Working in Conflict: A Faith Based Toolkit for Islamic Relief

5. ME&L

Contents

Introduction

The poet Abu Ghurra was captured by the Muslims at the battle of Badr, and was released after promising the Prophet (PBUH) that he would not return to the battlefield against the Muslims again. On the day of Uhud he had returned and was captured again. Once again he appealed to the Prophet (PBUH) for mercy with a similar promise, to which the Prophet replied: "A believer is not bitten from the same hole twice"
Bukhari & Muslim, commentary from The Sixty Sultaniyya compiled by Abu Luqman Fathullah)[1]

Through this *hadith* we are reminded of the importance of learning from our experience, and that from which we are able to make more informed decisions and actions. This is of great importance where the decisions we make have a direct impact on the lives of the communities we work with, and become crucial in an environment where violence may be the result of mistakes that could have been avoided.

1 http://www.khilafahbooks.com/the-sixty-sultaniyya-by-abu-luqman-fathullah/
2 http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/ilt/ilt_manualpage.html
3 http://dmeforpeace.org/sites/default/files/SI_MEL%20for%20Fragile%20States%20and%20Peacebuilding.pdf

WHY MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING (ME&L)

'Monitoring & evaluation' (M&E) is integral to effective projects and the most effective M&E is integrated into the whole process of the project – from design to review. The benefits and purposes of M&E are varied and include:

- Documenting your activity and impact
- To monitor the progress of the project
- To make your project accountable to both donors and beneficiaries
- To justify inputs - including your cost-effectiveness – again to both donors and beneficiaries
- To capture the process of change
- To foresee problems and look to resolve them
- To celebrate successes
- To acknowledge and learn from failures
- To enhance your credibility
- Sharing successes and problems to enable further projects and advocacy
- To adapt to the problems and failures identified – either in the current or future projects
- To mitigate or avoid risk

M&E, however, is insufficient unless you are *learning* from the results of the evaluation. Hence we will not refer to M&E in isolation, but Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (ME&L).

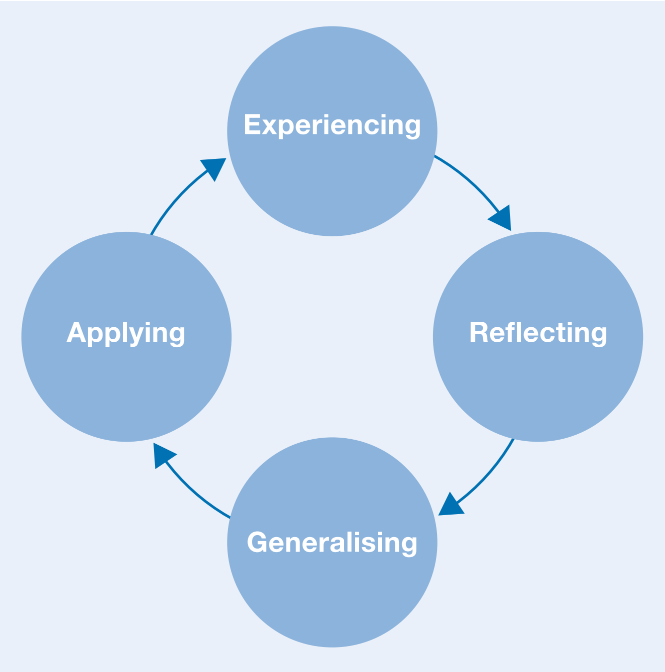
In practice this translates into a continual examination, not only on assessing and evaluating a project, but then taking this information and applying the lessons learned in moving forward.

ABOUT THIS CHAPTER

This chapter of the toolkit outlines tools and approaches that are of particular relevance to conflict transformation projects, or where you are measuring the impact of a project in a conflict environment. It acts as a supplement to standard guidelines for M&E of development and emergency projects – not as a replacement. It should be used in conjunction with the following excellent resources, which this section is drawn extensively from:

- Cheyanne Church and Mark M. Rogers, *Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs*, Search for Common Ground.[2]
- Rolf Sartorius & Christopher Carver, *Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning for Fragile States and Peacebuilding Programmes: Practical Tools for Improving Programme Performance and Results*, Social Impact, 2006.[3]

Learning



Source:.*Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs*, Search for Common Ground, 2006 [http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/ilt/ilt_manualpage.html]. Further information is available from Atherton, J.S., *Teaching and Learning: Experiential Learning*, 2004 [http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/experience.htm].

Because of the high risks of engaging with conflict dynamics learning from your evaluations can mean the difference between a positive intervention and one that is potentially damaging. In such environments not learning from mistakes can even increase the risk for staff and beneficiaries. This section responds to this risk by placing emphasis on processes that facilitate learning as a way to embed them in the standard practice of the office.

Learning is not a simple learn to-do process, but instead learning may require both experiencing and reflecting on that knowledge. To illustrate this below is a version of David A. Kolb's *Theory of Adult Learning* which indicates how different ways of learning influence each other:

- **Experience**
  Adults learn best by both doing and from experience. Yet more experience does not automatically result in better experience or learning.
- **Reflecting**
  While experience may be the best teacher, learning requires more than experience. In processing or reflecting on our experiences, we begin to learn from them.
- **Generalising**
  Generalising involves abstract conceptualization. It is a step beyond reflection in that it goes beyond first-hand experience or knowledge of how certain things work to a more general perception about how those things work.
- **Applying**
  Applying new learning and knowledge allows us to modify old behaviours and practice new behaviours in everyday situations.

APPLYING YOUR LEARNING

The Kolb *Theory of Adult Learning* can also be used to structure how you move to apply the results from M&E:[1]

1. **Experience**
   Evaluation process, debrief and evaluation report.
2. **Reflect and generalise**
   What worked? What did not?
   What should be changed?
3. **Apply**
   Adapt the project accordingly.
4. **Share**
   Offer new thinking to the office, organisation and broader fields.

