

# LITERATURE REVIEW

July 2016

## EFFECTIVE INTER-RELIGIOUS ACTION IN PEACEBUILDING PROGRAM (EIAP)

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*A report conducted by the Alliance for Peacebuilding in partnership with Search for Common Ground and CDA Collaborative*



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## About the Effective Inter-religious Action in Peacebuilding Program (EIAP)

This report is part of the Effective Inter-religious Action in Peacebuilding Program (EIAP) created with support from the **GHR Foundation**. EIAP is a three-year initiative led by Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP) in partnership with CDA Collaborative Learning and Search for Common Ground (SFCG). Driven by an interactive, and a whole of field process, EIAP involves key, diverse stakeholders representing all faiths to generate guidance on how to evaluate inter-religious action; and to develop a framework for ongoing work regarding what constitutes effective inter-religious action. Specific activities include:

- ⇒ Formation of an EIAP Global Advisory Council (GAC) of formal and informal religious leaders, academics, and practitioners.
- ⇒ Meta-evaluation conducted of inter-religious peacebuilding evaluations.
- ⇒ Research to identify the ‘state of play’ of inter-religious action and peacebuilding culminating in a published report.
- ⇒ Substantive and sustained engagement among religious communities, peacebuilding and development organizations, and donors.
- ⇒ Shared learning and collaboration via an on-line community of practice on Design, Monitoring and Evaluation (DM&E) for Peace.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Effective Inter-Religious Action in Peacebuilding Program (EIAP) began in November 2014 with support from the GHR Foundation and is led by Alliance for Peacebuilding in partnership with CDA Collaborative Learning and Search for Common Ground (SFCG). This three-year initiative is investigating how inter-religious action can help in building resilient and peaceful societies with diversities. Specific goals include generating guidance on how to evaluate inter-religious action and developing a framework for ongoing research regarding what constitutes effective inter-religious action in peacebuilding. As part of the EIAP, this literature review examines the “state of play” of inter-religious action in peacebuilding, the theories of change behind programming, and the evidence base for those theories.

This literature review is a desk review of program and evaluation documents, academic research, and interviews. The AfP secured most materials through its membership, with additional documents found through publicly available sources including, the United States Agency for International Development’s Development Experience Clearinghouse, United Nations Development Program’s Evaluation Resource Center, and DME for Peace. These documents formed the basis for the generation of Section 4.2 (*Program Design*) and Section 5 (*Theory of Change*). The seven evaluations used in the meta-evaluation<sup>1</sup> informed the review of Section 4.3 (*Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of Inter-religious Peacebuilding Programs*). Conclusions reflect what is documented in available records, which may not fully capture implementation or reality. Moreover, the reliance on AfP’s network may bias findings towards secular Western implementers partnering with religious actors rather than religious individuals and institutions conducting their work.

Many programs reviewed used context and conflict analysis in the design phase, identified key partners and included core assumptions. Areas for improving design include: engendering the program and having a clear theory of change. Drawing on a meta-evaluation of seven inter-religious programs, all of the evaluations stated the evaluation purpose, limitations, and used evaluation questions. Opportunities to improve evaluations include, providing clear criteria for analysis, using more rigorous evaluation design, substantiating conclusions with evidence, and utilizing engendered and conflict sensitive techniques.

Given the unique opportunities and challenges of engaging in inter-religious peacebuilding, this report outlines the macro theories of change used in inter-religious action. Macro theories of change reflect assumptions about the fundamental drivers of conflict and how they can be transformed.

Table 1: Macro Theories of Change in Inter-Religious Peacebuilding

Approach 1: Attitudes
<i>Theory 1.1: Healthy Relationships</i>
Building empathy, trust, and reducing prejudice, such as between religious groups, will strengthen relationships and undermine calls for violence.
<i>Common Activities: Dialogues, Social and Cultural Events</i>
<i>Strong evidence for contact theory reducing prejudice and building empathy among individuals, including positive evidence for inter-religious contact, but less evidence on change translating from the individual to the socio-political level to affect the broader peace.</i>
<i>Theory 1.2: Cooperation on Mutual Interests</i>
Working together on mutual areas of concern, such as economic development or health challenges, will help to build trust and relationships by providing a safe space for people to interact and experience the benefits of cooperation across religious lines.
<i>Common Activities: Economic Development Activities, Structural Changes (not directly related to peacebuilding)</i>
<i>Strong evidence for contact theory, including across religious groups, but little evidence that this affects behavior or conflict dynamics. Change must translate from the individual to the socio-political level to affect the broader peace.</i>
<i>Theory 1.3: Trauma Healing</i>
Helping individuals heal and spiritually move beyond conflict and trauma will make them more likely to not resort to or support violence in the future.
<i>Common Activities: Dialogues, Counseling</i>
<i>At the individual level, trauma healing appears extremely effective, and religion can contribute to personal healing. However, no evidence was found regarding how this creates socio-political level change.</i>
<i>Theory 1.4: Public Attitudes</i>
Creating attitude shifts within groups about prejudice, the acceptability of violence, or religious justifications for conflict will build constituencies for peace.
<i>Create resilient communities, by building immunity to recruitment by violent extremists, by catalyzing community-based programs that promote self-reliance and non-violent attitude.</i>
<i>Common Activities: Media Programming, Religious Addresses, community development programs</i>

Mixed evidence for what kinds of change media programming creates or how those changes affect the sociopolitical level (such as group behavior or norms). No evidence was identified about how religious organizations help spread or disseminate attitudes of tolerance, understanding and nonviolence, although evidence does exist that religion does shape attitudes.

## Approach 2: Behaviors

### Theory 2.1: Pressure for Change

Religious actors can generate or channel pressure for warring parties to agree to peace, address the drivers of the conflict and implement conflict transformation and reconciliation programming.

*Common Activities: Mass Mobilization, Advocacy, Agenda Setting*

*Strong case study evidence, such as religious groups' roles advocating for peace in Sierra Leone and Apartheid South Africa.*

### Theory 2.2: Building Networks and Alliances

Creating vertical and horizontal networks for peace, such as between secular and religious peacebuilders or from the local to international level, changes the incentives for parties to a conflict, prompting them to end violent conflict and support peace.

*Common Activities: Cross-group Networking Events, Trust-Building*

*There is case study evidence to support the necessity of this approach, such as the alliance of secular and religious groups in South Africa and Guatemala.*

### Theory 2.3: Legitimate Intermediary

Religious actors can act as a moral and neutral guarantor or party to help parties negotiate or mediate to resolve conflict.

*Common Activities: Mediation, Negotiation, Dialogues, "Good Offices"*

*Strong case study support, such as the Community of Sant'Egidio or Imam Ashafa and Pastor Wuye in Nigeria.*

### Theory 2.4: Building Skills and Processes

Developing skills and/or organizational processes builds the capacity and sustainability of peacebuilders.

*Common Activities: Trainings*

*While there is evidence that this approach can be a necessary step, there must be additional efforts to enable actors and organizations to use their new capacity to effect sociopolitical change for peace.*



### Approach 3: Institutions

#### Theory 3.1: Building formal and informal institutions

Building formal or informal institutions, such as transitional justice or social norms, create a broad, sustained sociopolitical shift that supports peace.

Common Activities: *Advocating or Supporting Transitional Justice*

*There is case study evidence of religious actors supporting transitional justice, but overall religious actors have focused less on this approach. Truth and reconciliation commissions (South Africa, Rwanda, East Timor) – were religious actors involved?*

### Approach 4. Counter Violent Extremism

#### Theory 4.1: Prevention

Addressing the root causes of violence hence preventing youths and susceptible individuals from being radicalized.

Common activities: *linking youth with elected officials (their needs are being addressed in government) and media (messaging).*

*There is a study evidence in Bujumbura, Burundi by Search for Common Ground (SFCG) that prevention helps grievances to be addressed through non-violent channels, marginalized groups and young vulnerable extremist narratives are engaged in conversations, new relations across dividing lines (Tribal or religious).*

#### Theory 4.2: Disengagement

Encouraging individuals who are already radicalized, or already engaged in violent extremism, to disengage from those systems and make alternative life choices.

Common activities: *Counselling and mentorship; providing access to social services, including employment/job training*

*There is a study in Morocco and Indonesia Prisons by SFCG that showed disengagement helped prison officials accept and use better skills in managing prisoners convicted of violence, and high risk prisoners engaged and participated in most of the activities that involved mentorship.*

#### Theory 4.3: Amplifying New Narratives

Increasing the availability of alternative and critical voices to debunk the ideological bases for violent extremism, and to provide new perspectives on constructive, nonviolent social change.

Common activities: *dialogue, supporting media outlets, trainings, debate competitions, comic books*

*There is a penetration of narratives into areas previously accessed by extremist views.*

*Theory 4.4: Improving State Response*

Working within or partnering with state entities to design and implement state plans, advocating from an external perspective for substantive change in how states conceptualize and respond to violent extremism.

*Common activities: Empowering civil societies, dialogue, trainings, etc.*

*A study in Northern Nigeria and Indonesia showed that improving state response had an effect in improving the knowledge and application of human right principles by security forces in these countries. There was also an increased collaboration between states and non-states actors.*

Those theories with the strongest evidence – Healthy Relationships, Cooperation on Mutual Interests, and Trauma Healing – focus primarily on individual-level change but do not address how a broader societal level transformation will emerge from them, and thus require complementary approaches to translate the individual changes to the socio-political level. The Pressure for Change and Legitimate Intermediary theories of change rely on case study evidence and would benefit from meta-analysis to draw broader lessons. Other theories have gaps in evidence. Inter-religious peacebuilding has focused relatively little on institution building, a pattern that deserves exploration. Another area for investigation is understanding in what ways and in what circumstances religious leaders are willing and able to effect different changes, especially across faiths. Overall, there is relatively little research specific to inter-religious peacebuilding theories of change, but even less on the evaluation of inter-religious action. Documents do not reference the particular challenges of engagement or content involved in evaluating inter-religious action.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Religion can contribute to violence or peace through its role in identity formation, ideals and organization. If religion or religious identity is directly invoked in the conflict, such as in the central belt of Nigeria, Israel/ Palestine, Southern Thailand conflict, Christian and Muslims in Central African Republic, or the 969 Movement in Myanmar, addressing the driving narratives and identities is also necessary to build peace.<sup>1</sup> Religious organizations and institutions also provide useful structures for reaching out to the broader population and engaging them in the peacebuilding process.

On a deeper level, religion and faith “connect[s] the human being to a cultural mooring .... If those cultural moorings have ways of peacemaking, then they may resonate by means that no other peace processes will. If those cultural moorings are conflicting, then we may see what needs to change culturally and psychologically.”<sup>2</sup> The emotional resonance of religious motivation and ideals cannot be replicated and can support peacebuilding in any context. Finally, divine influence and transformational experiences cannot be disregarded as a potential source of change.

However, evaluating the value of inter-religious programming requires discussion and innovation. For example, is a program’s contribution towards the larger peace a relevant standard against which to measure a program focused on enabling people to have personal religious experiences and transformations? Engaging in good works such as peacebuilding may be an end in and of itself. And how can one plan for or measure the transcendental and divine aspects of inter-religious peacebuilding?<sup>3</sup>

To identify the most efficacious ways to measure these types of programming, the Effective Inter-Religious Action in Peacebuilding Program (EIAP) was launched in November 2014 with funding from GHR Foundation. It is specifically designed to generate guidance on how to evaluate inter-religious action and develop a framework for ongoing learning regarding what constitutes effective inter-religious action. As part of this initiative, this paper seeks to understand the “state of play” in program design, monitoring, and evaluation of inter-religious peacebuilding programs. It also aims to understand the broad “theories of change” underlying inter-religious peacebuilding action and the state of evidence (and gaps in evidence) for them. The paper draws on the program documents and meta-evaluation of inter-religious peacebuilding programs also conducted under a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York,<sup>4</sup> as well as academic literature and evaluations that examine the contributions and effectiveness of different theories of change.

## 1.1 Definitions and Terminology

Various religions and organizations have their own operating understanding of what peace is. For the purpose of this paper, **peace** is more than just the formal end to direct violence (**negative peace**). An example is the Dayton Peace Accord which ended the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995 but there still exists negative peace. Peace should exist at all levels, from global to the local community. This document focuses on positive **peace**, in which underlying structural, relational, cultural or political drivers that undermine the sustainability of peace are addressed

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Kelman, “The Interdependence of Israeli and Palestinian National Identities: The Role of the Other in Existential Conflict.”

<sup>2</sup> Gopin, M. “World Religions, Violence, and Myths of Peace in International Relations,” *Bridge or Barrier. Religion, Violence and Visions for Peace*. Leiden: Brill, 2015. p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Alliance for Peacebuilding, “Effective Inter-Religious Action in Peacebuilding Program Global Advisory Council NCIL 2015 In-Person Meeting Notes.” One meeting attendee suggested emphasizing that evaluation can examine the effectiveness of a program through measurement while not disregarding the role of the divine.

<sup>4</sup> Vader, Jenny. “Meta-Review of Inter-Faith Action Program Evaluations.” CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2015. [http://dmeforpeace.org/sites/default/files/Peacebuilding%20Evaluation%20Consortium%20Meta-Review%20of%20Inter-Religious%20Peacebuilding%20Program%20Evaluations\\_July2015FINAL.pdf](http://dmeforpeace.org/sites/default/files/Peacebuilding%20Evaluation%20Consortium%20Meta-Review%20of%20Inter-Religious%20Peacebuilding%20Program%20Evaluations_July2015FINAL.pdf)

(poverty, hunger, discrimination, and injustice). **Peacebuilding** includes efforts to promote or sustain peace such as conflict resolution, mediation, and work that aim to increase social cohesion and reduce the likelihood of future violent conflict. The theories of change behind how organizations seek to promote peace (*positive peace*) vary widely, with activities from building institutions, improving human understanding through communication, peace education, international cooperation, dispute resolution, conflict management, arbitration to microcredit programs and including all ways in which human society is integrated.<sup>5</sup>

For many, religion is a fundamental component of an individual or society's identity<sup>6</sup>. For the purpose of this literature review, "religious actors" refers to the communities, indigenous and mainstream religious or spiritual leaders, institutions, organizations, NGOs as well as informal networks and youth organizations (faith-based, faith-inspired) that identify with a particular spirituality or religious group.

This literature review defines **inter-religious** broadly as the involvement of religious actors and institutions, engagements with a focus on religious narratives, programs that target religious dimensions of a conflict, or programs that promote peace within (intra-religious) between (inter-religious) religious groups. Action may take place at any level or scale in support of solidarity, cooperation, prevention of conflict, or conflict resolution and peacebuilding. **Inter-religious peace builders** are those who define themselves as religiously motivated and, who, work either at the political leadership or grassroots level, to prevent or end cultural, structural and violent conflict, with a particular emphasis on religious pluralism. They may operate out of a religious or faith identity (in coordination with or despite other identities) or leverage religion as a catalyst for conflict transformation. Therefore, **inter-religious action for peacebuilding** is the engagement of actors from different faiths, institutions, identities, narratives, and groups to support peace, whether or not the conflict involves religious groups or identities and whether or not the methodology or operation of the intervention is religious or secular.

Violent extremism (VE) is the use of violence to shape society according to a particular set of political or religious beliefs. Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) are the strategies that aim to dissuade, stop or curb individuals or groups from mobilizing towards violent extremism and encouraging the use of nonviolent means<sup>7</sup> or the "soft power" approaches that seek to prevent, mitigate, and end the recruitment and support of violent extremism<sup>8</sup>.

There is a controversy between the term Counter Terrorism and Counter Violent Extremism, in that, as a field of practice, CVE is expanding but still struggles to establish a compelling and definite definition of its own as a field. It still lacks the precision and focus, reflects problematic assumptions about the conditions that promote violent extremism, and it has not drawn a clear boundary that distinguishes it from other well-established fields like Counter Terrorism (CT)<sup>9</sup>. CVE is said to refer to the soft side of counter-terrorism strategies that tackle the drivers which lead to engagement in politically or ideologically motivated violence<sup>10</sup>.

## 1.2 Methodology

This literature review is a desk review of program and evaluation documents, academic literature, policy documents, and interview notes. In addition to eleven interviews conducted through AfP, the paper also draws on Georgetown

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<sup>5</sup> Galtung, J (1964). An Editorial. *Journal of Peace Research*, 1(1) 1-4

<sup>6</sup> USAID, Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding available at [usaid.gov/pdf/docs/Pnandr501.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/pdf/docs/Pnandr501.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Alliance for Peacebuilding on CVE

<sup>8</sup> Ramaniuk and Chowdhury, 2012

<sup>9</sup> USIP insights; State of the Art; CVE as a field, of Practice Spring 2014 source [https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/Insights\\_Spring\\_2014.pdf](https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/Insights_Spring_2014.pdf) accessed 07/28/2016

<sup>10</sup> Frazer, O. and Nunlist, C. (2005). *CSS Analysis in Security Policy; The concept of Countering Violent Extremism*, No. 183.

University's Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs Peacebuilding Practitioners Interview Series.<sup>11</sup> Interviews provided context on how peacebuilders work with partners, define success, choose their programs, understand how and why change will occur (the underlying theory of change), use monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and what they see as the largest barriers to monitoring and evaluating inter-religious action.

As noted above, AfP secured most program materials and interviews through its membership, primarily composed of US-based NGOs. This has created a bias in this review towards Western NGOs partnering with religious peacebuilders that will need to be tested and revised in ongoing and future activities of the EIAP and beyond. Additional documents were found through publicly available sources including, United States Agency for International Development's Development Experience Clearinghouse, United Nations Development Program's Evaluation Resource Center, and DME for Peace. It is important to emphasize that the conclusions reflect what is written in available materials, which may not fully capture implementation or reality.

The reviewed literature and research, primarily written by academics but also including research from practitioners and religious peacebuilders, is a survey of major works on inter-religious action, peacebuilding, and the role of religion in driving conflict and peace.

This material provides the foundation for examining the relationship between religion, violence and peacebuilding, and offers evidence for the theories of change, common activities (such as dialogues), and the benefits of engaging with particular social groups, such as women, youth, religious leaders and actors.

### 1.3 Paper Outline

After providing a brief overview of good practice in program design, monitoring, and evaluation of peacebuilding in Section 4.3, Section 3 examines religion's dual role in promoting conflict and peace. Section 5 proposes a typology of theories of change in inter-religious peacebuilding, drawn from the reviewed program documents and academic literature. For each of the theories of change identified, the discussion includes a narrative of classic cases or illustrative examples, assumptions behind the theory, and how engaging religion affects the overall approach. After summarizing the evidence for the theory of change, there is a short discussion of common activities. Section 6 examines some key partners throughout all theories of change ~ religious leaders, youth, and women, and institutions. Section 7 concludes with the identification of gaps in current knowledge about inter-religious peacebuilding and opportunities for further study.

## 2. RELIGION AS A SET OF IDEALS AND VALUES

Religions create a set of values, rendered more robust and powerful because they come from a divine rather than human source. This situates individuals and actions within a broader moral context, providing an explanation for why reality exists as it does, and how things could change to create a more just, ideal reality.<sup>12</sup> As a normative framework that addresses goodness, evil, and justice, religion creates a framework of understanding for followers, including supplying a goal for religious followers, and increasing individual and group motivation to pursue the ideal.

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<sup>11</sup> The Peacebuilding Practitioners Interview Series was undertaken as part of the Berkley Center's program on Religion, Conflict and Peace to learn more about the role of religion in conflict situations. During 2009 and 2010 the Berkley Center carried out a series of interviews with (mostly religious or faith-based) practitioners in South Africa, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sudan, Nigeria and Kenya. The full text of all the interviews can be found at <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/projects/peacebuilding-practitioners-interview-series>.

<sup>12</sup> Harpyiken, K. "Faithful Brokers? Potentials and Pitfalls of Religion in Peacemaking." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 25(3) 2008.; Gopin, M. "World Religions, Violence, and Myths of Peace in International Relations." *Bridge or Barrier. Religion, Violence and Visions for Peace*. Leiden: Brill, 2015. p. 49.

