

Peacebuilding Evaluation:

Assessing the Relevance and Effectiveness of Peacebuilding Initiatives: Lessons Learned from Testing New Approaches and Methodologies

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Abstract

The integration of evaluation into policy and practice of peacebuilding is still not a routine. Nevertheless, many advances have been made. These culminated so far in the ‘Guidance for the Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities’ commissioned by the Development Assistant Committee (DAC) of the Organization of Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD/DAC). However, a closer look at this important Guidance reveals that the debate about evaluation in peacebuilding is suffering from a lack of sound methodological debate on how best to evaluation policy and operational initiatives in complex conflict contexts. The current Guidance is more an introductory piece on what evaluation is all about rather a guide for evaluators. In this paper, I therefore present lessons from identifying and testing appropriate approaches and methodologies that allow for quality evaluation in the peacebuilding field. From an evaluation perspective I focus on theories of change, conflict analysis, conflict sensitivity and outcome plausibility. One section of the paper also provides a concrete example on how research results have been used to assess outcome plausibility.

1. Introduction

The debate about evaluation in peacebuilding¹ has started less than a decade ago. Though the integration of evaluation into policy and practice of peacebuilding is still not a routine, many advances have been made. There exist research studies as well as many evaluations of initiatives commissioned by funding agencies (see Çuhadar/Dayton/Paffenholz 2008 for an overview). Since a few years also guidance notes were developed (Church and Rogers 2006; Paffenholz and Reychler 2007). This development culminated in the 2008 (Draft) ‘Guidance for the Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities’ commissioned by the Development Assistant Committee (DAC) of the Organization of Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD/DAC)². These guidance marked an important step for the field of peacebuilding as the DAC units all Western donors. The need for the development of this guidance expresses the understanding that the existing guidance for the evaluation of development and humanitarian activities did not sufficiently reflect the complexity of the peacebuilding environment.

However, a closer look at the DAC Guidance on peacebuilding evaluation reveals that the debate about evaluation in peacebuilding is suffering from a lack of sound methodological debate on how best to evaluate policy and operational initiatives in complex conflict contexts. The current Guidance are more of an introductory piece on what evaluation is all about rather than a guide for evaluators. Evaluation experts therefore questioned the need for such specific peacebuilding evaluation Guidance.

In this paper I therefore argue that the peacebuilding field has so far failed to explain the specific challenges in evaluating complex political processes in conflict environments. While there is a lively debate in other field such as health or community development, on

¹ Peacebuilding in this paper is understood as an overarching term that covers conflict management, resolution, transformation approaches and practise. For a discussion on the use of the term by different institutions, see Barnett et al., 2007; from an international law perspective, see Chetail, 2009: 1-33; for a historical overview from a peace research perspective, see Paffenholz, 2010: 43-64; for a critical assessment in the context of liberal peacebuilding, see Heathershaw, 2008

² The guidance are currently available as a working draft for application were subject of a two year test period in 2009 and 2010: www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/

how best to evaluate complex social processes, the peacebuilding field is not engaged here. I therefore argue that time is ripe for the peacebuilding field to engage in these debates. In my understanding this is best done in explaining the challenges in peacebuilding evaluations as well as identifying and testing appropriate approaches and methodologies that allow for quality evaluation in the peacebuilding field.

The main challenge in peacebuilding evaluations is how to find appropriate approaches and methodologies to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of initiatives. In other words, how can we best find out that peacebuilding initiatives are addressing the needs for peacebuilding in a given context and are doing this in an effective way to contribute to their specific peacebuilding goals? The difficulty in providing answers is mainly linked to the fact that peacebuilding initiatives mostly lack the fundamental preconditions that need to be in place for their evaluation. They mostly do not provide clear and measurable goals, do not have a clear and explicit theory of change, lack baseline studies and monitoring indicators. Looking into the DAC peacebuilding evaluation guidance, we find the following suggestion to deal with the problem: Reconstructing theories of change, providing a conflict analysis and assessing the conflict sensitivity of initiatives. Unfortunately, the guidance fails to explain how this could be done. They neither provide methodological options nor sufficiently address the accompanying methodological challenges.

In this paper I therefore want to share lessons from testing approaches and methodologies to address these issues. I discuss how to assess theories of change; conflict analysis; conflict-sensitivity and outcome plausibility. One section of the paper will also provide a concrete example on how research results have been used to assess outcome plausibility. Finally, an outlook is given in the concluding section.

