



## ABOUT IMPACT

The Initiative to Measure Peace and Conflict Outcomes (IMPACT) was launched by the U.S. Institute of Peace in 2014 to develop simple, but rigorous, data-collection tools to monitor peacebuilding programs and assess progress toward objectives such as reducing violent incidents, resolving disputes, or increasing trust in local government institutions. The goal of the initiative is twofold: to learn lessons that can help improve future programming, and to enhance the ability of the field to demonstrate concretely the effectiveness of various 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 the rapidly changing, high-risk areas affected by conflict, where peacebuilders 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, hampering their ability to demonstrate to key decision-makers the power of peacebuilding and its cost-effectiveness. 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

Identify promising program approaches that appear to reduce violence

Uncover theories of change that underlie these programs

Develop indicators such as reductions in violence, increases in cooperation, and improvements in inclusive governance

Develop simple data collection tools (surveys, focus group questions, databases) that field teams can use as part of day-to-day implementation

Use evidence to develop more effective programs to reduce violence

Use evidence to demonstrate the impact of peacebuilding programming to key stakeholders



## ACTIVITIES

The first set of IMPACT data-collection tools, developed jointly by non-governmental organizations, U.S. government funders, and USIP, are aimed at assessing negotiation- and mediation-training programs. These programs are employed widely on the theory that influential local figures who acquire skills in those areas are a key to resolving community disputes that could turn violent or escalate to fuel broader conflict dynamics. The tools consist of a participant survey, focus-group questions, and a database that tracks disputes and their outcomes. The tools are intended to measure such results as changes in the number and types of disputes resolved, shifts in relationships among key figures involved in conflicts, and changes in levels of violence.

IMPACT is testing these tools on USIP programs in Iraq, Libya, Tunisia, and the Sahel. The Institute is also funding the American Friends Service Committee and Mediators Beyond Borders to test the assessment mechanisms on programs in Guatemala, Haiti, and Kenya. IMPACT partner organizations in Iraq, Myanmar, and Nigeria are also involved in the trials.

In the Central African Republic (CAR), IMPACT is working with USAID and the CAR Peacebuilding Partnership to develop standardized methods for monitoring and evaluating the progress of U.S. government-supported peacebuilding programs. The Partnership, a public-private initiative that supports locally led peacebuilding in the country, is made up of foundations, non-governmental organizations, civil society, and USAID. IMPACT-CAR will define a set of common peacebuilding objectives, identify indicators that can be used to measure progress toward those objectives, and develop simple, but rigorous, data-collection strategies to assess performance. In addition to regularly providing information to help improve individual programs, the initiative represents a unique opportunity to measure the aggregate impact of peacebuilding programs during a post-conflict transition.