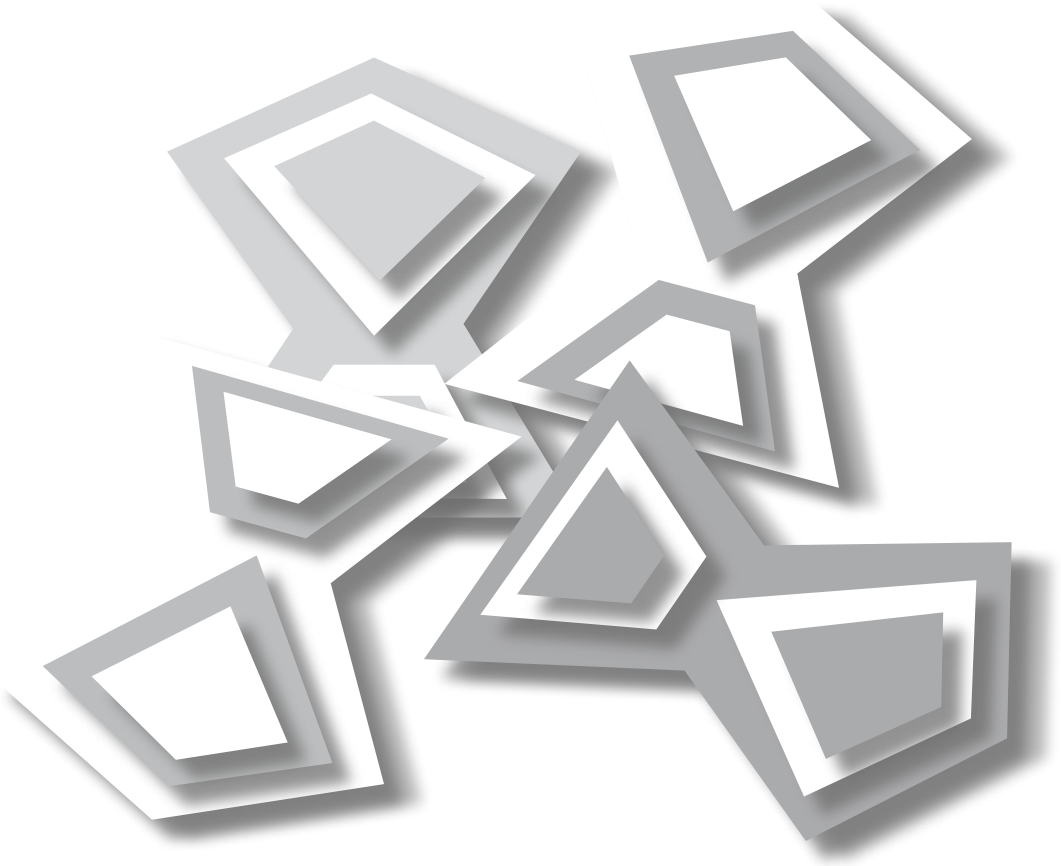

DESIGNING FOR RESULTS:
Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs

Cheyanne Church and Mark M. Rogers

Search for Common Ground

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The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Institute of Peace or of the Alliance for Peacebuilding.

December 13th, 2005

Dear colleagues in the field of conflict transformation,

It is my pleasure to introduce you to this manual for monitoring and evaluating peacebuilding initiatives. *Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring & Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programmes* was produced by Search for Common Ground, an international non-governmental organisation working in the field of conflict transformation, in partnership with the United States Institute of Peace and the Alliance for Peacebuilding. The authors of this manual are Cheyanne Church and Mark M. Rogers, whose hands-on experience, coupled with their deep analytical skills and theoretical bases, have meant that our field now has the first practical manual of its kind to which to turn.

It is my joy to thank both Cheyanne and Mark for the invaluable contribution they are making to our field.

Let me tell you a bit about Search for Common Ground and why we wanted to put this manual together.

Our mission is to transform the way the world deals with conflict: away from adversarial approaches, toward cooperative solutions. Our operating motto is: "Understand the differences; act on the commonalities."

Since 1982, we have developed comprehensive conflict transformation programmes in: Angola, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinée, Indonesia, Iran, Kosovo, Liberia, Macedonia, the Middle East (with offices in Jerusalem and Amman), Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Ukraine and the United States. We are also working on the broad issues pertaining to Islamic-Western relations in a large programme called Partners in Humanity.