Assessing Theories of Change

The issue

A *theory of change* is a theory of how and why an intervention works (Weiss 1995) and, hence, provides the rationale for why an intervention assumes to achieve change (Rossi et

al. 2004: 134). The theory underlying a program has been described under various terms pending on a particular field, e.g. logic model, result chain, outcome line, cause map or action theory (Rossi et. al. 2004: 139). In the context of peacebuilding, the term ‘theory of change’ is commonly used and can be described as a set of beliefs about how and why an initiative will work to change the conflict environment and support peacebuilding for the better (Church and Rogers 2006: 11; OECD/DAC 2008: 35 and 77-84).

A ‘theory of change’- approach is most of all a planning approach. As such, it is not particular to the peacebuilding field. It has been originally developed for use in community development initiatives (Weiss 1995). It enables stakeholders to systematically spell out their assumptions and logical steps how they think their programme or policy will achieve change. Unpacking, and possibly also reconciling, different intervention logics enables stakeholders to develop a theory of change for the intervention. On the basis of such a logical intervention model, milestones on the way to the intervention’s goal can be defined. This should include the development of monitoring indicators to measure change. Theories of change must be based on a sound understanding of the context. As initiatives cannot control for context, they need to focus on manageable aspects of the situation that promise a wider reach. Hence, theories of change can involve more than one path (Rossi et al. 2004: 136). This is particular true for interventions in complex contexts such as conflict environments. Here theories of change must be based on solid conflict analysis and an assessment of the relevant peacebuilding needs intervening actors aim to address (Paffenholz/Reychler 2007: 58-67).

Making use of a ‘theory of changes’-approach in evaluation means to unpack the intervention logic by systematically assessing the links between inputs, activities, outcomes and the context in which initiatives take place. This helps to evaluate whether an intervention is relevant for building peace and could possibly be effective in achieving change (OECD/DAC 2008: 78). In case an initiative’s goals and main activity lines do not relate in a reasonable way to the conflict context that the initiative aims to improve, there is little prospects for it to be effective.

The challenges

In consequence, peacebuilding evaluation guidance put a lot of emphasis on the importance of assessing theories of change (Church/Rogers 2006, Paffenholz/Reychler 2007; OECD/DAC 2008). However, there is little discussion in the literature with regards to existing challenges when engaging in such a seemingly important endeavor. The most common challenges mentioned are: theories of change are not explicit (Rossi et al. 1997: 134), there are many different theories within one initiative and stakeholders are not aware of these (OECD/DAC: 78) or else, stakeholders are not able to articulate the intervention's theory of change (Dyson 2006: 8).

As a consequence theories of change need to be reconstructed for the purpose of the evaluation before they can be assessed. This is easier said than done. Both in peacebuilding as well as in other fields, there is little attention paid to the challenges implied as well as the approaches and methodologies to overcome them.

A core problem is data constraints. Rarely do we find initiatives with well-developed theories of change embedded in a result-based framework with monitoring issues and indicators as well as ongoing monitoring. In such case, an evaluation is a very easy task. The reality of most peacebuilding evaluations is different. We mostly find unclear goals, no explicit theories of change, a weak or no link between the conflict analysis (if one is done at all) and the actual implementation, as well as an absence of baseline studies and monitoring.

The World Bank's Guide on Evaluation under Time and Data Constraints (which is a condensed version of Bamberger et. al. 2006' book) is referred to by the aforementioned OECD-DAC 2008 evaluation guidance for methods on how to deal with these constraints. The main ones being suggested by Bamberger and colleagues are reconstructing baselines and theories of change with the help of secondary data from programmes/projects, national statistics like national household survey and recall of the past by interviewing the main evaluation stakeholders including beneficiaries. This is meant to capture their narratives of the situation prior to, during and after the

