



Conducting **TRACK II** Peacemaking

Heidi Burgess and Guy Burgess



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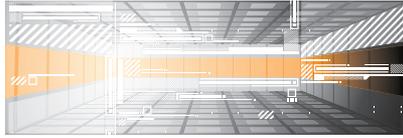
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Introduction

Although international conflicts have never been simple, the international and internal conflicts of the post–Cold War world tend to be especially complex. They typically involve ethnic disputes; many actors; numerous apparently incompatible interests and needs; long, violent histories; and complex international entanglements. Confronted by intractable conflicts whose roots extend deep into the fabric of society, lone mediators (or even teams of mediators) have seldom been able to make and keep the peace. Nor have military forces, by themselves, been particularly successful in such situations. In recognition of the nature and scale of the challenge, national and multinational actors have begun to launch “complex operations”—loosely coordinated peace efforts that involve not only diplomats and soldiers but also development specialists, human rights activists, trauma-healing practitioners, humanitarian relief workers, and conflict resolution experts.

In the conflict resolution realm, “track II” peacemaking or diplomacy has become increasingly common, complementing “track I” peacemaking efforts in myriad ways and at various points throughout a peace process. Track II practitioners bring parties together across conflict lines to talk, build relationships, engage in joint civic projects, or even develop new ideas about potential political solutions to the conflict. Track II efforts can be particularly valuable in preparing the ground for track I initiatives and building broad support for agreements reached by the parties, but track II can also be valuable if conducted simultaneously with track I efforts.

“Track I” is used here to describe any activities that bring the parties to a conflict into direct negotiation to achieve an agreement or a resolution. “Track II” refers to any activities that support, directly or indirectly, track I efforts. Track II practitioners are sometimes referred to as “intervenor” when they come in from the outside; elsewhere in this handbook we refer

to them as “practitioners” or “actors.” “Peacemaking” refers to the process of negotiating a peace agreement rather than to efforts to avert conflict, to implement an agreement, or to rebuild societies emerging from conflict. Conflict prevention and post-conflict activities are discussed in the following chapters only insofar as they relate to the peacemaking process.

Some practitioners and scholars within the fields of diplomacy and conflict resolution use alternative definitions. Track I, for instance, is often defined in terms of the participation of official actors such as UN envoys or representatives of individual states, while track II is often equated with the participation of unofficial actors such as nongovernmental organizations or private individuals. Still others break down track II peacemaking into multiple tracks.¹ This handbook, however, does not subdivide track II in that fashion, and it makes no distinction between track II activities performed by officials and those performed by unofficial actors.

Written for both track I and track II actors, this handbook illuminates the role and importance of track II activities; charts a wide range of track II activities, from assessment, conception, and planning to implementation and evaluation; and discusses the need for ensuring that different peacemaking efforts complement and reinforce one another. Creating such synergy involves not only aligning track I and track II efforts, but also coordinating various track II efforts to maximize their positive impacts.

For the sake of analytical clarity, this handbook presents the process of track II intervention as a series of steps: assess the track II environment, develop a strategic plan, design the process, conduct track II activities, and undertake follow-up activities and evaluation. For the sake of analytical precision, however, it should be explained that the process is not as linear as the notion of steps might suggest. While each track II actor will undertake a similar series of steps with each activity, different track II practitioners are likely to be conducting many different track II efforts simultaneously in any one conflict setting. In addition, each track II intervenor is likely to repeat the same steps within the context of a single intervention, conducting the same process with different audiences or modifying the process as the situation on the ground changes. Further, some steps actually take place throughout the process. Evaluation, for instance, is presented in the handbook as the last step, but in fact it should occur throughout the planning and implementation process. Similarly, the intervention plan that a track II actor initially designs may well need to be

revised several times throughout the peacemaking period as circumstances change or if the plan fails to work as expected.

The Peacemaker's Toolkit

This handbook is part of the series *The Peacemaker's Toolkit*, which is being published by the United States Institute of Peace.

For twenty-five years, the United States Institute of Peace has supported the work of mediators through research, training programs, workshops, and publications designed to discover and disseminate the keys to effective mediation. The Institute—mandated by the U.S. Congress to help prevent, manage, and resolve international conflict through nonviolent means—has conceived of *The Peacemaker's Toolkit* as a way of combining its own accumulated expertise with that of other organizations active in the field of mediation. Most publications in the series are produced jointly by the Institute and a partner organization. All publications are carefully reviewed before publication by highly experienced mediators to ensure that the final product will be a useful and reliable resource for practitioners.

The Online Version

There is an online version of *The Peacemaker's Toolkit* that presents not only the text of this handbook but also connects readers to a vast web of information. Links in the online version give readers immediate access to a considerable variety of publications, news reports, directories, and other sources of data regarding ongoing mediation initiatives, case studies, theoretical frameworks, and education and training. These links enable the online *Toolkit* to serve as a “you are here” map to the larger literature on mediation. www.usip.org/resources/peacemaker-s-toolkit



STEP 1

Assess the Track II Environment

The first step in any conflict intervention is usually conflict assessment. Even if one is a local, living in and with the conflict on a daily basis, it is important to step back and metaphorically go “up onto the balcony”² to get a broader perspective of the situation and a keener sense of the opportunities and challenges that the intervention is likely to encounter.

One needs to understand who all the parties are, what the issues are, what the conflict dynamics are, and what has been done (and by whom) to address the issues over time. Intractable conflicts generally have long and complicated histories, which compound the complexities of present realities. Multiple parties are usually contesting the conflict, and multiple track II actors (some from within the country, others from outside) are on the scene, all working on related but different parts of the problem. The first step in any track II effort, therefore, is to figure out as much as possible who is doing what, what the needs are, and what is not being done that might be useful. (Such an inquiry is generally referred to as a “needs assessment.”) Knowledge of these gaps can then become the basis for conceptualizing and planning track II activities that will have the greatest impact. (For more detailed guidance on how to conduct a conflict assessment, see another handbook in the Peacekeeper’s Toolkit series, *Managing a Mediation Process*, by Amy L. Scott and David R. Smock.)

Determine if Track II Efforts Are Feasible

Track II activities depend on the presence of a reasonably developed and active civil society for success. Societies that have a lively civil society are more likely to have a cadre of people who have the conviction and stamina needed to participate in a track II process—and to do so in good faith, hopeful that a more constructive way of approaching the conflict can be

Determine One's Role in the Big Picture

An individual (or organization) contemplating launching a new track II effort should figure out if and how he or she fits into the overall peacemaking picture. Questions to answer include:

- How will you add to the overall goal of achieving peace?
- Will your efforts contribute to a coordinated effort to build a larger peace constituency?
- Will your process be able to feed ideas into, or create ripeness for, a track I effort?
- Will you be able to coordinate your activities with others' activities to enhance the overall peacemaking effect—or will you detract from the overall effort by simply adding to confusion?

More specifically, you should discover which track I and track II actors:

- are doing similar work,
- are doing complementary work,
- are doing valuable work that might be helped by your efforts,
- are doing valuable work that might be harmed by your efforts (and how you can avoid causing this harm), and
- might oppose your efforts (and what you might do to overcome this opposition).

In answering these questions, the individual (or organization) must clearly and honestly assess the capacity and resources he or she brings to the situation. In crowded track II arenas, it may not be enough to determine that a practitioner has the skills and ability to address the track II needs that have been determined. To avoid counterproductive redundancy, the intervenor may want to consider the comparative advantage he or she brings to the situation. In other words, what strengths can one track II actor bring (financial resources, experience, staying power, relationships, prestige, etc.) that another track II actor cannot. When need, capacity, and comparative advantage are in alignment, the chances for creating a positive impact are strongly increased.

found. If people are content with the status quo or profoundly pessimistic about the chances of changing the situation, they will not be interested in participating, and if they are cajoled into participating, they are likely to undermine the process more than help it. If little civil society activity exists, this is where peacebuilding efforts need to start. Dialogues, problem-solving workshops, and other bilateral or multilateral processes will have to wait until later.

Even where an active civil society does exist, track II efforts may still be infeasible because of severe restrictions on civil liberties. For instance, if

participants in track II activities are required to travel, those activities will lead nowhere if participants cannot obtain passports or visas. Similarly, participants may have difficulty gaining access to protected or neutral zones or moving freely within rebel-controlled territories. Track I players must be willing to give track II activities “space.” This is meant figuratively, rather than literally (though finding suitable space is an issue, too). In repressive environments, where certain forms of assembly, speech, and action may be prohibited or punished, the safety of participants must be considered very carefully. People who engage in peacemaking are often regarded as traitors by members of their own communities. For this reason, many track II processes try to stay very low key, even secret, to protect participants when they reenter their home environments.

Knowing the local history of track II activities can be useful in determining what new activities will be both possible and likely to bear fruit. The more that the government and/or potential participants are familiar with track II processes, the more comfortable with them they are likely to be. However, if one or more track II processes have gone badly in the past (for example, increasing rather than diminishing hostility between groups, or taking a lot of time without making significant progress or bringing about any change), the local community and/or the parties to the conflict may distrust proposals for new track II activities. Such a wary environment is not an insurmountable hurdle, but a lot of effort will have to be devoted to explaining how a new activity will avoid the kinds of problems previously encountered.

A related problem occurs when too much track II activity has happened in the past or is currently under way. Often, many track II actors converge on a single high-profile problem location, and many of those actors try to recruit the same local people to participate in their programs. Such a surfeit of attention can have several negative consequences. In the first place, coordination of track II activities becomes extremely difficult. Second, people “burn out.” They have been involved in numerous track II activities, and have said the same things over and over again to the same people but nothing ever seems to change. A third problem is that some parties to the conflict or members of the local community will “forum shop,” looking for the process that they think will best lead to the achievement of their goals.

When such shopping expeditions lead important parties away from the official negotiating table, track I efforts may be undermined.

Evaluate the Need for Track II before Track I

Track II is often needed before track I because track I mediation will not work if

- the parties are not ready to negotiate or the conflict is not “ripe” for negotiation;
- negotiation is impossible because one or more of the parties—or issues—is viewed by the other(s) as illegitimate;
- one of the parties is too fragmented, ill-defined, low-powered, or inexperienced to allow for effective de-escalation or negotiation;
- the conflict is needs-based or values-based; or
- the general population is unsupportive of the peacemaking effort.

If any one or more of these situations is present, track II processes can nurture the conditions for subsequent track I efforts.

Creating Ripeness

Disputing parties are usually not ready to negotiate if they think they can win outright. Not until all sides agree that they are in a damaging situation that they cannot, by their own efforts, improve (often called a “mutually hurting stalemate”) will they be willing to engage in track I peacemaking. Even then, if any party sees no “way out”—if it lacks trust in the other(s) to negotiate honestly or to uphold any agreement that is made—it may continue the struggle. (The concepts of “mutually hurting stalemate” and “way out” are discussed in another Peacemaker's Toolkit handbook, *Timing Mediation Initiatives* by I. William Zartman.)

When a conflict is not ripe for negotiations, track II activities can be useful in stimulating ripeness. A party that is unwilling to come to the negotiating table may nonetheless be open to a third-party consultation to guide them in developing or expanding their thinking on interests and positions. Many track II actors work directly with parties in this way (the Consensus Building Institute and Independent Diplomat are two examples). An intimate understanding of the conflict landscape—including

knowledge of the decision-making dynamics within the parties—is essential if these actors are to accurately identify entry points for track II efforts that can serve to nudge the situation toward ripeness.

Track II activities can also facilitate communication between parties, build trust and relationships, break down stereotypes, and develop new ways of seeing and solving vexing problems. Such efforts help the parties understand that there is a way out of the predicament they are in, and that mutually satisfactory solutions might indeed be possible.

Decision makers within the parties can also be influenced indirectly. Mid-level leaders—for instance, prominent figures within religious and ethnic groups and within civil society and the wider community—often have access to the official representatives of the parties or are at least able to influence the climate of opinion within a party’s broad constituency. If even just a handful of mid-level leaders on each side of a conflict are sufficiently concerned about the status quo to consider alternative, nonviolent approaches to addressing the conflict, then track II activities may be able to gain a foothold and slowly grow in scope and influence, eventually paving the way to track I efforts.

Track II actors should assess not only this potential, but also what might be needed for mid-level leaders to leverage this power. If the potential exists, knowing what hinders it from being realized is vital to designing an effective strategy of engagement. Are there capacity gaps that can be addressed? Is there a need for a neutral forum? Are like-minded, concerned leaders aware that others share their views? The answers to these and other questions can indicate which track II activities might ripen the situation.

Track II mediators can interface with the many other ancillary service providers—development and human rights workers, civil society organizations, media organizations, relief workers, and the like—to help provide a coordinated response to humanitarian needs, which will in turn create a better atmosphere at the local level to support the track I peacemaking initiative.

Dealing with “Illegitimate” Parties

Track II processes can be particularly useful when the conflict involves at least one party that is seen by another as “illegitimate.” State negotiators

often refuse to talk to such parties—paramilitary or terrorist groups for instance—because of concern that engaging them legitimizes them and condones or encourages their violent actions. However, peace can seldom be achieved without negotiating with such parties, because they will continue their violent struggle until they have at least “been heard” or their needs have been met.

Track II activities can be helpful in ameliorating this kind of situation in two (or more) ways. First, track II actors can work quietly through back channels to ensure that the interests and demands of an illegitimate party are clearly understood and brought to the table. Second, they can work to convince the illegitimate parties that talking is more likely to get their interests met than is violence.

Direct contact with illegitimate parties may be legally prohibited, however. More than a few countries maintain lists of proscribed actors, and some countries limit almost any kind of interaction with the organizations and individuals named on those lists.

In June 2010, for instance, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a law that makes it illegal for any American to offer a terrorist entity “material support” of any kind, including training and advice. The court ruled that “urging a terrorist group to put down its arms in favor of using lawful, peaceful means to achieve political goals” is “providing material support” to terrorists, and is therefore illegal.³

When faced with such restrictions, track II actors can work with surrogates—people who share the same (or similar) aspirations as the illegitimate groups, but with whom talking is legal.

This was the approach used in the 1991 Madrid Conference on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict hosted by Spain, and co-sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union. Although the Palestinian representatives were in frequent communication with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), they were not overt members of the PLO, which Israel considered a “terrorist” organization and with which it refused to negotiate.