1 *Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs*, Search for Common Ground, 2006 [http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/ilt/ilt_manualpage.html].

Learning

Using 1–4 consider the results of your M&E data in each of the four ways outlined, with emphasis on how the lessons learned help how you adapt future practice.

This approach can require time that is not easily available to staff. To facilitate this process you can follow a simple checklist of activities:

Tasks

- Conduct draft conclusions and debrief with project team.
- Determine who will be involved in reflections conversation.
- Develop process for reflections conversation
- Document thoughts and ideas from conversation
- Determine who should be involved in making decisions about changes at the project. Programme and/or organisational level.
- Identify adaptations to be made including responses to evaluation recommendations.
- Develop a plan for utilising these recommendations and reflections.
- Evaluation and utilisation plan (including new knowledge) circulated to relevant staff.
- Monitor how the learning and utilisation plan has been applied.
- Incorporate results into organisational working knowledge through a variety of forums, e.g.:
  i. Workshops
  ii. Internal newsletter
  iii. Panels
  iv. Lessons learned briefing.
- Consider use of results in donor relations, public relations and academia.
- Consider how results and learning will be used in:
  i. Future proposals
  ii. To inform future project design.
- Circulate to other organisations in the field.

For each task ask the following:

- Who is involved?
- Who is the lead person?
- When is it happening?
- When will it be complete?

Reminder of key definitions and terms

INDICATORS

An indicator is a quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to reflect the changes connected to an intervention.

Basic components of an indicator:

- What is to be measured?
- What is going to change?
- Unit of measurement to be used to describe the change.
- Pre-programme status/state (baseline).
- Size, magnitude, or dimension of the intended change.
- Quality or standard of the change to be achieved.
- Target population(s).
- Timeframe.

It is **information** that signals change.

QUANTITATIVE VS. QUALITATIVE INDICATORS

- **Quantitative**
  Measures of quantities or amounts.
- **Qualitative**
  People's judgments or perceptions about a subject.

In deciding whether to use qualitative or quantitative indicators, the simple answer is: use **both**!

Example

The quantitative indicator is:

- "Fifty women elected parliamentarians in the next election."

While this is a positive objective and an adequate indicator, used alone it does not provide the full story.

Consider the richer evidence when accompanied by the qualitative indicators:

- "10% increase in women parliamentarians' belief that their voices are making a difference in decision making."
- "15% decrease in elected women's perception that they are marginalised in decision making."

BASELINE

A baseline provides a starting point from which a data comparison can be made. It is used as a point of comparison for M&E data.

Baselines should be conducted before the start of an intervention.

Most baselines focus on the intended outcomes of a project. However they can be used to measure secondary outcomes and assumptions for comparison later in the implementation.

Choosing your indicators

It is important to be realistic when choosing which indicators you will be measuring. Consider the following checklist in assessing which indicators to use:

Targeted

- Element of change: What is changing?
- Target group: Who is involved in the change?
- Location: Where is the change located?
- Timeframe: When is the change to happen?

Reliability

- Quality of the information is credible.
- Assumptions are minimal, or at least clearly stated.
- Connection between the indicator and what you are trying to prove is direct.
- Everyone collecting the information will find the same thing.

Measurable

- Specific unit(s) of measurement to be used: What will be measured, counted, weighed or sized?
- Reference to a baseline/benchmark for comparison: What was the measurement at the starting point?
- Qualities are defined: Words like 'effective', 'appropriate' and 'successful' are defined clearly.

Feasible

- Means of verification is viable and doable.
- Information can be obtained.

EXAMPLES OF IMPACT INDICATORS

To get to good impact indicators (both design and measurements) it is useful ask the following questions:

- Why are you undertaking this activity?
- You have produced this activity – so what?

Choosing your indicators

EXAMPLE OBJECTIVE ▶ INCREASED TOLERANCE AND RECONCILIATION[1]

Outcome indicators	Definition and unit of measurement	Data collection methods
1. Increased social cohesion, trust and tolerance intargeted communities	Perceptions expressed by individuals, households or organisations. Disaggregate by sex, ethnicity, religion, age, locale, etc.	Social capital assessment tool (SOCAT); capacity enhancement needs assessment (CENA); focus groups; direct observation; mini surveys.
2. Progress against indicators of reduced conflict tension defined by community groups in programme areas	Determined through participatory planning process with beneficiaries	Focus group; data collection; storytelling; conflict mapping
3. Reduced number of incidentsof violent conflict reported by media or by watchdog groups in targeted communities	Need to define what kinds of conflict and which media outlets. Disaggregate victims by sex, ethnicity, age, etc.	Media content analysis tool
4. Increase in the number of incidents where parties to the previous conflict cooperate	Beneficiaries and project managers mutually define 'cooperate'. Sort 'parties' by location, ethnicity, etc.	Mini survey; focus group; observation; key informant interviews
5. Increase in the number and % of targeted communities that have assimilated returnees	Define 'assimilated' and sort returnees by sex, ethnicity, etc.	Key informant interviews; focus groups; direct observation; review of public records
6. Number and % of targeted groups trained in peaceful conflict resolution methods as a result of programme activities, and using those skills in practice	Indicator should include standards for content and duration of training and should be sorted by gender, ethnic group, location, etc.	Four levels of training; evaluation; focus groups after completion of training

1 Adapted from Rolf Sartorius & Christopher Carver, *Social Impact, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning for Fragile States and Peacebuilding Programmes: Practical Tools for Improving Programme Performance and Results*, Social Impact, 2006 [http://dmeforpeace.org/sites/default/files/SI_MEL%20for%20Fragile%20States%20and%20Peacebuilding.pdf].