intervention. Bamberger et al. (2006) list a number of constraints when applying methods to compensate for missing data. These include the problems of stakeholders' bias when it comes to recalling the past. However, the authors do not consider evaluation in complex conflict contexts where national authorities is often hardly functional as a consequence of armed conflict. Consequently, there are rarely any national statistics or surveys available that evaluations can build on. Moreover, many peacebuilding interventions aim at influencing behaviours of people by changing their thinking and attitudes towards a culture of peace. Regularly conducted public perception surveys would need to be in existence as a basis for an adequate assessment of changes or else, interventions need to establish monitoring systems that allow for such monitoring of changes in the immediate intervention's context. For example, socialisation or social cohesion initiatives (e.g. dialogue or peace education projects) would need to work with baselines and control groups to monitor whether changes have occurred by participating actors as compared to other population groups. However, this generally does not happen. While ongoing evaluation is used for large community or social policy programmes, in the peacebuilding field, such a culture is not established. Hence, evaluations overly rely in interviews with participants of such initiatives. However, conflict and post-conflict situations are characterised by people's broken down trust, fears and political bias so that conducting interviews with project partners and mostly with beneficiaries becomes even more difficult (see OECD-DAC 2008).

As a consequence, more testing is required to come to reliable approaches and methods. The following section presents lessons from testing a number of such approaches and accompanying methodologies.

Combining different approaches to assess theories of change

Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman (2004: 151) in their seminal book on evaluation state that 'remarkable little is written of a nature about how to assess program theory'. The authors list the following options (152-168): a) comparison with needs assessment; b) assessment of logical plausibility (together with stakeholders and/or expert review panel); c) comparison with research and evidence from practise. These options are going beyond

the ones listed by Bamberger and colleagues. A contextualisation and testing in the peacebuilding field reveals the following issues and challenges:

Conflict Analysis and Peacebuilding Needs Assessment

A needs assessment as formulated by Rossi and colleagues (2004) is equivalent with a conflict analysis and a resulting peacebuilding needs assessment. A proper analysis of the context enables us to find out whether an initiative is relevant for the peacebuilding needs that it aimed to address. A number of challenges prevail and are listed in the literature such as bias in analysis, sensitivity of subject in a conflict setting (see Paffenholz and Reychler 2007). Additionally, recent evaluations that were conducted as part of the testing of the DAC Guidance identified that it is not sufficient to conduct a conflict analysis. Much more distinctiveness is necessary. The main points are addressed below.

Whose conflict analysis are we talking about?

Is the conflict analysis owned by the evaluators, the intervention's management staff, the beneficiaries or the main actors in the conflict setting? For example, in Sri Lanka three main theories of changes prevailed to manage and transform the conflict: the government saw a unified Sri Lanka as the solution to ethnic division with military victory as the means to achieve this goal; the opposing Tamil Tigers (LTTE) saw an independent Tamil state as their goal with military victory and political negotiations in parallel as a means to get there; the intervention community saw a federal system of governance with reconciled ethnic groups as the solution with negotiations and a multitude of social cohesion initiatives as the way to get there. All international interventions were geared towards the latter goal. They mostly failed due to three main reasons: the policy of the government was supported by the majority of Sri Lankans; there was sufficient funding available for the war (due to support by regional powers as well as tremendous resource flows due to the Tsunami aid); and the government eventual military victory. Hence, there was neither acceptance for a federal model, nor were people ready for reconciliation in such a climate of political and social polarization.

Adjusting conflict analysis to the evaluation scope and goal

The scope of analysis needs to match the evaluation goals. This means that it is not sufficient to just conduct a conflict analysis. Evaluators must conduct the appropriate analysis for the goals of a particular evaluation. For example, during a multi-donor evaluation in Southern Sudan both a national analysis was conducted as well as different analyses in various regions under evaluation³. For an evaluation of a global civil society programme⁴ a case study approach was chosen which combined conflict analysis with civil society analysis in the case studies. To understand the conflict as well as the development of civil society in a particular conflict in question, historical analysis was conducted. For a multi-donor evaluation in the Democratic Republic of Congo⁵ there was a need to also conduct a political economy analysis of the mining sector in order to find out the relation between the resources gained and the conflict dynamics.

Peacebuilding Needs Assessment

It was found that just doing a conflict analysis is insufficient. A solid peacebuilding needs assessment grounded in the conflict analysis is also required. The assessment of relevance of initiatives is done with the help of such a peacebuilding needs assessment. Such an assessment compares the overall goals and main activity lines implemented with the peacebuilding needs in these country, region, etc. Paffenholz/Reychler (2007) first developed such an approach as part of their 'Aid for Peace'-Framework. This assessment classifies activities as of 'high', 'medium', 'low' or 'no relevance'. The assessment is based on a qualitative context analysis followed by a quantitative assessment of the main activity lines against countries' peacebuilding needs.

