CDA's Expertise in Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

CDA COLLABORATIVE LEARNING PROJECTS

CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (CDA, cdacollaborative.org) is a non-profit organization committed to improving the effectiveness of those who work to provide humanitarian assistance, engage in peace practice, support sustainable development, and conduct corporate operations in a socially responsible manner. Through our collaborative learning process, we combine rigorous analysis with pragmatic field-level work and deliver practical tools to field staff and policymakers alike, based on the findings from the collaborative learning processes. CDA is based in Cambridge, MA, United States, and has an office in Myanmar, which was established to support local application of conflict-sensitivity practices of national and international actors. CDA's activities are structured around two pillars: Collaborative Learning (including applied research) and Advisory Services (including coaching, mentoring, and longer-term accompaniment), tailored to our diverse range of partner and clients. CDA neither implements country-level projects, nor directly engages in advocacy. Our partners and clients value our independence and experience as a convener and facilitator of multi-stakeholder engagements.

OUR APPROACH TO MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

CDA helps practitioners and organizations to improve the relevance and effectiveness of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding programming with application of systems approaches, evaluative thinking and learning tools. Our monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) approach supports adaptive programing while tracking progress towards program goals and intended change. CDA's collaborative learning and accompaniment services address organizational learning needs and reinforce a culture of reflection, evidence-based decision making, iteration and adaptation.

We believe good monitoring and evaluation starts with strong design – from strategy to project level. CDA uses tools and methodologies informed by evidence on program relevance and effectiveness from our past collaborative learning and advisory work. Our MEL approaches complement current design, monitoring, and evaluation (DM&E) methodologies in the aid sector, and are adapted for programming in fragile and conflict affected states (FCAS.) CDA pursues MEL questions across our four practice areas: Peacebuilding Effectiveness, Conflict Sensitivity/Do No Harm, Responsible Business, and Accountability and Feedback Loops. CDA has contributed to influential policy guidance, such as the OECD/DAC Guidance on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities, a practitioner guidance on feedback mechanisms, a guide on evaluative thinking in peacebuilding programs, and articles on systems thinking application in evaluation.

We have several on-going collaborative learning, R&D and advisory engagements focused on MEL, such as projects focusing on cumulative and collective impacts in peacebuilding, evidence reviews for the peacebuilding sector, DM&E of prevention of violent extremism programs, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of conflict sensitivity, and application of feedback mechanisms for adaptive management and program quality improvement.

SELECTION OF RECENT COLLABORATIVE LEARNING AND APPLIED RESEARCH ENGAGEMENTS

Learning Partners	Collaborators	Engagement	Region	Period
Peacebuilding Evaluation Consortium	Alliance for Peacebuilding, Search for Common Ground, Mercy Corps. Funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.	Develop new tools, resources and standards for peacebuilding evaluation	Global	2014– ongoing
Peacebuilding Evaluation Consortium / Evaluating Inter-Religious Action in Peacebuilding	Alliance for Peacebuilding, Search for Common Ground, Mercy Corps. Funded by the GHR Foundation.	Develop a guide for evaluating effective inter-religious action in peacebuilding and testing it with religious peacebuilders and evaluators	Global	2014-2017
UK Aid/DFID, Government of Switzerland, Government of Canada	Saferworld, swisspeace	Increase application of conflict sensitivity by donors and implementing partners with specific focus on M&E and learning within a Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility	South Sudan	2016- ongoing
Humanity United		Develop and test a model for collective impact in peacebuilding	Global and pilot countries	2016- ongoing
US State Department/INL	BESA Consulting, RCN Justice et Démocratie	Support more effective anti-corruption programs based on systems approaches and improved M&E	DRC	2013- ongoing