Where the presence of illegitimate actors is preventing peace talks, track II actors should assess what steps they can take to reconfigure the dynamics of the situation and pave the way for negotiations. Parties to a conflict are rarely monolithic entities. Are there elements within a party

that are committed to a peaceful resolution of the conflict and that can be engaged? Sometimes parties are committed to conflict because they do not have confidence that political processes will serve their interests. If that confidence can be strengthened by expanding the negotiating agenda to include previously neglected issues or by enhancing the capacity of a party to participate effectively in the political process, perhaps these parties will renounce violence. Illegitimate parties usually have concerns that are regarded as decidedly legitimate by other groups within society. By focusing on the legitimate concerns, rather than the illegitimate methods, the needs of both sides might be better addressed.

Empowering Low-Power Groups

Track II processes can also help parties that are not unwilling to negotiate but are *not ready* to do so. Several reasons can explain a lack of readiness. A common cause is a party's internal fragmentation and disorganization.

One of the problems in resolving the conflict in Darfur has been that there are so many different rebel groups moving in different directions, and making different demands. Even when the government of Sudan was ready to negotiate with the rebels, it was difficult to decide which groups to negotiate with. Indeed, one of the primary reasons for the failure of the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement was that two of the primary rebel groups, the SLA faction of Abdel Wahid Mohamed Nur (SLA/AW) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), refused to sign or abide by the agreement, while other rebel groups were willing to end their struggle. The same dynamic seems to be occurring with the 2010 accords.

Track II actors can try to remedy such a lack of cohesion by helping the various parties identify their interests, goals, and needs, and then help them to work together to develop a coherent negotiating strategy that they can employ at the official negotiation table.

Another common problem is a simple lack of negotiation experience on the “lower-power” side, which consequently finds itself unable to stand up to the more experienced, “higher-power” side. This is another area in which track II trainers can help low-power parties prepare for negotiations. Such assistance might seem one-sided but it is actually advantageous for both groups, as negotiators on all sides need to understand the negotiation process if it is to succeed. Track II trainers, consultants, facilitators, and

even mediators can work with low-powered and inexperienced parties to help them assess the conflict; identify their interests; develop constructive, nonviolent ways of addressing those interests; build coalitions; and improve their negotiation skills so that they can negotiate effectively, both in unofficial discussions and at the formal negotiating table.

Dealing with Needs and Values

When conflicts are at an impasse because of a clash of seemingly incompatible and nonnegotiable positions, track II processes can be particularly useful. Such deadlocks are particularly common in conflicts that center on needs-based and values-based issues such as security and identity. Track II activities such as dialogue and interactive problem solving can begin to reframe the conflict from a zero-sum, mutual-blame situation to a more nuanced understanding of mutual needs. Although it is usually assumed that needs-based conflicts are zero-sum or win-lose in nature, they actually are not. Usually, everyone's needs (for security, for example) are more easily met simultaneously (because the more secure one side feels, the less it will feel the need to attack the other side, so the more secure the other side will feel). This can propel the conflict into a de-escalatory spiral.

The Georgia–South Ossetia Dialogue Project, undertaken by the Conflict Management Group in partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council, brought together members of the negotiating teams of both sides and other influential actors for a series of facilitated joint brainstorming meetings over five years. Participants were asked to talk about their own experiences, interests, needs, and fears and listen to and explore those of the other side. They brainstormed ideas related to the Georgian–South Ossetian negotiation process, particularly on issues they discovered to be of common concern such as cultural and economic ties, refugees, and development. The improved relationships and understanding as well as the concrete ideas that were developed in these sessions significantly improved both the tone and the content of the official negotiations.⁴

To assess whether addressing values and needs may be a useful contribution to the conflict at the prenegotiation stage, it is important to know what the root causes of the conflict are and how issues are being framed. When positions are articulated in fixed, nonnegotiable, and emotionally charged terms, this is generally an indicator that values and needs are driving the conflict in destructive ways.

Building a Peace Constituency

Official negotiations cannot succeed if they are not supported by the wider society. Complex conflicts affect all people and are played out at all levels of society, from the elites down to the grassroots. If the lower levels—the grassroots and the mid-level leaders—are still heavily invested in the conflict, the leaders are unlikely to be interested in or willing to negotiate an agreement. And even if they do, it likely will not hold. Thus, track II activities that bring people together in all sorts of ways across conflict lines can contribute to building a “peace constituency”—people who see the value of peaceful relations with “the enemy” and who will push for and support negotiations before, during, and after they occur.

Further, track II processes give space and legitimacy to advocates of moderation. Voicing moderation in long-running, violent conflicts can be dangerous. It can be seen as treason or “supporting the enemy.” Frequently, moderates on all sides are silenced, ostracized, exiled, or even killed. For that reason, track II processes are often held in secret or with a very low public profile. Although participating in private cross-conflict dialogues is still not without risk, it is safer to do so than being open in one’s willingness to talk with the other side, and it can quietly grow a set of moderates who can come to the fore when the time is ripe.

Although such efforts are not sufficient to instigate ripeness on their own, having the support of significant mid-level and grassroots leaders once track I negotiations do begin is very important. If track I negotiators are too far out in front of their publics, spoilers will find it easier to scuttle the negotiations and/or the implementation of a peace agreement.

Consider Stand-Alone Track II Roles

Sometimes conflicts are serious and many people are dying, yet track I players choose not to get involved. The issues at stake may seem too politically dangerous or not sufficiently important from a political point of view to risk the time, resources, and/or reputation of potential track I intervenors. Alternatively or additionally, outside states may be reluctant to intervene in a conflict that they judge to be an internal matter for the state concerned. These “forgotten conflicts” can blow up into major catastrophes, as evidenced in the cases of Rwanda in 1994 and Sri Lanka in the 1960s and 1970s.⁵ In such cases, track I players—and the victims of

the conflict—often appreciate the involvement of track II actors, whose efforts can (if successful) prevent the further escalation of the conflict. Activities undertaken in such circumstances include a broad range of prenegotiation activities, from dialogues and interactive conflict resolution to training and joint projects.

For example, the Henry Martyn Institute: International Center for Research, Interfaith Relations and Reconciliation and Peace Core Team Manipur provided participatory conflict resolution workshops in India. Through these trainings, participants were empowered to become more effective dialogue and workshop facilitators, and they went on to help resolve conflicts and to build a stronger peace constituency in violence-torn northeast India.⁶ John Paul Lederach's many elective training workshops held in the 1980s in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Europe also empowered local people to resolve their own problems, often without the help of track I intervention at all. Lederach's *elicitive* approach to training helps participants understand and focus on their own understandings about conflict and traditional approaches to conflict resolution and transformation. Often in protracted, violent conflicts, these traditional approaches are forgotten or discredited, or the social structures in which these processes were embedded are destroyed and replaced with alternative authority structures. Lederach helps participants reinvigorate culturally tested, traditional approaches to peacemaking, and helps them identify ways in which these processes can be utilized to mitigate or bring an end to long-running, violent conflicts that are not adequately addressed by track I processes.⁷

Sometimes, the boundary between track I and track II can become very blurred, with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), for example, taking on roles normally played by foreign diplomats and negotiating peace agreements between the parties to a conflict.

The Community of Sant'Egidio in Mozambique is one of the best-known examples of unofficial actors providing track I mediation. Sant'Egidio, an Italian NGO, did not intend to play a track I role; in fact, its representatives started out doing track II activities—establishing relationships with both sides, exploring alternative approaches to the problem, creating communication channels between disputants, and the like. But they ended up actually negotiating the peace agreement. “Because the mediators didn’t have their own agenda, they were simultaneously able to make the parties themselves fully responsible for the peace process and to draw in the international community as significant, but nonintrusive actors to the process.”⁸

Assess the Need for Track II during Track I

Many of the activities deemed valuable during the prenegotiation phase can also be useful while talks between the parties are taking place. Track II actors can continue to connect the perspectives of illegitimate parties to the peace process through back channels, seek to strengthen the cohesiveness and capacity of one or more of the parties, and work with a broad spectrum of stakeholders on skill and capacity building, problem solving, and dialogue. Track II interventions can be especially valuable to track I negotiations when official talks grind to a halt over a highly contentious issue. The problematic issue can be referred to a parallel track II process, which can bring mid-level leaders, with strong interpersonal relationships developed over time, together to examine the problems and devise new solutions. Problem-solving workshops are particularly fruitful sources of creative new approaches. These proposed solutions can then be fed back into the track I process and, if deemed promising, refined until an acceptable approach is found.

In cases in which one party refuses to discuss issues that another party considers of critical importance, these issues can be handed to a confidential track II process. The parties are usually less resistant to discussing “illegitimate” issues or topics they find particularly threatening in track II environments than they are in the track I process.

Assess the Need for Track II after Track I

Postagreement disputes are common, and the threat of a return to violence is ever present. Track II actors can play a constructive role especially when sections of the population are unhappy with, ill-informed about, and/or

isolated from the peace process; and when ambiguities in the peace agreement are likely to lead to disputes during the implementation phase—disputes that the society lacks the capacity to resolve peacefully.

Continuing to Grow a Peace Constituency

A conflict is far from over when the parties reach a peace accord. But signing a peace agreement does carry enormous symbolic value, signaling a shift in the relationship between the parties. Track II actors can work to ensure that this shift is not an isolated experience among the elite within the society. Building a large constituency for peace can isolate spoilers and inoculate the grassroots constituencies from the dangers of sporadic violence and other setbacks.

At various times since the Good Friday Agreement was signed in Northern Ireland, spoilers have attempted to reignite the Troubles by killing a number of policemen and planting several car bombs. Each time, the peace constituency has pushed back—officials and grassroots people on both sides of the conflict have condemned the killings and refused to respond with violence. “That era is over,” both sides have repeatedly responded, refusing to get caught up in a new cycle of violence. Had many people not bought into the peace agreement, the likelihood of a spoiler’s being able to infect the larger society with renewed fear and hatred—leading to spiraling violence—would be much higher.

Fleshing Out the Details of an Agreement

Still, peace deals often fail and even for the ones that hold, the period following the signing of an agreement is a fragile time. Peace agreements are generally flawed to a greater or lesser degree. Negotiators may have left features of agreement ambiguous precisely because pushing for more specificity would have resulted in parties walking away from the table. Parties are often left to sort out these ambiguities at much lower political and bureaucratic levels, and to do so without the support of negotiators and the structure of formal talks. This is when having a strong track II constituency can be particularly useful. Track II mediators and civil leaders can hammer out details of broad-brush strategies, and actually make the agreement work on the ground. Without such support and attention to detail, the broad-brush agreements developed by the official track I negotiators may never get translated into practice.

Resolving Postagreement Disputes

Every peace deal will have its discontents. Understanding who is unhappy with the outcome of the peace process, and why, is important to the design of track II processes at this stage of the peace process. Track II efforts can be aimed at developing effective nonviolent channels for seeking a redress of grievances. Assessments should anticipate where and how discontent will manifest itself so that such efforts can be strategically designed and targeted.

Disagreements over implementation often play out at the level of the community. Track II activities can anticipate such problems and work to strengthen constructive channels for addressing the issues. For instance, building the capacities of select institutions and people who can deal with these issues in a constructive, cooperative, nonviolent way makes the likelihood of long-term success of the peacemaking process much higher.

Track II trainers can, for example, help inexperienced local leaders design effective dispute-handling and governmental systems. Newly forming democracies often need help in designing and implementing both governmental and civil society organizations that can provide needed services and deal effectively with the many disputes that are likely to arise.

“Circum-negotiation”

The Inter-Tajik Dialogue is an example of the way in which track II can supplement track I before, during, and following a track I negotiation or peace agreement. Harold Saunders and Gennady I. Chufrin convened this dialogue in 1993 in response to the civil war in Tajikistan that followed the breakup of the Soviet Union. Saunders described this process as “circum-negotiation,” or a “multi-level peace process.”

During the first phase, the dialogue engaged influential but nongovernmental actors who came together across conflict lines to develop relationships, build mutual trust, and eventually discuss the prerequisites for official negotiation. The second stage, which started just over a year later, was the official, track I negotiations convened by the United Nations. The track II process continued to take place at the same time, feeding ideas into the track I process via a few overlapping members. In addition, some spin-off NGOs were formed to work on longer-term peacebuilding efforts, such as citizenship education and civil society development. One example is the Public Committee for Democratic Processes in Tajikistan, which still exists. This was the “third level” of Saunders’ “multi-level” peace process.

Source: Harold Saunders, “Prerenegotiation and Circum-negotiation: Arenas of the Peace Process,” in *Managing Global Chaos*, eds. Chester Crocker, Fen Hampson, and Pamela

Aall (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996), 419–432; and the International Institute for Sustained Dialogue, “Sustained Dialogue in Tajikistan,” http://www.sustaineddialogue.org/programs/tajikistan_dialogue.htm (accessed March 21, 2010).



STEP 2

Develop a Strategic Plan

Once the need for track II activities is determined, the next step is to develop a strategy for engaging in track II activities that maximizes their benefits and actually brings about the desired change.

The first question to consider is thus, what is the desired change? The easy answer is, usually, “we want to bring about peace.” But intervenors—either track I or track II—must be much more specific than that. They must look at the needs identified in the needs assessment and determine which, if any, of those needs they might be able to help fill—and how. At this stage, several strategic decisions need to be made.

Decide on a Level of Work and a Strategy for Change

One decision involves the level at which the track II intervenor is going to focus his/her work. Many track II peacemakers work at the interpersonal level on psychological and relationship aspects of the conflict and blithely assume that their efforts, at least when combined with similar track II initiatives, will have a larger, sociopolitical impact on the conflict and the society as a whole. But this larger impact is unlikely to happen unless the would-be peacemakers not only consider, at the outset, how it might be achieved but also build into their plans concrete steps for “scaling up” the impact to the larger society by broadening the geographic scope of an intervention, the audience, or both.⁹

For example, interethnic dialogues and problem-solving workshops typically seek to break down negative stereotypes of “the other” and build trust between the participants. But the number of direct participants may be limited to just ten or twenty people. How are any attitudinal changes

effected in a workshop going to be spread? Unless influential and well-connected people are involved in these small group processes, then shifts in attitude will be disseminated more widely only if follow-up activities have been designed in advance. (For example, participants can take ideas developed in these workshops back to their constituents, discuss them, develop them further, and then form their own follow-up workshops with other people to further pursue some of these ideas.)

This problem of scaling up the impact illustrates the importance of track II actors' being explicit about their "strategies for change," their underlying assumptions about how positive change happens, and what can be done to start or accelerate that process. For example, a track II intervenor that sees a need to diminish prejudice and discrimination might believe that such changes can be effected by bringing the two groups together for conflict resolution training, an intergroup dialogue, or a problem-solving workshop. Indeed, all three of these approaches have been shown to have positive impacts on the relationships between the immediate participants, increasing intergroup understanding and diminishing negative stereotyping. However, if the intervenor's goal is to bring about change at the community, national, or international levels, these approaches (alone, at least) are unlikely to be very effective. Public information campaigns; childhood and adult educational programs; innovative media programming; and social, economic, and political policy changes may all be more effective strategies for achieving such deep structural changes.