Conflict Sensitivity Assessment

The principle of conflict sensitivity has been adopted by the OECD in 2001 and asserts that international assistance must, *at a minimum*, avoid negative effects on conflict – 'do no harm' – and, where possible, make a positive contribution to conflict prevention and

³ Aiding the Peace. A Multi-donor Evaluation of Support to Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities in Southern Sudan 2005–2010: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/3/40/46895095.pdf>

⁴ Evaluation of the German Civil Peace Service 1999-2010. Will be available on the Webpage of the German Ministry of Development and Cooperation (BMZ) in April 2011.

⁵ A Multi-donor Evaluation of Support to Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities in the Democratic Republic of Congo, forthcoming on www.oecd.org/dataoecd.

peacebuilding (Anderson 1999; OECD-DAC 2001). Although the principle was originally developed for humanitarian aid it is also regularly applied to development and peacebuilding interventions. In development, conflict-sensitivity has become one of several cross-cutting themes, like gender or environment. Development interventions need to address these when they analyse the context as well as plan and implement programmes. In the peacebuilding field it has taken some years to come to an understanding that even efforts that intend to address conflict issues directly or prevent violence can also do harm by failing to account for the inadvertent effects of increasing conflict through the way they intervene. The DAC Guidance on the Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities notes (DAC 2008): “In other words, just because they are “conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts”, does not mean they are exempt from being *conflict sensitive*.”

Methodologically this can be conducted as follows: First, an assessment of the quality of initiative’s conflict analysis; second, a comparison between this conflict analysis and the one prepared for the evaluation; third, an assessment of the quality of conflict monitoring.; fourth, assessment of changes in the initiative’s implementation due to changed conflict situations. This is based on a comparison of historical conflict analysis compared to the different project reports or narratives; fifth, assessment of quality of initiatives’ mechanisms to adapt activities to contexts (if in existence).

Assessing plausibility of effects in combining different approaches

As mentioned earlier in this paper, peacebuilding evaluations are challenged by data constraints. Moreover, often the effects of initiatives only show in the future. It is therefore important to assess whether an initiative is on the right track to achieving its goals. The first step is to check for the relevance of the intervention as described above. In case the result of such an assessment is that the intervention is not relevant for the needs of peacebuilding combined with unconvincing theories of change, it is most likely not worth to engage in an evaluation of effects. This is called an evaluability assessment (Rossi et al. 2004: 165-168).

In case the initiative is found relevant, the effects could be assessed. A variety of approaches exist to assess how the theories of change of an intervention have been implemented and effected

change in the peacebuilding environment. The easiest is to work with a results-based approach to check the results of an intervention against its monitoring indicators. However, this is rarely possible due to a fundamental lack of proper results-based management in the peacebuilding field. Alternatively, outcome plausibility can be assessed. Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman (2004: 158-159) suggest two main approaches: first, to find out whether the implementation steps follow a logical sequencing and, hence, are likely to achieve change in the future. They suggest a set of questions the evaluators could ask to the intervention's stakeholders. Second, comparison with research results or results from similar initiatives.

Lessons from a recent global evaluation of support to civil society peacebuilding initiative in eight countries suggest that these are useful approaches for peacebuilding evaluations. However, I found that only the combination of the different approaches makes triangulation possible and hence, supports the validity of the evaluation results. The following steps were conducted to assess outcomes in the evaluation in question:

- Context, conflict, peace process, civil society and peacebuilding needs analysis (as described above);
- Reconstruction of theories of change (as described above);
- Work with recall of the past in analysing stakeholders' narratives and perceptions of the interventions;
- Analysis of project reports and other results documents, lessons learned studies or internal evaluation documents of single projects;
- Analysis of self-evaluation reports of the various stakeholders (as described above)
- Use of surveys in one case only;
- Application of evidence-based research results in form of check lists for effectiveness success factors for different types of civil society peacebuilding interventions (see below)
- Work with outcome plausibility based on assumed continuation of result chains (theories of change were translated into result chains);
- Assessment of good practise examples for identifying factors contributing to effectiveness (independently from those of research).