These values and meanings can be a powerful motivator for either conflict or peace. For example, a dichotomous, good-evil construct drawn from an interpretation of rituals, traditions, and texts may preclude religious zealots from discussing peacebuilding or human rights.<sup>13</sup> An alternative understanding of those same sources may emphasize sanctity of human life, empathy, and links peace to one's relationship with a higher moral authority.<sup>14</sup> For example, the Catholic focus on living theological language translates directly into politics, as Catholics acknowledge the sanctity of human life, and are driven to pursue reconciliation and the common good.<sup>15</sup>

Finally, addressing the narratives that support this framework may be necessary to pursue peace. If historical experiences have become a part of group identity, "the resistance to change may not be part of holding onto an objectified enemy, but rather [holding on] to a cognitive meaning structure that cannot survive without [a key piece of the theological perspective]."<sup>16</sup> For example, it would be essential to engage religious identity in Pakistan, the central belt of Nigeria, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As Marc Gopin writes, when people view conflict through a religious lens, engaging with religion enables peacebuilders to address the "spiritual language of frustration and anger that leads to violence. Thus, even if the roots of the conflict are economic discontent, the revolt against the status quo may, in fact, express itself in religious terms."<sup>17</sup> In the reverse, religious framing may enable discussion in contexts where other topics, such as ethnicity, are dangerous or prohibited.<sup>18</sup>

Religious symbols, practices, and institutions provide access to these normative frameworks. Actors may use practices and traditions to legitimate or motivate people for violence, but also for peace and non-violence,<sup>19</sup> as, for example, Gandhi did in building on the Hindu practice of fasting to promote respect and religious tolerance nonviolently.<sup>20</sup>

## 2.1 Religion as an Identity

In addition to situating oneself in a moral framework, the ideas, practices, and traditions also make religion an important part of individual and group identity. Because it is based on divine teachings and ideals, religious identity may be particularly strong and stable.<sup>21</sup> As religious values and identity affect peoples' emotions, decisions, and actions, it is important for peacebuilders to acknowledge the power of and engage with religious identity.<sup>22</sup> If people perceive their religious identity or community to be under threat, it can be perceived as an existential threat that prompts a defensive, sometimes violent, reaction.<sup>23</sup> Pastor John Joseph Hayab of the Christian Association of Nigeria has commented, "Sometimes Christians [in Nigeria] react to tensions, to crises, without being fully

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<sup>13</sup> Gopin, M. "World Religions, Violence, and Myths of Peace in International Relations," *Bridge or Barrier. Religion, Violence and Visions for Peace*. Leiden: Brill, 2015. p. 52.

<sup>14</sup> Said, A and Funk, N. "The Role of Faith in Cross-Cultural Conflict Resolution." Presented at the European Parliament for the European Centre for Common Ground, 2001. p. 39.

<sup>15</sup> Appleby, S. "Exploiting the Ambivalence of Religion: Transforming Conflict by Transforming Religion." *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000. p. 14-15. Available at <http://sacred-sovereign.uchicago.edu/rsa-ambivalence.html>.

<sup>16</sup> Gopin, M. "World Religions, Violence, and Myths of Peace in International Relations." *Bridge or Barrier. Religion, Violence and Visions for Peace*. Leiden: Brill, 2015. p. 39-40.

<sup>17</sup> Gopin, M. "Religion, Violence, and Conflict Resolution." *Peace & Change*, 22(1) 1997. p. 2-3.

<sup>18</sup> Sarah's Interviews

<sup>19</sup> Gopin, M. "World Religions, Violence, and Myths of Peace in International Relations." *Bridge or Barrier. Religion, Violence and Visions for Peace*. Leiden: Brill, 2015. p. 48-49.

<sup>20</sup> Gopin, M. "Religion, Violence, and Conflict Resolution." *Peace & Change*, 22(1) 1997. p. 7.

<sup>21</sup> Harpyiken, K. "Faithful Brokers? Potentials and Pitfalls of Religion in Peacemaking." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 25(3) 2008. p. 354-355.

<sup>22</sup> Gopin, M. "World Religions, Violence, and Myths of Peace in International Relations." *Bridge or Barrier. Religion, Violence and Visions for Peace*. Leiden: Brill, 2015. p. 48.

<sup>23</sup> Hasenclever, A and Rittberger, V. "Does Religion Make a Difference? Theoretical Approaches to the Impact of Faith on Political Conflict." *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 29(3) 2000. p. 118-119.

informed. Muslims and Christians are quick to rally to defend their religions, often seeing the best defense as a strong offense.”<sup>24</sup>

Religious groups’ and individuals’ self-perceptions, boundaries, and inclusivity/exclusivity can be the basis for either peace or conflict.<sup>25</sup> An inclusive ideology might emphasize respect for all people, whereas a more exclusive identity may remove those who are not group members from ethical dues and concern.<sup>26</sup> For example, the vision of the Community of Sant’Egidio, a Catholic organization with ties to the Vatican, includes “the start of a multiracial, multicultural city, open to different kinds of religious life,” and drives the Church’s peacebuilding work.<sup>27</sup> While evidence shows the politicization of overlapping religious and ethnic identities is a major predictor for conflict,<sup>28</sup> future research and evaluation could examine how an individual’s multiple identities interact with religion in support of violence or peacebuilding.

Recognition and/or restoration of identity can tap into an emotional level of peacebuilding. As Dr. Abdul Aziz Said and Dr. Nathan C. Funk write, “The affirmation of individual and group identity achieved through redemptive transformation is essential in giving meaning to a conflict and its resolution. Attempts to divorce the spiritual from conflict resolution practices deny an essential component of healing and social restoration that permits conflicts to be *experienced* as resolved.”<sup>29</sup> Understanding the boundaries of a religious identity, and how inclusive or exclusive an individual or group may be, is a further consideration when engaging with identity groups.<sup>30</sup>

## 2.2 Religion as an Organization

While organization is not necessary to religion, it does facilitate dissemination and interaction with other institutions. Based on their moral authority and role within society,<sup>31</sup> religious institutions and actors can represent, and possibly reframe, morality and religious interpretations to mediate or motivate conflict, convey information, help promote attitudinal changes, or a host of other roles dependent on their position and the context.<sup>32</sup> A member of the Federation of Muslim Women’s Associations in Nigeria’s Kaduna Office said, “Faith-based organizations have more authority than other organizations. Almost everyone in Nigeria belongs to a religion, and people obey and respect their religious leaders. Because of this religious orientation, our organizations are more readily accepted.”<sup>33</sup> Religious networks can also assist with certain programming models (such as cascade training, or “train-the-trainer” systems) and lower the cost of accessing these networks, such as partnering with religious actors to disseminate information. This can be particularly useful in contexts without strong state institutions, where religious institutions often help fill a governance vacuum by providing information and services.<sup>34</sup> In 2007 in South Sudan (then, Southern Sudan), for example, faith-based organizations provided health care, education, and flood

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<sup>24</sup> Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs. “A Discussion with Pastor John Joseph Hayab, Christian Association of Nigeria.” *Peacebuilding Practitioner Interview Series*, 2010. Available at <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/projects/peacebuilding-practitioners-interview-series/list/interviews>.

<sup>25</sup> Harpyiken, K. “Faithful Brokers? Potentials and Pitfalls of Religion in Peacemaking.” *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 25(3) 2008. p. 354-355.

<sup>26</sup> Gopin, M. “World Religions, Violence, and Myths of Peace in International Relations.” *Bridge or Barrier. Religion, Violence and Visions for Peace*. Leiden: Brill, 2015. p. 55.

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Appleby, S. *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000. p. 156.

<sup>28</sup> Basedau et al. “Do Religious Factors Impact Armed Conflict? Empirical Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 23(5). Oxfordshire: Taylor and Francis Group, 2011. p. 20.

<sup>29</sup> Said, A and Funk, N. “The Role of Faith in Cross-Cultural Conflict Resolution.” Presented at the European Parliament for the European Centre for Common Ground, 2001. p. 39.

<sup>30</sup> Harpyiken, K. “Faithful Brokers? Potentials and Pitfalls of Religion in Peacemaking.” *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 25(3) 2008. p. 354-355.

<sup>31</sup> Harpyiken, K. “Faithful Brokers? Potentials and Pitfalls of Religion in Peacemaking.” *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 25(3) 2008.

<sup>32</sup> Steele, D. “Religious Aspects of Conflict and Its Resolution.” Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. p. 31.

<sup>33</sup> Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs. “A Discussion with ulaihatu Jaafar and Bilhatu Idris Adamu of the Kaduna Office of the Federation of Muslim Women’s Associations in Nigeria.” *Peacebuilding Practitioner Interview Series*, 2010. Available at <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/projects/peacebuilding-practitioners-interview-series/list/interviews>.

<sup>34</sup> Kaplan, S. “Religion, Development, and Fragile States.” 2015. p. 20. Available at <http://www.fragilestates.org/2015/02/10/religion-development-fragile-states-complex-relationship/>.

relief as the country worked to recover from civil war.<sup>35</sup> Religious organizations, with deep roots in the community and a record of service, can be powerful partners for peace. However, their ability to do so depends on their structure, the independence of members from the organization, and the independence of religious organizations from other power structures.

The structure of religious organizations may be either flat or hierarchical, either of which can help or hinder the pursuit of peace.<sup>36</sup> Dr. Mari Fitzduff writes about how the Catholic Church's hierarchical, norm-enforcing structure inhibited its responsiveness to the conflict in Northern Ireland. Religious leaders seeking to speak out against violence felt pressured to stay within the political mainstream of the Church, limiting leaders' willingness and ability to lead in conflict transformation. In contrast, smaller religious groups and individuals, such as the Quakers and more independent Catholic leaders, were able to respond more quickly.<sup>37</sup>

Independence refers to how individual members relate to organizations and whether or not religion is seen as separate from other parts of one's life.<sup>38</sup> A person more dependent on religious organizations may feel greater religious commitment, but the relationship between independence and pursuit of goals (both religious and areligious) is relatively unstudied. Does independence from religious organizations decrease devotion to religious goals? Under what personal or social circumstances will a religious message resonate more or less with independent individuals or groups, or vice versa?

Finally, religious organizations' ties to the existing power structures affect how they will interact with peace or conflict. For example, devoted Catholics in Communist Poland were a powerful force for democratization, but equally devoted members of the Greek Orthodox Church may be less willing to push for political change due to the Greek Orthodoxy's statist political ideology.<sup>39</sup> Religious institutions can also be perceived as interested in preserving the status quo, and therefore themselves be necessary to engage as participants in programming that is promoting change just like Islam as a religion is influencing the policy of the Middle East countries such as Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Lebanon, Nigeria, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, and Sudan.

A Kenyan journalist said, "As an institution, the Church has always benefited from the status quo – the Clergy are wealthy, and often corrupt, yet carry so much clout with the extremely poor. They don't really want to rock their own boat."<sup>40</sup> It is important for program designers and academics to examine under what circumstances and why religious organizations do or do not support peace.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Davis, E. "Interfaith Cooperation in Sudan." Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs. Washington D.C.: Washington Post, 2007.

<sup>36</sup> Harpyiken, K. "Faithful Brokers? Potentials and Pitfalls of Religion in Peacemaking." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 25(3) 2008. p. 356.

<sup>37</sup> Fitzduff, M. "Just Enough to Hate-Not Enough to Love: Religious Leaders in Northern Ireland." *Between Terror and Tolerance: Religious Leaders, Conflict, and Peacemaking*. Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2011. p. 145-168.

<sup>38</sup> Harpyiken, K. "Faithful Brokers? Potentials and Pitfalls of Religion in Peacemaking." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 25(3) 2008. p. 356.

<sup>39</sup> Philpott, D. "Explaining the Ambivalence of Religion." *American Political Science Review*, 101(3) 2007. p. 522. Available at <http://users.polisci.wisc.edu/schatzberg/ps657/Philpott2007.pdf>.

<sup>40</sup> Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs. "Discussion with Lucy Hannan, Journalist, Writer, and Film Director for Information and Voxcom Ltd in Nairobi, Kenya." *Peacebuilding Practitioner Interview Series*, 2010. Available at <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/projects/peacebuilding-practitioners-interview-series/list/interviews>.

<sup>41</sup> Appleby, S. "Exploiting the Ambivalence of Religion: Transforming Conflict by Transforming Religion." *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000. Available at <http://sacred-sovereign.uchicago.edu/rsa-ambivalence.html>.



### 3. UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN RELIGION, CONFLICT, AND PEACE

This section draws on interviews and academic literature to examine the relationships between **religion**, **conflict**, and **peace**. It is not a comprehensive, or thorough, review of the relationship of religion, conflict and peace, but is intended to provide background for understanding the “state of play” of monitoring and evaluation of inter-religious peacebuilding, as well as the broad theories of change and state of evidence identified. The “ambivalence” of religion – its ability to drive both conflict and peace – is due to its divine origin and values, its role in forming individual and group identities, and its organization, all of which can either undermine or support peacebuilding.

#### 3.1 Religion: Force for Conflict or Peace?

Academic literature agrees that religion can drive war or peace. A Pew Research Center study found that in 2010, 84% of people worldwide self-identified with a religious group. Religion is even more important in some key states experiencing violence. In Pakistan and Nigeria, 90% of respondents in each country said religion is ‘very important’ in their lives.<sup>42</sup> Marc Gopin writes, “Connecting the human being to his cultural moorings will help us understand why and when he fights and why and when he makes peace.... If those cultural moorings have ways of peacemaking, then they may resonate in ways that no other peace processes will. If those cultural moorings are conflict generating, then we may see what needs to change culturally and/or psychologically.”<sup>43</sup> Bringing peacebuilding into religion, and vice versa, is an opportunity to reach out to many people worldwide on a deeper moral and emotional level to promote peace.

Beyond divine influence, religion’s influence stems from three factors: its sacred ideals, individual and group religious identity, and religious organization. This framework enables inter-religious peacebuilders to think more strategically about why and how engaging with religion can support peace.

##### 3.1.1 Religion as a Driver of Conflict

Samuel P. Huntington’s famous “clash of civilizations” thesis anticipated that conflict in the post-Cold War era would fall along civilizational division, many of which overlapped with religious identities.<sup>44</sup> Academic studies, however, have not supported Huntington’s theory, as neither religious factors nor Huntington’s zones of civilizations have been found to be a substantial factor in ethnic conflict.<sup>45</sup> Nonetheless, religion can overlap with conflict and affect how it unfolds. Academic Jonathan Fox found that, beginning in 2002, religion was a major factor in all national conflicts that caused state failure.<sup>46</sup> While the religious identity of parties to a conflict did not affect the likelihood of a negotiated settlement, explicit religious claims did make successful settlements less likely.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> World Values Survey, “WVS Documentation Wave 6 (2010-2014).”

<sup>43</sup> Gopin, M. “World Religions, Violence, and Myths of Peace in International Relations.” *Bridge or Barrier. Religion, Violence and Visions for Peace*. Leiden: Brill, 2015. p. 36.

<sup>44</sup> Huntington, S. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.

<sup>45</sup> Fox, J. *Lessons on Religion and Conflict Resolution Based on Empirical Studies of Religion and Conflict*. Cambridge: Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, 2002. Available at <http://wcfia.harvard.edu/publications/lessons-religion-and-conflict-resolution-based-empirical-studies-religion-and>.

<sup>46</sup> Fox, J. “The Increasing Role of Religion in State Failure, 1960-2004.” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 19(3). Oxfordshire: Taylor and Francis Group, 2007. p. 410.

<sup>47</sup> Svensson, I. “Fighting with Faith: Religion and Conflict Resolution in Civil Wars.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 51(6). College Park: University of Maryland, 2007.

Evidence exists that particular demographic structures are more conflict-prone than others--in particular, overlaps between religious, cultural and ethnic boundaries, and contested domination by one group, increases the likelihood of violent conflict. Conflicts involving ethno-religious minorities feature more discrimination, and religious minorities cope with higher average levels of repression and discrimination than other ethnic minority groups.<sup>48</sup> While greater politicization of religion appears not automatically to increase the risk of violence, the combination of religion and ethnicity are significant predictors for armed conflict, particularly when identity is politicized and the conflict features discrimination or inter-group tension.<sup>49</sup>

Johan Galtung takes a more atomistic view and posits that religion can be a contributor of direct, cultural and structural violence. Because the idea of a "chosen people" is part of the belief system of many Abrahamic religions, he reasons that religion can lead to direct violence by its followers.<sup>50</sup> Cultural violence is the attitudes and beliefs that are used to justify and make structural violence legitimate. These include feelings of superiority/inferiority based on religion or rejection of non-believers which are used to legitimize the use of violence against the other. Exacerbating this is the marriage of religion with other factors such as language and ethnicity, which can lead to structural violence (e.g. marginalization and exclusion of outsiders or non-believers) and by extension result in physical violence.<sup>51</sup>

As a driver of structural violence, religion is used as a form of injustice and exploitation that generates wealth for the few top leaders and poverty for the masses, preventing others from developing their full humanity. This is by giving some classes, genders, ethnicities and nationalities privileges over others. It is used to institutionalize unequal opportunities for education (girls' education in the Middle east) resources (women and inheritance in Islam, or women driving cars in Saudi Arabia) and respect (Formal Ministerial positions within certain Christian denomination such as Roman Catholic Church and Orthodox churches like pope, priests or deacons). In structural violence, capitalism, patriarchy and dominator system is formed<sup>52</sup>.

As a driver of direct violence which involves the use of physical force, religion is used as a tool to go to war, murder, assault and verbal attacks like humiliation or shaming. Direct violence has its roots from both cultural and structural violence<sup>53</sup>.

Faith-based violence occurs in different parts of the world, and its perpetrators adhere to all the main world faiths<sup>54</sup>. The role of religion as a driver of direct violence can be seen in violence around the world and is increasingly being researched today.

History shows how religion has been used to fuel violence; from the execution of Russian Christians by atheists in the then Soviet Union in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, to the division and violent conflict between the Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks who were divided along Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim fault lines in 1990's to the rise of groups such

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<sup>48</sup> Fox, J. *Lessons on Religion and Conflict Resolution Based on Empirical Studies of Religion and Conflict*. Cambridge: Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, 2002. Available at <http://wcfia.harvard.edu/publications/lessons-religion-and-conflict-resolution-based-empirical-studies-religion-and>.

<sup>49</sup> Basedau et al. "Do Religious Factors Impact Armed Conflict? Empirical Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa" *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 23(5). Oxfordshire: Taylor and Francis Group, 2011. p. 20.

<sup>50</sup> Galtung, Johan. Peace, Conflict and Violence. In Hintjens H. and Zarkov D. (eds). *Conflict, Peace, Security and Development: Theories and Methodologies*. London. Routledge.

<sup>51</sup> Galtung, Johan. 1969. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research". *Journal of Peace Research* 6 (3). Sage Publications, Ltd.: 167-91. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/422690>.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid

<sup>53</sup> Ibid

<sup>54</sup> Adam et al, ed. 'In the Name of the Father? Christian Militantism in Tripura, Northern Uganda, and Ambon,' *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol.30 No.11.2007

as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), also known as, Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) and Boko Haram.

Some analyses focus on the history, texts and ideology of religion itself as sufficient to inspire and authorize deadly violence, seeing religious narratives of martyrdom, sacrifice and conquest, Qur'an and the Bible (in the book of Leviticus) recognizes the human propensity for conflict and gives permission to have a defensive warfare as accountable for violence by religious actors from ISIS/ISIL, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab to Christian identity militias such as Ku Klux Klan (KKK)<sup>55</sup>, Pogroms in Romania<sup>56</sup>, The National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) in India<sup>57</sup>, the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, and the Ambonese Christian militias<sup>58</sup>.

Others emphasize that it is the way in which religious movements perceive their actions and beliefs which inspire acts of violence; in other words, religious violence is not really religious, but embedded in nationalist, ethnic and ideological-political narratives and forces.<sup>59</sup> Mark Juergensmeyer, in his book *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, discusses the additional layer of complexity which religion can add to even conflicts that are primarily about competition over territory, power and/or resources. In such contests, religion may not be the "root cause" of discontent; instead, it initially may be primarily a way through which grievances are expressed and individuals mobilized. When contests are "religionized" (i.e., cast in a religious frame of reference), "what was primarily a worldly struggle takes on the aura of sacred conflict" and "this creates a whole new set of problems"<sup>60</sup> For one, when a conflict takes on religious connotations, it tends to escalate and become more protracted, because it is turned into dispute over absolutes (right versus wrong, truth versus untruth, good versus evil); by definition, there can be little negotiation or compromise over such sacred values.

However, as R. Scott Appleby notes, an extremist worldview is not essential or central to a religious perspective, but rather an **interpretation** of a given religious movement:

*[R]eligion is indeed "something apart" from other modes of belief, behavior, practice, and social organization, and [ . . . ] it can generate violence through (always internally contested) self-understandings excavated from the depths of an identifiably religious logic and religious dynamics. Yet I also resist—and the evidence does not support—the automatic identification of a fundamentalist or militant religious orientation, much less any intense religious sensibility whatsoever, with an inclination toward deadly violence, or with a deviant or pathological mindset (apart from the argument that any act of violation of another person might justifiably be considered "deviant").*<sup>61</sup>

While religious ideology does play a role, regardless of religion, people engage in terrorism because of enabling factors which provide opportunities for terrorism (e.g. social norms which justify the use of violence) or which precipitate the occurrence of terrorism (e.g. minority grievances and lack of political participation).<sup>62</sup> Extensive

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<sup>55</sup> Al-Khatter, Aref M. (2003). *Religion and Terrorism: an antisemitism from the earliest times to the present*. Lanham, Maryland, USA: Scarecrow Press, 1997 p. 267

<sup>56</sup> Paul Timichigiu (January, 2004). "Sami Fiul (Interview)" The Central Europe Centre for Research and Documentation. Retrieved 11 July, 2016.