Different types of processes are needed to bring about different types of change, and a change in one domain (personal, relational, structural, or cultural) does not necessarily bring about a change in any of the other domains. To transfer from one level (or type of change) to another, Lederach, Neufeldt, and Culbertson talk about "scale-up," which they define as "efforts to enhance the impact of a project by enlarging it or linking it with broader initiatives."¹⁰ Scale-up happens by either broadening the geographic scope of an intervention, or broadening the audience, or both.

Similarly, the *Reflecting on Peace Practice Project* frequently made the distinction between projects that focus on "many people" and those that focus on "key people."¹¹ Lederach, Neufelt, and Culbertson observe that if sociopolitical or cultural change is desired, programs that combine both of these dimensions—thus working with individuals, institutions, and the public—are necessary to effectively scale up impact.

Strategies for Change

Within the conflict resolution field, the concept of “strategies for change”—or “theories of change,” as they are more commonly termed—has attracted significant attention. For instance, John Paul Lederach, Reina Neufeldt, and Hal Culbertson have articulated four strategies for change:

- personal change: changes in individual attitudes and behaviors
- relationship change: changes in communication patterns, interpersonal and inter-group cooperation, decision-making processes, and conflict-management mechanisms
- structural change: changes in inequality; in racial, religious, or ethnic discrimination; and in institutional patterns (access, inclusion)
- cultural change: changes in the way the conflict is viewed or understood; in views of “the other”; and in the use (or not) of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms

Another typology—developed by Mary Anderson, Peter Woodrow, and Diana Chigas—identified fourteen distinct strategies for change related to peacebuilding, which the authors associated with more than one hundred different intervention methods.

Sources: John Paul Lederach, Reina Neufeldt, and Hal Culbertson, *Reflective Peacebuilding: A Planning, Monitoring, and Learning Toolkit* (Mindanao, Philippines: Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies and Catholic Relief Services Southeast/East Asia Regional Office, 2007), 51; http://crs.org/publications/showpdf.cfm?pdf_id=80 (accessed November 7, 2008). See Mary Anderson, Diana Chigas, and Peter Woodrow, *Encouraging Effective Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities: Towards DAC Guidance*, pp. 86–87; <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/52/3/39660852.pdf> (accessed September 29, 2008).

Other track II processes deal with the change problem more directly—they work to produce draft plans, proposals, or principles of agreement. If this is done with the blessing of track I and the understanding that the results will eventually be fed into the track I process, this direct approach can be very effective. If it is done independently of track I, it might still be productive—especially if the track I process bogs down or dies. Then the track II process can provide an alternative approach. However, as noted below, multiple simultaneous efforts to produce agreements can also lead to confusion, forum shopping, or dead ends for one or both processes.

Broad choices about process need to be made before a particular intervention is designed or implemented. These include choices about what type of activities one should undertake, who should be involved and over what time frame, and how one should coordinate or link into other related track I and track II activities. While more specific than strategies for change,

these decisions are informed by one's notions about how change comes about and what aspects of practices make the desired change most likely to occur.

Plan for Coordination

Track II actors should consider how they and their strategy fit into the larger picture of peacemaking activities. Most of the conflicts that are the targets of track II interventions are complex and protracted, and many other track I and track II players are likely to be involved or to have been involved. The conflict analysis performed in step 1 should give a track II actor the knowledge with which to prepare a map of past and present activities that will indicate gaps—areas of need that are not being addressed—and possible avenues for coordination.

Opportunities for coordination with other peacemakers should be built into the strategic plan. This means, at the least, making plans to contact, informally, other actors in the same region—to keep track of what they are doing, what their needs might be, and how their efforts might affect, interfere with, or benefit from one's own. Sometimes such coordination is made routine by convening a meeting of track II (or even track I and track II) actors once a month or once every few months. While valuable, such meetings take time and require personnel, a quantity almost always in short supply, so they tend to occur less often than they should.

Coordination can also go beyond the simple sharing of information to include sharing conflict analyses and evaluations of past intervention activities, joint planning of upcoming interventions (to enable actors to build on each other's activities), sharing resources, or even working on intervention activity jointly. (This happens less between tracks, but it does happen within track II.) The further ahead of time that such coordination is planned, the more likely it is to actually happen and the greater the benefits are likely to be.

Avoid Stepping on Toes

Coordination can also prevent conflicting or counterproductive peacemaking activities.

Track II players can make life more difficult for other peacemakers—both track I and track II—if they overstep their bounds, make promises they cannot keep, work outside their skill areas, or launch underfunded

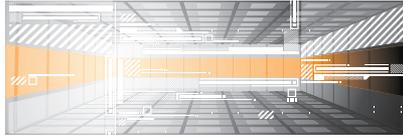
projects. Projects left unfinished because a track II actor's funding ran out can sometimes worsen the climate for peacemaking for everyone else by raising and then dashing participants' hopes. If participants conclude from such failed processes that "mediation does not work" or that the other side cannot be trusted—because that particular process did not succeed—future peacemaking attempts, including track I efforts, may inspire only skepticism or indifference. This presents a challenge because most projects start with less funding than they would prefer and press ahead in the hope that if the process proves successful, more funds will become available. Such optimism is often rewarded, but when additional funding cannot be found and the track II actor has to suspend or terminate the process, the participants are left frustrated or disillusioned. One solution to this problem is to design a process that will be helpful—at least in some limited way—even if it ends sooner than is hoped. Clarity about short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals and objectives can go a long way for avoiding disappointment over time.

Similarly, when track II processes are not coordinated with party-to-party talks, the result can be fragmentation of the international response to the conflict. Competing definitions of the problem and competing solutions can produce a confused marketplace of peacemaking. In such an environment, parties are tempted to go forum shopping for the intervention process that seems to serve their own best interests, while shunning others, including, perhaps, the track I process. Track I mediators find such actions highly problematic, for obvious reasons.

Track I players can also make life more difficult for track II actors, either intentionally or unintentionally. Intentional acts include denying visas for track II intervenors or disputing parties, thereby making it impossible to hold meetings. Track I actors also can refuse (or simply forget) to share information about the track I process. If the two tracks are following divergent courses, problems are likely to arise for both of them sooner or later. If there is some degree of coordination between the processes, however, both will likely benefit.

Effective coordination of governmental, civilian, military, and NGO activities has been particularly important—yet problematic—in both Iraq and Afghanistan, though it has been slow to develop in both places. When the threat of violence is real, NGOs often rely on the military to provide security (since NGOs seldom provide it themselves), but they often shun

open communication, cooperation, or collaboration with the military (or any track I actor) for fear of being seen as part of, or working for “the enemy,” and thus as legitimate targets. As security has become less of a problem in Iraq, coordination has improved. This has been especially true since the State Department and the Department of Defense have begun to implement NSPD 44 (a National Security Presidential Directive on the coordination, planning, and direction of stability and reconstruction operations [SROs]) and the parallel DOD Instruction 3000.05, both of which call for greatly increased collaboration between agencies in an effort to deliver effective SROs.



STEP 3

Design the Process

Track II peacemaking includes a vast array of processes, any number of which can be useful in different situations. Several are most commonly used as a preliminary to track I peacemaking. These include training, intergroup dialogues, interactive conflict resolution (also called problem-solving workshops), and public peace and tolerance education. These processes are also often useful if they are undertaken simultaneously with track I negotiations as they can help bring broader segments of society into alignment with those efforts.

Track II actors can also sometimes help track I actors surmount obstacles. For instance, track II can provide needed training to some track I participants who do not have the necessary skills or knowledge to negotiate effectively.

In the process of drawing up a new constitution in Iraq after the American invasion, U.S. officials knew from participating in UN meetings that Sunni leaders were opposed to a federal system. The Americans suspected, however, that the Sunnis did not fully understand the concept of federalism. U.S. officials therefore initiated a series of dialogues to discuss what a federal system in Iraq might mean in practice and how it could be implemented. This learning process helped pave the way for more successful negotiations.

Participants in dialogues or problem-solving workshops can develop new approaches to sticking points that can then be integrated into the track I negotiations. This happened a lot in the Tajik “sustained dialogue” (see the feature box “Circum-negotiation” on page 21). It also happened in the talks that led to the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestinians—though it is argued in that case that, for the Oslo Accords to have been successfully implemented, much more such work was needed to pave the way for their

acceptance. When continued after the culmination of a track I negotiation effort, similar processes can be used to hammer out remaining disputes and build support for the agreement among the general public and among mid-level leaders who were not involved in the official negotiations.

Choose the Best Process

The choice of process is dependent on a number of factors, the most important of which are the needs that one has identified, together with one's knowledge, availability, resources, and skills. Care must be taken to become involved only in interventions in which one has

- the skills and cultural knowledge necessary to provide the needed activity competently;
- sufficient knowledge about the culture to discern what processes and approaches are likely to be relevant and appropriate;
- the resources needed to do the work; and
- an indication that local people will be receptive to your efforts, such as a local request for help, an indication of local interest, or signs of willingness among local actors to collaborate in your efforts.

If all these criteria are met, then track II intervenors typically choose among the following options: training, dialogue, interactive conflict resolution, public peace education, and joint projects.

Training

Training is a short-term process that teaches participants about new approaches to their conflict and/or about conflict resolution more generally. It can take place in a wide variety of settings, for diverse purposes, and with different audiences.

A common form of intervention, training helps people learn the skills they will need to

- analyze their conflict effectively;
- identify their underlying relationships, interests, values, and needs;

- identify ways to improve their relationships and obtain their interests and needs while supporting their own values—through processes such as negotiation, mediation, and interactive problem solving;
- assess the benefits and costs of each approach;
- implement the chosen approach or approaches (e.g., by acquiring effective negotiation skills); and
- evaluate—and fine tune—the approaches implemented.

If the training brings together participants from both (or all) sides of a conflict, the training may resemble a problem-solving workshop. If the training involves both sides but focuses on psychological issues, it may resemble an intergroup dialogue or trauma-healing program (though such dialogues and programs tend to pay less attention to specific outcomes than a training would).

If only one side is present, the intervention remains more clearly a training, but it can have positive effects on the conflict overall if one side becomes more skilled in (and/or more willing to engage in) negotiating or relationship building after taking the training. Like so many other interventions, however, scale is often a major issue—how will training a few people have a greater, society-wide impact?

One response to this question is to adopt a “train-the-trainer” approach in which experts (either outsiders or local experts) train others to become conflict resolution trainers (or facilitators, mediators, etc.). These kinds of trainings will look very different, depending on whether the trainer adopts a prescriptive or an elicitive approach. In the prescriptive approach, the trainer’s goal is to provide a particular approach to the topic (be it conflict analysis, negotiation, mediation, or dialogue)—a recipe, in essence, or a set of steps to be followed. In elicitive trainings, the trainer takes more of a back seat—asking questions to draw out the participants’ own knowledge, but letting them take the lead to design their own training and allowing (and encouraging) them to develop their own approaches to their problems as much as possible.

The timing and location of the training and the identity of the trainers will also have a substantial impact on the conduct and consequences of the training. Training done very quickly (say, in a session lasting one day or one week) by outside trainers who come in quickly, deliver “canned”

knowledge, and then leave shortly thereafter may be evaluated well by the participants but is unlikely to have a lasting impact because participants will promptly revert to their previous practices. When training is done by people who have been involved in the conflict locale (as either insiders or visitors) for some time, however, the trainers are more likely to understand the complexities and nuances of the conflict history and current situation, as well as the local culture. This enables them to design a training that is both substantively and emotionally appropriate for the participants.

Training that is spread out over a long period of time—or has opportunities for “refreshers”—is also likely to be more effective than a one-time event. When people are exposed to ideas quickly and then sent back to their normal routines, they find it difficult to implement new behaviors for long. The pressure of time, habitual responses, and social pressure tend to cause people to revert to their old approaches. But if one goes “home,” tries to implement new ideas, and then comes back to the training to discuss what happened with the trainers and other trainees, effective behavioral change over the longer term is much more likely to occur.

Outsiders who cannot be present in the training location for a significant period of time should consider partnering with a local person or organization. Locals can help outside trainers design the training so that it is culturally appropriate and it addresses the actual needs and situation on the ground. Locals can also be present as advisers after the training to answer follow-up questions and maintain an ongoing dialogue or network with participants from past trainings.

Dialogue

The term “dialogue” is used in many different ways, but in the peacemaking context it generally means bringing conflicted parties together with a facilitator to improve interpersonal relationships, understandings, and trust, and sometimes (but not always) to engage in an analysis of the conflict situation and potential paths toward its transformation or resolution. The primary goal of dialogue is to improve relationships, not to negotiate a settlement or a peace agreement.

Some dialogues are one-time events, while others are long-term efforts that involve a series of meetings spread over months, years, or even decades.

An early, well-known example of what has come to be known as “sustained dialogue” was the U.S.-Soviet Dartmouth Conference which brought together American and Soviet citizens for informal discussions annually for more than thirty years of the Cold War. The participants were not serving government officials, but most had close ties to their governments or were otherwise influential members of their societies. By breaking down mistrust and encouraging the exchange of opinions, information, and ideas that were fed into track I Soviet-American negotiations, the Dartmouth Conference contributed to several policy breakthroughs in fields such as arms control.¹² The Dartmouth Conference also gave birth to some very successful spin-off activities, including the Inter-Tajikistan Dialogue that began in 1993 during the very deadly Tajik civil war. This track II effort paralleled the track I process, was instrumental in bringing the war to an end, and continued after the peace agreement was signed to assist with implementation.

A sustained dialogue or “public peace process” first invites participants to explore the nature of their relationship, then helps them work to improve that relationship, and finally—in some cases—moves them into a process of problem solving of their substantive differences.

Interactive Conflict Resolution

Interactive conflict resolution (ICR)—also called “controlled communication,” “analytical problem solving,” and “problem-solving workshops,” among other terms—consists of small group discussions between mid- or relatively high-level unofficial representatives of conflicting parties that are involved in long-lasting, destructive identity conflicts. The workshops are facilitated by “scholar-practitioners”—academics who have one foot in academia and the other in practice. Hence, they have a deep understanding not only of conflict dynamics and processes in general but also of the people and issues involved in the particular conflict. They also have a solid knowledge of and capability with facilitation processes, which makes them effective at moving the parties from an initial very hostile and guarded stance toward each other and the issues, to a more open, collaborative, and creative approach that allows for the development of innovative solutions to mutual problems.