Choosing your indicators

EXAMPLE OBJECTIVE ▶ INCREASED CSO CAPACITY TO ADVOCATE KEY ISSUES[1]

Outcome indicators	Definition and unit of measurement	Data collection methods
1. Number of policy initiatives in which CSOs participate	Sponsoring organisation needs to define what constitutes an initiative	Mini surveys with a sampling of target CSOs
2. Number of target CSOs showing improvement on advocacy index	Score derived for each target CSO based on improvement in advocacy skills	Advocacy index using simple survey or key informant interviews with sampling of target CSOs
3. Number CSOs/individuals who receive advocacy training	Content and duration of training should be specified	Project records: level 1 (in 4-levels of training evaluation)
4. Number of individuals who express satisfaction with advocacy training	Satisfaction is frequently measured on a five-point scale and can be used to assess satisfaction with specific topics	Project records: level 2 (in 4-levels of training evaluation)
5. Number of CSOs who develop practical advocacy action plans during training	The quality of advocacy action plans can be assessed using a simple checklist	Project records: level 3 (in 4-levels of training evaluation)

1 Adapted from Rolf Sartorius & Christopher Carver, *Social Impact, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning for Fragile States and Peacebuilding Programmes: Practical Tools for Improving Programme Performance and Results*, Social Impact, 2006 [http://dmeforpeace.org/sites/default/files/SI_MEL%20for%20Fragile%20States%20and%20Peacebuilding.pdf].

Choosing your indicators

EXAMPLE OBJECTIVE ▶ INCREASED TRANSPARENCY, RESPONSIVENESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE[1]

Outcome indicators	Definition and unit of measurement	Data collection methods
1. Improvement in CENA score measuring degree of collaboration among local government, CSOs and CBOs	Scaled measure of collaboration among people in targeted areas	Capacity enhancement needs assessment (CENA)
2. Increase in the number and % of citizens in targeted areas who feel that local government is competently addressing their priority concerns	Number and % of target population disaggregated by sex, ethnicity or other important divisions	Mini survey of citizen attitudes and perceptions in targeted locales
3. Increase in the number and % of citizens attending and participating in local town meetings to discuss issues of common interest and priorities	Number of target population disaggregated by sex, ethnic group, locale, etc	Direct observation at town meetings in targeted locales

EXAMPLE OBJECTIVE ▶ EXPANDED CIVIL SOCIETY[1]

Outcome indicators	Definition and unit of measurement	Data collection methods
1. Increase in the number of civic organisations	Number of registered civic organisations in programme supported areas	Key informant interviews
2. Increase in the number and % of citizens who are members of civic organisations	Number of citizens as formal members of civic organisations and % of citizens out of total pop in target areas who are CSO members	Key informant interviews; organisation membership rosters
3. Increase in the number and % of civic groups representing marginalised or disadvantaged citizens	Sponsoring organisation needs to specify which marginalised groups are targeted	Key informant interviews with members of civic organisation and disadvantaged groups

1 Adapted from Rolf Sartorius & Christopher Carver, *Social Impact, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning for Fragile States and Peacebuilding Programmes: Practical Tools for Improving Programme Performance and Results*, Social Impact, 2006 [http://dmeforpeace.org/sites/default/files/SI_MEL%20for%20Fragile%20States%20and%20Peacebuilding.pdf].

Choosing your indicators

A worked example

MEASURING THE IMPACT OF MEDIA MESSAGES

Media messages are often included in peacebuilding projects, but are rarely considered critically. Considering the planned impact of those messages at a design stage will help you to:

- Plan the nature and targeting of those messages
- Measure impact more accurately as part of your M&E cycle

More accurate impact assessments during the project will also facilitate learning, which will enable you to change the design of the media messages to improve effectiveness of the intervention.

The easiest measurement to make is the number of people who heard the media message. However, this does not tell you whether it made any difference or had any impact.

THE FOUR QUESTIONS PROCESS

1. **Why …**
   Are you producing media messages?
2. **How …**
   Does behaviour change?
   Does your message do this?
3. **How …**
   Do you measure those changes?
4. **How …**
   Do you measure the impact of your intervention only?

1. WHY …

Are you producing media messages?

Refer to your theory of change and project objectives.

- **Point of the project**
  To encourage peace and peaceful relations.
- **Point of the media messages**
  To encourage changes in behaviour, thereby to encourage peace and peaceful relations.

Choosing your indicators

2. HOW …

Does behaviour change? Does your message do this?

Changes in behaviour can take place through a number of factors, and often due to a combination of:

- Social interaction
- Direct experience
- Evidence (education)
- Knowledge
- Change in mentality (e.g. behavioural ethics, as a result of experience)
- Changes in the behaviour and beliefs of your peers (people tend to share attitudes and change them in relation to the views of the groups of which they are members).

Consider how your message will initiate these factors for change.

3. HOW …

Do you measure those changes?

For media messages you are essentially measuring perception, attitudes and behaviour.

Some ways to measure this could include a survey of perceptions and attitudes. For example, asking beneficiaries views on a certain statement – perhaps about a particular group - and asking the same question before and after intervention.

4. HOW …

Do you measure the impact of your intervention only?

Projects do not take place in isolation. It can be easy to attribute changes to your project when they were in fact caused by other factors. You can address this in a perception survey, for example, in the following ways:

- Asking why their mind changed between surveys.
- Ask about the reaction to the message of the project specifically – did it change your view?
- If it did not – ask 'why not' so you can react to this information.
- Ask directly about other factors that led to a change in attitudes or belief.

You can also look to measure wider impact:

- Ask about whether they communicated this change in view to others.
- Ask about how this has changed their behaviour, and whether they have seen changes in the behaviour of others.

