

Context

From 2005-2014, OECD countries spent \$317B in official development assistance in fragile and conflict affected states. Over this same period, the cost of conflict increased nearly ten-fold in 31 conflict affected countries (from ~\$25B to \$250B), and one estimate places the global cost of armed conflict as high as \$14.2 trillion annually.

Problem

The peacebuilding community has committed resources to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to measure both program outputs (*did we do what we said we would do*) and outcomes (*did the program have the intended impact*). M&E seeks to determine if a program was successful by determining the extent to which desired outputs and outcomes are achieved. However, this view of success ignores the question of whether program objectives were achieved at a reasonable cost to the donor / funder.

There is scarce information about what kinds of peace building / violence prevention activities achieve the greatest impact for the dollars spent. With scarce resources, donors seek to deploy funds toward the most effective, expeditious ways of reducing violent conflict. However, today there is insufficient data and evidence to help practitioners and funders decide where their money will have the greatest impact. With the level of armed conflict on the rise, it is increasingly important to have objective evidence to guide the allocation of scarce resources.

Conflict environments are often complex, long-lasting crises, that require sustained effort making it difficult to measure the impact of individual peacebuilding interventions. The community is tackling this challenge using M&E, however M&E does not provide the full picture for donors and funders. To determine if a program was successful, it should not only meet program objectives, but do so at a reasonable cost. **A successful program should not only be effective but also cost-effective.**

Research Goals and Objectives

The long-term research goal is to develop a framework, dataset and toolkit for donors and policymakers to better allocate scarce resources to maximize the impact of peacebuilding activities. The assessment framework will address:

1. **Efficiency** - how effectively programs convert resources (people and dollars) into outputs
2. **Effectiveness** - the extent to which the outputs of the program generated the desired value
3. **Cost Effectiveness** - whether the program worked at a reasonable and appropriate cost

Methodology:

I. Phase 1a – Select Categories for Analysis

Outcome: 6-10 kinds of programs or interventions for analysis

- Conduct an initial scan of expenditure and M&E data across a broad set of programs to identify candidate programs to analyze. Select 6-10 segments of peacebuilding activities (e.g., DDR) that have been utilized in multiple contexts for analysis.

II. Phase 1b – Develop Methodology for Analysis

Outcome: Quantitative model of effectiveness for 6-10 programs / interventions, with a “how-to” guide for subsequent inquiry

- Analyze the data to determine how it is formatted and structured (level of detail, naming conventions, fields, etc.), develop metrics to represent the cost-effectiveness of each segment and compare across segments.

III. Phase 1c – Documentation of Findings

Outcome: Publications, articles, and presentations to test and disseminate methodology and findings

- Document findings for dissemination to both donors and implementers to validate methodology and determine level of interest in further research, including government agencies.

About Our Research Team

The Purdue Peace Project (PPP) is a university-based political violence prevention initiative at Purdue University that does peacebuilding work in fragile states and conducts research to advance knowledge about political violence prevention at the local, community level. The PPP convenes everyday citizens to help them address immediate threats of violence in their communities and shares best practices with practitioners and scholars around the world. PPP is partnered with Frontier Design Group (FDG) for this project. FDG is a consulting firm based in Washington, DC that has worked extensively in the development, peacebuilding, and cost estimating communities.