Most ICR practitioners see scale-up (or “transfer”)¹³ as the key goal of this process. While it is well documented that ICR workshops like dialogues help break down intergroup hostility and stereotypes, improve interpersonal relationships, and foster improved interpersonal understanding among the

participants themselves, this is not the ultimate goal of these workshops. Rather, the ultimate goal is to transfer that change into the track I process so that it has a much broader, society-wide effect.

Transfer can take place in three ways:

- Influential participants such as writers and journalists, scholars, church and community group leaders, and activists can directly present ideas that come out of the workshops to their larger constituencies, students, followers, and readers. They can also present these ideas to intermediary organizations such as research and policy institutes and think tanks, which can develop and disseminate the ideas further.
- Some ICR participants serve as advisers to individuals engaged in track I negotiations. As such, they can insert ideas and suggest changes in outlook developed in the ICR process to those engaged in the track I process.
- Some ICR participants themselves go on to become representatives in the track I process, and can thereby bring the ideas and thought processes into the track I discussions even more directly than an adviser could do. Thus, unlike dialogues, which often do not have transfer mechanisms built into their process, scale-up is an inherent part of ICR, indeed, its primary goal.

Despite the difference in their ultimate goals, many of the procedural elements of dialogue and ICR are very similar, though ICR usually focuses more on scholarly conflict analysis and identification of underlying needs and interests—at least at the beginning. (Once such topics are covered, workshops may move into more traditional negotiation or problem-solving efforts.) Also, ICR is generally carried out in a series of workshops, not just one. Dialogue may be sequential, though one-time events are not uncommon. Each ICR workshop usually runs three to seven days, and workshops tend to be held several times a year. Like dialogues, ICR workshops are usually held in neutral, informal settings—often a quiet university campus or a retreat where the participants can relax yet focus intensely on the people and the task at hand without interruptions.

ICR processes tend to work best in identity-based conflicts where major interests and needs, such as identity and security, are at stake; where disputants see integration, not separation, as their goal; and where asymmetries of power between the parties are relatively modest.¹⁴

However, ICR has been effective in situations that do not match these criteria. It has, for instance, been used extensively in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

A leader of this effort has been Harvard professor of social psychology Herbert Kelman. Kelman's first ICR, or "problem-solving workshop" as he called them, was held between Israelis and Palestinians in 1971. This was followed by hundreds of workshops in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Like most problem-solving workshops, most of Kelman's involved what Lederach refers to as "mid-level leaders"¹⁵—politically involved and influential, yet unofficial members of opposing sides. Kelman describes his participants as "parliamentarians, leaders and activists of political parties or political movements, journalists, editors, directors, of think tanks," and politically active scholars.¹⁶

A continuing workshop with highly influential Israelis and Palestinians met over a three-year period, from 1990 to 1993, ending just before the announcement of the Oslo agreement. Although ultimately those accords did not hold, the relationships built and the substantive solutions developed in those workshops are widely credited with making the Oslo Accord possible. Kelman himself asserts that there were three ways that his problem-solving workshops contributed to and made Oslo possible. These were: (1) the development of "cadres" of people knowledgeable about and able to effectively communicate and negotiate with the other side; (2) the sharing of information and the development of new, substantive ideas that were then fed into the official negotiations; and (3) the "fostering of a political atmosphere that made the parties open to a new relationship."

Analyses of the reasons why Oslo did not hold are many, but faulting the track II input is not one of them. Lamenting that it did not go far enough to engage a larger segment of the population, thereby creating a larger "peace constituency," however, is. Kelman and his protégés are also continuing their long legacy of holding such workshops in the hopes that they eventually can lead to another round of successful negotiations. However, Kelman cautions much of the past learning has been lost and will have to be rediscovered by a new cadre of mid-level leaders.¹⁷

Public Peace Education

Another commonly employed track II process is public peace education. Whether conducted in formal or informal venues, in face-to-face meetings, or through the media, and whether targeted at children or adults or both, most peace education programs seek to create enlarged constituencies for peace.

The basic notion underlying this process is that the incidence and effectiveness of both track I and II efforts rise with the number of people who hold positive (or at least neutral) views of “the other,” who understand that collaborative approaches to problem solving are likely to work better than confrontational or violent approaches, and who understand basic conflict resolution principles, including nonviolent communication and negotiation skills.

Topics addressed may include philosophical and practical issues such as intergroup relations (e.g., stereotypes, discrimination, and tolerance), civil and human rights, conflict management, and international relations. The educational approaches used vary even more than the topics—lessons about “the other” may be integrated into children’s regular lessons in school or they may be taught in stand-alone workshops. Workshop participants may be drawn from a single group (such as a particular church or community) or several groups. And participants may interact only with other members of their own side in the conflict, or be brought together with individuals from the other side, thereby presenting the opportunity for participants to build friendships and mutual understanding across the lines of the conflict.

Peace or tolerance education can also be promulgated through the media.

The NGO Search for Common Ground, for example, has created and aired radio soap operas in twelve countries. These soap operas, which have attracted large audiences (one soap opera was listened to by no less than 80 percent of Burundians), tell the stories of ordinary people interacting in their daily lives with people on the other side of the conflict. They depict a nonadversarial, cooperative, tolerant approach to “the other” and give their listeners intellectual knowledge about constructive approaches to conflict while also giving that knowledge an emotional charge. As Susan Mellon, executive director of Search for Common Ground, commented in 2006: “We try to pass

*messages about dialogue and peacebuilding through ways that aren't just didactic or scholastic or intellectual. Rather, they address people's interests, and are fun, and are motivating. . . . It has enabled people to talk about issues in a less confrontational way, in a more collaborative way about a huge array of issues.*²¹⁸

Another approach to peace education is that taken by the NGO Seeds of Peace, which brings teenagers from all sides of violent conflicts together to spend several weeks at a camp in the countryside in the northeast of the United States. The youngsters live and work together, breaking down stereotypes they have of one another, building friendships, and learning conflict resolution skills. "Our mission," the organization explains, "is to empower leaders of the next generation. Treaties are negotiated by governments. Peace is made by people. Seeds of Peace is doing what no government can. It is sowing the seeds of peace among the next generation of leaders. It is educating them to develop empathy, respect, and confidence. It is equipping them with communication and negotiation skills. It is enabling them to see the human face of their enemies. By empowering them to emerge as tomorrow's leaders, Seeds of Peace is working to forge the personal relationships so critical to peacemaking and reconciliation."²¹⁹ Teaching integrative negotiation and peer mediation as a means of constructively resolving conflicts is often seen as beneficial, at least at the individual level.

Like dialogues and ICR workshops, peace education efforts face two challenges. One is developing attitudinal changes that can be sustained once participants return to their usual environments; this challenge is especially pronounced in the case of the Seeds of Peace program, which takes youngsters thousands of miles from their homes, but it also exists even in the case of workshops, which also constitute a departure from the participants' normal routines. The second challenge is the problem of scale-up—transferring attitudinal changes to a broader segment of society. There are no tried and true solutions to these problems, though a variety of approaches have been tried. One approach to the maintenance problem is to help participants keep in contact with each other via email or Internet chat rooms after they go back to their home environments. Another is to create alumni groups of people who have been trained, to maintain long-term support. Efforts to scale-up these processes involve simply implementing programs as widely as possible and using mass venues (such as radio) to reinforce lessons taught on a smaller scale—in schools, for instance.

Joint Projects

Joint projects are, to some degree, another form of peace education. Such projects invite people from all sides of a conflict to come together in a physically and psychologically safe setting to accomplish a joint goal. Although the project may not seem safe psychologically at the beginning, organizers typically work with the participants to help them feel comfortable with everyone involved, slowly building trust across conflict lines. Among the numerous and varied examples that could be cited are a bilingual school in Galilee in which Arab and Jewish children are co-taught by Arab and Jewish teachers (in this case, clearly an example of peace education); a project to rebuild Albanian mosques in Kosovo involving Jews, Protestants, Serb Orthodox, and Albanian Muslims, all former enemies; and a program in Burundi that organizes soccer games with teams composed of both Hutus and Tutsis.

Joint projects typically seek to achieve one or more of three objectives:

- To construct specific structures, organizations, relationships, and institutions that will be useful to those on both sides of a conflict.
- To spur grassroots reconciliation and conflict transformation that can spread to society as a whole.
- To create symbols of peace and cooperation (e.g., a jointly constructed house or school) that will impress the wider society.

When opposing groups come into contact in a safe setting and work collaboratively to achieve common goals, the results are often improved intergroup understanding—in essence, peace education—at least among the participants. Trust and cooperative relations are also often improved, especially when competitive situations are avoided and interaction goes beyond superficial exchanges.

There are dangers involved in such projects, however, that planners should be careful to avoid. One is to overreach—to take on a project that is too difficult (politically, socially, logistically, technically, or financially). When joint projects fail to achieve their goals, participants tend to blame the failure on the other group, thus reinforcing the notion that the other group is at fault for the conflict. Failures also breed cynicism, fostering the impression that any effort to work with the other side is doomed to lead nowhere.

In 1998, a joint Israeli-Palestinian production of the children's television program Sesame Street was launched in an effort to teach tolerance and intergroup understanding to preschoolers and their parents. Seventy half-hour shows were created, each with an Arabic and a Hebrew segment. Very popular initially, the program became more difficult to produce after the second Intifada started, and audiences became much less receptive as well. "We've realized that a goal of friendship was beyond realism, given where things are now," explained one of the producers in 2002.²⁰ The program ended that year because the Palestinian producers argued that it was pointless to air a program promoting tolerance before a peace agreement was attained. The program was reinstated, however, in 2004, when relations had improved enough to make people willing to take the risk to try it once again. This time, however, there were three separate programs—one in Israel, one in the occupied territories, and a third produced in Jordan. All worked to promote tolerance and mutual understanding, but each program is produced separately—there are no shared segments and no joint production.²¹

Another risk, even of successful projects, is lack of local ownership and commitment. Joint projects are often conceived and directed by outside NGOs, not by the disputants themselves. Even if the disputants are willing to participate in such a venture, they may not develop a sense of ownership or pride in the project; when the NGO leaves the area, hopes that the locals will take over and continue the effort are dashed, because the locals see the project as belonging to the NGO, whose departure effectively signals the end of the effort. (Their departure may also signal an end of funding when the funding is provided by non-local organizations.) Although NGO involvement is often necessary to get joint projects off the ground, efforts should be made to have as much local involvement, direction, and funding—and as little NGO involvement, direction, and funding—as possible. Projects that are seen as locally owned and operated are much more likely to continue than ones that are seen as “foreign.” Another problem with external funding is that the recipients can become so focused on making the funder happy that they lose sight of local interests and values, thereby creating a project that is essentially “foreign,” even though it is carried out by local people.

While joint projects should seek to foster local ownership, they should strive to avoid replicating the local dynamics of the conflict. One way of succumbing to this latter danger is to design projects that reflect the

asymmetrical resources (of money, time, skills, or physical resources) of the parties to the conflict. Replicating the power imbalance of the larger conflict within the microcosm of the project engenders hostility, distrust, and tension—not the trust, understanding, and teamwork that the project's designer hoped for.

Decide How to Implement the Process

After a particular process has been selected, choices must be made about how to implement it. Factors to consider at the planning stage include venue, participants, partners, and intervention philosophy.

Choose a Suitable Venue

Although appropriate venues vary depending on the process to be used, for dialogues, workshops, or trainings a venue should usually be relatively easy for all participants to reach yet be sufficiently geographically remote that they will feel outside their normal locale—and hence away from normal activities, day-to-day pressures, and interruptions. Participants should be able to focus entirely on the event and the people involved in the event—not on outside distractions. A setting such as a university or a retreat—located in a neutral area if both sides are participating—encourages people to think creatively and more openly about relationships and issues. For dialogues and ICR workshops, the setting needs to be private so discussions can be both undisturbed and confidential.

For all processes, the venue needs to be physically safe, in terms of both geographic location and physical structures. It needs to be affordable and accessible; it should not be in a location that one side has difficulty getting to because of border crossings, for instance, or so far away that key people cannot afford the cost of traveling to the venue. The facility should be flexible (in terms of room setup and use), comfortable, and—when possible, some facilitators suggest—inspirational (e.g., in a beautiful setting or a place of historical or spiritual significance to both sides).

A venue that has recreational opportunities as well as comfortable meeting spaces allows for informal relationship building. When formal discussions get bogged down, more fruitful discussion can often occur during a walk in the woods or a sporting event (preferably one with cross-group teams). Meals, too, offer a chance to relax and build relationships

in a way that formal meetings do not so a venue should have onsite catering facilities (able to serve culturally appropriate foods).

Select Participants

Deciding which group, and which individuals within those groups, should participate is sometimes tricky. If the aim of the process is to achieve significant progress in relationship building or substantive idea generation across groups in conflict, it is usually desirable to have all the conflicting groups present—even ones that would not be welcome in official processes because they are considered illegitimate (for instance, representatives of militant groups). Even in informal processes, legitimate parties may balk at including illegitimate or violent parties. However, if breakthroughs are to be achieved, including all the parties to the conflict is essential. One cannot change the attitudes and behavior of the more extreme members of the disputing groups if one talks only with moderates. In addition, groups that might be expected to be spoilers—for example, ex-combatants or families of killed or missing people—are sometimes very interested in working for peace.

One example is the Parents Circle–Families Forum. It is a grassroots organization that unites hundreds of families on both sides of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict who have lost loved ones to work together toward peace and reconciliation. Their organizational flier best describes their purpose and approach:

“We have chosen to convert the feelings of anger and revenge, helplessness and despair, into energies of hope and action, as messengers of a process of reconciliation. We who have paid the highest price possible, believe that empathy for the pain and needs of the other can generate a change in Israeli and Palestinian awareness and public opinion.