Today, we have more than 350 full-time staff around the world, which makes us one of the largest NGOs working in our field. Our headquarters are in Brussels and Washington, DC.

We appreciate that people and nations will always act in their perceived best interests, but that everyone's best interest is served by solutions that maximize the gain of those with a stake in the outcome. Today's problems – whether ethnic, environmental, or economic – are too complex and interconnected to be settled on an adversarial basis.

We believe that non-governmental organisations like ours can – and should – play a key role in complementing and supplementing the work of governments and multilateral organisations and that close cooperation improves the chances for successful conflict prevention and resolution.

Our core principles include:
Conflict is both normal and resolvable;
Common ground is not the same as compromise;
Conflict can be transformed;
Peace is a process;
Humankind is interdependent.

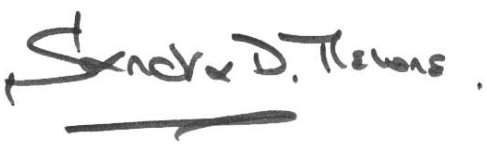
Our operating practices include:
Cooperative action;
Using an integrated approach;
Committing to engage and discovering the possibilities with time;
Avoiding parachuting;
Being social entrepreneurs;
Being fully immersed in local cultures.

Our operational methods are diverse. Our "toolbox" includes:
Traditional conflict resolution techniques;
Mediation and facilitation;
Capacity strengthening;
Shuttle diplomacy;
Back-channel negotiations;
Practical cooperation projects;
Radio and television production;
Common Ground journalism;
Arts and Culture;
Sports;
Policy Forums;
Polling;
Awards.

As an organisation, we are deeply committed to measuring and increasing the difference our programmes make. We are also committed to being a learning organisation, which shares lessons learned across programmes within the organisation and with our partners in the field, both internationally and locally.

This manual is one of many contributions we hope to make to advance our field. It is our desire that it will prompt wider access to, and use of, the tools and concepts found within. For more information, please visit our website at http://www.sfcg.org.

Sincerely,



Sandra D. Melone
Executive Director

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Cheyanne Church is a Visiting Scholar with the Fletcher School and the West Africa Liaison with the Reflecting on Peace Practice project (CDA - Collaborative Learning Project) as an independent consultant. She was previously the Director for Institutional Learning and Research at Search for Common Ground (SFCG). While at SFCG, she spearheaded the use of design, monitoring and evalution tools as integrated components of peacebuilding programming in SFCG offices from Burundi to Ukraine. She was also involved in a variety of efforts to advance the field of evaluation and peacebuilding, such as the development of a new methodology to measure impact in Macedonia and Kosovo.

Cheyanne has published on evaluation and conflict resolution, single-identity work, and conflict research effects on policy, and most recently, she co-edited *NGOs* at the *Table: Strategies for Influencing Policy in Areas of Conflict.* She has also taught courses on peacebuilding and evaluation at INCORE (Northern Ireland) and American University (Washington, DC). Prior to SFCG, Cheyanne was the Director of Policy and Evaluation at INCORE. In this period, she was also a member of the Advisory Group for the Reflecting on Peace Practice Project for Collaborative for Development Action. Cheyanne received her MSc from the London School of Economics and her BComm from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

Mark M. Rogers is an experienced facilitator, trainer, mediator, program designer, and peacebuilder. His main interest is in developing collaborative processes that address community conflicts, strengthen relationships, and end violence. He has taught courses on the practice of peacebuilding at the United Nations University for Peace in Costa Rica and on monitoring and evaluation for peacebuilding at American University. He has also participated in conflict assessments for USAID's Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation and the World Bank.

Previously, Mark served in Burundi as the Country Director for Search for Common Ground's largest and oldest program. Mark has also served as a mediator, trainer, and service coordinator in upstate New York, mediating dozens of neighborhood, family, workplace, and housing disputes and training young mediators for school-based mediation programs.

He has over two decades of field experience in relief and community development in Central and West Africa, Asia, Central America, and the Balkans working with several organizations, including PLAN International, the International Rescue Committee, and the International Medical Corps. Mark holds a Master's in International Administration from the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont and a BA from the University of Colorado.