Planning, design and ME&L

Planning for ME&L should take place as part of the project design itself.

EXAMPLE OF DESIGNING ME&L INDICATORS WITH PROJECT DESIGN

You will recall the process outlined in section 4.c, 'Conflict transformation', page 5, for designing project strategy:

1. What is the current situation
2. What is the desired future?
3. What needs to change?
4. How will we arrive at that change?

What is the current situation?	What do we do to create the future?	What does change look like?	How do we measure the impact?
Assessed through baseline and conflict analysis	*Programme design decisions*	*What the desired future looks like according to the beneficiaries*	*Remember we are measuring change not confirmation of activity*
Disputes	Restructure/reform of committees	Reduction of disputes	**Quantitative**: number of disputes recorded; % reduction over time. **Qualitative**: positive attitudes expressed about other communities.
Community governance segregated by group	Build capacity of committees; facilitate links between committees and local government	Integrated committees; more peaceful relationships between communities	**Quantitative**: number of disputes recorded; % reduction over time; number of integrated committees; % of representation of each group on committees; number of committee members trained; number of actions recorded as a result of training. **Qualitative**: changes in attitudes between communities.
Local committees are ineffective in advocating for community needs	Improve community resource manage-ment; provision of services (e.g. water)	Local government fulfils responsibilities to provide social services	**Quantitative**: number of meetings between committees and local government; number of services planned by local government; number of services planned responsive to community needs; number of actions undertaken by local government to provide services; evidence of community participation in decision making. **Qualitative**: perception of positive attitudes expressed about local government services; perception of agreement with the statement 'government is responsive to my needs'.
Lack of resources leading to disputes		Sufficient resources to meet community needs; ability to repair wells quickly	**Quantitative**: number of people trained to maintain water pumps; number of water pumps built. **Qualitative**: perception of committees responsible for service maintenance (not NGO); perception of positive views expressed about management capability of committees.

Specific evaluation tools for peacebuilding

The remainder of this toolkit outlines particular tools that might not normally be part of a standard ME&L assessment process, but can be of particular use to evaluate projects and programmes that have specifically looked to engage with the conflict environment. These tools are based on the assumption that readers are familiar with some basic M&E approaches including:

- Key informant interviews
- Focus groups
- Direct observation
- Case study collection
- Project document review
- Surveys and questionnaires
- Desk-based research and secondary data review

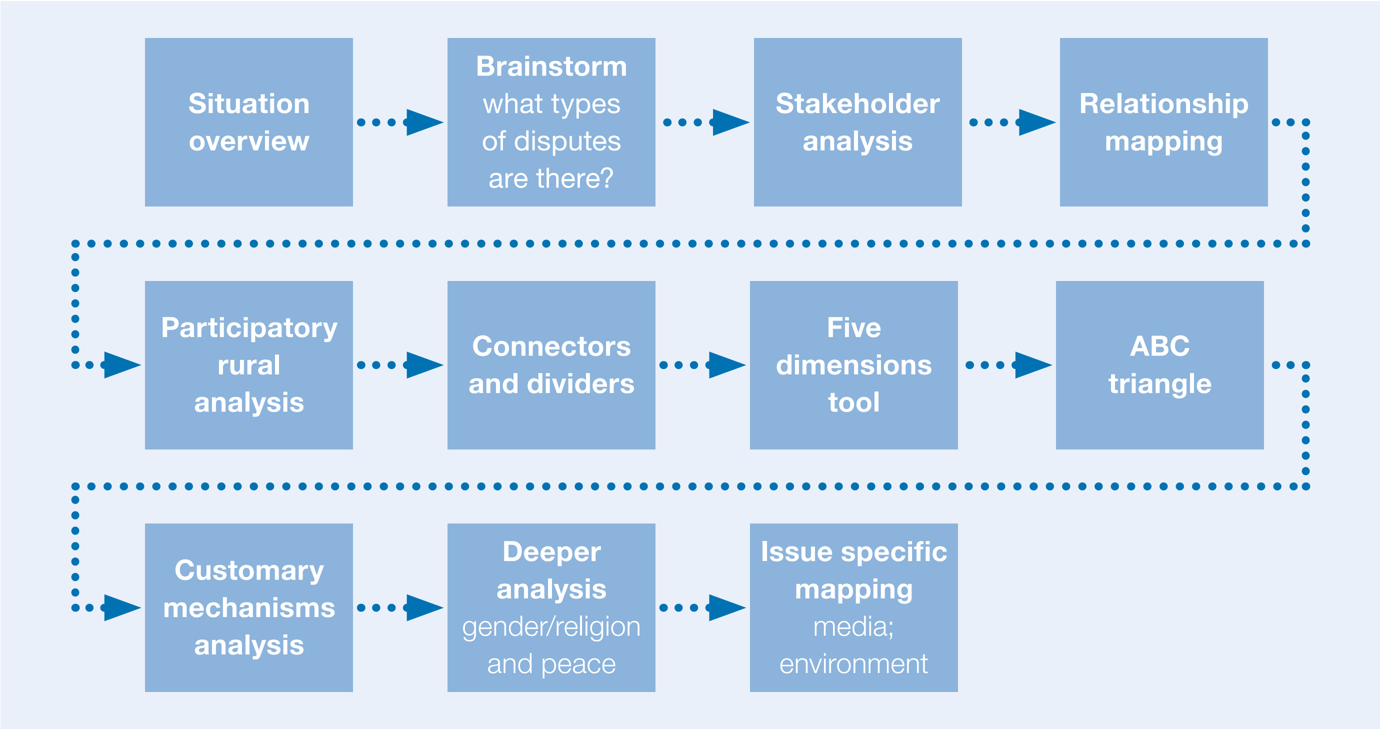
CONFLICT MAPPING

This tool may be appropriate where you are aiming to have a direct impact on the conflict environment as specifically assessed through your conflict mapping preparation exercises.