A reconciliation process initiated by The PARENTS CIRCLE—FAMILIES FORUM puts victims, who refuse to revenge their loss, at the forefront of public awareness. In doing so, we humanize both sides and act as an example and inspiration to Israeli and Palestinian societies.”²²

Similar projects can be found in many other conflict zones. Jo Berry, the daughter of Sir Anthony Berry, a victim of an IRA bombing, created an

organization, Building Bridges for Peace, after she met and, to her surprise, befriended Patrick McGee, the bomber who killed her father. Learning from this experience about the power and possibility of reconciliation, she founded Bridges for Peace to promote peace education and to provide training for facilitators who want to promote dialogue between victims and perpetrators (they call them “victimizers”).²³

While it is important to engage people who may be reluctant or resistant to the goals of the processes, if participants have no intention of or interest in making or building peace, they are likely to be disruptive and may harm the process more than they help it. Thus, care should be taken to screen participants carefully before issuing invitations, so as to gauge participants' level of interest in the forthcoming process and their willingness to play by the rules. Intervenors can work with stakeholders and their local partners to develop the criteria for participant selection, taking care to develop a process that will be seen as fair to all sides. Criteria for selecting individuals might include people's availability, commitment to working for peace, interpersonal skills, and reputation as being thoughtful and honest, and trustworthy. Criteria for selecting groups or organizations to be represented include their relationship to the conflict (centrally involved or less so), institutional and/or political relationships (well connected to people and organizations that have the power to make changes happen), demographic and/or political diversity, and overall group credibility (reputation for fair play and follow through, in other words, the will and ability to carry out agreements).²⁴

How each participant is linked to other people within their own group is also a significant consideration. Mid-level leaders of organizations with large constituencies are often more likely than grassroots people to be able to scale up, or disseminate, the ideas and attitudes developed in small group meetings. Thus, if the goal of the effort is transference to a larger constituency, participants should be selected to maximize the likelihood of that outcome.

The Centre for Nonviolent Action, for instance, runs training programs in the Balkans that primarily target teachers, journalists, activists, social workers, youth workers, and political party activists, because of their ability to disseminate ideas throughout different segments of society.²⁵

It is also important to consider the degree to which a person who is supposedly representing or speaking for a particular group (even on an informal basis) is connected to and knowledgeable about the concerns, issues, interests, and needs of that group. Although many track II processes have ground rules that call for keeping discussions confidential (unless all participants agree to publicly disclose some or all aspects of the discussion), a mechanism must be available to allow representatives to inform their constituents about the progress of the track II endeavor and to solicit their responses and input. Representatives from key civil society organizations are often well placed in this respect, being knowledgeable about local concerns and able to transfer the results of the small group work to their larger constituencies when appropriate.

Another means of getting grassroots input into track II processes is through public opinion polls. Access to opinion poll data allows deliberants to compare the picture painted by the people in the room with an independent assessment of public opinion. For example, while the U.S. government may be primarily interested in good governance and security in Afghanistan, a public opinion poll conducted by Gallup in December 2008 showed that the Afghan public is more concerned with the economy. The pollsters asked the open-ended question: “What is the single most important problem your family faces today?” Forty-one percent of respondents named the bad economy, 16 percent said unemployment, and 9 percent said “high costs” (the latter, of course, also being economic in nature). Only 12 percent said “security.”²⁶ The lesson for peacemakers is clear: improving the security situation is key to restoring the economy, but more attention must be paid to the economy directly if peacemaking in Afghanistan is to succeed. Information such as this can help track II intervenors in their efforts as they can design programs that focus on economic improvements as much as they focus on security issues, or even more.

Recruit Partners

As discussed earlier, intervenors from the outside will find it very beneficial—sometimes essential—to have a local partner. Partners are most often found among local NGOs, but any individual, organization, or even local government official can prove a valuable partner if they possess peacemaking skills or at least an interest in learning peacemaking skills, as well as useful expertise (e.g., knowledge of the local culture, logistics). As

is the case with so much of track II work, networking is the best way to find potential partners. During the assessment phase, as you take stock of which actors are playing which roles in the conflict, you can get a sense of which local organizations might be good to work with, and you can approach them (or sometimes they can approach you) to explore possible affiliations. In other cases, partnerships are formed through umbrella organizations.

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), which was established in 2003 in response to a call from UN secretary-general Kofi Annan for a larger civil society role in peacebuilding, now has fifteen regional networks and more than one thousand members. Among its goals are “linking local, national, regional, and global levels of action.”²⁷ Its regional and global meetings provide excellent opportunities to find local partners.

Locals can help not only with logistics but also with the cultural translation necessary to ensure that the intervenor's chosen process is relevant to local conditions and understood by local people. In addition, partners can facilitate the building of trust with participants before and during the process, and help with follow-up after the outside intervenor is gone.

The pioneering peacebuilder John Paul Lederach always works with local partners after he learned the importance of doing so early in his career. Lederach tells a story of a mediation training he conducted in Guatemala before he had spent much time there. He studied, he says, the local culture and put together a training that he thought was appropriate. His role-playing activities were based on real-life situations drawn from the Central American context, and for the first role-play, he asked two of the participants to play family members, while Lederach, speaking fluent Spanish, played the mediator. After the role-play was over, Lederach asked for observations and questions. The first observation, made by another participant, but addressed to the role-players, not to Lederach, was “You two looked like *gringos!*” Despite studying up on the culture, knowing Spanish fluently, and thinking he was being culturally relevant, Lederach quickly learned he didn't know enough.²⁸

It was from that experience that Lederach developed the notion of elicitive training and learned the value of having local collaborators—an

approach that he (and most other Western intervenors) has used ever since to ensure the cultural relevancy of track II activities and to improve the likelihood that they will continue after the outside intervenor has left the country. Lederach now has a long-term project running in Nepal, where he is working with a number of different Nepalese organizations to solidify the peace after the civil war. Although he is only one person and can go to Nepal for only a week or two every few months, the programs he has initiated run all the time because they are largely owned and run by the local organizations he has trained and collaborated with.

This emphasizes another point: the local role in any partnership. Often, locals are seen as secondary actors—necessary and important, but not the key players. Yet, as has been pointed out, locals really should be seen as the primary players, and external NGOs as the secondary ones. Locals best understand local culture and needs, and locals will continue working on and living in the conflict long after the outside intervenors have left. For successful conflict transformation, locals should partner with outsiders—not the other way around.²⁹

In addition to local partners, it is sometimes useful to have non-local partners. As discussed in step 2, many different outside actors are often found in hotbeds of conflict, and they are likely to trip over one another unless they coordinate their activities. By coordinating or even cooperating (sharing resources and expertise, or joining forces for program delivery, not just talking with each other), organizations can create synergies that make them all more effective.

Five to ten years ago, such coordination was seen as desirable but was uncommon in practice because intervenors were fearful of compromising their independence in what they anticipated would be a time-consuming process. The challenges presented by Iraq and Afghanistan seem to have changed that calculation. Coalition partners have put a great deal of emphasis on collaboration between track I and track II actors, between local and external actors, and between actors of the same type.

Weigh the Benefits of Elicitive and Prescriptive Approaches

An important decision the intervenor must make is whether to implement the chosen process in a prescriptive or an elicitive fashion, or to combine both approaches. (Lederach first described the elicitive approach in the

context of conflict resolution training, but it applies to other forms of intervention as well.)³⁰ Prescriptive training or intervention assumes that the intervenor—the trainer, the dialogue facilitator, or the mediator—is the “expert” and that he or she is giving his or her expertise to the client. The elicitive approach assumes that the clients are actually the experts—they understand their situation better than any outsider, and they know (though they may not realize that they know) the best way to solve their problem. The elicitive intervenor will work to draw out the clients’ knowledge about the problem and options for addressing it, helping them to develop an action plan on their own. This can be done in the context of any process—dialogue, interactive conflict resolution (e.g., problem-solving workshops), joint projects, peace education, or training. While prescriptive trainers or intervenors usually try to incorporate local knowledge and expertise as well, they give it much less emphasis than they give to their own approaches and solutions. Both approaches have benefits and shortcomings (see table 1), which is why many intervenors try to combine elements of both in their work. For instance, one hybrid approach is to listen to participants and try to get a grasp of how they define the problem and what they see as a possible range of solutions—and why—and then suggest ideas based on other cases drawn from the intervenor’s knowledge and experience or useful theories about why the local situation has evolved in the way it has and/or what is likely to be helpful in the future.

Work with Funders

Another aspect of process design is working with funders, both before funding is obtained and afterward. Some funders take a very hands-on approach. Their RFPs (requests for proposal) are very specific, and they essentially want to find someone who will carry out a process that they, the funders, have designed. Other funders are almost completely hands-off. They provide the funds, but they leave all design decisions to the practitioner. Most are somewhere between these two extremes.

It is important to understand where on this continuum your funder lies and to give as much information on your activities as the funder wants. The relationship with (and demands from) the funder can be frustrating when the funder is in, say, Europe or the United States and the grantee is in the field abroad. Reality can look very different from those two vantage

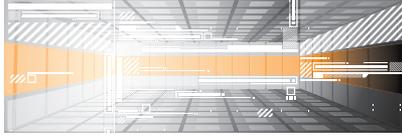
Table 1. Comparison of Prescriptive and Elicitive Approaches to Practice

	Prescriptive	Elicitive
Characteristics	Intervenor is expert	Clients are experts, intervenor is facilitator
	Intervenor defines needs	Clients and intervenor design the process
	Intervenor transfers outside knowledge	Intervenor helps clients identify and implement their own "internal" knowledge
Strengths	Draws on intervenor's knowledge of what has proved effective in other settings	Accounts for cultural differences
	Provides clients with concrete skills and ideas	Utilizes local knowledge and resources, empowers clients to solve their own problems
	Usually quicker to implement than elicitive approaches	
Weaknesses	Does not account for cultural differences	Might overlook opportunities for cross-cultural learning
	Ignores clients' own knowledge, and thus may be disempowering	Sometimes frustrates clients who want to learn about other, outside approaches
		Tends to take more time and commitment than prescriptive approaches

Source: Based on information in Michelle Maiese, "Elicitive Training," in *Beyond Intractability*, ed. Heidi Burgess and Guy Burgess, http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/prescriptive_elicitive_training/ (accessed November 7, 2008).

points, and what the funder wants may seem completely unreasonable, impossible, or counterproductive to the people on the ground. When such a difference of expectations occurs, it requires negotiation with the funder, which can be almost as challenging as negotiating with the conflicting parties. But the same rules of good negotiation apply: listen respectfully; try to understand the other side's underlying interests; explain your concerns and interests, values, and needs; and try to find a mutual accommodation. Usually, the funder is the one with the ultimate power—if it withdraws (or does not award or renew) the funds, the project will come to a close. So the key is to keep the funder on your side by educating it about the challenges on the ground, why you are designing your process as you are, and, if changes need to be made, why they were made and what the outcomes were. (See step 5, on evaluation, for more on this topic.)

Most funders are reasonable and understand the difficulties entailed in track II work. But they also want to be assured that their grantees are able to address those difficulties successfully and stand a reasonable chance of achieving their goals. Funders certainly do not want to fund projects that are likely to do harm. Making sure that one's process design is good, that one's implementation is consistent, and that one deals with challenges in a transparent and sensible way usually goes a long way toward satisfying a funder's concerns, which in turn helps maintain the flow of funds to the project.



STEP 4

Conduct Track II Activities

The manner in which any track II activity is conducted depends on what the activity is. However, several implementation challenges are present in almost all situations. These include building trust, adjusting goals and strategies as necessary to meet unanticipated needs and unexpected events, managing “people problems” and group dynamics, overcoming obstacles, and managing power inequities. Working with the media and coordinating with track I and other track II programs are other tasks that feature in many track II efforts.

Manage Distrust and Build Trust

Building trust between the intervenors and the participants and among the participants themselves is critical and challenging. Before that is possible, however, one must deal with the high degree of distrust that exists between the parties, and often between each of the parties and the intervenor or the intervention process. For adversaries, not trusting the other is safer, as it does not leave one vulnerable to attacks or abuse from one’s own side—or from the adversary if things go wrong. Being wary of the intervenor is also logical. It protects the parties from harm if the intervenor turns out to favor the other side or otherwise act in ways that are perceived as dangerous or hostile to a participant. As a first step toward building trust, intervenors need to ask themselves what the risks are to the participants if and when they engage in the process. What will happen to them if things go wrong—if an embarrassing story becomes public, for example, or if the other side reneges on an agreement? While these risks cannot be completely avoided, working with the participants to develop a process that limits potential damage can be helpful in transforming distrust into trust.

Usually very little trust exists at the beginning of an activity so the process needs to be designed to allow relationships to be built and trust to be earned. In order for the trainer, mediator, or facilitator to earn the participants' trust, it is important to

- treat all participants equally and with respect and dignity at all times, and to encourage all the participants to do the same;
- create an environment that makes the participants feel comfortable and safe;
- let each party know that the trainer, mediator, or facilitator is listening to them, understands their problems and how they feel about them, cares about their problems, and can serve as a resource to help them address those problems;
- show that the trainer, mediator, or facilitator has no stake in the outcome of the conflict that will prevent the participants from pursuing their own interests and goals (“stake” can include high pay; highly paid intervenors may be suspected of wanting a settlement for their own financial benefit, which is why unpaid—and usually independently wealthy—intervenors may have more credibility with the parties);
- never assign blame, criticize or judge a participant or party, or tell the participants what they must do (though one can enforce mutually agreed upon ground rules in a respectful way);
- ask nonthreatening, open-ended questions; and
- listen empathetically, reframe unclear or unnecessarily hostile language sympathetically, and encourage others to do the same.³¹

The participants, too, need to be able to earn one another's respect and trust, though this happens slowly over time. Typically, a facilitator will first engage the participants in “easy” tasks, such as discussing familiar and nonthreatening subjects. Many start with icebreakers, exercises that are designed to help people get to know each other as people, not as adversaries. Sometimes, for example, dyads or small groups are asked to introduce themselves to each other and talk about something completely unrelated to the conflict—for instance, their jobs (if they are not conflict-relevant) or their personal interests.

The Public Conversations Project usually starts its dialogues with meals at which people are allowed to talk to each other about anything except the conflict at hand and their views on it. This helps people make connections with each other and begin to see the commonalities between them, before they begin to focus on differences.

After the icebreaking stage, the facilitator can move on to relatively easy conflict-related tasks. A common one is setting the ground rules for the process. These are usually fairly noncontroversial, yet collaborating to set ground rules gives participants a sense of accomplishment. They learn that they can, indeed, work together and make progress. In addition, if the ground rules are collaboratively set, the participants are more likely to follow them, and will often self-police each other when the ground rules are broken. This is helpful on several levels: it generates buy-in, it generates a sense of progress and success, and the ground rules themselves create a positive working environment. Those three things together, over time, help build trust and commitment to the process.

Trust also tends to build with familiarity. In workshops that bring people together for several days of uninterrupted discussion, the participants have no option but to interact with “the other” continuously: during meetings, at meals, in the gym in the morning, and at the bar at night. They tell stories and connect on a human level—learning that they share the same fears, needs, and concerns. As these commonalities are discovered, so too is trust, respect, and friendship that enable the process to go forward effectively.

