



ABOUT IMPACT

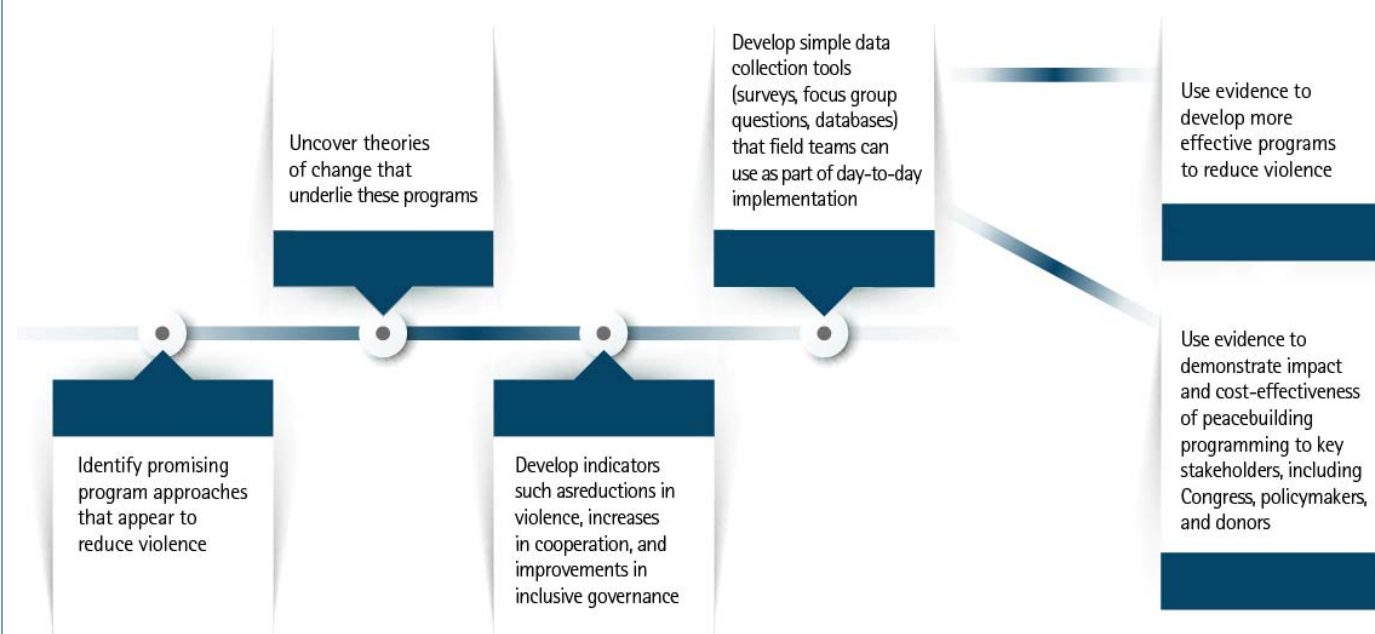
The Initiative to Measure Peace and Conflict Outcomes (IMPACT) was launched by the U.S. Institute of Peace in 2014 with the aim of developing simple, but rigorous, data-collection tools to monitor peacebuilding programs and assess progress toward meaningful objectives, such as reducing violent incidents, resolving disputes, or increasing trust in local government institutions. The goal of the initiative is twofold: to learn important lessons that can be used to improve future programming, and to increase the ability of the field to demonstrate concretely the effectiveness of peacebuilding approaches.

RATIONALE

Many standard techniques for monitoring and evaluating programs and projects are too complicated, too rigid, or too expensive to be implemented in rapidly changing, high-risk areas affected by conflict, where peacebuilders and other practitioners often operate. In addition, although practitioners recognize the importance of demonstrating the impact of their own programs, they often work in isolation from one another, hindering the ability to validate the power of peacebuilding and its cost-effectiveness for key decision-makers. So there is an urgent need to create simple tools that can be used by a wide range of organizations to assess and demonstrate the impact of their work.

Approach

In collaboration with policymakers and practitioners, the Initiative works to



ACTIVITIES

The first set of IMPACT data-collection tools was developed jointly by non-governmental organizations, U.S. government donors, and USIP, and focuses on assessing negotiation- and mediation-training programs. Such programs are used widely based on the theory that if influential local figures acquire these skills, those individuals will play an important role in resolving disputes in their communities that otherwise could turn violent or escalate to fuel broader conflict dynamics.

The set of tools developed in this case consists of a participant survey, focus-group questions, and a database used to track disputes and their outcomes. These mechanisms are intended to measure important results, such as changes in the number and types of disputes resolved, changes in relationships among key figures involved, and changes in levels of violence.

IMPACT is testing the tools on USIP programs in Iraq, Libya, Tunisia, and the Sahel. The Institute also is funding two grantees, the American Friends Service Committee and Mediators Beyond Borders, to test the tools on programs in Guatemala, Haiti, and Kenya. Additionally, four IMPACT partner organizations are testing the tools on their programs this year.

To make the data-collection tools more widely available, USIP plans to release an IMPACT Practitioner Guide in June 2015. In the near future, additional program models will be added to the initiative to allow simple, but rigorous, data collection across a broader range of peacebuilding work.