To undertake conflict mapping as an ME&L exercise you would use the conflict mapping tools outlined in section 3 directly with the beneficiaries.

If you repeat the whole conflict mapping exercise system you can also use it to simultaneously assess the conflict environment to update contingency plans (i.e. through geographic mapping) and to compare beneficiary responses to those given in the previous assessment (e.g. customary mechanism's analysis or relationship mapping).

Below is a recreation of the mapping methodology relevant to M&EL, with those used directly from the initial mapping exercise marked accordingly. Refer to section 3, 'Conflict mapping', for the tools themselves:



Specific evaluation tools for peacebuilding

4-LEVELS OF TRAINING EVALUATION

Many conflict transformation projects involve capacity building or training for beneficiaries. However, it is often the case that participants do not have the opportunity to utilise this training and it falls into disuse. There are occasions, too, where beneficiaries take part in training to obtain other development benefits, rather than to develop skills. Finally, there is a risk that the quality of the training is insufficient.

It is highly recommended that interventions that involve extensive capacity building/training use the 4-Levels of training evaluation.

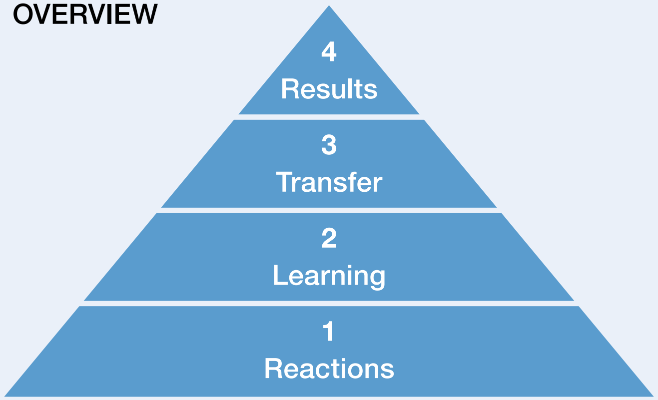
Advantages

- Provides a comprehensive means to measure results, strengths and weaknesses of training programs.
- Serves not only as a diagnostic tool but also focuses on making training improvements necessary to improve training and design follow-up.

Disadvantages

- Level-3 and Level-4 assessments require records for following up six months or one year later. Records may be spotty or people may have moved or changed jobs.
- More rigorous level three and four assessments are costly and time-intensive.
- Lack of assessment continuity may challenge consistent reporting.
- It may be difficult to link training to level four results due to intervening variables.

OVERVIEW



Source: Donald Kirkpatrick, *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels*, Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco, 1994.

LEVEL 1: REACTIONS

Refers to customer satisfaction. Usually measured through forms completed by participants at the end of the training or throughout.

Guidelines

1. Determine what you want to find out.
2. Design a form that will quantify reactions.
3. Ensure understanding (make it simple and check any translations).
4. Encourage written comments and suggestions.
5. Get a 100% immediate response.
6. Facilitate participants giving honest responses (e.g. through anonymity).
7. Measure reactions against standards and take the appropriate action.
8. Communicate reactions as appropriate.

LEVEL 2: LEARNING

Refers to the amount of learning which has occurred after a training programme. Assessing at this level moves beyond learner satisfaction and aims to assess the extent students have advanced in their skills, knowledge or attitude.

Specific evaluation tools for peacebuilding

Usually measured through tests conducted before training and after training. Use a control group,[1] if practical, to:

1. Evaluate knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes both before and after the programme.
2. Use a test to measure knowledge and attitudes. Use a performance test to measure skills.
3. Get a 100% immediate response.
4. Use the results of the evaluation to take appropriate action.

LEVEL 3: TRANSFER

Assess transfer of learning beyond the classroom. Refers to changes in learners' behaviour due to the training programme. For this to happen, it is necessary that:

- The person must have a desire to change
- The person must know what to do and how to do it
- The person must work in the right climate
- The person must see benefits or rewards for changing.

1 The control group is a group monitored in an experiment or study that does not receive the same treatment by the researchers. This is used as a benchmark to compare to other groups which are the subject of the experiment or study.

Measurement is difficult as you cannot predict exactly when change will occur. One way is to include 'visioning' by participants:

1. Discuss how participants will apply learning.
2. Plan concrete next steps (action plan). Next steps should outline what knowledge, skills and tools will be applied where, by when and by whom. This creates an action plan that participants and trainers can use for follow-up.
3. Go back to participants six months later and use interviews or mini surveys assess what they have used and applied.
4. Use information about successes and obstacles to inform design of future training and follow-up.

Guidelines

1. Use a control group if practical.
2. Allow time for a change to take place.
3. Evaluate both before and after the program if practical.
4. Survey and/or interview one or more of the following: trainees, their immediate supervisors, their subordinates and others who can indicate change.
5. Get a 100% immediate response.
6. Repeat the evaluation at appropriate times.

LEVEL 4: RESULTS

Refers to the measurement of the success of the programme at higher levels and social impacts.
For example:

- Reduced conflict
- Improved quality of services
- More responsive local governance
- Improved quality of journalistic reporting
- More balanced media coverage
- Increased use local courts to resolve disputes

Measurement is difficult at this level as it may not be easy to link results directly with training due to other intervening variables. Key informant interviews, focus groups, and mini surveys with former trainees, and trainee peers and employers may provide information about results.

Guidelines

1. Use a control group if practical.
2. Allow time for a change to take place.
3. Evaluate both before and after the programme if practical.
4. Repeat the evaluation at appropriate times.
5. Be satisfied with evidence if proof is not possible.