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INTRODUCTION

"We are all faced with a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as impossible situations."

- CHUCK SWINDOLL

Much has been learned already…

In Macedonia, our television program targeted children to change their attitudes and behaviors about other ethnic groups in the country. We knew from our monitoring efforts that we had extremely high ratings and that the children both knew the characters and understood the main messages being conveyed. Yet, it was only after our evaluation, which explored the effects of the show beyond the target audience, that we started to understand the true power of the program and the opportunity we had missed to do even more.

The evidence indicated that the television program changed what children considered to be the ideal world in which they wanted to live. It shifted their consciousness about what was possible. Behaviors, however, did not change because children were not able to connect this ideal with the real world in which they lived. Future programs will directly link media work with practical activities for the target audience so that perceptions and behaviors may both change.

Our programming focused on women who had been involved in the resistance movement, and we sought to explore alternative means of catalyzing change. Many of the husbands and brothers of these women were also involved in the resistance. After several months of work with the group, a number of the participants dropped out. At the time, it was deemed normal attrition that one could expect from any type of long-term project. It was only through a formative evaluation that we discovered that these women were being pressured and, in some cases, violently abused at home due to their new ideas and opinions regarding the political situation. Our project had changed them; however, we had not anticipated this consequence. With this information, we were able to design new programs to protect against this unintended negative effect.

One of the objectives of our program was to increase the freedom of movement of the minority community, despite the ongoing state of war. Since the conflict was highly dynamic, we needed real-time information to feed into our programming decisions. By integrating mapping into existing activities, we were able to monitor the changes in people's movements. This helped us understand how perceptions of fear and threat changed over time, which was especially useful because the perceptions of the community were not always the same as ours. We

altered our program based on this information. If we had not done the regular monitoring, we would have missed several important changes.

The authors hope this manual will help peacebuilding practitioners appreciate how design, monitoring, and evaluation (DM&E) can contribute both to their learning and to the success of their programs. The belief that underpins all the concepts within this text is that monitoring and evaluation are the learning disciplines most accessible and most useful for peacebuilding practitioners. Ultimately, excellence in conflict transformation program design and effectiveness is the goal of the authors.

The purpose of the manual is to introduce peacebuilding practitioners to the concepts, tools, and methods needed to incorporate better design, monitoring, and evaluation practices into peacebuilding programming. As an introductory volume, the target audience is front-line peacebuilding practitioners from around the world with minimal formal training in design, monitoring, and evaluation. It assumes the audience has experience, training, and access to resources on conflict assessments, which are a prerequisite to participating in conflict transformation program design.

The belief that underpins all the concepts within this text is that monitoring and evaluation are the learning disciplines most accessible and most useful for peacebuilding practitioners.

A number of factors have contributed to the timing of this manual:

- Myths about the complexity, time, and resources needed to conduct DM&E inhibit programs from seeking out opportunities and building capacity in DM&E.
- DM&E has been approached as an end-game, after-the-fact initiative and, hence, is perceived to be of little value to the practitioner.
- There is a limited pool of seasoned individuals who have a blend of experience in conflict transformation and evaluation expertise.
- The nature of conflict transformation and peacebuilding is qualitative and process-focused, which does not lend itself to quantitative models.
- It is often difficult for peacebuilding practitioners to learn the various DM&E approaches in the detail needed to improve program quality.

The manual offers general information on learning and change in addition to chapters dedicated to specific issues such as baselines, indicators, monitoring, and evaluation. It is organized so that readers can easily jump from one chapter to another. However, we strongly urge jumpy readers to start with the chapter on understanding change because it frames the thinking for most of the discussions in the other chapters.

Every effort was made to offer concrete examples with each of the concepts and methods covered. Many are based upon real programs – predominantly those of Search for Common Ground – while others are fictitious.

The manual is intended to be a living reference, updated periodically.

The manual is intended to be a living reference, updated periodically. We invite readers to share examples of how their DM&E experiences have improved program effectiveness. In finding, adapting, and creating those examples, the authors were again awed at the reach of peacebuilding and its vast array of undertakings and strategies. We hope that readers will be left, as we are, with a thirst for a more in-depth resource since this manual only begins to touch the surface of this complex and exciting field.