The timing of such a process largely depends on the depth of animosities and the extent of interpersonal fear and distrust. When processes are undertaken with people on both sides who are eager to work with the other side to build relationships and find new approaches for seeking peace—members of “the peace constituency”—this can be fairly easy and the process can move quickly. When working with people who are more skeptical about the feasibility of working successfully with the other side, the process must proceed much more slowly.

Some people even think it helps to allow the initial hostility and anger to come out—so rather than setting ground rules prohibiting personal attacks early on (as many do) they start by allowing parties to vent. This allows participants to feel as if they have shown the depth of their feelings

and are not being forced to be someone they are not. But the venting is done in a controlled environment, and is not allowed to escalate. It is taken as a starting point, from which the facilitator moves to reframe from hostility to new ways of approaching both the people and the problem.

ICR practitioner Jay Rothman developed what he calls the “ARIA Framework”—a process that slowly moves people from “Antagonism,” to “Resonance, to Invention, to Action.” In the first, antagonistic portion of his workshops, Rothman expects the parties to behave negatively toward each other. They focus on the profound differences in their positions, usually in “Us vs. Them” terms. They are encouraged to vent their frustrations and anger in a controlled way, but, they make their feelings about the other and the situation very clear. Rothman then helps them to reframe their very opposed positions into interests and needs. All sides have a need for security, all sides have a need to honor and confirm their identity, and as Rothman points out, identity and security are not zero-sum, but are actually self-reinforcing. The more one side feels secure, the less it will feel a need to attack the other side, so the more the other side will feel secure as well. This understanding leads to what Rothman calls “Resonance.” The ARIA framework then keeps building on this resonance to invent new approaches to problems and devise ways to put them into action. This can take a very long time; it is seldom accomplished in a day or even a week, and can take months or even years.³²

Refine Goals and Strategies as Needed

Although the people who designed the process probably defined the goals initially, these goals may change as the process goes on. Formative evaluation (evaluation that takes place as the activity is ongoing) may suggest that the initial goals were too ambitious or not ambitious enough. The agenda might have been too wide or too narrow. Needs and interests of the participants may be different from those initially expected.

Effective intervenors are flexible, yet unbreakable. Their guiding principles are immutable and they will be very reluctant to abandon particular goals, ground rules, and other key elements of their chosen approach, but they also are able to recognize what can be changed without imperiling the overall purpose of the activity and what should be modified to make the activity more fruitful. Being able to adapt both the process and the substance to unanticipated situations is important if maximum

impact is to be achieved. If an approach is not working, it should be changed. Disappointments in one area may well lead to breakthroughs in another. Flexibility, creativity, and resilience are keys to success.

For example, an intervenor who plans to work with several key local leaders should anticipate that some of those people may be unwilling to participate and should have ideas for other people who could fill the same roles. Similarly, if a training plan does not seem to be resonating, do not stick with it, change it. Work with the participants to figure out what they want and need (and how that differs from what you are providing). In the story about Lederach and the “gringo training,” Lederach quickly learned that his initial training plan was based on what has come to be called the “North American model” for mediation. The mediator is an outsider neutral. Insider partial mediation is more culturally appropriate in Central and South America, he learned that day, as he talked to the participants about why they said their compatriots “looked like gringos.” Lederach tried to adjust the training as best he could at the time of that first intervention, but he has adapted his trainings much more in the years hence.

In addition to challenges, unexpected opportunities sometimes arise. If intervenors are present in a conflict area for a long time, they begin to be trusted and seen more like a local than are those practitioners who fly in for a week and then leave again. That means, if problems develop when locals seek outside assistance, the track II providers who are there and are known and trusted are likely to be sought more than those who are far away and unknown. If practitioners are alert to changing conditions, they can often move into areas that were closed to them before.

Deal with “People Problems” and Group Dynamics

Even when participants are carefully screened before participating, “people problems” often develop and group dynamics may be challenging. Especially at the beginning of a process, people are likely to be very hostile or reserved toward people from the other side of the conflict. Participants arrive with very different worldviews, badly flawed stereotypes, different norms of communication (e.g., explicit or allusive), and different expectations about the process and the anticipated outcomes. Often, participants expect (and behave) as if they were in an adversarial process, such as a court case or a traditional hard bargaining process. It can take some time to convince them that this process is something different and

some participants are never persuaded. (This is one instance in which elicitive approaches may not be optimal; if the predominant approach is adversarial, then embracing that approach is likely to lead to more conflict, not less.) Participants need to be coaxed into using alternative nonadversarial processes (dialogues, integrative bargaining, analytical problem solving, etc.) as an alternative to adversarial bargaining.

In order to facilitate such a transformation of attitudes, expectations, and behaviors, intervenors and trainers need to take control quickly, making the ground rules for interaction and behavior clear. If participants strongly resist ground rules requiring nonadversarial behavior, the intervenor might opt to be prescriptive and urge the participants to give this “new approach” a chance. (The intervenor, it should be noted, can never force the participants to do so.) But if participants are at least somewhat amenable to new approaches, then it can be helpful to suggest a set of nonadversarial norms for interaction, explain why these ground rules are needed, and invite discussion. At this point, participants can modify and/or add rules until they come up with norms of interaction that are acceptable to everyone. This process of discussion and revision of the ground rules gives participants a taste of working together in a cooperative manner, makes participants more likely to buy into the ground rules, and encourages them to engage in self-enforcement when violations occur.

However, such cooperative generation of the ground rules is more appropriate in some situations than it is in others. For instance, one assumption of both dialogue processes and interactive problem solving is that the conflict is driven by a set of relationships and norms of interaction that contribute to escalation and perpetuation of the conflict. Facilitators of dialogues and problem-solving workshops, therefore, generally set out an alternative set of norms for interaction that, they explain, tend to improve relationships and deescalate conflict. Although participants can add more ground rules and perhaps modify the set of norms in minor ways, facilitators usually resist efforts to make significant changes. Because the workshops are private and confidential, participants usually feel safe enough to adopt these new forms of behavior. The goal is to help participants eventually understand that these new norms are more constructive than their existing approaches, and thus persuade them not only to use these newly learned behaviors outside of the workshop setting but also to encourage others on the outside to adopt such behavioral norms.

Strong emotions can be particularly disruptive, especially when they are expressed to the detriment of other participants or the process as a whole, or when they are unexpressed but allowed to build, sometimes to a point at which very angry or frustrated individuals either explode in rage or leave the process. Ways of dealing with strong emotions vary considerably from one culture to another, and the task becomes especially tricky when working with multicultural groups, as some cultures accept and expect the direct expression of emotions, while others do not. If overt discussion of emotions is culturally acceptable, using active listening to tease out emotions and deal with them proactively is often helpful. Sometimes processes are specifically designed to let each side exhibit their emotions through “venting,” though care must be taken to prevent escalation during such processes. Setting ground rules that prohibit personal attacks and encourage participants to focus on problems, not people, and to reframe strong negative statements in more palatable ways can allow the emotions to be expressed and handled without derailing the process.

If the participants’ culture frowns on the expression of certain emotions, yet those emotions seem to be roiling just below the surface, separating the participants temporarily and letting them cool down can help defuse tensions. Another tactic is to enlist an intermediary to translate and carry messages back and forth between the two sides until a calmer atmosphere can be created and maintained.

Address Power Inequalities

The parties to a conflict are rarely evenly matched in terms of power (in terms, that is, of the ability to accomplish what they want, whether by political, military, economic, or other means), and the greater the disparities in power, the greater the problems posed for many track II (as well as track I) processes.

In the first place, the higher-power party in a conflict may be reluctant to participate in a track II activity because it sees no benefit in doing so or because it fears that participation will exact a cost—such as having to give up some of its power. Consequently, the purpose and the process design must be clarified and made sufficiently attractive and safe to attract the higher-power party so that they will participate. One way to accomplish this is to persuade that party that it can participate without losing power—and that participation might even enhance its ability to satisfy its needs

rather than diminishing them. (When these processes are used in stalemated situations, as they often are, this is not a hard argument to make, as no progress is being made otherwise.) track II intervenors need to find the people who, even in hard times when distrust and anger are high, realize that violence and conflict escalation is not a way to meet their own needs. A small cadre of such individuals can keep the candle of peace alive—hopefully—until calmer heads prevail in the general populace and track I environments.

A second concern is that the stronger players may not take the weaker players seriously, and the weaker players may feel reluctant or unable to participate fully. A third problem arises from the fact that power differences can affect the objectives of participants. For instance, it has been observed that in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Palestinians often participate in track II activities with the express purpose of fostering changes in Israeli political views, while Israeli participants tend to be more concerned with establishing lines of communication and building social connections.³³ When powerful groups' political views remain unchanged, weaker parties sometimes view track II processes as ignoring the power imbalances and not addressing the central problems in the conflict.³⁴

Although little can be done by track II actors to change the power differentials in the conflict itself, the process designers and facilitators can do a great deal to change the power dynamics within the track II setting. This, indeed, is a key to success.

The first step for dealing with power differences is to ensure that everyone who has been chosen to participate is accepted as a legitimate party at the table. Simply by agreeing to let lower-power groups participate, the intervenors and the high-power groups are taking one step toward power equalization. In addition, ground rules must state that all participants be treated and addressed in the same way. For instance, either formal names should be used for everyone, or informal names should be used for all. Using formal names and titles for representatives of the powerful parties and informal (e.g., first names) for members of the lower-power parties reinforces power distinctions. Seating arrangements must also be designed so that so all groups feel they are participating as equals.

The resources and skills available to the parties should also be equalized as much as possible within the track II setting. Typically, the powerful

groups have large staffs to do preparatory work and extensive experience with political discussions and negotiations. The lower-power groups have no such staffs and often little political or negotiating experience. All parties stand to benefit from efforts by the track II intervenor to give the lower-power groups extra time to prepare for discussions and negotiations and assistance in analyzing issues and formulating and articulating their substantive concerns. The more evenly matched the parties are in these respects, the more likely they are to have a productive discussion.

Overcome External Obstacles

Although separate from track I, all track II dialogues still take place in the political context of the region and conflict they are trying to address. Like others in an escalated political conflict, track II participants are affected by the news and by the ups and downs of official diplomatic initiatives. When hostility increases in the relationship between the two sides, track II participants tend to become wary and distrustful of each other and of proposed (or ongoing) track II processes. Yet, as noted earlier, this is when track II is the most important and stands to make the most progress, thus track II providers should not give up.

Rather, they need to go underground and try to continue to operate, but at a much less visible level. This is where having established networks can be extremely valuable. If you have a cadre of local people who know you and trust you, you can work through them to set up track II processes without setting off alarm bells in—and without inviting harassment or obstruction from—the outside community.

A key to successful recruitment, therefore, is providing good cover. Although promises of absolute secrecy should never be made because they probably can not be honored, participants should be protected from outside eyes as much as possible. Media should never be involved, and strict ground rules should be set for participants about confidentiality. Confidentiality, participants should be persuaded, protects everyone, themselves included. While someone might still leak information about the track II effort to the outside, those leaks usually hurt the source of the leak as much as they hurt the others—a fact that can be used as one of several grounds to encourage compliance with confidentiality rules.

It is also useful to have venues in which people can meet without first having to secure official permission. If track I parties are at each others' throats, they are likely to see any track I process as a threat. So officials are unlikely to issue visas allowing participants to travel "to the other side" or otherwise try to prevent such meetings. Thus, track II processes, if they are to continue, must be very low key, running under all official and media radar.

Overcome Internal Obstacles

Internal obstacles also pose problems. Participants who were enthusiastic at the beginning may become less so over time if the process is not addressing their interests or needs or unfolding in the way they had expected, or they may become increasingly apprehensive about the direction of the discussion and increasingly obstinate and hostile. Care must be taken to enforce ground rules of interaction to redirect and work through hostility and negotiate around stumbling blocks. A particular issue that is too technically complex or politically charged to deal with by the full group can be delegated to a smaller group of people who have the expertise to grapple with it and who are willing to do so. Another approach is to put difficult topics aside and deal with easier topics first. Then, as participants become more comfortable with the process and each other, they may be more willing to tackle the more difficult topic.

Participant turnover is another commonly encountered problem. Most track II processes work best if they involve the same people working together over a substantial period of time, be it a week, once a week, or once a month for a year or more. The longer the time that people have to get to know one another, and the longer they have to build trust with one another and with the process, the better. By the same token, however, the departure of a regular participant presents a problem because his or her replacement will not have the same history of interaction and of understanding and trust built up over time. Especially in the cases of processes that are spread out over months and years, intervenors should strive to persuade participants to stay with the process. This can be done by making it clear how essential each person's participation is, and by urging participants not to sacrifice the significant effort and time they have already invested. Peers can be encouraged to make the same arguments as well (and often do so without encouragement, because loss of continuity hurts everyone, not just the

person leaving). But if a participant is determined to exit, the intervenor should do as much as possible to make the newcomer feel comfortable with the people and the process as soon as possible.

Coordinate with Other Processes

As this handbook has sought to emphasize, many different kinds of intervenors conducting various kinds of interventions are usually found within each complex conflict. Amid such a profusion of track I and track II activity, it is not possible—but also, fortunately, not necessary—for all intervenors to know at all times what all the other intervenors are doing. Track II actors will find it very useful, however, to have a good idea of which other third-party actors are active in the conflict and a general understanding of what each of them is doing.

Among its other advantages, this kind of awareness will reveal opportunities to cooperate with other intervenors. Such cooperation can take many forms, from sharing information, to collaborating on service delivery by combining events, projects, or programs. One typology summarizes the various forms of relating to other intervenors as the “four Cs”:

- communication (sharing information, sharing analysis);
- coordination (planning together, synchronizing activities);
- cooperation (resource sharing, maximizing the impact of separate initiatives); and
- collaboration (working in collaboration, maximizing the impact of joint initiatives).³⁵

Communication is the lowest level of relating (i.e., it is the easiest to accomplish), but it can nonetheless be very useful. Media reports on conflict situations are usually highly suspect: they are inevitably incomplete, almost always inaccurate to some degree, and often slanted. Intervenors are likely to get a more reliable sense of what is happening on the ground by sharing information and analyses with other intervenors. Moreover, some kinds of information (such as which areas are safe to work in and which individuals should be recruited for workshops) can only be obtained by talking to colleagues, acquaintances, and other contacts. The broader one’s network, the more information one can obtain

and the more varied the range of analyses and strategies one can consider. In stressful situations—as most arenas for track II activity are—multiple perspectives on the same information are likely to generate a keener understanding of the situation and a more effective range of options.