Specific evaluation tools for peacebuilding

MEDIA CONTENT ANALYSIS TOOL (MCAT)[1]

This tool is used to evaluate the amount and impact of media coverage about civil society topics. It is of particular use where conflict transformation requires the changing of attitudes, or where the media is playing a key role in either combating or perpetuating attitudes that are one of the foundations for disputes.

This tool is based on an existing chosen topic, e.g. human rights or attitudes towards a marginalised group about which you are analysing media coverage.

Advantages

- The baseline data allows sponsoring agencies to see trends over time on selected topics reported through different media outlets.
- The tool provides a clear, quantitative measure for making policy and assistance decisions to support various media outlets.

1 Adapted from: Rolf Sartorius & Christopher Carver, *Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning for Fragile States and Peacebuilding Programmes: Practical Tools for Improving Programme Performance and Results*, Social Impact, 2006 [http://dmeforpeace.org/sites/default/files/SI_MEL%20for%20Fragile%20States%20and%20Peacebuilding.pdf].

Disadvantages

- Copies of newspapers and magazines need to be saved, stored, and analysed.
- Project officers may need to be trained to conduct this research.
- Subjectivity can influence the outcome of this tool.
- Transcripts of radio and broadcast news shows need to be obtained.

Skills required

It is beneficial for the evaluator to know something about journalism and the media business. For those without media experience, they should become familiar with identifying and attributing sources, the use of headlines, counting newspaper/magazine inches, the use of photographs, and identifying news frames and the tone of the writing.

Time required

This can completed daily or weekly in a short amount of time once the media outlets of interest are identified and the sample articles are read.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE SAMPLE

The first step is to identify the local newspapers, magazines, and Internet sites that the public consults for news and information. After the initial baseline study, this research should be conducted every three or six months to track changes.

Each outlet will be examined for the topic of interest. For instance, if the interest was in issues of human rights then stories that address, mention, feature, or respond to human rights issues will be included in the sample. Be aware that you will want to include those you wish to have an impact on as well as those who you consider 'allies'.

STEP 2: DEFINE IMPACT MEASURES

REACH

Identify the circulation of the outlet. Circulation numbers for print outlets include both the number of issues sold per week/month and also the actual number of issues that are read. Some newspapers and magazines have a 1 to 8 ratio of the number sold to the number actually read by people who share the publication. For internet news sites, ask the webmaster or marketing director to provide the number of hits for the site. The website management may also have other data to share about its reach and impact. Outlets that have a larger circulation/audience have the potential for greater impact.

Create a scale from one to 10 with 10 being the highest score to rank each outlet by how many people it reaches. A daily paper with a large circulation will be scored higher than a small weekly magazine. News websites with a high number of hits will score higher than those with fewer hits.

Specific evaluation tools for peacebuilding

CONTENT

Analyse each story on seven measures, with each on a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 as the highest score.

Prominence

The placement of a story is crucial to its impact. The number that is assigned is dependent on the number of pages in the source. What is most important is to be consistent with the rankings and to have a clearly defined scale in mind.

- Appears on the first page or is featured in the first three pages of the paper or magazine, then rate it a '10'. The absolute highest prominence a newspaper can give a story is if the newspaper is broadsheet size, the story is on the top half of the front page, called in the industry 'above the fold'.
- Appears in the second or third section of paper, rate it a '5'.
- If the paper only has one section, then separate story placement scores:
  i. First three pages = 10
  ii. Second five pages = 6
  iii. Last pages = 3

Headline

Editors write the headlines and their choice of words provides an indication of the value placed on the story.

- The headline appears to be outrageous or offending = 0 (The reporter who wrote the story seldom writes the headline; editors will often refer to the most sensational part of a story – even if small – and use it for the headline.)
- The headline reports statistics, uses the names of local officials or locations = 8+

Visuals

Stories that have accompanying photographs have higher impact.

- The photo does not contribute to a fuller understanding the issue = 0 (e.g. a photo of a government official speaking at a news conference does not add to a story.)
- The photo helps the reader to understand/ personalise the issue = 8+

Quotes

Stories that have accompanying quotes have higher impact.

- The quote does not contribute to a fuller understanding the issue = 0 (Quotes that inflame anger or breed intolerance get no points.)
- The quote helps the reader to understand/ personalize the issue = 8+ (Quotes from elected officials, victims, international figures, local NGOs, and critics of unjust policies add impact to stories.)

Tone

The tone of the article contributes to its impact. Tone can be understood through an analysis of adjectives (negative and positive).

- A negative tone that creates anger, tension or identifies scapegoats = 0
- A neutral tone offers no clear angle. It is neither negative nor positive about human rights. A neutral tone is not bad. As long as the content of the story is factual, it can receive a few points.
- Uses adjectives to promote human rights, identify positive behaviours, or reward people or organisations for positive actions = 8+

Column inches

the amount of space dedicated to a story is an indicator of impact. Stories are measured by inches or centimetres. Each inch of the story creates an impact index. Count the number of inches or centimetres. A story might have 20 column inches (about 50 cm) or it may have 100 (about 250 cm). This number is its score.

Political ideology

it is important to identify the prevailing ideology or political affiliation of each outlet.

- Outlets that are considered independent from most political affiliation and influence will be scored higher = 10

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- Media outlets known for close association with political parties that go against the goals of your intervention = 0

STEP 3: CREATE A SCORE SHEET FOR EACH OUTLET

A quick examination of the scores on the sum total of stories provides insight into the capacity of an outlet to serve your project objectives. Each story will be scored individually and then also counted to create the total score of the media outlet.