<sup>57</sup> Henderson, Alex (2015). "6 Modern-day Christian Terrorist Groups Our Media Conveniently Ignores. Salon. Retrieved July, 11, 2016.

<sup>58</sup> Adam et al, ed. 'In the Name of the Father? Christian Militantism in Tripura, Northern Uganda, and Ambon,' *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* Vol.30 No.11.2007.

<sup>59</sup> Appleby, R. S. 2015. "Religious Violence; The Strong, the Weak, and the Pathological." In Appleby, R.S., Omer, A. & Little, D. *The Oxford Handbook of Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 33.

<sup>60</sup> Juergensmeyer, 2008: 253

<sup>61</sup> Appleby, R. S. 2015. "Religious Violence; The Strong, the Weak, and the Pathological." In Appleby, R.S., Omer, A. & Little, D. *The Oxford Handbook of Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 47. He notes that "[l]eaders seeking to form cadres for jihad, crusade, or anti-Muslim (or anti-Jewish, etc.) riots must convince the believer that violence is justified in religious terms. Luckily for them, most scriptures and traditions contain ambiguities and exceptions—including what might be called 'emergency clauses.'" Id. at 41.

<sup>62</sup> Crenshaw, Martha. 1981. "The Causes of Terrorism." *Comparative Politics* 379-399.

research shows how poverty and relative deprivation,<sup>63</sup> globalization and the political system,<sup>64</sup> political grievances which create alienation<sup>65</sup> and even state repression<sup>66</sup> all enable and trigger terrorism. Moreover, it is inaccurate to reduce the source of a conflict to these individual factors but rather it is a product of the interaction of these dimensions.<sup>67</sup>

Nevertheless, persons within religious groups are mobilized to engage in acts of violence in the name of religion through radicalization. Radicalization may be defined “*as the process by which an individual or group transitions from passive reception of revolutionary, militant or extremist views, ideas and beliefs to active pursuit of these ideals, especially through supporting, promoting or adopting violence to realize such intentions.*”<sup>68</sup> This radicalization usually begins with some perceived grievance in which another group is seen as the cause of the grievance.<sup>69</sup>

The radicalization of youth Boko Haram (see Figure 1) can be explained as a lack of understanding of religious teachings combined with poor political and socioeconomic conditions in northern Nigeria. Although not the case in every context, 'radicalization' comes through deep religious knowledge and the exclusive or violent interpretations of theology.

In 2013, the CLEEN Foundation was commissioned by USIP to conduct surveys, focus groups and interviews in six states in Nigeria to unearth the reasons why young men are joining Boko Haram. The main issue flagged was that young men were becoming radicalized because they are ignorant of religious teaching that opposes violence. Additionally, unemployment and poverty, a weak family structure, high levels of illiteracy, the indiscriminate use of force by the government on civilians, high levels of government corruption and neglect of citizen welfare, were all flagged as other drivers of youth mobilization into the insurgency.

Many volunteers to violent and nonviolent extremists have very little knowledge of religion and this makes them easy prey for recruiters. Example, the two British Muslims who bought “Islam for Dummies” before traveling to Syria to join the terrorist group ISIS who justifies their actions by quoting the Qur’an to embed themselves within their wider faith community and gain support<sup>70</sup>.

However, being susceptible to extremism doesn’t always lead to violence. It is only partially true that what causes a person to focus on one text or another is due to one's emotional nature, family upbringing, or socioeconomic status. An arbitrary poverty line, for example, can predict who will become violent or antisocial. Some disenfranchised people, often in the worst of circumstances, become saints, while others become rebels, revolutionaries, and terrorists.<sup>71</sup> A loving family structure will not necessarily provide a guide as to how someone will behave in complex confrontational circumstances.

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<sup>63</sup> Gurr, Ted. “Economic Factors, in *The Roots of Terrorism*, ed. Louise Richardson. Pgs. 85-102. New York: Routledge, 2006.

<sup>64</sup> Weinberg, Leonard. Democracy and Terrorism, in *The Roots of Terrorism*, ed. Louise Richardson. Pgs 45-56. New York: Routledge, 2006.

<sup>65</sup> Juergensmeyer, Mark. Religion as a Cause of Terrorism, in *The Roots of Terrorism*, ed. Louise Richardson. Pgs 133-144. New York: Routledge, 2006.

<sup>66</sup> Crenshaw, Martha. 1981. “The Causes of Terrorism.” *Comparative Politics* 379-399.

<sup>67</sup> British Academy. *The Role of Religion in Conflict and Peacebuilding*. 2015.

<sup>68</sup> Onuoha, Freedom C. 2014. *Why do Youth Join Boko Haram*. Special Report, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Martin Robinson, Daily Mail. Accessed July, 11, 2016. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2684714/I-tell-I-m-going-jihad-Lol-I-I-arrested-What-British-terrorist-Birmingham-told-childhood-friend-travelled-Syria-join-rebel-fighters.html>

<sup>71</sup> Richard Rubenstein, *Alchemists of Revolution: Terrorism in the Modern World*, New York: Basic Books, 1987

Open sources do not reveal the exact number of youth in Boko Haram today, but research shows that the foot soldiers, bomb makers, strategists, ideologues or criminals are predominantly young disaffected males who are ready and willing to fight and be killed.

In Borno State, Kano and Sokoto (i.e. in Northern Nigeria) 93.2%, 90% and 82% of the respondents respectively argued that young males are joining Boko Haram because they are ignorant of religious teaching. The lack of deep knowledge of true religious teaching is the leading factor influencing the adoption of extreme religious views, especially among the youth in Nigeria.

Youths are influenced by itinerant preachers who are outside the mainstream Islam who pervert religious theology, that using violence to further their religious cause is permissible and compulsory. Three trends contribute to this dilemma. One is the reliance on roaming preachers who claim to be Islamic scholars, instead of on religious books themselves. Then, there is the proliferation of Islamic and Christian sects and of independent preachers in both religions. The result of which is a youth population which is vulnerable to radicalization and recruitment.

Students do not learn to comprehend Arabic, but merely to pronounce it in Quranic schools, where they are also taught to beg for charity in return for shelter and Quranic lessons from a very young age from local leaders often with extreme views and may become prey for Organizations like Boko Haram (dependency on hand-outs). There are millions of the latter, commonly referred to as Al-Majiri students, in Northern Nigeria (The revealer, May 1, 2012).

*Source- Onuoha, Freedom C. 2014. Why do Youth Join Boko Haram. Special Report, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace (USIP).*

Figure 1: Youth Radicalization and Boko Haram.

### 3.1.2 Religion as a Force for Peace

Religion is a key way many people engage with and interpret the world, shaping norms and behavior, and, as such, can be a powerful force for peace. Throughout human history, religion has developed various laws and ideas that have provided followers with a cultural commitment to critical peace-related values. Some of these values include empathy, an openness to and even love for strangers, the suppression of unbridled ego and acquisitiveness, the articulation of human rights, unilateral gestures of forgiveness and humility, interpersonal repentance and the acceptance of responsibility for past errors as a means of reconciliation, and the drive for social justice<sup>72</sup>.

*Evidence throughout this paper shows how religion can support peace, from motivating religious peacemakers like Sant'Egidio in Mozambique, to building tolerance in Northern Ireland, or spreading the values of nonviolence, empathy, and sanctity for life examples such as Imam Omar Kobine Layama, president of the Central African Islamic Community; Dieudonné Nzapalainga, the Archbishop of Bangui; and Nicolas Guérékoyame-Gbangou, president of the Evangelical Alliance of the Central African Republic, are religious leaders who together, engage their religion to foster peace in Central African Republic (CAR).*

Every major religion of the world has expressed at some point, through its leaders and thinkers, a commitment to the value of peace, both in classical texts and modern reformulations. Furthermore, religious actors have had a major play in an increasingly important and valuable role in resolving internal and international conflicts.

<sup>72</sup> Marc Gopin, Peace & Change, Jan97, Vol. 22 Issue 1, p1, 31p

Mennonite, Quaker, and Catholic leaders like Pope Francis have successfully intervened in and mediated African, Asian, and Latin American conflicts, as have key Buddhist leaders such as Maha Gosananda from Cambodia<sup>73</sup> and Thich Nhat Hanh from Vietnam<sup>74</sup>, Imam Muhammad Ashafa, and Pastor James Wuye from Kaduna in northern Nigeria<sup>75</sup>.

## EXAMPLES OF RELIGION AND PEACE

### Islam and Peace

Islam, as a religion and tradition, has resources with which conflicts are resolved peacefully and nonviolently. Both its scriptures and teachings have rich sources of values, beliefs and strategies that have been used to promote peaceful and non-violent conflict resolution<sup>1</sup>. Values such as justice (*adl*), beneficence (*ihsan*) and wisdom (*nikmah*), unity, supreme love of the creator, mercy, subjection to passion, accountability to all actions are some of the core principles in peacemaking strategies and frameworks in Islam.

Some of the teachings identified in Islam include: Equality (Quran 49:13), Quest for peace by using non-violent means to settle violence (Quran 5:64), Peacemaking (Quran 49:9-10), Forgiveness (7:199), tolerance to physical difference, social status or other diversity (Quran 49:13, 53:45, 30:22, 64:2, 6:165).

### Buddhism and Peace

Maitri and Karuna (friendliness and charity) are the two pillars on which Buddhism has been raised. The profound doctrine of love and non-violence thus emerges from the bosom of Buddhist doctrine. Sacrifice, non-aggression, non-attachment, non-possession are the values that are upheld in Buddhism.

A critical concept for the inner life in the traditions of Muslims is *sulh* which means *peace* as opposed to *war*<sup>76</sup>, for Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism is *ahimsa*, nonviolence, made famous by Gandhi, is an evidence that religion traditionally have been practicing peace,<sup>77</sup> and for Christianity is the golden rule” *do unto others as you want them to do unto you*<sup>78</sup>

### Christianity and Peace

Christian ethics has sought to combine Jesus’ message of love with the responsible exercise of power in society and the polity. Christianity teaches that peace among persons, groups or nations is not possible without good will towards one another. For example<sup>79</sup>,

*Numbers 6:24–26* ) ends with: "May God lift up his face onto you and give you *peace*"<sup>80</sup>, *Leviticus 26:6* : "And I shall place *peace* upon the land, *Numbers 25:12* : "Behold I give him my covenant of *peace*", *Isaiah 57:19* : "*Peace, peace* to the

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<sup>73</sup> Cynthia Sampson, "Religion and Peacebuilding," in Handbook of International Conflict Resolution (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, forthcoming)

<sup>74</sup> Henry O. Thompson, World Religions in War and Peace (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1988), passim; John Ferguson, War and Peace in the World's Religions (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Homer A. Jack, ed., Worm Religions and World Peace: The International Inter-religious Symposium on Peace (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968)

<sup>75</sup> Interfaith Mediation and Conflict Resolution. Interfaith.euclid.int

<sup>76</sup> Lewis, (1991), pg 78-80

<sup>77</sup> Mohandas Gandhi, *All Men Are Brothers*, ed. Krishna Kripalani (New York: Continuum, 1980), chap. 4; Christopher Key Chappie. *Nonviolence to Animals, Earth, and Self in Asian Traditions* (Albany: State University of New York, 1993).

<sup>78</sup> Mathew 7:12, Good News Bible.

<sup>79</sup> <http://www.mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0406.htm - 24>

<sup>80</sup> Ibid

distant and the close", Psalms 34:15 : "Seek *peace* and pursue it", Psalms 119:165 : "Great *peace* to those who love Your Torah." Psalms 125:5 and Psalms 128:6 : "*Peace* upon Israel"

## Judaism and Peace<sup>81</sup>

According to the Hebrews, the word shalom which means peace, is derived from one of the names of God. Hebrew root word for "complete" or "whole" implying that according to Judaism and the teachings of the Torah, only when there is a true state of wholeness, when everything is "complete", does true "peace" reign. This is directly related to the Islam Salaam which means peace.

## Examples of the Work of Interfaith Peace Organizations

**Nigerian Interreligious Council** organizes youth summits that involve youth from all over Nigeria on inter-religious dialogue and peaceful co-existence. It also fosters religious understanding and peaceful coexistence through the promotion of dialogue among religious groups, and collaborates and interacts with other similar groups in Africa, Europe and the United States. For example, African Union, United States Commission on Inter Religious Freedom (USCIRF), Tony Blair Faith Foundation, UK, ECOWAS<sup>82</sup>.

**International Council of Christians and Jews**<sup>83</sup> promotes understanding and cooperation between Christians and Jews based on respect for each other's identity and integrity, addresses issues of human rights and human dignity deeply enshrined in the traditions of Judaism and Christianity, counters all forms of prejudice, intolerance, discrimination, racism and the misuse of religion for national and political domination. They affirm that in honest dialogue each person remains loyal to his or her own essential faith commitment, recognizing in the other person his or her integrity and otherness, coordinate worldwide activities through conferences held regularly in different countries, encourage research and education to promote interreligious understanding among students, teachers, religious leaders, and scholars, perform outreach in regions that so far have little or no structured Jewish-Christian dialogue and also provide a platform for theological debate<sup>84</sup>

**The United Religions Initiative (URI)**<sup>85</sup> as an organization promotes peace and justice by engaging people to bridge religious and cultural differences and work together for the good of their communities. They promote enduring, daily interfaith cooperation, end religiously motivated violence and create cultures of peace, justice and healing<sup>86</sup>, as well as engage in community action such as conflict resolution and reconciliation, environmental sustainability, education, women's and youth programs, and advocacy for human rights.<sup>87</sup>

**The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID)**<sup>88</sup> promotes interreligious dialogue in accordance with the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, in particular, the declaration *Nostra aetate*, mutual understanding, respect and collaboration between Catholics and the followers of others religious traditions; encourage the study of religions; and promote the formation of persons dedicated to dialogue.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid

<sup>82</sup> Nigerian Inter-religious council report. Available at: <http://www.abubakrsiddeeq.com/2010/12/nigerian-inter-religious-council-nirec.html>

<sup>83</sup> International Council of Christians and Jews. Mission Statement. Available at: <http://www.icrelations.net>

<sup>84</sup> Ibid

<sup>85</sup> Cooperation Circles , United Religions Initiative. Available at: [http://www.uri.org/Cooperation\\_Circles.html](http://www.uri.org/Cooperation_Circles.html)

<sup>86</sup> Ibid

<sup>87</sup> United Religions Initiative Charter. Available at: [http://www.uri.org/about\\_uri/charter](http://www.uri.org/about_uri/charter)

<sup>88</sup> Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue (PCID). Available at: [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/interelg/index.htm](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/index.htm)

<sup>89</sup> Ibid

### 3.1.3 Bringing Together Religion and Peacebuilding

The peacebuilding and development fields have been reluctant to work with religious actors and institutions for many reasons. One former practitioner attributed this reluctance to many donors' focus on secular work.<sup>90</sup> Other interviewees noted that religious engagement, such as working with radical religious leaders, may be negatively perceived by donors and host communities in certain contexts. Nonetheless, religion and peacebuilding have begun to work together more in the last 25 years. Religion is a key way many people engage with and interpret the world, shaping norms and behavior, and as such can be a powerful force to build social cohesion and trust in support of peace.

The three above ways religion can contribute to violence or peace – through its ideals, basis for identity, and organization. If religion or religious identity is directly invoked in the conflict, as it has been in 969 Movement in Myanmar, Sri Lanka or Muslim – Christian conflict in Nigeria, Central African Republic, Israel-Palestine, then addressing the driving narratives and identities is necessary to build peace.<sup>91</sup> The organization of religious groups also provides a structure for population outreach and engagement in peacebuilding.

On a deeper level, religion and faith “connect[s] the human being to his cultural moorings .... If those cultural moorings have ways of peacemaking, then they may resonate in ways that no other peace processes will. If those cultural moorings are conflict generating, then we may see what needs to change culturally and/or psychologically.”<sup>92</sup> The emotional resonance of religious motivation and ideals cannot be replicated and should support peacebuilding in any context. Finally, divine influence and transformational experiences cannot be disregarded as a potential source of change.

## 4. PROGRAM DESIGN, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION IN PEACEBUILDING

This section summarizes the prevailing literature on good practice in program design, monitoring, and evaluation in three important steps. Despite the existence of an intellectual base for how to conduct strong design, monitoring and evaluation, many real world constraints impede the use of this knowledge. Some organizations may not have the technical expertise to incorporate such practices throughout the programming cycle. Finding the appropriate balance between allocating limited time and money to direct programming, and the need to design, monitor and evaluate that programming, can also be difficult.

As identified through interviews and document reviews, creating strong program designs is a challenge in inter-religious peacebuilding, as it is in the peacebuilding field more broadly. Specifically, a particular feature of inter-religious work identified through interviews and notes of the 2015 EIAP Global Advisory Council meeting is the difficulty of accounting for the divine in designing and evaluating programs. How can one include a transcendental experience in planning a program, or evaluate the value or origins of such an experience? This differentiates inter-religious work and has not been explicitly addressed by either academics or professionals.

Nevertheless, lessons from the broader peacebuilding field, as well as new research on faith-based peacebuilding provide a good starting point for designing quality inter-religious programs. Table 2 below outlines three key

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<sup>90</sup> Katherine Marshall Interview

<sup>91</sup> See, for example, Kelman, H. “The Interdependence of Israeli and Palestinian National Identities: The Role of the Other in Existential Conflict.” *Journal of Social Issues*, 55(3) 1999. p. 581-600. Available at <http://scholar.harvard.edu/hckelman/publications/interdependence-israeli-and-palestinian-national-identities-role-other-existen>.

<sup>92</sup> Gopin, M. “World Religions, Violence, and Myths of Peace in International Relations.” *Bridge or Barrier. Religion, Violence and Visions for Peace*. Leiden: Brill, 2015. p. 36.



components of good practice in design, monitoring and evaluation of peacebuilding initiatives that were included in some of the program documents reviewed for this report/lit review.

## 4.1 Conflict Analysis

Conflict analysis is an important part of program design; it provides a better understanding of the context, and provides a basis for designing effective faith-based interventions, as well as assessing their relevance and impact. Religion can be the main driver of a conflict, but this is not always the case. Sometimes, the role of religion in wars can be overemphasized while other more deeply rooted causes or motivations are obscured.

For inter-religious action, analyzing the role of religion in the conflict is also necessary, including the different ways religion contributes to conflict, as well as ways in which it does not exacerbate conflict and/or acts as a force for peace.

Table 2 (below) outlines the following areas of analysis that we found in the documents we reviewed (combined) – Where; What; Who; Why; When and How?

Table 2: Conflict Analysis

Areas of analysis	Focus	Guiding questions
Geography/location (Where)	Where is the geographical location of the conflict?	<p>Is the conflict affecting an area of specific religious significance? (Israel- Palestine conflict).</p> <p>Is there an inter-communal dimension to the conflict?</p> <p>To what extent does religious identity serve to demarcate communal boundaries?</p> <p>How are the boundaries of the conflict defined?</p> <p>Is it a local conflict affecting one or several communities, a national level conflict affecting most or all of the country, or a wider regional or international conflict that crosses state boundaries?</p> <p>Which sectors of society are involved?</p> <p>Does the conflict involve social groups defined along identity lines (e.g. ethnicity, religion, language, class), or political groupings defined on ideological lines, or certain specific interest groups (businesses, trade unions, environmental groups, etc.)?</p> <p>Is there an inter-communal dimension to the conflict?</p> <p>To what extent does religious identity serve to demarcate communal boundaries?</p>

		Are victims and attacks limited to a particular geographic area?
Issues and Drivers (What)	What the conflict is all about.	What are the arising issues and drivers of the conflict and why are they important?
The actors (Those with stake in the conflict). Primary actors (Those involved in direct confrontation). Secondary Actors (those with influence and an indirect stake in the outcome) Tertiary Actors (those intervening to resolve the conflict) (Who)	Who are the Actors in the conflict? (Primary, Secondary and Tertiary) This will help to identify which level to approach <sup>93</sup>  i. Top elite -Key principals and Religious Leaders- have a great role in the conflict  ii. Middle range -Connects the top and the grassroots and hence has the greatest potential of bringing the top and the grassroots together. Includes the NGOs and governmental organizations, ethic and also a broader network that links various religious leaders together, as well as academic institutions and humanitarian organizations. May also include problem solving workshops, conflict resolution training and peace commissions.  iii. The grassroots- this is the local community. It is important because they are often the hostile group with deep rooted hatred and animosity because factors such as social and economic insecurity, discrimination and human rights violations are experienced at the grassroots level.	Who are the primary, secondary and tertiary actors in the conflict and what are the relationships between them?  What are the characteristics and attributes that define the actors?  What are the alliances and relationships between the actors?  Which conflict actors are associated with a particular religious' identity?  What is the language used?  What kind of discourses are employed by the actors? (Religious or secular?)  How is religion shaping the relationship between the actors? (attitudes, alliances, communication)
Reasons for actor's engagement (Why)	Why the actors are engaged in the conflict.	What motivates actors to engage in the conflict? (Is it personal)  How does religion shape the motivations of the actors in the conflict?