The combination of these approaches did allow for sufficient triangulation, as well as ensured the accountability, learning and utilization focus of the evaluation.

The following section looks particularly into the assessment of effects with the help of research results.

Assessing plausibility of effects in using research results

Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman suggest making use of research results for evaluations (2004: 159-162). They suggest applying the results of quantitative meta-analysis. A number of challenges are associated with this approach:

First, such research results for the particular evaluation must exist; second, in the peacebuilding field, there is often a disconnect between peacebuilding evaluators and researchers. Hence, even if such research exists, it will – most likely - not be used. I found that an intensive inception phase that forces evaluators to spell out the approaches and methodologies they will use in more detail is one (small) option to compensate for this gap. However, much more connect between those worlds is needed; third, I found that even if such research results exist, they cannot directly be used without adaptation to the purpose of evaluation. Hence, ‘translation’ is needed.

Below I would like to demonstrate how such a ‘translation’ process has been accomplished and applied in the aforementioned evaluation of a global civil society programme. We used the results of a three-year international research project on the role of civil society in peacebuilding (Paffenholz 2010). Building on transitology research⁶ (Merkel&Lauth, 1998; Croissant, Lauth&Merkel, 2000), a framework for the analysis of civil society in peacebuilding has been developed (Paffenholz&Spurk, 2010). It elaborates seven functions civil society can fulfil (protection, monitoring, advocacy, socialization, social cohesion, facilitation, service delivery). Assessing functions instead of solely actors allows analyzing all existing social forces that can contribute to peacebuilding. The framework allows for an analysis of the relevance of these functions and the conditions under which they could be effective.

As a result of the first in-depth application of the framework in a meta-analysis of 13 case studies a set of two variables that influence civil society’s effectiveness were found: function- and context specific ones (Paffenholz 2009 and 2010). For making use of these

⁶ See Zinecker 2009 for an explanation of terminology and issues debated.

results for the evaluation in question, we translated the variables into effectiveness conditions against which the initiatives could be measured.

We applied the following steps: First, we grouped the assessment of project activities along the seven peacebuilding functions as identified by the research and shown below.

. Seven civil society peacebuilding functions (Paffenholz/Spurk 2006)

1. **Protection** of citizens from violence from all parties;
2. **Monitoring** of human rights violations, the implementation of peace agreements, etc.;
3. **Advocacy** for peace and human rights;
4. **Socialisation** for democratic and peace values as well as for in-group identity of marginalised groups;
5. **Inter-group social cohesion**, bringing people together from adversary groups;
6. **Facilitation** on the local and national level between all sorts of actors;
7. **Service delivery** for creating entry points for peacebuilding, i.e. for the six above functions.

Second, along each function we conducted a quantitative assessment of the programmes' effectiveness against the list of conditions for effectiveness (for each function) identified from the above mentioned research, e.g. one third of partners fulfil condition; more than two thirds of the projects met condition. The judgment presented was either based on results from the projects or else – where there was not sufficient evidence – against outcome plausibility. We used the following criteria (adapted from Paffenholz 2009):

Check list for peacebuilding effectiveness of civil society initiatives

The effectiveness of all types of initiatives in conflict countries can be tremendously influenced (in a positive and negative way) by the context they are operating in. Solid analysis combined with ongoing conflict monitoring and a regular adaption of initiatives to changing contexts is the first condition for effectiveness. Particular attention needs to be paid to:

1. the level of violence and how it can influence initiatives; moreover, initiative shall assess what they can contribute to reduction in violence and protection of people (be it through direct initiatives or monitoring and advocacy);
2. the behavior of the state/authorities;
3. the role of the media;

4. composition of civil society: civil society is not just the ‘good ‘ society; tensions, hierarchies, power and gender relations need to be analysed and addressed;
5. the influence of regional conflict settings on initiatives have to be equally considered;
6. funding and other support has to be provided in a sensitive way: Funding enhances many initiatives and contributes to the professionalisation of peacebuilding activities. Yet, funding has often also contributed to the NGOisation of peace work, the reduction in volunteerism, and the shift of accountability from local and national constituencies to international NGOs and donors. A sensitive funding strategy that enables initiatives without creating harm is required.