Create a score sheet for each story on the issue of interest using the following criteria:

- Media organisation's name
- Media organisation's reach
  i. Circulation = 1–10
  ii. Importance and credibility from media outreach measure = 1–5 (see tool description)
  iii. Add circulation score to media outreach measure mean to get sub-total.
- Content (0 to 10)
  The addition of seven measures: prominence; headline; visuals; quotes; tone; column inches; political ideology.
- Overall score
  Reach total + content total
- Repeat excercise every six months or year
  Reach total + content total x 2.

Create a score sheet for each media outlet.

To find the aggregate score for each outlet, add the total scores from each story and divide by the number of stories. This number then can be compared across outlets.

CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT (CENA)[1,2]

The CENA measures local stakeholder perceptions of:

- Extent of collaboration between NGOs, CBOs and local governments.
- Community participation.
- The extent of equality/inequality in communities.
- Training and skill level of NGO/CBO staff to carry-out community based activities.
- Level of community participation in formal, informal and traditional community organisations.
- Corruption in local government.
- Capacity and leadership in local government.

Advantages

- Flexible and adaptable; can be used as a full capacity assessment tool or to assess specific aspects.
- Provides rich qualitative data with a 'quantitative edge' for both baseline assessment and performance monitoring purposes.
- Is rapid and low-cost, especially when combined with other techniques.
- Can provide an important input into the design and targeting of new programmes.

Disadvantages

- Some capacity changes that are measured may take years to become apparent.
- Results need to be calculated using an Excel, Access, or SPSS software programme.
- Requires lots of time for data entry and analysis.
- The larger the sample, the more time it takes to conduct.

1 Adapted from: McNeil, Mary and Kathleen Kuehnast, *Assessing Capacity for Community-based Development: A Pilot Study in Tajikistan*, World Bank Institute, Washington, D.C, 2004 [http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2004/12/6573689/assessing-capacity-community-based-development-pilot-study-tajikistan]; and Rolf Sartorius & Christopher Carver, *Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning for Fragile States and Peacebuilding Programmes: Practical Tools for Improving Programme Performance and Results*, Social Impact, 2006 [http://dmeforpeace.org/sites/default/files/SI_MEL%20for%20Fragile%20States%20and%20Peacebuilding.pdf].

2 Note: to use this tool requires the CENA Index Matrix, available from both of the above sources.

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Skills required

- Ability to modify and adapt the tool;
- Focus group and key informant interviewing skills
- Ability to provide qualitative data to give context for interpretation of the data
- Data analysis skills

Time required

Once the target communities and broad issues of concern have been identified the tool can be adapted to require a short amount of time. The estimated total time required is about four to six weeks for the full assessment.

STEP 1: PREPARATION AND SITE SELECTION

Using the CENA index matrix as a starting point, develop your questionnaire for individual/household interviews and participatory focus groups:

1. Focus the CENA tool by identifying and adapting key issues and questions.
2. Translate and pilot test the assessment questions to be used in key informant and focus group interviews.
3. Select communities for applying the CENA. Teams of two to three facilitators will do a rapid assessment in each community. Ideally, the teams will involve a sponsoring agency staff member and a local researcher or NGO representative. Each of the teams can conduct the assessment in two to three communities spending roughly four to five days in each locale.

STEP 2: CHOOSE STAKEHOLDERS FOR INTERVIEWS

1. Ensure your interviewees represent the various stakeholder groups—community members, local government officials, civil society and national government (or those individuals who may have direct experience with the government).
2. Ensure you have included a variety of age groups, men and women, poor and non-poor, and different ethnic groups that reflect the demographics of the community.

When you choose individuals to interview, use the following criteria:

- They must be willing to be interviewed.
- They must be willing to speak openly and frankly.
- They must be able to express themselves fully and easily.
- They must have at least one to three hours of available time.

STEP 3: CONDUCT INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

At each site, the three-member team will conduct a total of 16 interviews with representative stakeholders. Where other people are present and contributing to an interview (i.e. in a house), this is a household interview but counted as individual. Interviews should last about two to three hours.

STEP 4: CONDUCTING FOCUS GROUPS

Three focus groups should be conducted at each site. Each session should last about two to three hours.

- **Group 1**
  Non-poor, mixed age and gender
- **Group 2**
  Poor, mixed age and gender
- **Group 3**
  Special group: Pick a group that stands out as different from the rest of the community. This group can be mixed poor/non-poor

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STEP 5: PREPARE WRITE-UPS

The assessment should result in at least 16 narrative interview reports from each community and three focus group reports from each community. There will be one community summary required that will summarise the findings from each community.

The compilation and analysis of the results of these interviews and focus group discussions form the capacity index on each community.

The team then fills out the capacity index together:

- **Focus group and interview reports**
  Detailed description and analysis of each focus group discussion and of each interview. Each report should be three to five single-spaced pages.
- **Community summary**
  A five to eight page summary of analysis from each community describing and analysing patterns and trends. Compare and contrast with other communities. The summary also provides programming options and/or captures community-level results/changes that are reasonably attributable to programme activities.
- **Capacity index matrix**
  This will be completed for each community. The scores should be tabulated and charted.

STORYTELLING

This method collects first-hand information on an event that has happened from the perspective of a person that took part in it, or saw it take place. It provides the perspective and interpretations of the interviewee, and therefore it is useful to get personal insight and views on a situation.

Similar to case studies, storytelling can be used to narrate a picture of how a program or particular experience has had an impact. Storytelling can also be done in a quantitative manner, where you collect large numbers of stories and then enumerate them for analysis; or collect multiple perspectives to indicate a 'verified account'.

Advantages

- It empowers the people who usually don't have a voice.
- It gathers information from individuals who may not respond to other research methods such as interviews, surveys and focus groups, due to illiteracy or other factors.
- It takes advantage of having witnesses of an event that needs to be studied.
- The requirements are low; the participant only needs to have observed or participated.

