
• 2016 – Present

Tools:
• Participant Surveys, Focus Groups, Community Survey, Meetings and Follow-On Activity tracking, Facilitator’s Questionnaires, Team reflections, Partner reflections, Media tracking, Guided Observation
What is Guided Observation?

- Capture information from conversations, events, workshops, dialogues and more
- A set of questions around key themes/indicators
- Completed by trained, preferably impartial, persons
- Adaptive (context, scope, etc)
- Adds granularity
What is it good for?

Good For:
• Conversations
• Tracking behaviors, engagement and outward perceptions
• Ex: Re-integration of VE, youth rehabilitation programs, trust-building

Not Good For:
• Output-focused projects
• Non-observable perceptions

Dialogue 7. Niamey V, Niger
In Practice

Prep:
- Practice sessions
- Walking through questions
- Calibration
- Translation and adaptation

When to capture:
- Throughout the event
- Post-session
- Post-day
- Post-event

Medium: Paper, Online or Debrief
Sample Areas

- **Participant interaction**
  - How would you describe interparticipant dynamics in the room? Please use descriptive adjectives.

- **Points of Tension**
  - Describe any disagreements during the dialogue. Did they get resolved? Why or why not?

- **Planning**
  - Did participants agree on a solution or solutions to the security issue? If yes, please describe the solution(s).

- **Facilitation skills**
  - For each facilitator active in facilitating this dialogue, please rate each facilitator on these skills. As you evaluate each facilitator on a skill, please use specific examples of how the facilitator demonstrated the rating given.

- **Sustainability**
  - At this time, if the partner and USIP stopped supporting the JSD process, do you think dialogue participants would be capable of continuing the process on their own? Please explain.
Challenges

• Subjectivity / Positive-Bias
  • Solution: training and other tools
• Variability of conversation
  • Solution: mix of questions, “choose your own adventure”
• Discrepancies
  • Solution: timely follow-up with observers and facilitators
• Thoroughness
  • Solution: training and refining of questions
• Comparability across countries
  • Solution: key indicators
• Unfamiliar
  • Solution: training, education, time
• Time
Lessons Learned

- Specificity of questions
- Focus on word choice, translation and cultural understanding
- Document should flow
  - Objective sections
  - Subjective sections
- Number of participants changes your approach
- Supplement quantitative with qualitative

Dialogue 3, La Marsa, Tunisia
Ways Forward

- Updating our guided observation as the nature of dialogues change
- Analyzing the responses we are getting to refine questions and inform decision-making
- Using responses to help paint the picture of our impact
- What are examples you’ve seen of guided observation?

THANK YOU!

Dialogue 3, La Marsa, Tunisia