“When the Conflict Management Group (CMG) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) worked together on the Georgian-Ossetian Dialogue Project, NRC’s staff in the conflict zone not only provided CMG (based in Cambridge, Mass.) with information on local developments related to the peace process, but also participated actively with CMG staff in analyzing the implications of those developments.”²²⁶

Communication between track I and track II is also valuable. Track I mediators can talk with track II facilitators about stumbling blocks encountered in track I deliberations that might be paralleled in a track II meeting. Alternatively, track II facilitators can share with track I actors creative ideas that emerged from a track II problem-solving workshop that might help move a track I negotiation forward. Although both track I and track II negotiations are almost always confidential, intervenors can usually secure permission from the negotiators to share potentially useful information with a few key people involved in other negotiations.

Coordination, which involves a closer degree of cooperation than does communication, can be particularly useful in preventing duplication of effort. Coordination between multiple track II actors allows them to divide up tasks according to their specific strengths and interests, as well as according to the areas (geographic, topical, or procedural) in which they are active. Moreover, each track can engage in activities that help the other, utilizing its strengths to make up for weaknesses in the other process, and fitting together in a way that is mutually supporting.

“In 1999, the track I intervenors in the Moldovan-Transdnestrian conflict (the OSCE, Russia, and Ukraine) discussed broad plans with the track II intervenors (MICOM, the Moldovan Initiative Committee on Management). This discussion led MICOM to organize a study visit to Northern Ireland with the expert groups from both sides of the conflict and the OSCE, Russian, and Ukrainian mediators. While MICOM’s activities

remained separate from the track I negotiation process, the shared planning allowed for increased complementarity of the separate processes.³⁷

Cooperation goes yet one step further with resource sharing. Resources may include expertise, personnel, or equipment. When one intervenor sees a need that it, alone, is unable to fill, it is very beneficial to have strong enough (and trusting enough) relationships with other groups—either track I or track II—to which they can turn for assistance. An NGO that finds itself involved in a situation it has not encountered before (for instance, a substantive area about which it knows little or an intervention in a region in which it has not formerly been involved) can benefit greatly from advice provided by other organizations that do have pertinent experience. This sharing of information and expertise commonly occurs among members of the Alliance for Peacebuilding—an umbrella organization of NGOs working for peace around the world.

Cooperation can also involve the sharing of personnel. It is not uncommon for one NGO to send one or two of its people to work with another NGO for a while, and then to trade back. That helps the people being traded learn new skills and make new contacts while broadening the expertise of both organizations. Equipment can also be shared. This can range from small things (computers, LCD projectors) to big things (vehicles), which can be hard to come by in war zones.

Cooperation can also involve sharing of time or resources.

For example, one local NGO in the Georgia-Abkhazia conflict initiated a project to search for missing people but was quickly overwhelmed by the size of the effort. However, the NGO was able to enlist the help of several other NGOs doing peacemaking work in the area. Those NGOs asked around among the people they were dealing with for information about missing people, and by sharing what they found were able to help each other (and more importantly the local families) in their efforts to find loved ones.³⁸

Collaboration, the most intensive form of coordination, involves two or more organizations planning and implementing a project together. Collaboration is fairly common in terms of outside organizations partnering with local peacebuilding organizations to provide training, dialogues, or other track II projects. Unfortunately, this kind of collaboration is less common among outside intervenors, which sometimes see one another as

competitors instead of (or as well as) colleagues. Nevertheless, collaboration does occur from time to time, and can yield significant benefits.

*“The NRC and CMG collaborated on a dialogue project addressing the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict. NRC brought strong local presence in the conflict zone and a refugee assistance program to the collaboration, and CMG brought conflict resolution expertise. Together, the two organizations brought about strong improvements in the peace process that neither would likely have been able to facilitate on their own.”*³⁹

Cooperation is not without risks, however, especially cooperation between governments (which tend to dominate track I efforts) and NGOs (which conduct most track II efforts). For some NGOs, close interaction with the disputing and/or intervening governments, especially on the ground in conflict situations, is thought to compromise their impartiality, legitimacy, and effectiveness. (It is difficult to play the role of benevolent and impartial helper when one's partners are viewed as the agents of Western imperialism or as invading or occupying powers by many of the local parties.) An NGO cannot always determine local perceptions of its ties to powerful track I actors, but an NGO that publicly cooperates with such actors will certainly raise local suspicions about its impartiality.

Likewise, some government agencies feel that NGOs pose risks to the track I process (by promising things they cannot deliver, or diverting attention or participants from track I work), so they are reluctant to cooperate or aid them in any way. The most problematic relationship, perhaps, is that between NGOs and military officials. NGOs often want to be seen as impartial and nonviolent, and thus shy away from associating with any armed group—regardless of whether that group is part of one of the parties to the conflict or is part of an international peacekeeping force. This inclination to stay as far away from military intervenors as possible comes at a price, for those forces might be willing to share information with the NGO intervenors or help with their security.

Practical considerations can also hamper coordination. One is that it takes personnel time, which is always in short supply—yet coordination is not always cost-effective, especially if the goals of different organizations or programs are very different and not complementary. Other constraints on coordination are imposed by factors such as confidentiality (which can

significantly limit the sharing of information, but is very important at times as previously discussed) and competition between intervenors for funds, clients, prestige, and contacts.

"At one point in the Northern Uganda peace negotiations there were at least eight institutional players engaged in mediation, most of whom had no knowledge of others. In these cases, the interest or intention [for interaction] may often be there, but is simply not followed through due to pressure of events and perhaps organizational agendas."¹⁰

Another obstacle to coordination occurs when one organization believes association with another will inhibit what it is doing or harm the trust it has developed with its clients or the community overall. This is a particular problem with NGOs needing information (or protection) from military or other security providers, but not wanting to appear as if they are in any way associated with the military, for fear of seeming nonneutral. Sometimes such fears extend a layer out—in other words, NGOs will not cooperate even with other NGOs if those NGOs cooperate with the military. Reputation is very carefully guarded and if cooperation is seen to have the potential to sully reputation, cooperation will not occur.

There are also drawbacks to not cooperating, however. The biggest is creating or perpetuating unnecessary overlap in the kinds of track II work being undertaken and the geographic focus of that work. In many cases, multiple track II processes of the same kind (trainings and dialogues, for instance) are active in one region of a country while other processes (trauma healing, for instance) and other regions are largely ignored.

The peace, humanitarian aid, and development NGO CDA Associates often does an exercise with track II practitioners in which it asks them to draw a diagram on a blackboard or large piece of newsprint, showing all the problems that are hampering effective peacemaking and how they relate to each other. The practitioners are then asked to use another color marker on the same diagram to show in what areas they and other track II actors they know about are working. Invariably, Peter Woodrow of CDA associates reports, all of the work will be focused on one or two problem areas, while most of the others remain unaddressed.

In addition to creating gaps, overlapping work wastes everyone's time and money and can be used by disputants to their advantage, as they can "work" one group against another—participating only in the process that

they think is most in their favor. The wasted time and money also result in lost opportunities and diminished overall effectiveness.

Such wastefulness can be avoided by taking the following measures:

- Create more opportunities for regular communication and relationship development between track I and track II professionals. Cooperation, coordination, and/or collaboration never happen without trust. Trust is built by frequent contact, testing, and confirmation of people's reliability. By getting to know people over time, both sides can determine who does and does not know what they are doing, what they are talking about, and who has the willingness and ability to follow through on their promises and commitments. Once the two tracks establish contact with each other, the benefits of frequent communication become clear and steps are likely to be taken to ensure it occurs regularly. In addition to holding regular meetings, the two tracks often find it helpful to adopt the practice of exchanging calls routinely—maybe once a week—with specific contact people to find out what the other track is doing.
- Whenever possible, establish a long-term presence in a region. A long-term presence gives track II practitioners not only the knowledge they need to “know what they are talking about” but also the chance to develop trusting and meaningful relationships both with the local citizens and with the track I practitioners. (NGOs and others that have been in a country for some time but doing work other than track II conflict resolution can often act as brokers and sometimes directly as intervenors or conveners themselves. Examples include the Norwegian research organization FAFO in the Middle East, the Catholic lay organization Sant'Egidio in Mozambique, and the Norwegian Relief organization in Mali. Useful partnerships can be organized through such entities.)
- The same is true for track I intervenors, of course. If they come and go quickly, they will not have the ability to connect to the track II practitioners in a way that allows the mutual development of trust and therefore effective collaboration.
- Develop greater understanding of the diverse roles track I and track II actors play in different contexts, appreciating that the roles may evolve over time and rejecting the all-too-common assumption that a single actor can or should fulfill all the functions involved in a peace process.⁴¹ A peace effort usually builds on what went before, and even though an

earlier effort may have looked like a failure, it may have prepared the ground in some way for a more successful effort either by the same party or by other subsequent parties. The key to effective cooperation between track I and track II actors on the scene at any given time is to share a vision about what each other's track's role is, and how they can mutually support each other and enhance each other's efforts. Track I and II practitioners should meet early on (and then meet regularly) to determine who is going to do what, what each expects of the other, and what one track does *not* want the other track to do.

- Implement flexible and adaptive joint planning processes that evolve in changing environments. This is largely already covered above, but the key notion here is flexibility. As the situation changes, needs change. If joint planning is ongoing, both track I and track II need to be able to respond in adaptive ways. One track may become more active in a particular geographic or substantive area while the other withdraws from that area. Rules for interaction and intervention should not remain fixed, but should adapt to the needs as they develop.
- Integrate newcomers into the existing network of collaborators. Trust is not built immediately, but if new people are introduced to a network by current, trusted collaborators, those newcomers will more rapidly acquire the local knowledge and contacts necessary to become effective collaborators. If they are left out of the collaboration network, they are more likely to work at cross-purposes with others (if even unintentionally) and are likely to develop distrust of the group from which they are excluded.
- Where appropriate, create explicit roles for convening and facilitating cooperative efforts. Meetings do not happen without convenors and facilitators. Ideally, one “well-networked” track II person should team with a well-networked track I person to jointly convene and facilitate regular meetings. This task can be very demanding in terms of time and work, and so it should be shared, with responsibility rotating among the members of a network or group. If everyone feels the results are worthwhile, they will be more likely to accept the extra work, especially if it is periodic.
- Identify and capitalize on examples of successful cooperation, and apply lessons learned, as appropriate, to other contexts.⁴² These examples can come from the current context or elsewhere. The more people who are

involved in collaboration meetings, the more experience that can be brought to bear on the current problems, and the more ideas for potential synergistic responses that can be developed. Very large meetings, however, tend to allow less time than do smaller meetings for participants to discuss problems and ideas. Thus, it is necessary to strike a balance between size of meetings and richness of discussion.⁴³

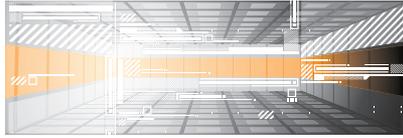
Handle the Media

The way in which the media are dealt with varies tremendously from one process to another—from complete media invisibility (it is hoped) to complete media involvement. Processes that demand confidentiality—processes such as interactive conflict resolution and most dialogues—cannot, of course, occur with media present: the parties would not be willing to talk candidly, take risks of saying things that would not play well in the public eye, or explore new modes of interacting or new ideas for solving their mutual problems. In these processes, discussions must remain private unless all of the participants agree to release a statement or tell their constituents enough about the process to generate opinions and ideas from those constituents that can be fed back into the process.

At the other extreme are processes that depend on the media. For instance, programs seeking to promote tolerance and cooperative problem solving among the broader public typically rely on television or radio to help them spread their message to their target audiences.

Between these two extremes are those projects that seek to use the media at particular phases in their work. Some projects (utilizing negotiation, ICR, dialogue, or practically anything else), begin by conducting private discussions, then try to reach out to a broader constituency in an effort to scale up processes or impacts, and then withdraw into private processes to delve deeper into particular issues or to build greater mutual understanding between the participants.

Whatever approach is taken to the media, everyone involved in a process—including the media—should clearly understand what can be publicized and what cannot, and why. If the media understand the importance of keeping some issues private, they will be more likely (though by no means guaranteed) to respect that privacy.



STEP 5

Undertake Follow-up Activities and Evaluation

Evaluation must be planned in advance and carried out throughout the duration of track II processes. The benefits of evaluation are not limited to the latter stages of a project. Assessment and reassessment of goals, documentation of all activities (what was done, by whom, and with whom), and outcomes (both successes and failures) are actually beneficial throughout a project's lifecycle—from the planning stages, through project implementation, and after a project concludes. Even if evaluation is carried out formally only at the end, the degree to which goals are established and change strategies are made explicit initially will make evaluating the program at the end easier and more effective. Similarly, follow-up activities—such as scaling up the impact of an initially limited project—are more likely to be fruitful if they are worked into the project's design from the beginning.

Plan For and Initiate Follow-up Activities

If changes accomplished in any track II process are to be maintained and implemented, follow-up activities, actions, and in some cases institutions must be explicitly planned for. What is called the “reentry” problem makes it difficult for participants to maintain their newly developed relationships and more conciliatory attitudes toward the other side when they leave the process setting and go home to their communities, which maintain a much more hostile stance toward “the other.” If the positive attitudes and behaviors are to be maintained, or better yet transferred further, frequent reinforcement needs to take place—either through continued cross-group contacts (emails, phone

calls, letters, visits), follow-on joint projects, or fairly frequent follow-up meetings.

Similarly, if plans are made to implement follow-up activities, these need to be set in motion before people leave, and explicit responsibilities, dates, and “deliverables” need to be specified. Even then, it is often hard to keep the interest, excitement, and momentum alive once the group goes home—so frequent follow-up cross-group contact is vitally important. The continuing process of developing plans for follow-up meetings and for work to do between those meetings can also help keep momentum going and interest in peacemaking alive. The key is to keep people engaged with the process—and the cross-group contacts they have formed—after the process ends. If action is not taken frequently to maintain dialogue and engagement, the process will wither as people become increasingly distracted by their day-to-day business and as the memories of the relationships made and ideas developed in the workshop or dialogue become less and less current or important in their day-to-day lives.

Document the Activity Thoroughly

Another important aspect of follow-up is documentation. As noted earlier, evaluation is best done throughout the intervention process. In practice, however, evaluation, if it is done at all, is typically done at the end. This is better than nothing, and a post facto evaluation can reveal a lot of useful information to the track II providers and others if the evaluation is made public. Even if a formal evaluation is not completed, documenting what was done, why (what was the strategy of change?), with whom, and with what outcomes is important for the intervenors and is likely to be of use to the participants and (if confidentiality rules permit wider distribution) to outside observers.