SELECTION OF RECENT ADVISORY SERVICE ENGAGEMENTS

Clients / Partners	Engagement	Region	Period
The Carter Center	Support for more systematic inclusion of analysis and program design tools into MEL processes.	Global	2017
SIDA CDA in consortium with Saferworld, swisspeace, Stockholm Policy Group, Global Emeregency Group	Human security and humanitarian assistance helpdesk, including on questions of relevance and effectiveness	Global/Various countries	2016- ongoing
International Alert	Strategic program support and DM&E	South Caucasus	2016- ongoing
UK Stabilization Unit	Conflict sensitive M&E capacity development for FCAS	Global	2017-2018
Search for Common ground	Support collective impact model pilot	Sri Lanka	2017
American Friends Service Committee	Technical assistance on program strategy development, systems thinking and M&E	Global and select countries	2015- ongoing
Essential Partners	M&E support to assess effectiveness of dialogue facilitation and programs	Global	2016-2017
Rotary Peace Fellows Program	Develop and teach a semester long course and workshops on peacebuilding DM&E for Rotary Peace Fellows	Duke University & University of North Carolina	2015-2017
The Omidyar Group	Develop tools for assessing effectiveness in complex environments	Global	2016
United Nations Global Compact	Support the Business and Peace Impact Assessment Advisory Group and develop resources on M&E of business and peace	Global	2016
Interpeace, World Vision Inernational Alert, Norwegian Church Aid	Facilitate participatory program quality assessments and evaluability assessments with partners and local counterparts	Mali, South Caucasus, Afghanistan, and Sri Lanka	2013-2014
DFID Conflict, Crime, and Violence Results Initiative Consortium with CARE, Saferworld, SFCG, Small Arms Survey, and VERA Institute of Justice	Provide helpdesk support for DFID on measuring program results in FCAS	Global and select country focus (South Sudan, Afghanistan and others)	2012-2014

A SELECTION OF PUBLICATIONS

Anderson, Mary B. and Lara Olson, with Kristin Doughty. *Confronting War: Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners*. Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2003.

Chigas, Diana, Madeline Church, and Vanessa Corlazzoli. "Evaluating Impacts of Peacebuilding Interventions: Approaches and Methods, Challenges and Considerations." A Conflict, Crime, and Violence Results Initiative (CCVRI) product. London, UK: DFID, 2014.

Chigas, Diana, and Nicole Goddard. "Monitoring and Evaluation of Conflict Sensitivity – Methodological Considerations." *Evaluation Connections* (August 2016): 10-11.

Designing Strategic Initiatives to Impact Conflict Systems: Systems Approaches to Peacebuilding. A Resource Manual. Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2016.

Ernstorfer, Anita, Diana Chigas, and Hannah Vaughan-Lee. "From Little to Large: When does Peacebuilding Add up." *Journal for Peacebuilding and Development* 10, no. 1 (2015): 72-77.

Ernstorfer, Anita, Isabella Jean, and Peter Woodrow, with Diana Chigas. *Thinking Evaluatively in Peacebuilding Design, Implementation and Monitoring: Three Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) and Do No Harm (DNH)-infused options to strengthen the effectiveness of peacebuilding strategies and programs*. Peacebuilding Evaluation Consortium, 2016.

Goldwyn, Rachel, and Diana Chigas. "Monitoring and Evaluating Conflict Sensitivity: Methodological Challenges and Practical Solutions." A Conflict, Crime, and Violence Results Initiative (CCVRI) product. London, UK: Care International UK, CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, and DFID, 2013.

Listening Project. "Feedback Mechanisms in International Assistance Organizations." Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2011.

Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) Basics. A Resource Manual. Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2016.

Ris, Lillie, and Anita Ernstorfer. "Borrowing a Wheel: Applying Existing Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation Strategies to Emerging Programming Approaches to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism. Briefing Paper." Peacebuilding Evaluation Consortium, 2017.

Woodrow, Peter, with Nick Oatley. "Practical Approaches to Theories of Change in Conflict, Security and Justice Programmes. Part I: What they are, different types, how to develop and use them." A Conflict, Crime, and Violence Results Initiative (CCVRI) product. London, UK: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects and DFID, 2013.

Woodrow, Peter and Chigas, Diana. "Connecting the Dots: Evaluating Whether and How Programmes Address Conflict Systems," in *The Non-Linearity of Peace Processes: Theory and Practice of Systemic Conflict Transformation* edited by Ropers, N. et al. Barbara Budrich Verlag, 2011.

OUR TEAM

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