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Disadvantages

- Recording a story may be threatening to the storyteller.
- The storytelling approach may be too subjective
- Conducting storytelling is time consuming, to collect quantifiable data this way can be prohibitively so.
- A vulnerable individual may tell the story that they thinks the interviewer wants to hear.
- You may collect stories that have little relevance.

Skills required

- The interviewer should have some people skills.
- Active listening skills.
- The interviewer should remain neutral yet affirming in during the process.
- The interviewer should have some knowledge of conducting qualitative analysis.

Time required

Conducting a storytelling assumes 'no rush'. Assume an average storytelling lasts for two to three hours.

STEP 1: CONDUCT BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Research the cultural and social background of the person(s) interviewed to help avoid barriers to the storytelling. Adapt to the interviewee's background and needs.

STEP 2: LISTEN TO THE STORIES AND DOCUMENT THEM

Tips

- Never manipulate the conversation.
- Do not interrupt the person telling their story.
- The person who is speaking has to feel comfortable with the listener.
- Separate the person from the problem, no stereotyping or prejudicing.

Warm-up

Before eliciting a story try to establish a comfortable tone. You might say something about yourself to establish a sense of reciprocity and to give the interviewee a sense of the person they are talking to. Tell the interviewee about how the information will be used, answer questions, etc. Establish a safe environment for the interviewee. Consider the location of the interview.

Empower the storyteller

Empower interviewees by confirming that they have valuable knowledge and giving them a reason to tell their story.

Be a great audience

Listen closely and focus intensely on the teller. You get more authentic stories when you are receptive and fully comprehending. If the interviewee is distracted the one-to-one connection can be broken, and the story can becomes more generic and less genuine.

Document the conversation

If you have permission from the interviewee you should tape-record the story. This will allow you to be more an audience than a note taker, which can be distracting. If you need to take notes put conscious effort into giving attention to the interviewee.

Do not resist the story

Do not to reject the story that the interviewee offers, if the interviewee turns to topics that seem irrelevant or unproductive, hear out what is offered and follow up with additional questions. Use a mixture of questions that are closed (i.e. those that invite a yes or no answer) and open-ended (asking for detailed responses).

Observe an implicit contract of trust

There is one exception when you may choose to reject the narrative; if you feel that the interviewee is not telling the truth. Do not challenge directly but indicate scepticism indirectly, for example you might look aside. The interview should be with implicit agreement that storyteller will share their knowledge openly and accurately, and you will accept it appreciatively. If one side does not keep this agreement, the procedure breaks down.

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STEP 3: CONDUCT A NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

1. Transcribe what you recorded. The information that might affect interpretations must all be included in the transcription such as pauses and emphasis. There are three elements that have to be identified:

- **Perspective**
  The point of view of the interviewee.
- **Context**
  The environment in which the interviewee is immersed.
- **Frame**
  Are previous events that influence how the interviewee perceives various situations For example, when someone experiences violence on the hands of members of one ethnic group, her or his frame of viewing interaction with members of that group may be influenced by that violence.

2. Review the story using a narrative analysis. The narrative approach can provide you with an organisational structure responsive to analysis. A typical narrative framework focuses on the 'core narrative' or skeleton plot through four categories:

- **Orientation**
  Describes the setting and character.
- **Abstract**
  Summarises the events or incidents of the story.
- **Complicating action**
  Offers an evaluative commentary on events.
- **Resolution**
  Describes the outcomes of the story.

This provides you with a story map that will supply information on all relations that were given at the storytelling.

STEP 4: WRITE A STORYTELLING REPORT

The storytelling report can be in a number of formats including:

- You may translate the story(s) into case studies.
- You may use aspects or sections of a story to support ME&L lessons.
- If you collect a large number of stories you can enumerate the findings to provide data.
- Use multiple reports of an event to provide a 'verified account'. This can be useful for documenting human rights abuses.
- Use multiple reports to do a comparative analysis of attitudes and behaviours to inform conflict analysis and then advocacy or programming design.

Other advanced tools available

COGNITIVE SOCIAL CAPITAL ASSESSMENT TOOL (CSCA)[1]

Cognitive social capital refers to people's perceptions of the trustworthiness of other people and key institutions that shape their lives, as well as the norms of cooperation and reciprocity that underlie attempts to work together to solve problems. The CSCA tool can be used to provide information about the extent and type of social capital available in a community (such as trust, collaboration and confidence) and to monitor the change in this social capital.

ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT TOOL (OCAT)[2]

OCAT is a family of related online tools used to assess an organisation's operational capacity and identify areas of strength or weakness. Often they are comprehensive and time-intensive tools but they can be amended and abbreviated to meet specific needs.

They can be used to measure the institutional capacity of an organisation targeted for support; or to increase the institutional capacity of the implementing partner. This tool can also provide baseline data for setting targets around capacity, and they inform managers of the impact of an intervention or the effectiveness of a capacity building intervention.

1 Rolf Sartorius & Christopher Carver, *Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning for Fragile States and Peacebuilding Programmes: Practical Tools for Improving Programme Performance and Results*, Social Impact, 2006 [http://dmeforpeace.org/sites/default/files/SI_MEL%20for%20Fragile%20States%20and%20Peacebuilding.pdf].

2 As per note 1 plus: TIPS, USAID Center for Development Information and Evaluation, *Measuring Institutional Capacity: Recent Practices in Monitoring and Evaluation*, 2000 [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNACG624.pdf]; and Educational Development Centre, *The Participatory Organizational Evaluation Tool* [http://www.equalinrights.org/uploads/tx_wizzresources/UNDP_nodate_POET_UsersManual.pdf].

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