<sup>93</sup> Lederach, John Paul, (1997) *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington: United States Institute for Peace

<p><b>Conflict evolution</b> (When)</p>	<p><i>When did the conflict start and how has it evolved?</i></p>	<p><i>How has the role of religion in the conflict evolved over the course of the conflict?</i></p> <p><i>What point of the conflict did religion come in?</i></p> <p><i>When did religious identity labels first begin to be used to designate “sides” in the conflict and when did they cease to be used?</i></p> <p><i>What are other key events that developed during the conflict?</i></p> <p><i>Is religion an escalator or de-escalator in the conflict?</i></p> <p><i>What are the correlation between developments with a religious dimension and the level of escalation of the conflict?</i></p>
<p><b>Power and influence</b> (How)</p>	<p><i>How is power and influence used in the conflict?</i></p>	<p><i>How are conflict actors using sources of power and influence in pursuit of their goals?</i></p> <p><i>How are the dynamics of the conflict understood?</i></p> <p><i>How is the power and influence of religion being used in the conflict?</i></p> <p><i>How is the balance of power between the conflict parties used?</i></p>

Newspaper articles, interviews, commentaries of religious texts, publications from the faith based organizations involved, speeches and writings of religious leaders, and even the obituaries of martyrs are good starting points for conducting this assessment<sup>94</sup>.

Similarly, ongoing work by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) on the role of religion in conflict also outlines a framework for analyzing the religious component in conflicts. This includes an assessment of how religion shapes societal worldviews; impacts on gender dynamics; shapes political and governance structures; how historical narratives reinforce tensions and how external events may shape the religious conflict.

Analyzing each of these aspects are crucial. For example, studying the relationship between religion and the political system helps to identify how a particular religious group may be given special status or afforded religious freedoms at the expense of marginalizing other groups. Or, understanding the history of the religious element of the conflict helps to decipher the salience of the current divisive religious identities. Also, any information contrary to popular divisive beliefs (e.g. historical examples of peaceful co-existence or a different source of the conflict than currently believed), may be a powerful conciliatory element to include in an intervention. Again, these are important pieces of information which will inform the design phase of the program (see Table 1).

<sup>94</sup> British Academy. The Role of Religion in Conflict and Peacebuilding. 2015.

Table 3: A Framework for Assessing the Role of Religion in Conflict

Level of Analysis	Focus	Guiding Questions
Religion and Society	<i>How religion is manifested in society and the extent to which it shapes different societal values and worldviews.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the different religions people identify with?</li> <li>• Is religion the main way in which people identify?</li> <li>• Do religious identities intersect with or delineate other identities (e.g. Bosnian Muslims vs. Orthodox Serbs in Bosnia or Muslim Palestinians vs. Jewish Israelis?)</li> <li>• How do people with different religious identities interact?</li> </ul>
Religion and Gender	<i>How religion impacts on gender dynamics</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do the different religions people identify with in the society define the roles/ functions of men and women?</li> <li>• To what extent do women and men accept these roles?</li> <li>• What are the gendered differences about religious practices and symbols?</li> </ul>
Religion and Political System	<i>How religion shapes political, legal and governance structures.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are differences in religion and belief dealt with?</li> <li>• To what extent do people believe that a particular religious group governs the affairs of society?</li> <li>• What position do religions occupy in the political system?</li> <li>• What laws govern the role and practice of religion in society?</li> </ul>
Religion and History	<i>How historical narratives shape or reinforce contemporary conflicts and tensions between groups.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What impact has religion, in general had on history?</li> <li>• What is the role of history in intra/inter religious disputes?</li> <li>• How do historical narratives shape contemporary religious conflicts?</li> <li>• How does history shape the way people with different religious identities interact?</li> </ul>
Religion and Wider Context	<i>The level of analysis moves beyond the local site, to unearth the ways in which regional or international events may shape the conflict.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How and when was each religion born in the society and how is/was it spread?</li> <li>• Are any of the religions associated with an outside power?</li> <li>• How did the different religious groups relate historically?</li> <li>• What historical events of religious significance are important to current conflict narratives?</li> </ul>

## 4.2 PROGRAM DESIGN

Quality programs are focused on creating *change*. In the context of peacebuilding, this change may be to increase tolerance of another religious groups or to enable disparate civil society groups to work together. The program **goal** is the most significant change the program seeks to achieve.

Importantly, though individual changes (such as someone becoming more tolerant or skilled in conflict resolution) are significant, the Reflecting on Peace Practice Program (RPP)<sup>95</sup> found that long-term goals should reach beyond the individual-personal level (e.g., attitudes, beliefs, skills) to address **socio-political level** change (e.g., in informal and formal institutions, culture and social norms, group behavior, etc.). In reaching that level, the goal may contribute to building what RPP calls **peace writ large**, or societal-level peace.

### 4.2.1 The Goals of Faith-Based Peacebuilding Programs

Little has been written about how the goals of secular and religious peacebuilding do or do not align with one another, which is an important consideration for both funders and implementers of peacebuilding work. For example, is a program's contribution towards the larger peace a relevant standard against which to measure a program focused on enabling people to have personal religious experiences and transformations? Engaging in good work that transforms or helps individuals may be an end in and of itself. And how can one plan for or measure the transcendental and divine aspects of inter-religious peacebuilding?<sup>96</sup>

From the Berkley Center's Peacebuilding Practitioners Interview Series and the EIAP's Global Advisory Council meeting in May 2015, we can identify some goals which inter-religious programs and secular peacebuilding programs share in common. The list below is not exhaustive, but reflects some broad from a diverse group of practitioners. It includes:

- Attitude change, connection and relationship-building across conflict (or religious) lines. Efforts may aim to deconstruct hostile perceptions, reduce suspicion, and build mutual understanding and cooperation.
- Inter-religious coexistence and cooperation on common issues that promotes “tolerance”, understanding, respect and ability to live together despite differences.
- Dispute resolution—reaching agreements (e.g., on land disputes), or “at least” ongoing dialogue to resolve differences
- Addressing deep structural factors that prevent reconciliation, such as poverty, exploitation, exclusion and social injustice. This reflects the belief that it is not enough to promote reconciliation through dialogue and training; concrete (joint) action and change in concrete issues of concern (such as poverty, violent extremism, unemployment, health, etc.) are needed to facilitate reconciliation.
- Reform and reintegration of ex-combatants, with a focus on correcting “negative images” through use of religious texts and “deprogram[ming] them from their tendency towards violence, to renounce violence.”<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Anderson, M. and Olson, L. *Confronting War: Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners*. Cambridge: CDA, 2003.

<sup>96</sup> Alliance for Peacebuilding, “Effective Inter-Religious Action in Peacebuilding Program Global Advisory Council NCIL 2015 In-Person Meeting Notes.” One meeting attendee suggested emphasizing that evaluation can examine the effectiveness of a program through measurement while not disregarding the role of the divine.

<sup>97</sup> Interview with Talatu Aliyu, Interfaith Mediation Centre, Nigeria. <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-talatu-aliyu-of-interfaith-mediation-centre>.

Some goals emerged as particularly important and meaningful in inter-religious action for peacebuilding:

- Healing and reconciliation. This is a core domain of work for religious peacebuilders, and a domain that many noted is a special responsibility and area of contribution for inter-religious peacebuilding. This includes both supporting healing both within one's self and supporting acceptance of responsibility and forgiveness both individually and within and across communities.
- Solidarity, mobilization and making people's voices heard. Protecting and "caring for the people"<sup>98</sup> in the midst of violence, as well as advocating for their needs and making people's voices heard (with government, in peace processes) on grievances, humanitarian concerns and other issues that affect them.
- Education for better choices in conflict—or as one practitioner has noted, "to move from a position of ignorance to a position of knowledge" about different religions and issues that can trigger conflicts so that people can respond constructively, and not react, to provocations and manipulation based on "misinformation" about religious texts and beliefs.<sup>99</sup>
- Building hope. This goal of engendering and sustaining hope during conflict and in long and difficult peacebuilding processes is a powerful theme in inter-religious peacebuilding, and one that the interviews suggest is believed to be a special contribution of religious peacebuilding: through education, preaching and praying to support and sustain people's hope that things can get better, and sustain their support for a future peace.

#### 4.2.2 Distinctive Contributions of Inter-Religious Peacebuilding

What are distinctive contributions and advantages of faith-based peacebuilding? Studies and interviews with faith-based peacebuilding and development actors<sup>100</sup> suggest a number of characteristics of faith-based actors and peacebuilding approaches that allow them to make contributions to peacebuilding.

- Credibility and trust of religious leaders and institutions. In many cases, faith-based actors have credibility, trust and legitimacy that give them unique leverage to reconcile parties, motivate people to change attitudes and behaviors, and disseminate ideas related to human rights, governance and peacebuilding. As a Kenyan religious peacebuilder commented, "there is enormous respect for religious leaders, which means that people listen to what they say."<sup>101</sup> With their moral authority and command of religious texts, faith-based actors can also more effectively challenge traditional structures and practices.<sup>102</sup>
- Power of religious beliefs as a resource for peacebuilding. Religious beliefs are a powerful force both for healing and reconciliation, as well as for motivating people to act. "Monks are like doctors. The philosophy is medicine

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<sup>98</sup> Interview with Raphael Solomon Sabun, Peacebuilding and Civic Education Coordinator, Reconcile International, Yei, Sudan.

<http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-raphael-soloman-sabun-peace-building-and-civic-education-coordinator-for-reconcile-international-in-yei-sudan>.

<sup>99</sup> Interview with Mustafa Ali, Secretary General, Global Network of Religions for Children, and Director, Arigatou International-Nairobi.

<http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-mustafa-ali-secretary-general-global-network-of-religions-for-children-and-director-arigatou-international-nairobi>.

<sup>100</sup> See, e.g., Peacebuilding Practitioner Interview Series, Berkley Center, Georgetown University; Bouta, T., Kadaifci-Orellana, A. & Abu-Nimer, M. (2005) "Faith-Based Peacebuilding: Mapping of Christian, Muslim and Multi-faith Actors." The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations and Salam Institute.

<sup>101</sup> Interview with Rev. Anthony Jama Sasaka, Inter-Religious Dialogue, Coordinator for Chemchemi Ya Ukweli, Nairobi, Kenya, June 29, 2010, Berkley Center Peacebuilding Practitioners Interview Series, <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-reverend-anthony-jami-sasaka-inter-religious-dialogue-coordinator-for-chemchemi-ya-ukweli-nairobi-kenya-and-with-orieno-ombok-consultant-at-chemchemi-and-executive-director-at-bondo-institute-for-development-and-technology-nairobi>.

<sup>102</sup> Bouta, T. *et al.* "Faith-based peacebuilding."

for the heart. It can heal people and it can protect them.”<sup>103</sup> Religious beliefs can provide emotional, psychological and spiritual resources for healing trauma and injury, as well as inspire strength and motivation for apology and forgiveness. As the Director of Training, Mobilization & Sensibilization for the National Service of Gacaca Courts in Rwanda noted, “While there are many reasons people choose to confess, religious beliefs are certainly a major reason many people choose to confess.”<sup>104</sup> Moreover, use of scripture and engagement of spirituality can provide inspiration, strength and motivation to address conflict, as well as to hold back reactivity.

- Broad reach and influence. Because religion and religious institutions are often deeply rooted in societies, they can have broad reach and loyalty unlike other institutions. As a peacebuilder in Nigeria commented, “Faith-based organizations have more authority than other organizations. Almost everyone in Nigeria belongs to a religion, and people obey and respect their religious leaders.”<sup>105</sup> Local religious leaders often have a broad community base, and are able to reach people through mosques, churches, community centers and educational institutions, while also being able to draw on global networks of like-minded faith-based actors both for mobilization of support for peace and for influence. At the same time, their credibility, moral authority and broad reach allows them to have strong influence over government and political leaders. Religious leaders and institutions are often “key people”<sup>106</sup> for peacebuilding.
- Strong faith-based commitment to peacebuilding. Religious values and principles can inspire a strong sense of responsibility and commitment to reach out to victims of conflict, and to strive for and engage in peacebuilding—and to have the strength to remain engaged and committed to peacebuilding under difficult conditions.

### 4.2.3 Other Elements of Good Program Design

Program designs include not only an explicit **goal** but also **activities**, **inputs** (what the program will need to carry out activities), and **objectives** (changes the program wants to occur to work towards the goal), as well as clearly articulated **assumptions** about the context as well as how and why changes will occur (theory of change). A theory of change describes how and why change will happen in the context, and can oftentimes be framed as an “If... then...” statement. A CARE International review of 19 peacebuilding projects found use of theories of change made programs more transparent in their assumptions, increased clarity and precision in establishing program logic, and assisted in targeting potential partners and participants.<sup>107</sup>

Figure 4 below provides an illustrative map of a theory of change of a program with multiple theories of change: both *skills and processes* (focused on improving giving people and groups the capacity to support peace) and *public attitudes* (changing public attitudes towards other groups and/or the use of violence) theories of change. The program theory of change links how activities will contribute to objectives, and how objectives will lead to the

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<sup>103</sup> Interview with Venerable Loun Sovath, November 20, 2011, Faith and Development in Cambodia Interview Series, Berkley Center, Georgetown University, <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-venerable-loun-sovath>.

<sup>104</sup> Interview with Denis Bikeshu, May 21, 2009, Peacebuilding Practitioners Interview Series, Berkley Center, Georgetown University, <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-denis-bikeshu-director-of-training-mobilisation-sensibilisation-for-the-national-service-of-gacaca-courts-in-rwanda>.

<sup>105</sup> A discussion with Bilhatu Idris Adamu, Kaduna Office of the Federation of Muslim Women’s Associations in Nigeria, July 1, 2010, Peacebuilding Practitioners Interview Series, Berkley Center, Georgetown University. <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-zulaihatu-jaafar-and-bilhatu-idris-adamu-of-the-kaduna-office-of-the-federation-of-muslim-women-s-associations-in-nigeria>.

<sup>106</sup> See Anderson, M. and Olson, L. 2003. *Confronting War: Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners*. Cambridge, MA: CDA, pp. 54-70. “Key people” are individuals or groups whose direct involvement is important to the peace process, because they are necessary to peace, because they may have leverage to affect people on a broader scale, because they are connected to hard to reach groups, or because they can build effective bridges between grassroots and decision makers, or across different groups.

<sup>107</sup> CARE International UK. *Peacebuilding with Impact: Defining Theories of Change*. 2012.

goal. At the highest level, a macro theory of change describes the fundamental, socio-political changes that should occur to help build peace.<sup>108</sup> Theory of Change focuses on macro-theories of change in inter-religious peacebuilding.

Well-designed peacebuilding programs, whether secular or religious, are logical, effective, adaptable and sets the stage for sound monitoring and evaluation (which will be discussed later). Thus, a strong design should involve the following components. Table 4 below describes key elements of good practice in program design and provides an assessment of the degree to which the program documents examined for this report do (or do not) align with them.

Table 4: Good Practice in Program Design

Design Component	Importance	Analysis of 25 Program Designs
Be clear and written	<i>This facilitates consistent implementation, assumption testing, and quality monitoring and evaluation, especially as staff move in and out of the office.</i>	<i>A simple document review does not enable analyzing this in full, as it is impossible to say what was known but not included. However, very few designs included assumptions, and fewer included both contextual and causal assumptions.</i>
Draw from quality conflict analysis.	<i>A program is more likely to be effective if it is appropriately situated in the context.<sup>109</sup></i>	<i>Most documents included a context and/or conflict analysis and tied the program design to that analysis.</i>
Do-No-Harm	<i>Programs should be designed to minimize the possibility of the intervention worsening or prolonging destructive conflicts. This involves a good understanding of the context and building in systems to understand where programming is going wrong.<sup>110</sup></i>	<i>Few explicit in articulation of conflict or faith sensitivity in design</i>
Have a clear theory of change	<i>Tying a program goal to peace writ large and a macro theory of change will provide focus in determining the most significant possible change. A clear theory of change also enables: quality monitoring and evaluation, identifying and testing/verifying assumptions, adapting the program, and learning the effectiveness of different approaches.</i>	<i>Outside of designs from one organization, most programs did not include a clear theory of change.</i>
Include key assumptions	<i>Tracking the validity of causal and contextual assumptions is critical to helping a program adapt to a changing context and evaluating why a program is more or less effective.</i>	<i>Approximately half of the program documents identified a central causal assumption, but none included both contextual and causal assumptions.</i>

<sup>108</sup> Babbitt, E. Chigas, D. and Wilkinson, R. *Theories and Indicators of Change Briefing Paper: Concepts and Primers for Conflict Management and Mitigation*. Washington: USAID. 2013. Available at [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/pnaed181.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnaed181.pdf).

<sup>109</sup> See for example, CDA. *Reflecting on Peace Practice - Participant Training Manual*. Cambridge: CDA. p. 3-5. Available at <http://www.cdacollaborative.org/media/94317/rpp-i-participant-training-manual.pdf>.

<sup>110</sup> See CDA Collaborative “The “Do No Harm” Framework for Analyzing the Impact of Assistance on Conflict.” <http://www.cdacollaborative.org/media/52500/Do-No-Harm-Handbook.pdf>



Identify - partners, constituencies, key and more people <sup>111</sup>	<i>This provides a roadmap for outreach, engagement and implementation, and who has influence in the conflict.</i>	<i>Most programs did not identify key partners, though many identified general constituencies (such as youth and religious leaders). Two programs identified key people, using that term.</i>
Be engendered	<i>Identifying that different groups (such as gender, ethnicity, religion, or ex-combatants) may require different approaches, activities, and sensitivities make the program more likely to be effective and less likely to exacerbate conflict.</i>	<i>Very few program documents explicitly included how program design and activities were tailored to different groups.</i>

In discussing the opportunities for improvement in the current practice of designing, monitoring, and evaluating inter-religious peacebuilding, the following is not a negative reflection of the programs or organizations that form the basis of this review. First, good practice may have been followed but not reflected in the documents made available for this paper. Second, these gaps are instructive primarily because they are typical of those in the peacebuilding field more broadly, including all its constraints and challenges, and limit the evaluability of programs – contributing to the dearth of good evidence on what works and does not in inter-religious peacebuilding.

### 4.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E) OF INTER-RELIGIOUS PEACEBUILDING PROGRAMS

Much like good design, quality monitoring and evaluation can drive more effective peacebuilding, both during a program and in designing future programs. **Monitoring** is the ongoing collection of data to inform day-to-day decisions about implementation. Through the systematic gathering of evidence, **evaluation** is an in-depth look at how and why things worked, which can inform both current programs and future planning. Both monitoring and evaluation are useful in driving accountability, learning, and in donor reporting.

Monitoring and evaluation is important specifically for faith-based programming because “...the current evidence base is thin and there are many who remain to be convinced that programming in this area can be effective.” – USAID, *From the Director: Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding*, Sep. 2009

Quality evaluations are a way to understand what approaches are more or less effective in inter-religious peacebuilding, and in what context.

Above all else, an evaluation should provide the necessary information and evidence to decision-makers. Therefore, every evaluation must be tailored to the particular organization, context, and subject being evaluated. Ongoing work by USIP, the Salam Institute and the Network of Traditional and Religious Peacemakers on religiously-motivated reconciliation argues that the M&E process should also be flexible and revised often to reflect the ebb and flows in the commitment and attitudes of participants (especially those who have suffered violence). Therefore, to review faith-based interventions, particularly reconciliation efforts, the M&E process should be designed with short-feedback loops and allow for change and failure.

<sup>111</sup> “Key people” has been defined in *Confronting War* (p. 48) as people or groups that have a significant influence on the evolution of the conflict; “more people” refers to approaches that target a broader constituency, seeking to involve a broader range of groups in the peace process.