Check list of Effectiveness criteria for particular civil society peacebuilding initiatives/functions:

Protection: The effectiveness of protection initiatives can be substantially enhanced when systematically combined with monitoring activities and advocacy campaigns. An integrated media reach out strategy and cooperation with international networks is equally needed.

Monitoring: The effectiveness of monitoring can be enhanced when activities are designed to reinforce protection and advocacy initiatives instead of having a monitoring only purpose. Outreach to national and international networking also fosters effectiveness. Monitoring should take place during all phases of conflict. More monitoring activities should be organised around the implementation of peace agreements.

Advocacy: The effectiveness of advocacy initiatives increases when the campaigning know how is reinforced and when supported by accompanying monitoring initiatives with targeted media strategies. The international attention additionally enhances effectiveness. It can be achieved through the media as well as international networking.

Socialisation: The precondition for effectiveness of socialisation initiatives is a low level of violence or an absence of violence. For being effective it is essential to engage with influential existing organisations such as schools or associations even if they are still reinforcing existing divides in society. This can be effective when performed as part of a long-term process instead of implementing short-term isolated initiatives outside important institutions. Additionally, strengthening democratic values is particularly important. Finally, in-group socialisation of marginalised groups is more effective when the empowerment takes place in a sensitive way that does not foster radicalisation.

Social cohesion: The precondition for effectiveness of social cohesion initiatives is a low level of violence or an absence of violence. The effectiveness of social cohesion increases when initiatives aim at bringing people together for a specific purpose or common cause with a concrete outcome-

orientation. Effective initiatives thereby aim at behaviour instead of attitude change. Long-term systematic initiatives are more effective than short-term scattered events especially when they focus on all cleavages society and also bridge difficult groups.

Facilitation: Local facilitation was performed at all times and did not necessarily need special attention or support. This also seems to hold true for national facilitation by eminent civil society groups. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of existing initiatives can be enhanced when targeted – instead of general – training is provided. For example, targeted community mediation training for refugee return in Bosnia was very effective, while general mediation training given to a variety of groups proved to be ineffective. People did not know what do with the knowledge acquired.

Service delivery: Service delivery is only effective for peacebuilding when it creates entry points for other functions. During war and armed conflict aid projects are often taking place in the conflict affected areas. The systematic use of such projects for additional protection purposes can enhance their peacebuilding effectiveness. After large scale violence ends or in phases with low levels of violence, aid project can be very effective in creating platforms of cooperation and dialogue for adversary groups for a common purpose.

Third, we conducted a qualitative assessment of supporting or hindering factors for effectiveness which are based on an analysis of the CPS's effectiveness results from examples in the case studies.

In sum, this approach worked well and was found very useful for this type of peacebuilding intervention. It enables the evaluators to quickly assess different initiatives. In doing so, it became clear whether certain theories of change were more or less likely to achieve desired results. The comparison of this research based assessment with the good practise examples also quickly revealed that the more success initiative fulfilled more of the aforementioned criteria as identified by the research.

Conclusion

Evaluation in peacebuilding has only been an issue since less than ten years. Though it is not yet a routine, peacebuilders start to acknowledge the importance of evaluations. However, so far most emphasis has been put on lobbying for the case of evaluation in the peacebuilding field. Though a variety of overall Guidance and Frameworks exists (Church and Rogers 2006; Paffenholz and Reychler 2007; OECD/DAC 2008), they

mostly focus on introducing the basics of evaluation to peacebuilders. In this paper I have argued that the time has now come to move beyond this awareness building and engage in a debate about appropriate approaches and methodologies on how to reach for quality evaluation. The peacebuilding field must accept that evaluation is a serious undertaking that needs a professional debate. I have therefore presented a number of challenges faced in peacebuilding evaluations and presented methodological options to overcome them. From an evaluation perspective I discussed conflict analysis; peacebuilding needs assessment; conflict sensitivity; theories of change and work with outcome plausibility. The use of research results for evaluating effects of initiatives has been found particularly useful. I also suggest a combination of different approaches to achieve better triangulation.

However, as stated in the OECD/DAC ‘Guidance on the Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities’ all these approaches and methods cannot fully compensate for missing data that are common in the peacebuilding field. Hence, the future of evaluation in peacebuilding should be geared towards improving quality in planning as well as creating a culture of monitoring and evaluation as an integrated part of peacebuilding policy and programme implementation.

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