In addition to offering practical lessons for future interventions, an evaluation of specific track II activities presents an opportunity to test the efficacy of those theories that may have guided (implicitly or explicitly) the intervenor's activities. The link between the theories an intervenor uses and the intervenor's evaluation of success is usually ignored in the literature on evaluation.

The goal of most track II interventions is to have as wide an impact as possible. Some interventions focus on individual-level change, but even

those assume that if one changes enough individuals, a wider benefit will also occur. If this is to happen, others must learn from the intervention's successes and failures. For processes that are intended for wider audiences initially, evaluation is even more important as more people are affected by the track II effort, and more is to be gained or lost through its success or failure. Thus, documenting what has been done, what worked, and what did not work for all processes is very important if track II efforts are to be as successful as possible.

Undertake an Evaluation

Track II intervenors need to decide early on what their goals are and what their level of intervention and particular process is going to be. Then they need to design an evaluation process that starts at the beginning of the intervention (or before, if one considers conflict assessment to be part of the evaluation). Care must be taken to match the goals of the evaluation to the goals and objectives of the particular process. Evaluations with goals that differ from the goals of the intervention can distract participants and lead to inappropriate critiques and conclusions. Evaluations using appropriate criteria, however, provide realistic feedback and guidance for constructive change—as the intervention is happening and at the end (for future interventions or follow-up activities).

Formative evaluation—the evaluation that takes place during an intervention—usually involves a structured process of reflection on the intervention: the agenda, the procedures, and the outcomes so far. The purpose is to provide input to the intervenors about what is working well and what might be changed. It is usually done by the intervenors themselves or sometimes with outsiders working in conjunction with the process providers. Common approaches include surveys of participants, reflective dialogues, observations, and interviews. Another useful approach is to appoint a project historian who can chronicle the evolution of the initiative, describing the stages through which it passes and (with due respect for the need for confidentiality) assessing what actually happens before, during, and after specific activities.

Formative evaluation usually improves the intervention process and maximizes the likelihood of beneficial outcomes. In addition, it promotes individual and social learning, increases awareness of what is working well and what is not, and continues to build relationships among participants

and between the intervenors and the participants. This evaluation usually does not happen unless it is explicitly built into the initial plan of the intervention, with funding and time explicitly allocated to such endeavors.

Summative evaluation, done at the end of an intervention, focuses on the overall effectiveness of the program. This kind of evaluation determines what worked well and what did not—what aspects of the intervention could be considered successful and which were not (and why). Measurement strategies include those of formative evaluation (surveys, dialogues, and interviews) as well as interviews with the intervenors and analysis of documents and media.

In summative evaluation, the definition of success is key and tricky. Generally, success needs to be measured on the basis of the stated goals and at the appropriate level. If the goal of the process was simply to change immediate attitudes of participants, using a postintervention survey to assess attitudinal change is minimally acceptable—and more valuable if a preintervention survey was taken as well. Either way, however, attitudinal changes tend to disappear quickly once participants go back into their normal environments and resume their everyday activities, which is why a measure of attitudes several months or even years later may give a better insight into the long-term effect of the intervention.

If the goal was more than individual attitude change, then ways need to be developed to measure associated behavioral change and transference. Do the behaviors of the participants change over time? How? Are there other explanations for this change? How many of the ideas developed in the track II process were carried forward into a track I process? How many of these ideas actually did get implemented? Such measurements get increasingly complicated the further away one tries to get from the original intervention—in terms of either time or people. Intervening or extenuating factors also must be considered. Before an intervention can be declared successful or unsuccessful, it is important to consider what other factors, beyond the intervention, affected the ultimate goal of the process—be it attitudinal change or “peace writ large” (i.e., not just the short term cessation of hostilities, but the remedy of underlying social tensions and attenuated relationships that led to the conflict in the first place).⁴⁴ Although the details of evaluation are extensive, the primary issues and options are summarized in table 2.

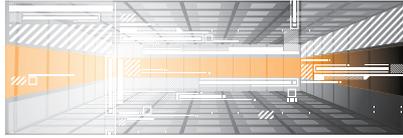
Table 2. Types of Evaluation

Type of Evaluation	Assessment	Formative	Summative
Objectives	<p>Generate information useful to a specific conflict resolution process before commencement of a formal intervention to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ decide if a conflict resolution process can work, ▶ design the conflict resolution process, and ▶ select the appropriate type of intervention. 	<p>Generate information useful to a specific conflict resolution process during the formal intervention to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ promote more constructive and thoughtful engagement ▶ enable process corrections that can improve the conflict resolution outcome. 	<p>Generate knowledge about a specific conflict resolution process or a whole class of similar processes to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ help disputants, funders, and intervenors assess the effectiveness of a completed intervention.
Audience	Participants, potential intervenors, funders	Participants, funders, intervenor, prospective users, social theorists	Participants, funders, intervenor, conflict resolution community,
Purpose in Knowledge-Oriented Evaluation	To add knowledge useful for interested parties, particularly those outside the dispute such as funders, the conflict resolution community, and social theorists; improve the conflict resolution process and help resolve the conflict itself.		
Who Conducts the Evaluation	Intervenor, disputants	Intervenor, participants, and/or nonaffiliated researcher	

Table 2. Types of Evaluation (continued)

Type of Evaluation	Assessment	Formative	Summative
Means	<p>A wide array of techniques are useful at multiple levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ observation ▶ in-depth interviews ▶ surveys ▶ focus groups ▶ analysis ▶ reports ▶ dialogue with participants about findings 		
Outcome	Immediate feedback, analysis	On-going feedback, analysis	Evaluative analysis and feedback, best practices, program recommendations, improvements of theory and practice

Source: Reprinted from Michael Elliot, Tamra Pearson d'Estrée, and Sandra Kaufman, "Evaluation as a Tool for Reflection," in Heidi Burgess and Guy Burgess, ed., *Beyond Intractability*, http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/Evaluation_Reflection/, accessed November 1, 2008.



CONCLUSION

Keep Your Eye on the Big Picture

To achieve peace in today's complex conflicts, a wide variety of interventions need to be undertaken by a diverse cast of would-be peacemakers working with an equally diverse cast of local actors at different phases of the conflict. Track II interventions typically are the first to be undertaken, plowing the ground to make it more fertile for track I efforts at a later time.

Track II actors can start to work around the purveyors of hatred and fear—those who nurture violence—through various activities with small groups of independent thinkers who believe that there must be alternative, nonviolent ways to deal with their conflicts. By providing informal, low-profile, and low-key opportunities to explore alternative approaches with “the other”—through interactive problem-solving workshops and cross-conflict group dialogues—a few brave individuals can begin to forge a new way forward, long before the parties would be willing to sit down at the negotiating table.

These quiet efforts can slowly be magnified by more open and larger-scale efforts such as peace and tolerance education in schools and/or on the airwaves. As the peace constituency expands, the ground for track I negotiations becomes much more fertile. This is not meant to imply that a peace constituency alone will make peace possible—it will not. Leaders must still be willing to enter into—and conclude—peace negotiations. This often involves admitting they were wrong to get into the conflict in the first place or that they did not fight well enough to win. This is a very hard step for leaders to take—and they often do not until there is enough outside pressure on them to change their cost-benefit calculations to the point where peace seems potentially more advantageous than continued war. However, once leaders are ready to negotiate, the potential for the

successful culmination and implementation of an agreement increases considerably if the peace constituency behind them is large.

Track II does not stop, however, when track I starts. It proceeds simultaneously as well, sometimes feeding ideas into the track I process, and sometimes supporting the track I process by helping out with research, training, and other assigned or requested tasks. And track II also can continue the work with mid-level leaders and the public to further enlarge the size of the grassroots peace constituency. This is critically important because this constituency must be large and committed by the time any peace agreement is signed, as it is the mid-level leaders, along with the grassroots, who are going to determine the success or failure of implementation of any agreement. If an agreement is signed by elite negotiators but not supported by the people on the ground, it will never hold. A single spoiler may be able to reignite the flames of conflict, and the peace agreement will be quickly forgotten. A large grassroots and mid-level peace constituency, however, can act like firefighters, who will be able to quickly pour water on the fire built by a few would-be spoilers.

An example of unsuccessful spoilers is the shooting of two British troops—and shortly thereafter a police officer—in Northern Ireland in March 2009. Presumably the intent of the perpetrators was to reignite “The Troubles” between Northern Ireland and Great Britain. But by 2009, the peace constituency in Northern Ireland was so strong that few people wanted a renewal of conflict. Rather, leaders on all sides immediately denounced the killings and insisted that all sides work together to bring the killers to justice and maintain the peace.

In his book *The Moral Imagination*,⁴⁵ John Paul Lederach observes that the worst conflicts are transformed by a few people who possess a profound imagination. The moral imagination that he describes has four components. The first is the ability to imagine oneself in a positive relationship with the other. Most people in intractable conflicts assume that the other is evil—that no positive relationship with them will ever be possible. Lederach asserts that people who are going to be able to lift societies out of deadly conflict must be able to see beyond the stereotypes, hatred, and fear to imagine a profoundly changed relationship with the other—one of mutual understanding and support.

The second component is a deep curiosity about what is and what could be. Peacemakers must be able to understand the complexity of the situation they are operating in, but also be curious about other possibilities, new ways of seeing the world and acting within it.

Third, peacemakers must be profoundly creative. “Creativity,” says Lederach, “moves beyond what exists toward something new and unexpected while rising from and speaking to the everyday.”⁴⁶ Lederach focuses on people who have lived their entire lives surrounded by deadly conflict, conditions that have left most people miserable and hopeless. Yet a few, he notices, manage to rise above the fear and the hopelessness to create a vision for a better future. These are the peacemakers who will likely succeed.

While Lederach largely focused on parties internal to the conflict, the same can be said of external intervenors. An anonymous reviewer of a draft of this handbook wisely suggested that some people tend to be able to “think outside the box” better than others, saying “a good rule of thumb for selecting intervenors or facilitators is to avoid the specialists or the experts who know; the more one knows about the conflict or about what ought to work, the less one is able to listen and to imagine.”

Finally, peacemakers, says Lederach, must be willing to take risks. Risk taking requires stepping out of the world of the known, into the world of the unknown. There are no roadmaps, no landmarks, and no guarantees of success. Yet there is the knowledge that there is a possibility of a better place down the road, and a willingness to follow that unknown road to see what is there.

Track II peacemakers would do well to develop Lederach’s moral imagination. By being curious and creative, willing to imagine new relationships and take risks, track II peacemakers can work to create a new landscape of peace.

Notes

1. Louise Diamond and John W. McDonald, *Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace* (Kumarian Press, 1996); and John McDonald, "Multi-Track Diplomacy," in *Beyond Intractability*, ed. Heidi Burgess and Guy Burgess, http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/multi-track_diplomacy/ (accessed March 23, 2009). *Beyond Intractability* is an online knowledge base focusing on constructive approaches to conflict. Launched in 2003, the Beyond Intractability Knowledge Base Project is based at the University of Colorado.
2. This apt metaphor is William Ury's. See his *Getting Past No: Negotiating with Difficult People* (New York: Bantam Books, 1991), 11. An online summary of this is available in *Beyond Intractability*, ed. Burgess and Burgess, <http://www.beyondintractability.org/booksummary/10438/?nid=5486>.
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18. From an interview conducted in fall 2006. A transcript is on the Beyond Intractability Web site, http://www.beyondintractability.org/audio/sandra_melone/.
19. This mission statement is on the Seeds of Peace Web site, <http://www.seedsofpeace.org/>. See also John Wallach’s book about the Seeds of Peace program, *The Enemy Has a Face: The Seeds of Peace Experience* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2000).
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28. Lederach, *Preparing for Peace*, 37–39.
29. These observations were made by Hannah Reich in an excellent critique of local involvement, "Local Ownership," in *Conflict Transformation Projects: Partnership, Participation or Patronage?* Berghof Occasional Paper no. 27 (Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, 2006), <http://www.berghof-center.org/uploads/download/boc27e.pdf> (accessed March 24, 2010).
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33. See Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *Dialogue, Conflict Resolution, and Change: Arab-Jewish Encounters in Israel*. (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1999), 71.
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36. Susan Allen Nan, "Intervention Coordination," in *Beyond Intractability*, ed. Burgess and Burgess, http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intervention_coordination/ (accessed June 12, 2009).
37. *Ibid.*
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39. *Ibid.*
40. Fisher and Zimina, "Just Wasting Our Time?" 28.
41. See Christopher Mitchell, "The Process and Stages of Mediation: Two Sudanese Cases," in *Making War and Waging Peace: Foreign Intervention in Africa*, ed. David Smock (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993), 146.

42. Susan Allen Nan and Andrea Strimling, “track I–track II Cooperation,” *Beyond Intractability*, ed. Burgess and Burgess, http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/track_1_2_cooperation (accessed June 12, 2009).
43. The material in this bulleted list is drawn from the authors’ own knowledge as well as two *Beyond Intractability* articles: Susan Allen Nan. “Intervention Coordination,” http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intervention_coordination/; and Susan Allen Nan and Andrea Strimling, “track I–track II Cooperation,” http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/track_1_2_cooperation/ (both accessed March 28, 2010).
44. The term “peace writ large” was coined by Mary Anderson (and the Reflecting on Peace Practice Project) to refer to peace as a grand, overarching concept. See Reflecting on Peace Practice Project homepage, http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/project_profile.php?pid=RPP&pname=Reflecting on Peace Practice (accessed March 25, 2010). Another similar term is “stable peace”; see Kenneth Boulding, *Stable Peace* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978).
45. John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
46. John Paul Lederach, transcript of a talk given on *The Moral Imagination* at the 2004 Annual Meeting of the Association for Conflict Resolution, held in Sacramento, CA. Transcript at http://acrnet.org/acrlibrary/more.php?id=49_0_1_0_M (accessed November 9, 2008).

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After receiving his PhD in sociology from the University of Colorado, doing postdoctoral work at MIT, and spending several years doing public policy work, **Guy Burgess** helped establish, with his wife Heidi, the University of Colorado Conflict Information Consortium. For more than twenty years with the Consortium, he has worked to make information on constructive approaches to conflict more accessible. Building on the Consortium's Beyond Intractability knowledge base, Guy leads the development of the Governance Forum, a next generation, online knowledge base and learning community. He also teaches with the Colorado Peace and Conflict Studies Program and the Josef Korbel School of International Studies.

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The University of Colorado Conflict Information Consortium, directed by Guy and Heidi Burgess, was founded in 1988 as a multidisciplinary center for research and teaching about conflict and its transformation. With its primary focus on difficult and intractable conflicts, the Consortium has pioneered efforts to use rapidly advancing information technologies to provide citizens in all walks of life with the information that they need to deal with conflicts more constructively.

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