### 4.3.1 Evaluation Criteria

The OECD DAC Guidance, *Evaluating Peacebuilding Activities in Settings of Conflict and Fragility*, lays out six criteria for evaluating peacebuilding interventions: relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, sustainability and coherence and coordination.<sup>112</sup> During its May 2015 meeting, the EIAP Global Advisory Council identified criteria that would be particularly relevant for inter-religious peacebuilding. These include: replicability, sustainability, adaptability, self-reflection, inclusivity, ownership by local communities, utilizing a ‘do no harm’ approach, addressing root causes/conflict drivers, and creativity given contextual constraints such as funding or violence.<sup>113</sup>

### 4.3.2 Challenges in Monitoring and Evaluating Inter-religious Peacebuilding Programs

The challenges and weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation of inter-religious peacebuilding initiatives mirror those of peacebuilding more generally. Several interview participants noted the difficulty of measuring the effects of inter-religious peacebuilding and the need for more guidance and capacity-building to be effective. First, some implementers encounter these measurement challenges because many programs work towards achieving long-term change as well as changes that are not immediately observable, such as in individual attitudes or social norms. Thus, it is difficult to identify indicators that accurately reflect the changes sought, the scope and scale of change, and their “relevance” (in the sense that they address a key driver or enabler of conflict). Moreover, understanding how changes accumulate at different levels and over time, how changes in individuals’ attitudes might lead to program level changes, and how programs may contribute to peace writ large also makes measuring effectiveness and impact difficult. For instance, survey questions may range from whether a participant would attend an event with people of another group to if he or she would invite someone of another faith into his or her home.<sup>114</sup> Another implementer referenced the importance of behavior changes, such as the sharing of resources among religious groups. Most fundamentally, however, it is critical that such indicators are tailored to the context, measured from a baseline when possible and created around the changes a program intends to catalyze.

Second, monitoring and evaluation plans may not always be sufficiently flexible to identify and address positive and negative unintended consequences.<sup>115</sup> In building capacity throughout organizations, one practitioner noted the importance of engaging and training religious leaders in monitoring and evaluation.

As in peacebuilding evaluation more broadly, a major shortcoming of M&E of inter-religious programs, as noted by USAID, is that it focuses mostly on outputs and anecdotes. Because evaluations may not reach strong conclusions, their usefulness is limited, they add less value to programming, and create a reinforcing cycle where individuals or organizations do not see the value in investing in monitoring and evaluation. Further, the nature of relationships and accountability between donors, implementers, and beneficiaries does not always drive useful, honest and transparent evaluation.<sup>116</sup>

### 4.3.3 An Assessment of NGO’s Adherence to Good Practice in Evaluation

How do evaluations of inter-religious peacebuilding reviewed for this report confront these challenges? Some good practices in monitoring and evaluation are noted in Table 3 along with findings from the meta-evaluation of seven

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<sup>112</sup> OECD DAC. *Evaluating Peacebuilding Activities in Settings of Conflict and Fragility: Improving Learning for Results*. Paris: OECD, 2012: 65-71.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Sarah’s interviews.

<sup>115</sup> Sarah’s Interviews

<sup>116</sup> Blum, A. *Improving Peacebuilding Evaluation: A Whole-of-Field Approach*. Washington: USIP, 2011. Available at [http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/resources/Improving\\_Peacebuilding\\_Evaluation.pdf](http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/resources/Improving_Peacebuilding_Evaluation.pdf).

inter-religious action evaluations conducted by the PEC.<sup>117</sup> Overall, evaluations did not follow good practice which limits the usefulness of evidence learning for future programs and/or developing an evidence base on inter-religious action.

Evaluations of programs focused on direct beneficiaries and the individual level. Extending analysis to include the broader community, institutions, and policy could help in understanding both the sustainability of a program, and the likelihood the program is affecting the socio-political level and more comprehensive peace, but is challenging and often not undertaken.<sup>118</sup> For example, to understand the roles of religious leaders in promoting attitude changes favorable to peace, it is essential to look beyond the leaders themselves and to the community. On attitude changes, one practitioner emphasized the importance of evaluating engagement with other faiths and on multiple levels.<sup>119</sup>

The evaluations did not examine or engage with the inter-religious aspects of programming deeply. This silence on the challenges of evaluating inter-religious interventions limits the ability of organizations and evaluators to build a foundation of evaluation practice unique to inter-religious action, which might include particular considerations, approaches, and data collection techniques that could make evaluations more valuable. Only one program evaluation of sixteen investigated how inter-religious peacebuilding differs from secular peacebuilding with a quasi-experimental evaluation design that tested a religious intervention against a secular comparison group.<sup>120</sup> Though necessitating greater expertise and resources, such program and evaluation design is one way to build evidence for the added value of engaging religion relative to secular peacebuilding.

Table 5: Good Practice in Program Evaluation and a Review of Evaluations

EVALUATION COMPONENT	IMPORTANCE	EVALUATION ANALYSIS
Clear purpose and users	Understanding who will use the monitoring and evaluation findings and how the information will be applied to decision-making is more likely to yield useful monitoring and evaluation.	All evaluations had a stated purpose, but only one specified the intended audience(s) for the evaluation.
Clear criteria	Establishing the criteria (such as the OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability) is critical to assessing the quality of programming.	Two out of seven evaluations provided clear criteria.
Appropriate methods	Evaluation uses and information needs should drive data collection and analysis. Mixed methods and triangulation between methods increases reliability. Data should be disaggregated by relevant subgroups.	Four out of seven evaluations used mixed methods to triangulate and substantiate findings. The other three used qualitative methods only.

<sup>117</sup> Vader, J. *Meta-Review of Inter-Religious Peacebuilding Evaluations*. Cambridge: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2015. Available at <http://dmeformpeace.org/learn/peacebuilding-evaluation-consortium-meta-review-inter-religious-peacebuilding-evaluations>.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Sarah's interviews.

<sup>120</sup> Mercy Corps, Inter-Religious Peacebuilding in Northern Nigeria Program.

Evaluation design	To provide a comparison across time or groups can demonstrate the effects of a program. A baseline measuring indicators prior to beginning program implementation and/or use of comparison groups are key to many evaluation designs.	Common limitations of evaluation design include that only one evaluation used a baseline, and only one of 7 used a comparison group or measured effectiveness beyond direct program participants. <sup>121</sup>
Stated limitations	Evaluation choices and limitations should be explicitly stated.	All the evaluations stated some limitations, with the most common limitations being the lack of a baseline and a limited sample size. Two mentioned potential biases.
Evidence-based and context-relevant conclusions	Explicitly stated evidence should support findings. Conclusions should also take into account contextual factors that may have affected implementation or effectiveness.	Four out of seven evaluations did not include conclusions supported by strong evidence. Half used questionable evidence, and three of seven evaluations made statements with no supporting evidence. <sup>122</sup>
Engendered and conflict sensitive process	Monitoring and evaluation is also a form of intervention and must seek to do no harm.	None were explicit about gender and conflict sensitivity in the evaluation process.

## 5. THEORIES OF CHANGE

Given the unique opportunities and challenges of engaging in inter-religious peacebuilding, this report outlines new macro theories of change drawn from academic literature and the program documents reviewed. A **theory of change** describes how and why a change will happen in the context, and can oftentimes be framed as an “If... then...because...” statement. **Macro theories of change** reflect assumptions about the fundamental drivers of conflict that an intervention seeks to change and assumptions about how change happens. The theory of change an organization chooses reflects inherent (and often implicit) assumptions about what are important causes of conflict, how change occurs, and what is feasible to address through programming.

It is important to note that not all inter-religious work may explicitly seek to change the driver of conflict or create new forces for peace. However, understanding the validity of different theories in different contexts can make for more effective programming both in the short and long term. Through understanding the assumptions of a particular theory, and how and why it would contribute in a particular context, articulating macro theories of change increases the likelihood that a program will address, monitor, and evaluate fundamental assumptions. In the long term, building a body of evidence about the various theories and under what circumstances they are effective enables peacebuilders to make more appropriate and effective programming choices.

Many programs draw on multiple theories of change. For example, a program in Sri Lanka’s stated theory of change was, “If key religious leaders from all faiths can develop mutual understanding and positive, tolerant attitudes toward each other

<sup>121</sup> As some evaluations and interviewees noted, this is due in part to the limited resources—both human and financial—allocated for evaluation.

<sup>122</sup> This does not mean that the conclusions were not evidence-based. However, the failure to connect conclusions to evidence or data collected in the evaluation explicitly in the reports limits their usefulness as a source of evidence for the field about what works and does not work.

*and engage in joint activities in their communities, then these broader communities will develop more tolerant, positive attitudes toward each other, and conflict and ethnic tensions will significantly decrease.*"<sup>123</sup>

Activities included training for religious leaders in conflict resolution skills (based on the theory that building skills will lead people to engage in more constructive dialogue and resolution of differences and disengage from violence(see Theory 2.4:*Building Skills and Processes*), which also provided an opportunity for leaders to build relationships with one another (on a theory that better relationships will counteract negative stereotypes and promote trust (see Theory 1.1:*Healthy Relationships* and 2.3:*Legitimate Intermediary*). The program also held community activities, such as language classes for children and sporting events (on the theory that contact in joint activities unrelated to conflicts, such as sports and languages, will lead to better relationships, changed attitudes and greater trust (see Theory 1.2:*Cooperation on Mutual Interests*).

Furthermore, macro theories of change may require sequencing. The effectiveness of combining or sequencing theories of change depends on the context (what is the starting point for the program?), as well as the goal (where is the programming leading?). If institutions for conflict resolution exist but are ineffective, a program may need to build skills and processes, as well as change norms about the institution's focus and purpose in society. If individuals have the skills to resolve or prevent conflict but lack a network or institution, programs would have to take a different approach.

While many theories of change overlap with those for peacebuilding more generally, the different approaches and implementation of inter-religious action may also require new ways of thinking about these theories of change. In compiling the evidence for each theory of change, there were some strong trends.

First, macro theories of change focused on how change is promoted on a broader (societal) scale had different types of evidence than those (**micro-theories**) focused on individual-level change (e.g., trauma healing, skills, contact theory). However, overall, the evaluations reviewed did not have strong evidence about program effectiveness, demonstrating the importance of discussing and sharing program design, monitoring, and evaluation techniques and research.<sup>124</sup>

Secondly, much of the evidence comes in the form of case studies or anecdotes of success stories. Part of this stems from the general challenges of evaluating peacebuilding, especially its long-term impacts, and the difficulty of accounting for context-specific considerations in a multi-case study. This may also stem from the alignment of narrative or story-based forms of evidence with modes of working in inter-religious action. Yet at the same time, the reliance on case studies creates a selection effect (case studies rarely examine why an approach was not effective) and can limit opportunities to generalize lessons learned.<sup>125</sup>

For each of the theories of change identified below, the discussion includes a narrative, how engaging with religion would strengthen or alter a given theory, assumptions behind the theory, classic cases or illustrative examples. Many overlap significantly with peacebuilding theories of change more generally—while positing a special or distinctive role for inter-religious action within them. An accompanying summary of the academic and evaluation literature and other evidence for the theory of change is also included; as there is limited evidence focused specifically on

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<sup>123</sup> Karuna Center for Peacebuilding, interviewed by Sarah McLaughlin of the Alliance for Peacebuilding, 2015.

<sup>124</sup> This theme also emerged in the EIAP Global Advisory Council meeting in May 2015 and in interviews with practitioners, including Mohammed Abu-Nimer.

<sup>125</sup> For more on the limitations of the case study approach, see Brewer, Higgins, and Teeney. "Religion and Peacemaking: A Conceptualization." *Current Sociology*, 61 2013. p. 244-264.

inter-religious action, these comments draw heavily on research conducted for USAID on Theories and Indicators of Change in relation to peacebuilding theories more generally.<sup>126</sup>

## 5.1 Attitudes

This family of theories of change assumes that individual attitude changes will create a critical mass of people, or that key people will develop attitudes, that will then translate into behavior in support of peace and non-violence as a means of channeling grievances.

A fundamental assumption behind this approach is that individual changes will accrue to socio-political level effects. Individual changes may occur among communities (including public opinion changes) or key people (such as religious actors or leaders becoming more tolerant). Attitude changes may occur through a number of activities, with the most common being dialogues, trauma healings, and inter-group projects for development.

Individual change of key partners such as religious leaders may sometimes be the necessary first step in a program, such as bringing in more radical leaders or groups or partnering with religious actors for attitude changes to trickle down to their communities. A religious leader who participated in an inter-religious workshop said, “At the early stages it was our race, our faith, but the experience received from the program made us think of faiths and ethnic groups in the same way we thought of our race and religion, and that there should be unity and co-existence among all faiths and ethnic groups.” Or, working with larger groups of people, attitude changes are assumed to accumulate and reach a critical mass to create sociopolitical change.

### 5.1.1 Healthy Relationships

As one practitioner interviewed said, “Peacebuilding is the restoration of relationships.”<sup>127</sup> This approach seeks to replace negative relationships and stigma with cooperation and unity through putting members of different groups in contact with one another, such as through social or cultural interactions. Engaging and building relationships with members of other conflict relevant groups, it is assumed, will enable a more sustainable peace. Because people will have more favorable perceptions of the “other” and be less willing to support violence against the (now humanized) “other”. Many programs drawing on the Healthy Relationships approach used dialogues or social and cultural events to bring people of different groups together.

Religion can provide an important spiritual foundation for people to relate to one another, as well as narratives that support empathy and tolerance. Such person-to-person work may be particularly important to complement official processes such as peace negotiations, involving citizens in the process and building a bottom-up constituency for peace.<sup>128</sup> Or, among key people in the conflict, such contact can be the foundation for future cooperation for peace. In eastern Bosnia, religious leaders attributed their ability to resolve a land conflict to their personal relationship built over years meeting of the Inter-Religious Council.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> The theories of change and attitude-behavior-institution structure draws from Babbitt, Chigas, and Wilkinson. “Theories and Indicators of Change: Concepts and Primers for Conflict Management and Mitigation.” Washington D6 .C.: USAID, 2013. Available at [http://www.cdacollaborative.org/publications/reflecting-on-peace-practice/rpp-guidance-materials/theories-and-indicators-of-change\(thinc\)-briefing-paper-concepts-and-primers-for-conflict-management-and-mitigation/](http://www.cdacollaborative.org/publications/reflecting-on-peace-practice/rpp-guidance-materials/theories-and-indicators-of-change(thinc)-briefing-paper-concepts-and-primers-for-conflict-management-and-mitigation/).

<sup>127</sup> Niyonzima Interview

<sup>128</sup> For a summary of John Paul Lederach’s “peacebuilding pyramid” and the importance of engaging peacebuilding at multiple levels. Maiese, Burgess, and Burgess, “Levels of Action (summarizing John Paul Lederach)”; For an example of why engaging citizens in peace processes is important to building ownership and support, see Jean, I., and Mendelsohn, E. “Much Process but No Peace: Israel-Palestine, 1993-2008.” Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2008. Available at <http://www.cdacollaborative.org/media/53204/Cumulative-Impact-Case-Study-Much-Process-but-No-Peace-Israel-Palestine-1993-2008.pdf>.

<sup>129</sup> Peuraca, B. “Can Faith-Based NGOs Advance Interfaith Reconciliation? The Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina.” Washington DC: United State Institute of Peace, 2003. p. 9. Available at <http://www.usip.org/publications/can-faith-based-ngos-advance-interfaith-reconciliation-the-case-of-bosnia-and-herzegovina/>.

Contact theory undergirds such programs, with the theory of change being that if one exposes a member of a group (the in-group) to members of another conflict-relevant group (the out-group), then this will create empathy and reduce prejudice. Dr. Gordon W. Allport argued, “contact theory would be adequate under four conditions: equality between the groups; common goals; cooperation; support of institutions, law, or customs”.<sup>130</sup> A meta-analysis of 515 studies by Thomas F. Pettigrew and Linda R. Tropp found strong evidence that interpersonal contact correlates with lower levels of prejudice, and that contact with one member of an out-group extended to other members of the out-group and even other groups.<sup>131</sup> Pettigrew and Tropp also found Allport’s four conditions for group contact to be enabling rather than necessary; contact under other circumstances still resulted in reduced prejudice, though with a less significant reduction.<sup>132</sup> Overall, this demonstrates the strength and potential of contact to help individuals build healthy relationships with one another.

*Figure 2: Building Healthy Relationships through Dialogue and Interfaith projects in Sri Lanka.*

A program in Sri Lanka brought together 80 Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim and Christian religious leaders in Sri Lanka’s Eastern province to develop empathy and mutual understanding, build trust and discover common ground as peace builders, among other aims.

Through interfaith dialogue and community projects, religious leaders many of those surveyed reported meaningful relationships both among different faith minority groups and with Buddhist participants. These contributed to a broader attitudinal shift—for example, participants were less likely to blame other religious groups for problems in their communities, and felt greater understanding, respect and unity with other groups. Hence refrained from violent extremism by using non-violence in resolving disputes. (Karuna Center for Peacebuilding, interviewed by Sarah McLaughlin of the Alliance for Peacebuilding, 2015).

Research does nonetheless suggest that the quality and depth of contact is important. Social scientists have examined under what circumstances contact is more likely to reduce prejudice and support peacebuilding, and evidence about inter-religious contact generally supports the theory. In a study on the effect of contact on Muslims and Christians in Indonesia, quantity of contact reduced prejudice more among the Muslim majority, whereas quality of contact (meeting two of Allport’s four conditions, equality and cooperation) resulted in reduced prejudice equally in the two groups. These findings suggest that it may be important to try to create optimal conditions for inter-group contact if contact is to benefit all participants equally.<sup>133</sup>

Several studies have also demonstrated that inter-group contact increases forgiveness and trust between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland.<sup>134</sup> In a study examining the effects of personal experience of conflict, outgroup friendship was a strong predictor of forgiveness, but experience of conflict dampened the likelihood of forgiveness given only casual contact (such as at a market) with the other group. This suggests that a person’s history and experiences, the nature of contact, and the standard for improved relations affects the strength of contact theory.

<sup>130</sup> Allport, G. *The Nature of Prejudice*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 1979.

<sup>131</sup> Pettigrew, T., and Tropp, L. “A Meta-Analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90(5) 1979. Available at [http://www.iaccp.org/sites/default/files/pettigrew\\_tropp\\_2006\\_contact\\_theory\\_0.pdf](http://www.iaccp.org/sites/default/files/pettigrew_tropp_2006_contact_theory_0.pdf); Decreased prejudice spreads most to the out-group when identity is made salient in interactions and the conflict, such as in Hughes, J. “Mediating and Moderating Effects of Inter-Group Contact: Case Studies from Bilingual/Bi-National Schools in Israel.” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 33(3) 2007.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Kanas, Scheepers, and Sterkens. “Inter-religious Contact, Perceived Group Threat, and Perceived Discrimination: Predicting Negative Attitudes among Religious Minorities and Majorities in Indonesia.” *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 78(2) 2015.

<sup>134</sup> Pettigrew, et al. “Recent Advances in Intergroup Contact Theory.” *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35(3) 2011.; Voci, et al. “Refining the Association between Intergroup Contact and Intergroup Forgiveness in Northern Ireland: Type of Contact, Prior Conflict Experience, and Group Identification.” *Group Processes Intergroup Relations*, 2015.

## 5.1.2 Limitations of Healthy Relationships Theory

Research suggests that, under some circumstances, contact can be ineffective or even damaging to inter-group perceptions and relationships. At the individual level, mitigating factors include in-group norms, a power imbalance between groups, and perception of group threat to the in-group. There is mixed evidence about the individual impact of positive versus negative interactions, with one study finding that negative contact increased racism and discrimination more than positive contact reduced prejudice.<sup>135</sup> For example, in the long-running workshops and dialogues between Israelis and Palestinians, Palestinians allege the structure and agenda of meetings reflect the underlying power asymmetry and privilege Israeli over Palestinian issues.<sup>136</sup> A study of positive and negative inter-group contact experiences of students in Indonesia and the Philippines found that negative interactions could feed into perceptions of group threat, perpetuating or worsening perceptions of the threatening out-group.<sup>137</sup> Combined with another study demonstrating how majorities and minorities only benefit equally from *quality* contact (which meets more of Allport's enabling conditions),<sup>138</sup> it is important for programs to enable equal contact that benefits all participants and groups rather than reinforcing power imbalances. There is little research, however, about whether grounding relationship-building in religious values, texts and dialogue might affect the quality of interaction and the depth of impact.

In addition to the potential for negative effects, the healthy relationships theory has little evidence to suggest that individual changes translate or scale up to social norms or institutional changes. While individuals may be rethinking prejudices and increasing empathy for another group, this may not be enough to overcome social norms or prompt action to prevent further violence.<sup>139</sup> Examining the consistent people-to-people work in Israel and Palestine from 1993-2008, Isabella Jean and Everett Mendelsohn found that intergroup contact had not "added up" to create a force for peace. One Israeli academic and activist attributed this both to the difference in power and expectations between participating Israelis and Palestinians – the former coming to 'make a friend' and the latter to 'convince Israelis to make concessions' – and the lack of a link to a peace process.<sup>140</sup> Intergroup contact may provide the grassroots engagement to complement official diplomacy, but there is no evidence to show whether building healthy relationships alone affects the broader peace.

## 5.2 Cooperation on Mutual Interests

This theory of change focuses on indirect ways of approaching peacebuilding, particularly through development activities. This theory posits that if contact among people across religious lines occurs in activities based on mutual interests (e.g., HIV AIDS, addressing poverty, etc.), then understanding will increase, prejudice will be reduced, and

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<sup>135</sup> Barlow et al., "The Contact Caveat: Negative Contact Predicts Increased Prejudice More Than Positive Contact Predicts Reduced Prejudice." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38(12) 2012.

<sup>136</sup> Jean, I., and Mendelsohn, E. "Much Process but No Peace: Israel-Palestine, 1993-2008." Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2008; Chigas, D. "The Role and Effectiveness of Non-Governmental Third Parties in Peacebuilding." *Moving Toward a Just Peace*, 2014. This is also reflected in the CRS Gemini Dialogues evaluation, reviewed for the EIAP meta-evaluation (Vader 2015) and this paper.

<sup>137</sup> Kanas, Scheepers, and Sterkens. "Inter-religious Contact, Perceived Group Threat, and Perceived Discrimination: Predicting Negative Attitudes among Religious Minorities and Majorities in Indonesia." *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 78(2) 2015.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> For an example of how inter-group relationships were not sufficient to prevent violence in Kosovo, see Chigas, D. "Has Peacebuilding Made a Difference in Kosovo? A Study of the Effectiveness of Peacebuilding in Preventing Violence: Lessons Learned from the March 2004 Riots in Kosovo." Cambridge, MA: CDA, 2006. Available here <http://www.cdacollaborative.org/publications/reflecting-on-peace-practice/rpp-case-studies-and-field-visit-reports/has-peacebuilding-made-a-difference-in-kosovo-english/>; Israeli teachers at a bilingual/binational school in Israel also cited group norms as limiting the nature of their relationships with Palestinians. See Hughes, J. "Mediating and Moderating Effects of Inter-Group Contact: Case Studies from Bilingual/Bi-National Schools in Israel." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 33(3) 2007.

<sup>140</sup> Jean, I., and Mendelsohn, E. "Much Process but No Peace: Israel-Palestine, 1993-2008." Cambridge, MA: CDA, 2008. p. 30. Available at <http://www.cdacollaborative.org/media/53204/Cumulative-Impact-Case-Study-Much-Process-but-No-Peace-Israel-Palestine-1993-2008.pdf>.



a “safe space within the conflict for healthy relationships to develop”<sup>141</sup> will be created. The assumption is that by providing safe space for inter-religious relationship building and demonstrating concretely the benefits of cooperation, attitudes will change, mistrust will diminish and people will be less likely to support or engage in violence.

Rather than focusing on attitude change directly, this approach allows groups to interact while also working on important social and economic issues that affect people’s and communities’ quality of life. The “positive change in attitude occurs from repeated engagement and increased cooperation around the safe purpose.”<sup>142</sup> Working on issues of mutual concern—such as economic development, HIV/AIDS, child rights, malaria, etc.—provides may also provide an entry point for discussing sensitive issues or a neutral platform for relationship building and inter-group cooperation. For example, programs reviewed for this study included efforts to spread knowledge of child rights through training and community outreach, and cascade training of religious leaders to spread knowledge of malaria prevention to their congregations.<sup>143</sup> Engaging religious leaders in training offered opportunities for exposure to one another, and build relationships (see Theory 1.1: Healthy Relationships for evidence on contact theory) that could form the basis for future cooperation and violence prevention.

In development and humanitarian programming, religious groups can leverage existing organization and religious notions of charity to distribute knowledge, goods or services, and ameliorate human insecurity that may underlie violence. Speaking about the power of religious organizations in South Sudan, one practitioner said, “During the war... [i]t was the churches that gave relief aid to the people and provided them with the basic resources they needed to survive.”<sup>144</sup>

*Figure 3: Mercy Corps’ Maluku Economic Recovery Program*

*Building on evidence that countries with low per capita income are more likely to face violence and the inverse relationships between economic growth and the experience of civil war,<sup>131</sup> Mercy Corps’ Maluku Economic Recovery Program in Indonesia seeks to use economic activity and services (such as business development training and sea transport services), as well as multi-cultural events and mediation workshops, to create incentives for cooperation between Christian and Muslim communities, arguing that this economic interdependence provided incentives for groups to maintain peace during elections in 2009.*

### 5.2.1 Limitations of Theories of Cooperation on Mutual Interests

The relationship building side of this theory of change has similar evidence and critiques as the Healthy Relationships (Theory 1.1), and, like inter-group contact, may require special conditions in implementation to be effective. Though economic interaction may provide a neutral, inclusive space for groups to interact relative to social or cultural events, it may also not challenge social norms that inhibit genuine interaction or inter-group relationships. In a retrospective analysis of peacebuilding programs in Kosovo following 2004 riots, Diana Chigas discusses how, despite the presence of inter-religious relationships and networks based around economic activity, bonds were not strong enough to help communities resist inter-ethnic violence. Norms within Kosovo-Serb and Kosovo-Albanian communities accepted discreet personal or economic interactions but did not endorse collective action against violence. Chigas notes that while communities participated in inter-group economic activities, either logistical constraints like location or norms restricted some projects from becoming interethnic in practice as well as on paper. Addressing these social norms, in addition to development work or joint action, and providing

<sup>141</sup> USAID Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation. “People-to-People Peacebuilding: A Program Guide.” Washington, DC: USAID, 2011. p. 20. Available at <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/CMMP2PGuidelines2010-01-19.pdf>.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> CRS Child Marriage and Malaria Evaluation (from EIAP Meta-evaluation)

<sup>144</sup> Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs. “A Discussion with Raphael Soloman Sabun Peacebuilding and Civil Education Coordinator for Reconcile International in Yei, Sudan.” *Peacebuilding Practitioner Interview Series*, 2010. Available at <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/projects/peacebuilding-practitioners-interview-series/list/interviews>.

alternative, non-violent dispute resolution mechanisms may complement relationship-building activities by providing an established alternative to violence.<sup>145</sup>

Mercy Corps' Evaluation and Assessment of Poverty and Conflict Intervention, synthesizing evaluation findings on its Maluku Economic Recovery Program and its Building Bridges to Peace program in Uganda, offered several preliminary conclusions about how to maximize the potential for development to contribute to peacebuilding, including: paying particular attention to design to encourage cooperation rather than increase economic competition between groups; target underlying drivers of the conflict rather than economic development more broadly; focus on creating "deep" interactions, which involve building relationships (such as business partnerships) rather than "thin" cooperation, such as trading, and; trust building may be necessary to enable economic relationships to develop.<sup>146</sup>

There are also broader concerns about engaging religion and development. It is important to note that there is a broad range of faith-based organizations that engage in development, in terms of their size, structure, ideology, capabilities, and how they infuse faith into their work. While religious ideology may drive people to engage in good works and development, it may also affect the nature of services around issues such as gender and health. Explicitly discussing religious issues to support spiritual development may also risk igniting concerns about proselytization.<sup>147</sup> These issues may be particularly difficult depending on the source of funding, such as secular government agencies. Nonetheless, clear communication would enable actors to negotiate these issues and effectively engage religious actors and institutions in development.

### 5.3 Trauma Healing

Trauma counseling works to address individual barriers to peace, focused on personal healing to enable people to build the attitudes and relationships to support peace. One faith leader and practitioner said, "We have people who have grown up in war, and that is all they know. We have taught them something else."<sup>148</sup> A peacebuilder in Sudan said, "Our goal is to move the person from victim to survivor. Since so many people feel useless, we try to help them see that they are important. In this way they can start building a new life."<sup>149</sup> Through creating safe spaces for discussion, providing a network of support, and supplying a meaning framework, religion can help individuals to heal and move beyond trauma.

Some of these trauma-healing programs have undergone rigorous evaluation. Evaluating discussion and support groups in Rwanda, researchers found that improved coping with trauma correlated with improved opinions of the "other" group intervention.<sup>150</sup> Another study demonstrated that, while Rwandans in general showed improved

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<sup>145</sup> Chigas, D. "Has Peacebuilding Made a Difference in Kosovo? A Study of the Effectiveness of Peacebuilding in Preventing Violence: Lessons Learned from the March 2004 Riots in Kosovo." Cambridge, MA: CDA, 2006. Available here [http://www.cdacollaborative.org/publications/reflecting-on-peace-practice/rpp-case-studies-and-field-visit-reports/has-peacebuilding-made-a-difference-in-kosovo\(english\)/](http://www.cdacollaborative.org/publications/reflecting-on-peace-practice/rpp-case-studies-and-field-visit-reports/has-peacebuilding-made-a-difference-in-kosovo(english)/).

<sup>146</sup> Mercy Corps. "Evaluation and Assessment of Poverty and Conflict Interventions: Conflict & Economics: Lessons Learned on Measuring Impact." Portland, OR: Mercy Corps, 2010. Available at <https://www.mercycorps.org/research-resources/understanding-poverty-and-conflict>.

<sup>147</sup> James, R. "Handle with Care: Engaging with Faith-Based Organizations in Development." Oxford: INTRAC, 2009. Available at <http://www.intrac.org/data/files/resources/625/Handle-With-Care-Engaging-with-faith-based-organisations.pdf>.

<sup>148</sup> Reverend Nahimana Interview

<sup>149</sup> Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs. "A Discussion with Raphael Soloman Sabun Peacebuilding and Civil Education Coordinator for Reconcile International in Yei, Sudan." *Peacebuilding Practitioner Interview Series*, 2010. Available at <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/projects/peacebuilding-practitioners-interview-series/list/interviews>.

<sup>150</sup> Staub et al. "Healing, Reconciliation, Forgiving and the Prevention of Violence after Genocide or Mass Killing: An Intervention and Its Experimental Evaluation in Rwanda." *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 24(3) 2005. Available at [http://people.umass.edu/estaub/HEALING\\_RECONCILIATION\\_FORGIVING.pdf](http://people.umass.edu/estaub/HEALING_RECONCILIATION_FORGIVING.pdf).

mental health over the course of the intervention, those who attended a group socio-therapy program showed significantly more improvement over those who did not attend.<sup>151</sup>

Religion can play a powerful role in helping people heal after experiencing trauma. With established relationships and networks, religious groups can provide a safe network of support for individuals, as well as a conceptual framework for processing and moving on from trauma. Two meta-analyses of studies surrounding religion, spirituality, and post-traumatic development found evidence that positive religious coping (such as seeking support from God and working collaboratively with God) positively correlated with improved psychological processing after experiencing various forms of stress, whereas negative religious coping (such as seeing trauma as punishment) yielded no strong results.<sup>152</sup> Authors hypothesize these results are due to established religious relationships and networks, as well as a how religion provides a conceptual framework for processing and moving on from trauma.<sup>153</sup>

### 5.3.1 Limitations of Trauma Healing Theories

General critiques of this approach include that it has a Western bias, imposing Western concepts of trauma and how one should recover from trauma, and that it can reinforce notions of victimhood.<sup>154</sup> The evidence on the role of religion is also limited, even if it is suggestive. The meta-analyses of religion and trauma healing largely relied on studies that examined Protestants and Catholics, which limits the generalizability of evidence to other religions and faiths.<sup>155</sup> Moreover, there is limited evidence about the influence of religious interventions specifically on those who have experienced violence rather than other kinds of stressors.

Finally, though there is strong evidence for the individual impact of trauma counseling,<sup>156</sup> there is no clear link to the socio-political level—in other words, addressing issues of trauma and recovery at the broader societal level.

## 5.4 Public Attitudes

Rather than focusing on individual changes (*such as in Theory 1.1: Healthy Relationships and Theory 1.2: Cooperation on Mutual Interests*), this approach seeks to create change within groups. Programs using this theory of change seek to build a critical mass of attitudinal changes to shift the way groups think about others, the use and necessity of conflict, and what defines one's identity. These group attitudes create resilient communities, by building immunity to recruitment by violent extremists, by catalyzing community-based programs that promote self-reliance and non-violent attitude.

Media outreach is a common way programs engage this theory of change. Media programs may work to increase knowledge and decrease stigma of other conflict relevant groups, such as religious groups, or draw on religious narratives and constituencies to build support for peace. Religious ideology and organization offers an entry point into forming public attitudes. In situations where religious symbols or identities are used to justify conflict,

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<sup>151</sup> Scholte et al. "The Effect on Mental Health of a Large Scale Psychosocial Intervention for Survivors of Mass Violence: A Quasi-Experimental Study in Rwanda." San Francisco, CA: PLOS, 2011. Available at <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0021819>.

<sup>152</sup> With 11 studies included, Shaw, Joseph, and Linley. "Religion, Spirituality, and Posttraumatic Growth: A Systematic Review." *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, 8(1) 2007; Analysing 49 studies, Ano, G, and Vasconcelles, E. "Religious Coping and Psychological Adjustment to Stress: A Meta-Analysis." *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 61(4) 2005.

<sup>153</sup> See Harper, A and Pargament, K. "Trauma, Religion, and Spirituality: Pathways to Healing." *Traumatic Stress and Long-Term Recovery*. Springer International Publishing, 2015. 85% of the cases in Ano and Vasconcelles' meta-analysis of 49 studies focused on Catholics and Protestants.

<sup>154</sup> For more, see Babbitt, Chigas, and Wilkinson. "Theories and Indicators of Change: Concepts and Primers for Conflict Management and Mitigation." Washington D.C.: USAID, 2013. p. 35. Available at [http://www.cdacollaborative.org/publications/reflecting-on-peace-practice/rpp-guidance-materials/theories-and-indicators-of-change\(thinc\)-briefing-paper-concepts-and-primers-for-conflict-management-and-mitigation/](http://www.cdacollaborative.org/publications/reflecting-on-peace-practice/rpp-guidance-materials/theories-and-indicators-of-change(thinc)-briefing-paper-concepts-and-primers-for-conflict-management-and-mitigation/).

<sup>155</sup> Ano, G, and Vasconcelles, E. "Religious Coping and Psychological Adjustment to Stress: A Meta-Analysis." *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 61(4) 2005.

<sup>156</sup> Babbitt, Chigas, and Wilkinson. "Theories and Indicators of Change: Concepts and Primers for Conflict Management and Mitigation." Washington D.C.: USAID, 2013. p. 35. Available at [http://www.cdacollaborative.org/publications/reflecting-on-peace-practice/rpp-guidance-materials/theories-and-indicators-of-change\(thinc\)-briefing-paper-concepts-and-primers-for-conflict-management-and-mitigation/](http://www.cdacollaborative.org/publications/reflecting-on-peace-practice/rpp-guidance-materials/theories-and-indicators-of-change(thinc)-briefing-paper-concepts-and-primers-for-conflict-management-and-mitigation/).

shifting public opinion may be necessary to reimagine group identity and undermine religious justifications for violence. Building broad attitudinal shifts for peace provides a way to engage large portions of the population in peacebuilding.

One study of media for reconciliation in Kenya found that sharing stories of similar experience of conflict allowed Kenyans to better understand the conflict and mutually recognize other people and groups experienced conflict in a similar way. This mutual recognition and empathy, it is believed, may be a first step towards conflict resolution.<sup>157</sup> Another study on

*Figure 4: Using Media and Religious Messages to Shape Public Attitudes*

*A program targeted young people in Indonesia using radio shows, video competitions, and video documentary to increase knowledge of youth in Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia of religious pluralism and understanding, leading to changes in perceptions and attitudes, and further shifts in behavior aimed to provide a gender-sensitive, youth-focused analysis that breaks down negative stereotypes and creates positive attitudes about people of other religions.*

*Another program in Nigeria, among a number of activities, brought religious leaders together once a year to identify messages of tolerance common to each faith and engage in a series of radio broadcasts and inter-faith dialogue in communities in conflict.*

the effects of radio listening in post-genocide Rwanda found mixed evidence for media influence on participants. While finding that listeners were more likely to support inter-group marriage and express openness to trusting others, it also found no difference in opinions about bystanders' responsibility to prevent violence or in understanding of mass violence. These findings suggest that a different mechanism of change may be operating; rather than individual attitudinal change leading to behavior change and broader change in social attitudes, the reverse may be true—while personal (individual) opinions may not change, media programs may be able to affect social norms and participant behavior.<sup>158</sup>

In situations where religion is used to promote or justify conflict, religious actors are uniquely positioned to address narratives that condone violence and affect attitudes towards violence. Inter-group actors and institutions have the contextual knowledge and legitimacy to reshape group attitudes or identities; religious actors have the position and organization to discuss, and perhaps reshape, group attitudes or identities that support violence. Such religious engagement and negotiation may happen through sermons, participation in inter-religious dialogues, or through using media. Engaging with religious figures and texts can connect with people on deeper levels, replacing extremist or exclusivist narratives with tolerant and inclusive interpretations of religious texts or identity. Alternatively, discussing the religious foundations of tolerance and peace can help build moral resistance to violence.

Several programs tried to leverage the normative framework of religion to support attitude shifts through engaging religious leaders, but there is mixed evidence on the capacity of religious figures to shape public opinion. On Northern Ireland, one author wrote that “lasting peace is impossible without a change of hearts and minds, without a new story to replace the old.”<sup>159</sup> Through public statements and building on the reputations of individual leaders,

<sup>157</sup> Tully, M. “Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation Through Recognition: Assessing an Integrated Peace Media Strategy in Kenya.” *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 42(1) 2014.

<sup>158</sup> Paluck, E. “Reducing Intergroup Prejudice and Conflict Using the Media: A Field Experiment in Rwanda.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2009. The study created two groups of soap opera listeners, one with the control group listening about health and the treatment group hearing themes of reconciliation, such as reducing prejudice, violence, and trauma. Those who listened to reconciliation radio did not have different personal opinions about a bystander's responsibility to prevent violence or understandings of mass violence (such as who commits violence). However, reconciliation listeners were more likely to advise that intergroup marriage is acceptable, and they expressed a greater openness to trusting others. Reconciliation listeners still considered those coping with trauma to be “mad,” but they also showed an increased willingness to listen to someone who would like to talk about his or her traumatic experience.

<sup>159</sup> Appleby, R. *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion Violence, and Reconciliation*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999. p. 17.

religious figures provided this story and offered an alternative to extremist narratives, prompting religious communities to resist inflammatory rhetoric.<sup>160</sup>

When religious identities are salient to the conflict, engaging with and reshaping those identities may be necessary to enable peace. Herbert Kelman argues that, for progress to be made in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the groups will have to reshape how their identities relate to the conflict and one another. Kelman describes the situation as “a state of negative interdependence between two identities such that asserting one group’s identity requires negating the identity of the other,” particularly to portray one’s cause and actions as just. To overcome this “negative interdependence,” Kelman proposes problem-solving dialogues where individuals participate as equals to discuss and renegotiate how their identities relate to one another.<sup>161</sup> While Kelman is referring specifically to inter-ethnic/inter-group identity, his conclusions may be relevant for inter-religious dialogues as well.

Programs can also work within a group to reshape and broaden identities, reducing group prejudice and improving attitudes towards peace. Single identity dialogues may be a first step in conflicts where group norms inhibit having quality interactions with members of the out-group. In Northern Ireland, programs worked to build group confidence and support cultural identity, though these programs risk entrenching rather than overcoming intra-group norms against tolerance and inclusivity.<sup>162</sup>

#### 5.4.1 Limitations of Mass Public Attitudes Theories

Thania Paffenholz, in a study that examined the ability of civil society organizations to affect socialization, found that socialization is more effective when levels of violence are low.<sup>163</sup> This indicates the timing of public attitudes interventions are important. Furthermore, religious institutions and networks have not been studied as forums for transmitting public attitudes.

The effectiveness and appropriateness of engaging religious narratives in different contexts is a critical area for more research. Two interview participants noted the importance of understanding how individuals view their religious experience at the moment to speak with them more effectively. For example, if people feel their religion is threatened, they will be open to different kinds of engagements and from different sources.<sup>164</sup>

Most fundamentally, there is mixed evidence for if and how activities – particularly media – affect *behavior*, whether through engaging the audience emotionally or through creating social norms. This calls into question how programs affect the broader peace and what approach programs should take to create change in public attitudes, and ultimately behaviors.

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 183. However, one 2013 United States Institute of Peace survey in Pakistan found that respondents were not more likely to agree with a tolerant statement if a well-known religious leader endorsed the statement. However, this finding was not statistically significant, and the ability to influence opinion may be highly personalized (meaning a specific leader may be able to influence a person’s attitude) Kalin and Siddiqui, “Religious Authority and the Promotion of Sectarian Tolerance in Pakistan,” p. 9.

<sup>161</sup> Kelman, H. “The Interdependence of Israeli and Palestinian National Identities: The Role of the Other in Existential Conflict.” *Journal of Social Issues*, 55(3) 1999. Available at <http://scholar.harvard.edu/hckelman/publications/interdependence-israeli-and-palestinian-national-identities-role-other-existen>.

<sup>162</sup> Church, Visser, and Johnson. “A Path to Peace or Persistence? The ‘Single Identity’ Approach to Conflict Resolution in Northern Ireland.” *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 21(3) 2004.

<sup>163</sup> Paffenholz, T. “Civil Society and Peacebuilding.” Geneva, Switzerland: Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding, 2009.

<sup>164</sup> Chisholm and Elci Interview

## 5.5 Behaviors

Rather than operating through a prior attitude change, this set of theories assumes that behavior can be changed directly through changing incentives or capabilities. Through changing actors' incentives or capacities rather than necessitating shifts in attitudes, change – and therefore peace.

### 5.5.1 Pressure for Change

Religious actors and institutions have influence stemming from their history of public engagement and popular legitimacy, established organizations, and access to the normative framework of their ideology. Reverend Matt Esau, of the Anglican Church in South Africa, says “religious actors can interact on the side of the people. The[y] [sic] can make sure their protests are heard.”<sup>165</sup> Through building or channeling popular pressure for change, religious actors can exert pressure for peace non-violently. Common activities in this theory of change include advocacy, agenda-setting and popular mobilization. Leveraging their moral authority, religious figures have been critical in building support for change and pressuring parties to a conflict to change their behavior such as refraining from the use of violence but instead sort non-violent means.

Thania Paffenholz found that mass mobilization was the most effective form of civil society advocacy in peacebuilding generally. For example, during peace negotiations in Guatemala, the *Asamblea de la Sociedad Civil* was able to have two-thirds of its proposals reach the peace agreement. The main limitations on civil society mobilization were space for civil society (such as media openness and capacities of organizations).<sup>166</sup> Drawing on organizational capacities or moral considerations can enable religious actors to magnify their influence in mass mobilization.

Based on numerous case studies of success stories, religious figures and institutions clearly have the authority and influence to create pressure for peace. In the face of Chilean government abduction and disappearances of its citizens, the Catholic Church established the Vicarate of Solidarity in 1976 to combat the state abuse. One author wrote, the Vicarate “made a critical contribution to the return of democracy to Chile in 1990,” giving “institutional form and stimulus... to moral opposition to authoritarian rule.”<sup>167</sup> Speaking in 1984, Archbishop Desmond Tutu invoked divine morality and justice against South Africa's Apartheid regime, saying, “In pursuance of apartheid's ideological racist dream, over 3.000.000 of God's children have been uprooted from their homes.... Apartheid has, however, ensured that God's children, just because they are black, should be treated as if they were things, and not as of infinite value as being created in the image of God.”<sup>168</sup> Numerous other examples of religious figures creating pressure for justice and peace include Kenyan Catholic and Protestant religious figures being among the first to mobilize against Daniel Arap Moi, or when protests against the Filipino President Marcos' regime followed the Catholic Bishops' conference's denunciation of the Filipino elections.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs. “A Discussion with Reverend Matt Esau on the Role of the Anglican Church and the Possibility of Renewal in Jacob Zuma's Inauguration Speech.” *Peacebuilding Practitioner Interview Series*, 2010. Available at <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/projects/peacebuilding-practitioners-interview-series/list/interviews>.

<sup>166</sup> Paffenholz, T. “Civil Society and Peacebuilding.” Geneva, Switzerland: Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding, 2009. p. 19.

<sup>167</sup> Lowden, P. *Moral Opposition to Authoritarian Rule in Chile, 1973-90*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996. p. 1; quoted in Appleby, R. *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion Violence, and Reconciliation*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999. p. 221.

<sup>168</sup> Tutu, D. “Nobel Lecture: The Nobel Peace Prize 1984.” 1984. Available at [http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/1984/tutu-lecture.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1984/tutu-lecture.html).

<sup>169</sup> Appleby, R. *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion Violence, and Reconciliation*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999. Chapter 6.

## 5.6 Limitations of Pressure for Change Theories

Despite the numerous success stories, religious figures also face limiting factors. The sustainability of this pressure is dependent on the movement's internal organization and resources. The 1992 Dhammayietra in Cambodia increased public confidence in upcoming elections and protested ongoing violence by the Khmer Rouge. Initiated by Buddhist monk Maha Ghosananda, the Dhammayietra was a 45-day walk involving both monks and lay people, focused on areas that were still divided. Drawing on Buddhist norms, values and teachings, the walk in 1993 aimed to build links between people divided by conflict and provide a symbol of the return of Buddhism and the consolidation of peace despite continued hardship. It helped counter fear and provide hope, and was a significant factor in high participation in the 1993 elections in Cambodia.<sup>170</sup> However, an unwillingness to build organizational processes (Theory 2.4: Skills and Processes) and reliance on international organizations limited the movement's capacity to mobilize long term and build sustainable pressure for peace.<sup>171</sup>

## 5.7 Building Networks and Alliances

When groups advocating for peace exist in society, they may be too fragmented to mobilize effectively for peace. Therefore, peace can emerge when diverse groups and interests build the horizontal (such as among civil society organizations, especially across conflict lines) and vertical (such as at the local, national, and international levels) alliances to unite and press for change. Programs can provide the opportunities and incentives for religious actors to form the relationships and networks that make them more effective peacebuilders.

A theme throughout interviews was the necessity of building partnerships and networks. A Rwandan peacebuilder said, "Overall, the churches' reconciliation efforts are not very well organized amongst themselves or within their own communities. This has made them less effective."<sup>172</sup> More broadly, Mohammed Abu-Nimer also echoed this theme. He described the divide between inter-religious peacebuilding and the rest of the peacebuilding field. In addition to coordination challenges, this disconnect also means that the inter-religious and secular peacebuilders cannot learn from one another, share experiences, and build knowledge of effective practice.<sup>173</sup>

This theory of change assumes groups have the collective capacity but must develop the connections to sustain cooperation for peace. Using participatory capacity building training to also build trust and partnerships between religious and secular civil society groups, one program assumed that, "[b]y reaching across the aisle, previously isolated organizations stand to magnify their impact, and better leverage their influence in local circles to promote positive social norms."<sup>174</sup> John Paul Lederach argues that both horizontal and vertical engagement is important to building sustainable peace.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Ngarm, S. & T. Miletic, "Cambodia's Post-war Struggle for Peace." Cumulative Impact Case Study. Cambridge, MA: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2009. <http://cdacollaborative.org/media/53201/Cumulative-Impact-Case-Study-Cambodias-Post-War-Struggle-for-Peace.pdf>.

<sup>171</sup> Appleby, R. *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion Violence, and Reconciliation*. pp. 123, 130-131.

<sup>172</sup> Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs. "A Conversation with Sammy Kalisa, Project Manager for Rwandans Allied for Peace and Progress." *Peacebuilding Practitioner Interview Series*, 2010. Available at <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/projects/peacebuilding-practitioners-interview-series/list/interviews>. For another example, also see A Discussion with Alimigbe Francis, OI of Justice, Development & Peace/Caritas.

<sup>173</sup> Abu-Nimer. A Discussion on Inter-religious Peacebuilding.

<sup>174</sup> Karuna Center for Peacebuilding, interviewed by Sarah McLaughlin of the Alliance for Peacebuilding, 2015.

<sup>175</sup> Lederach, J. *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1998.

Much evidence for this theory comes from case studies. A recent analysis of peacebuilding in Nepal notes the lack of communication and coordination surrounding religion and peacebuilding in the country. A lack of vertical relationships inhibits sharing good ideas at the local level.<sup>176</sup>

In a positive example, under Apartheid in South Africa, the Consultative Business Movement and South African Council of Churches allied to prompt and facilitate discussions between parties in the 1991 National Peace Accord.<sup>177</sup> Similarly, in Guatemala, an alliance of Roman Catholics, indigenous Mayans, Jews and evangelicals helped end the civil war.<sup>178</sup> Internationally, Religions for Peace provides trainings and venue to share best practices, as well as serves as a peacebuilding program implementer.

### 5.7.1 Limitations of Building Networks and Alliances Theories

In writing about inter-faith dialogue in Israel and Palestine, Abu Nimer enumerates many of the general challenges to effective functioning of coalitions across conflict lines, including distrust between participants, asymmetric management and funding, different expectations and goals, language barriers, a sense of alienation, and the effect of external events on progress.<sup>179</sup> However, as Kelman notes, such continued uneasiness has a benefit in that individuals participate while still maintaining their legitimacy within their group.<sup>180</sup> Moreover, programs must also consider if creating networks and alliances may expose participant groups to pressures against peace, such as negative public opinion against negotiation or derision for cooperating with another group.<sup>181</sup>

While there are a number of positive examples of building networks being effective in enabling support for peace, there is not clear guidance about what, across contexts, are signals that this is an appropriate theory of change. When is building networks effective, and at what point do the marginal value of such programs decrease? Do societies, leaders, or situations have to be “ripe”<sup>182</sup> and/or open to roles for religious actors for this approach to affect the broader peace? These are all areas for future research and evaluations to explore.

## 5.8 Legitimate Intermediary

In a context where parties to a conflict do not trust one another, groups are more likely sort to violent extremism but will negotiate and reach agreement with a legitimate and respected intermediary, either between parties to a conflict or between the grassroots and official level able to draw on a moral authority, religious actors can act as neutral but influential guarantors and mediators. They can lend their legitimacy and “good offices,” mediating between groups, reducing suspicion, or creating an environment conducive to collaboration. Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye have negotiated many peace settlements in Nigeria.<sup>183</sup> Bolivia in 1968, Catholic leaders used “good offices” and regularly mediated between miners and the national government as well as

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<sup>176</sup> Owen, M and King, A. “Religious Peacebuilding and Development in Nepal.” University of Winchester, UK: Winchester Centre of Religions for Reconciliation and Peace, 2013. Available at <http://www.winchester.ac.uk/academicdepartments/theology-religion-and-philosophy/Research/Documents/Religion%20and%20Peacebuilding%20in%20Nepal%20Report.pdf>.

<sup>177</sup> Spies, C. “South Africa’ National Peace Accord: Its Structures and Functions.” London, UK: Conciliation Resources, 2002; Spies 2002 referenced in Chigas, D. “The Role and Effectiveness of Non-Governmental Third Parties in Peacebuilding.” *Moving Toward a Just Peace*, 2014. p. 277.

<sup>178</sup> United States Institute of Peace. “Certificate Course in Interfaith Conflict Resolution.” p. 78. Available at <http://online.usip.org/interfaith/>.

<sup>179</sup> Abu Nimer, M. “IFD and Peacebuilding in Israel and Palestine.” In Abu Nimer, M., Khoury, A. & Welty, E. *Unity in Diversity: Interfaith Dialogue in the Middle East*. Washington, D.C.: US Institute of Peace, 2007.

<sup>180</sup> Kelman, HC. “Coalitions Across Conflict Lines: The Interplay of Conflicts Within and Between the Israeli and Palestinian Communities.” *Conflict between people and groups*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1993. p. 236-258.

<sup>181</sup> See, for example on how considering multiple constituencies affect interests and negotiation, Putnam, R. “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games.” *International Organization*, 42(3) 1988.

<sup>182</sup> United States Institute of Peace. “More On... Ensuring Conflict Ripeness.” Available at <http://www.usip.org/managing-mediation-process/step-3-ensure-conflict-ripeness/more-ensuring-conflict-ripeness>.

<sup>183</sup> United States Institute of Peace. “Certificate Course in Interfaith Conflict Resolution.” p. 38-49. Available at <http://online.usip.org/interfaith/>.



numerous election-related disputes.<sup>184</sup> And Former UN Secretary General helped mediate the Kenyan 2007/2008 post-election violence which helped the political leaders to sort non-violence means to air their grievances.

As with earlier theories of change, the Legitimate Intermediary theory is built on case studies of successful interventions. Nonetheless, these demonstrate important qualities of effective activities, whether mediation or opening the space for negotiation. R. Scott Appleby identified three key qualities that make religious peacemaker more likely to be effective. These include: international or transnational ties, a history in advocating for peace and against the use of force, and have positive relationships with the various groups.<sup>185</sup> Added to this is the importance of perceived neutrality by all parties. In Sierra Leone, it was the non-religious nature of the conflict that enabled the Inter-Religious Council to maintain neutrality and mediate between factions.<sup>186</sup> In perhaps the best-known example of a religious institution acting as a legitimate intermediary, in the early 1990s, the Catholic organization the Community of Sant'Egidio was instrumental in resolving Mozambique's civil war. As Jeffrey Haynes writes, "Sant'Egidio was successful in its efforts because both RENAMO and the government perceived Sant'Egidio as an organization characterized both by a welcome neutrality and a compassionate outlook, with but one interest in Mozambique: to end the civil war and promote peace."<sup>187</sup>

For this approach to be effective, the individuals or institutions must have record of integrity and neutrality to build trust with and between the parties. Religious figures must also have the requisite skills to effectively work with parties towards a settlement, and like all negotiations are also subject to situational 'ripeness.'<sup>188</sup> However, religious actors also have specific tools at their disposal to engage parties. Reverend Burgess Carr, Secretary-General of the All-Africa Conference of Churches, served as a mediator in Sudan in the process that led to the 1972 Addis Ababa agreement. With a mediation team, Reverend Carr identified cross-cutting religious beliefs that unified the two sides, building common ground with sermons, prayers, and Bible readings.<sup>189</sup>

### 5.8.1 Limitations of Legitimate Intermediary theory

While there is strong evidence that religious actors and institutions are well situated to act as mediators, there are general limitations to the influence of mediators. Outcomes are dependent on events and actors external to the interactions, as well as general situational ripeness.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Appleby, R. *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion Violence, and Reconciliation*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999. p. 217.

<sup>185</sup> Appleby, S. "Building Sustainable Peace: The Roles of Local and Transnational Religious Actors." *Religious Pluralism, Globalization, and World Politics*, 2008.

<sup>186</sup> Kaplan, S. "Religion, Development, and Fragile States." 2015. p. 19. Available at <http://www.fragilestates.org/2015/02/10/religion-development-fragile-states-complex-relationship/>.

<sup>187</sup> Haynes, J. "Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building: The Role of Religion in Mozambique, Nigeria, and Cambodia," 64. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 47(1) 2009.

<sup>188</sup> For more, see United States Institute of Peace. "More On... Ensuring Conflict Ripeness." Available at <http://www.usip.org/managing-mediation-process/step-3-ensure-conflict-ripeness/more-ensuring-conflict-ripeness>.

<sup>189</sup> Appleby, R. *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion Violence, and Reconciliation*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999. p. 218-219.

<sup>190</sup> United States Institute of Peace. "More On... Ensuring Conflict Ripeness." Available at <http://www.usip.org/managing-mediation-process/step-3-ensure-conflict-ripeness/more-ensuring-conflict-ripeness>.

## 5.9 Building Skills and Processes

Given their moral authority and popular legitimacy, religious actors can play powerful roles in peacebuilding, but they may not have the specific skills or the managerial or organizational set-up to effect change. For example, as mentioned above (Theory 2.1), lack of organizational structure and processes limited the influence of the Cambodian Dhammayietra marches. While the movement had a strong understanding of issues of justice and reconciliation, it lacked the capacity in training, management and resource mobilization which inhibited it from gaining traction in broader social practices and political institutions.<sup>191</sup>

### Figure 5: Mitigating Violent Sectarianism through Capacity-Building in Pakistan

A project in Pakistan sought to mitigate violent sectarianism through joint capacity-building that aimed to create and normalize collaborative working relationships between secular and faith-based organizations, and strengthen skills and structures for joint analysis and collaboration so they could work together to drive social change. The theory of change was that if these ideologically diverse faith-based and secular groups could build relationships and skills to work together, they could model constructive, non-violent solutions to the impacts of violent sectarianism, and would inspire the Pakistani public to support or adopt non-violent approaches to solving these issues. (Karuna Center for Peacebuilding, interviewed by Sarah McLaughlin of the Alliance for Peacebuilding, 2015.)

Trainings are the most common activity in programs using this theory of change. A program implemented by Mercy Corps in Northern Nigeria identified instances of religious leaders leveraging their faith and position to prevent violence. After training fifty religious leaders (both Christian and Muslim, men and women) in negotiation and dispute resolution, the program also provided follow-up mentorship and meetings to continue to support and engage the leaders.

The implicit assumption is that with greater capacity, skills or processes for handling conflict constructively, agreements, inter-religious cooperation and reconciliation will be more likely than violent extremism. As a religious leader in Sudan noted, “People need to be taught so that they can reconcile.”<sup>192</sup>

### 5.9.1 Limitations of Building Skills and Processes Theories

This approach is founded on the assumption that the skills and processes learned will affect the broader peace, but individual trainings do not necessarily accrue to socio-political level changes, and monitoring and evaluation should focus on use of skills rather than people trained. While this approach is critical to making other theories of change effective, capacity building alone does not affect the broader conflict.<sup>193</sup>

## 5.10 Institutions

This theory of change focuses on building governmental and/or civil society (including religious) institutions so they have the capacity and flexibility to promote and/or sustain peace and a formal way of channeling griefs non-violently. Institutions may be formal or informal, national or local. These institutions should help deter and disrupt recruitment or mobilization and assist with reintegration of former violent extremists.

<sup>191</sup> Appleby, S. “Building Sustainable Peace: The Roles of Local and Transnational Religious Actors.” *Religious Pluralism, Globalization, and World Politics*, 2008. p.134–136.

<sup>192</sup> Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs. “A Conversation with Peter Martin Bakata, Psychosocial Training Officer with RECONCIKE International, Yei, Sudan. *Peacebuilding Practitioner Interview Series*, 2009. Available at <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-peter-martin-bakata-psychosocial-training-officer-with-reconcile-international-in-yei-sudan>.

<sup>193</sup> Anderson, M and Olson, L. “Confronting War: Critical Lessons For Peace Practitioners.” Cambridge, MA: CDA, 2003. Available at [http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/sites/default/files/Confronting\\_War.pdf](http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/sites/default/files/Confronting_War.pdf).

Among programs, institution-focused changes included supporting transitional justice institutions, setting up emergency preparedness systems, and seeking social norm change. With the exception of advocacy for transitional justice mechanisms, overall, religious peacebuilding has demonstrated relatively less interest in an institutions-focused approach to peacebuilding, perhaps due to many religious organizations distancing themselves from political institutions to maintain their legitimacy in contexts where the state has been delegitimized among the populace and too close a relationship between church and state would delegitimize religious actors/institutions, or where they are an important focal point for mobilization against state abuses.<sup>194</sup>

Religious actors and institutions have called for and supported, transitional justice and reconciliation. In Brazil and Guatemala, the Catholic Church investigated state abuses and, after democratization, supplied evidence to truth commissions. Religious leaders lobbied and publicly advocated for truth commissions in South Africa, East Timor, Peru, Sierra Leone, and Germany, religious actors have urged their governments for truth commissions. More broadly, religious actors and institutions have supported reconciliation. In the institution itself, Archbishop Desmond Tutu leading South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and at the more local level religious actors can draw on ideologies and symbols to support reconciliation between people.<sup>195</sup>

### 5.11 Limitations of Institutions

Institution building, both formal or informal, religious or secular, despite its lofty aspirations, is a political undertaking which is ultimately dependent upon the political will and commitment of national and local governments. Thus, the first determining factor is inevitably the level and nature of support provided by member states or the institution leaders that are already in place<sup>196</sup>.

### 5.12 Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)

This family of theories aims to “dissuade individuals or groups from mobilizing towards violent extremism through nonviolent means.”<sup>197</sup> As such, CVE is sometimes considered the ‘soft’ side or alternative to counter-terrorism efforts. Although CVE is not necessarily initiated or exclusively implemented by religious actors, religious leaders and activists are engaged in intra-/inter-religion work to counter violent extremism. Some of the theories of change in this category overlap with others discussed above. Yet, CVE is explored here as a distinct family of theories of change because its’ recent rise to prominence and its controversial treatment make it particularly influential.

Efforts to counter violent extremism aim primarily to address the underlying causes of violent extremism, including socioeconomic, political, ideological, cultural and psychological drivers, as well as the extreme religious, political or social ideologies that are used to inspire or justify violence. These causes are very much under debate, yet recent evidence indicates that grievances and unjust experiences play a strong role, poverty is likely less significant than once thought,<sup>198</sup> and extremist ideologies can often be used to exploit a once constructive agenda for purposes of escalating conflict.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> Appleby, R. *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion Violence, and Reconciliation*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999. p. 34-39, 221.

<sup>195</sup> Philpott, D. “Religion, Reconciliation, and Transitional Justice: The State of the Field.” New York, NY: Social Science Research Council, 2007. Available at <http://kroc.nd.edu/sites/default/files/workingpaperphilpott.pdf>.

<sup>196</sup> Stedman, et al., eds., *Ending Civil Wars*, makes the most convincing case about the importance of political will.

<sup>197</sup> <http://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/our-work/about-our-work/countering-violent-extremism/>

<sup>198</sup> Mercy Corps, “Youth & Consequences: Unemployment, Injustice and Violence.” Available at: <https://www.mercycorps.org/research-resources/youth-consequences-unemployment-injustice-and-violence>

<sup>199</sup> Candace Karp; Senior Program Officer, USIP Academy: Conflict Prevention and Resolution Forum on Tuesday, April 14, 2015 at the U.S. Institute of Peace.

CVE theories can be usefully organized under four pillars: Prevention, Disengagement, Improving State Response and Amplifying New Narratives, in the theory of change<sup>200</sup>.

### 5.12.1 Prevention

The assumptions here are that the drivers of violent extremism are rooted in grievance, marginalization, how people work across dividing lines and how messages of violent extremists resonate with people's own sense of identity and their aspirations. Youth are considered particularly important as targets for radicalization and mobilization to violence.

**Common theories of change include:**

- ⇒ Enable youths to hold dialogue and solution seeking with governments and community members, and help to ensure that governments and communities are genuinely responsive. This will decrease youth susceptibility to radicalization and violence, because youth will have a sense of being heard and being able to influence their own future.
- ⇒ Facilitate communication between power holders and marginalized groups on matters and issues that affect them, and help to ensure that power holders are genuinely responsive. This will decrease susceptibility to radicalization and violence among marginalized groups, because it enables a non-violent way to address their grievances.
- ⇒ Expose youth to alternative non-violent interpretations of the religious, political or social belief systems that they hold dear. This will decrease likelihood of violence, because youth will realize that being faithful to their own convictions does not necessarily require violent behavior.

### 5.12.2 Disengagement

Disengagement aims to encourage individuals who are already radicalized, or already engaged in violent extremism, to disengage from those systems and make alternative life choices. Reaching out to violent extremists who are currently active may entail security risk, while reaching out to violent extremists who have been captured may involve collaboration with the criminal justice system.

**Common theories of change include:**

- ⇒ Provide the individual with counseling and mentoring from a respected moderate religious leader or political activist. This will help the individual to disengage from violent extremism, because he or she will realize that being faithful to their own convictions does not necessarily require violence.
- ⇒ Provide support for individual re-development of identity, self-esteem and vocation. This will encourage productive social reintegration by removing psychological barriers that commonly prevent it.
- ⇒ Help to ensure the individual is surrounded by a network of family and friends who do not support violent extremism. This will encourage productive social reintegration because most individuals do not embark on a major life change without a social support system.

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<sup>200</sup> Lena Slachmuisjlder; Vice-President of Programs, Search for Common Ground : Conflict Prevention and Resolution Forum on Tuesday, April 14,2015 at the U.S. Institute of Peace.

### 5.12.3 Amplifying New Narratives.

This approach refers to increasing the availability of alternative and critical voices to debunk the ideological bases for violent extremism, and to provide new perspectives on constructive, nonviolent social change. New narratives can be communicated via print media, social media, sermons and lectures, or whatever mechanisms are most effective in a particular context.

#### **Common theories of change include:**

- ⇒ Set up opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue and relationship building among youth around key socio-political issues. This will help reduce adherence to the narratives that drive violent extremism, because youth will be exposed to alternative ways of viewing and interacting with the world, and alternate ways of hoping for a better future.
- ⇒ Facilitate opportunities for inter-religious dialogue. These exchanges will call into question the narratives of religious exclusivism and religiously-motivated violence, because they expose participants to the humanity of people of other faith backgrounds, and reduce stereotypes.
- ⇒ Provide indigenous moderate religious leaders and non-violent political activists with a platform for being very broadly heard within populations considered vulnerable to radicalization. This will reduce the risk of future violence, because people will consider a range of alternative culturally-appropriate narratives, rather than being exposed only to violent extremist narratives.

### 5.12.4 Improving State Response

All theories of change within the sub-family share the assumption that state responses to violent extremism are a learning effort in progress, with room for improvement to become more effective. However, approaches can range widely from working within or partnering with state entities to design and implement state plans, to advocating from an external perspective for substantive change in how states conceptualize and respond to violent extremism.<sup>201</sup>

State strategies are built on assumptions about the long-term factors necessary for stable peace, which are often said to include inclusive political processes, strong and responsive governance, and responsible and accountable justice and security systems. Strengthening resilience at both the community and state level is often considered key, and success is noted in building capacity and collaboration among a broad, diverse range of civil society and state actors. Key state entities may include security, intelligence, counter-terrorism, police, ministries of religion, etc.

#### **Common theories of change include:**

- ⇒ Empower civil society, including faith leaders, youth, women, human rights activists etc. to take action for peace and against violent extremism. Make sure civil societies have an enabling environment in which to work, and that laws and policies designed to address violent extremism are not used to deny the freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly and association of movement.<sup>202</sup> This will maximize the role of civil society, which is often able to address the ‘soft’ factors contributing to violent extremism in ways that the state cannot.
- ⇒ Study the context-specific factors that contribute to violent extremism in particular at-risk communities, and the impact of potential state responses, including the negative impact of potential human rights violations. Bring findings and actionable recommendations to the attention of policymakers as well as communities. This

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<sup>201</sup> See for example Saferworld’s paper on Dilemmas of Counter-Terror, Stabilisation and Statebuilding, and related Saferworld papers.

<sup>202</sup> Eric Rosand; Counselor on counter terrorism and preventing violent extremism United States Department of State.

can help to challenge and change underlying assumptions about what actually works, thus leading to the development of better strategies.

- ⇒ Build trust and strengthen cooperation between at-risk communities and the police and security forces that are charged with protecting them, in context-appropriate ways. These improved relationships will help communities and security forces to develop a more informed understanding of each other, and to identify common interests as a basis for cooperation.

### 5.12.5 Limitations of CVE

There is common misconception that a single issue such as poverty or religion can lead to violent extremism or can fuel radicalization and violence. However, in every country and region, these risk factors vary and some factors may only apply to one demographic population and not the other. Further, the risk factors combine and interact with each other in a wide variety of ways. Therefore, it is particularly important for theories of change to be developed and validated through analysis of the local context.

The evidence base underlying many CVE theories of change is still contested. A transparent meta-review of the social science research concludes that we do not yet know how to predict who is vulnerable to radicalization and violence,<sup>203</sup> and therefore we don't yet know what works best to mitigate it. Some activists also argue that certain CVE approaches tend to exacerbate violence rather than reduce it and, while opinions and emotions on CVE run high, there is not yet enough researched evidence to objectively address these questions.

Finally, CVE approaches tend to be more politicized than those falling into the attitudinal, behavioral and institutional families above. In any given CVE program, there may be a medium to large group of stakeholders whose motivations and assumptions in undertaking CVE programming vary significantly from each other. Therefore, robust discussion is essential to articulate and critically examine any CVE program's theories of change, in order to develop strategies that all of the stakeholders involved can actively support.

## 6 KEY PARTNERS IN INTRA-/INTER-RELIGIOUS PEACEBUILDING

The following includes a special focus on groups commonly identified as implementation partners:

### 6.1 Religious Leaders

Of the most common partners in the 15 of 25 programs reviewed, religious leaders lend legitimacy, authority, and provide an entry point to religious institutions and communities. Various programs leveraged leaders' positions and influence in sharing information,<sup>204</sup> conducting trainings, and providing leaders with more skills and resources to mediate, negotiate or prevent conflict. With their role as moral authority, religious figures, role models in the society, spiritual directors can also lead by example, interacting with those of other faiths to demonstrate the acceptability, and necessity of tolerance and peace.<sup>205</sup>

<sup>203</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/28/world/europe/mystery-about-who-will-become-a-terrorist-defies-clear-answers.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/28/world/europe/mystery-about-who-will-become-a-terrorist-defies-clear-answers.html?_r=0)

<sup>204</sup> See, for example on how religious leaders can help disseminate information CATALYST. "Best Practices in Egypt: Mobilizing Religious Leaders." 2000. Available at <http://www.pathfinder.org/publications-tools/pdfs/CATALYST-Mobilizing-Religious-Leaders.pdf>.

<sup>205</sup> Peuraca, B. "Can Faith-Based NGOs Advance Interfaith Reconciliation? The Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina." Washington DC: United State Institute of Peace, 2003. p. 4. Available at <http://www.usip.org/publications/can-faith-based-ngos-advance-interfaith-reconciliation-the-case-of-bosnia-and-herzegovina>.

A 2013 Asia Foundation survey in Afghanistan demonstrated the reach and influence of religious leaders. According to the survey, 60% of people had worked with traditional and religious leaders in resolving a problem, and 80% thought religious leaders fair and trusted.<sup>206</sup> Moreover, survey analysis found that “among traditional leaders, religious figures possess the strongest moral authority in shaping attitudes and behaviors on questions like women’s rights.” This suggests that religious leaders can be highly influential partners in creating norm changes, such as in peacebuilding.<sup>207</sup>

For example, the Acholi Religious Leader’s Peace Initiative (ALPRI) in Uganda is an alliance of the Catholic Church, the Anglican Church of Uganda, and Muslims in Gulu and Kitgum which pushes for peace between the Ugandan government and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). An evaluation of the initiative found that leaders possessed neutrality, moral leadership, and a network of churches, mosques, and parishes. The ALPRI has used religious organization to host meetings and share messages of peace. As the evaluation notes, the nature of engagement with leaders and dissemination of messages depends on religious hierarchies and organization.

#### Examples of religious peacebuilders

*Imam Omar Kobine Layama, president of the Central African Islamic Community; Dieudonné Nzapalainga, the Archbishop of Bangui; and Nicolas Guérékoyame-Gbangou, president of the Evangelical Alliance of the Central African Republic and also the Nigeria’s Christians and Muslims peace Foundation, Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye from Kaduna in Northern Nigeria, Pope Francis of the Roman Catholic Church.*

Religious hierarchies may necessitate involving leaders at all levels to work with those at the local level.<sup>208</sup> However, religious ideologies and hierarchies can also constrain religious leaders depending on how they relate to the status quo surrounding the conflict. David Little and Scott Appleby write, “Often religious leaders, especially officials with an institution or tradition they are ordained or commissioned to “protect,” are unwilling and psychologically unprepared for the personal conversion that is necessary if they are to embrace genuine dialogue, healing, and reconciliation.”<sup>209</sup> Such conservatism may limit their willingness to participate in programs and social change.

While working with religions that have powerful access and influence among populations, it is also important to broaden participation to other influential religious actors and include additional groups. Two other common groups to work with in peacebuilding include youth and women.

## 6.2 Youth

Youth<sup>210</sup> are the second most common target groups for programs. A total of 8 out of the 25 programs focused on youth. Based on the relationship between low levels of education and employment, and higher levels of violence,<sup>211</sup> as well as the “youth bulge” theory, that a high percentage of youth, particularly young men, precedes conflict,<sup>212</sup> youth are a key constituency to engage in peacebuilding. Siobhan McEvoy-Levy argues that working with youth is

<sup>206</sup> The Asia Foundation, “A Survey of the Afghan People”; Quoted in Kakar, P. “Engaging Afghan Religious Leaders for Women’s Rights.” Washington, DC: United State Institute of Peace, 2014. Available at <http://www.usip.org/publications/engaging-afghan-religious-leaders-women-s-rights>.

<sup>207</sup> Kakar, P. “Engaging Afghan Religious Leaders for Women’s Rights.” Washington, DC: United State Institute of Peace, 2014. Available at <http://www.usip.org/publications/engaging-afghan-religious-leaders-women-s-rights>.

<sup>208</sup> USAID. “Religion, Conflict & Peacebuilding.” 2009. p. 9,11.

<sup>209</sup> Little and Appleby, 2004

<sup>210</sup> While youth is a flexible category that depends on the cultural context, for consistency the UN defines youth as a person between 15 and 24 years old.

<sup>211</sup> Department for International Development (DFID). “Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Donor Agencies and Policy Advisors.” DFID, 2015.

<sup>212</sup> See, for example, Urdal, H, *Demography and Internal Armed Conflict* and ; Collier, P and Hoeffler, A, “Greed and Grievance in Civil War”; There are debates about whether the percentage of youth in a society is the root cause of the relationship. For examples see Sommers, M, “Youth and Conflict: A Brief Review of Available Literature” and ; Hendrixson, A, “Angry Young Men, Veiled Young Women: Constructing a New Population Threat.”

critical as many are active in conflict, are the primary perpetrators and victims of post-settlement violence, and their involvement shapes societal attitudes and behaviors in the future.<sup>213</sup>

How they can be involved as partners.

⇒ **Creating spaces for youths to express their opinions and listening to their views**

Rather than simply acknowledging them as victims or perpetrators of violence, it's vital to engage youths as social actors with their own views and contributions. They can form peace groups that can be used in spreading and involving peace initiatives throughout the region.

⇒ **Enhancing their peacebuilding knowledge and skills**

This means giving them access to the teachers, facilitators, educational programs and networks that can nurture and promote their conflict resolution and leadership skills.

⇒ **Build trust between youths and governments**

This is by involving the youths in the policy making and other government initiatives that involves development and peace rather than politicians and other war lords using them as war tools to fight against the government.

⇒ **Supporting youths who are positively contributing positively to their communities.**

This is to encourage positive attitude and hard work within the youths and use their work as an example to encourage other youths to emulate.

In Liberia, Mercy Corps found that the highest predictors of youth political violence included unemployment, relative and absolute poverty, and increased perception of exclusion.<sup>214</sup> The Academy for Educational Development (AED) found youth are more likely to engage in peacebuilding rather than violence under four conditions: active participation in the political process, strengthened relationships between youth and their communities, workplace training, and increased confidence.<sup>215</sup>

Religion can potentially play both a preventative role and a healing role in helping youth choose peace over violence. For example, studies have found that public religious devotion and group membership correlated with reduced substance abuse, less fighting and theft,<sup>216</sup> and that church attendance decreased the likelihood of American inner-city youth engaging with drug crime and drug use.<sup>217</sup> As noted, religion can also provide a framework for

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<sup>213</sup> McEvoy-Levy, "Peace Review: A Transnational Quarterly"; referenced in Bennett, Karki, and Nepal. "Youth and Peacebuilding in Nepal: The Current Context and Recommendations." Washington, DC: Search for Common Grounds, 2012. Available at [https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/NEP\\_CA\\_Jan12\\_Youth-and-Peacebuilding.pdf](https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/NEP_CA_Jan12_Youth-and-Peacebuilding.pdf).

<sup>214</sup> Mercy Corps. "Why Youth Fight: Making Sense of Youth Political Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa." p. 3. Available at <https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/Why%20Youth%20Fight.pdf>.

<sup>215</sup> Academy for Educational Development. "Youth as a Catalyst for Peace: Helping Youth Develop the Vision, Skills, and Behaviors to Promote Peace"; summarized in Bennett, Karki, and Nepal. "Youth and Peacebuilding in Nepal: The Current Context and Recommendations." Washington, DC: Search for Common Grounds, 2012. Available at [https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/NEP\\_CA\\_Jan12\\_Youth-and-Peacebuilding.pdf](https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/NEP_CA_Jan12_Youth-and-Peacebuilding.pdf).

<sup>216</sup> Salas-Wright et al. "Religiosity Profiles of American Youth in Relation to Substance Use, Violence, and Delinquency." *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 2012.

<sup>217</sup> Johnson et al. "Escaping from the Crime of Inner Cities: Church Attendance and Religious Salience among Disadvantaged Youth." *Justice Quarterly*, 17(2) 2000.



reconciliation (*see* Theory 1.3: Trauma Healing) and a foundation for relationship building (*see* Theory 1.1: Healthy Relationships), both of which decrease the likelihood of youth resorting to violence.<sup>218</sup>

A Search for Common Ground meta-analysis of inter-religious programs found that when engaging with youth, important considerations include whether or not youth require permission from their family or religious leaders, as well as if religious leaders or parents might feel the programs challenge existing authority structures. Key gatekeepers, such as school officials, are also helpful to engage as they help with access to youth in communities.<sup>219</sup>

### 6.3 Women

As formal religious hierarchies often do not include women, peacebuilders have begun to actively work to engage more women. Women are also peacebuilders, but generally operate on a more local level, rather than the national or international, and with less recognition.<sup>220</sup>

Involving women advocates, for example, Israeli –Palestinian Conflict such as Women in Black, Israel Women Against Occupation and Women Peace Net, many grassroots initiatives have been created to build trust, cooperation and understanding between Jewish women in Israel and Palestinian women in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. These involved visits, dialogue activities, local and international conferences, collaboration and demonstrations. Women’s organizations have continued to work together, trying to alleviate social, economic and political problems suffered by both sides. Mothers and parents movements have also played an important role in mobilizing support for peace in the area.

Including more women in the negotiations such as the Sudan, Israel-Palestine Central African Republic, Chad and Nigeria.

Encouraging more women to participate in decision-making and peace processes, underlines their role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding and advocates the protection of women’s rights in support and in order to implement and strengthen resolution 1325 (The International Women’s Commission (IWC) and Resolution 1325).

A trainer on nonviolence in Nicaragua spoke about how, speaking with other peacebuilders from the Middle East, "We also talked about the fact that men have manipulated religion to exercise and justify violence against women. However, religion can also provide a ground for men to learn to respect women and to promote a world of peace."<sup>221</sup> Nonetheless, working with women does not mean excluding others. In implementation, USAID suggests that integrating women necessitates first integrating religious leadership in men, otherwise leading men and leaders could see the program as threatening.<sup>222</sup>

Their separation from formal institutions and hierarchies frees women to advocate for different goals and take different action. A UN Development Fund for Women report explains, "[B]ecause women are regarded as less threatening to the established order, they tend to have more freedom of action. In some instances, they can make public pleas for peace by taking advantage of sexist notions that for the most part discourage retaliation against

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<sup>218</sup> Academy for Educational Development. "Youth as a Catalyst for Peace: Helping Youth Develop the Vision, Skills, and Behaviors to Promote Peace." 2005.

<sup>219</sup> Ehmer et al. "Accommodating Religious Identity in Youth Peacebuilding Programs." Washington, DC: Search for Common Ground, 2015. Available at <http://www.american.edu/sis/practica/upload/S15-Final-Draft-SFCG-Toolkit.pdf>.

<sup>220</sup> From interviews with David Smock and Kathryn Boethig, conducted for and referenced in Marshall et al. "Women in Religious Peacebuilding." Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2011. Available at <http://www.usip.org/publications/women-in-religious-peacebuilding>.

<sup>221</sup> Women Peacemakers Program. "Men and Women Working as Partners for Gender-Sensitive Active Nonviolence: A Collection of Stories from the Field" 2013. p. 63. Available at <http://www.gppac.net/documents/10156/0/May%20Pub%202013%20web.pdf/afcd575d-8f3e-4c6b-9f90-cde15f3ee134>.

<sup>222</sup> USAID. "Religion, Conflict & Peacebuilding." 2009. p. 11. Available at [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/Pnadr501.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnadr501.pdf).

women.”<sup>223</sup> This separation also makes women more amenable to changing existing power structures.<sup>224</sup> For example, Mari Fitzduff argues nuns in Northern Ireland were more radical and involved in interfaith work because they were less connected to church hierarchies than priests.<sup>225</sup>

As they experience conflict differently – dealing with higher levels of insecurity, such as sexual abuse – and have different roles in society, they tend to focus more holistically on community and relationship building.<sup>226</sup> Also, women are often involved in community healing, leading prayers and rituals.<sup>227</sup> With their focus on relationships and roles in the family, women are able to relate to one another across conflict lines and work to improve the future.<sup>228</sup>

## 6.4 Civil Society Actors

Working with civil society actors like Human Rights Activists and peacebuilding in order to develop their comfort level in working with the religious sector by engaging them in small projects and building on toward robust projects<sup>229</sup>.

Their duties towards inter-religious peacebuilding are:

- ⇒ Advocating for dialogue as an alternative for armed violence by highlighting the costs of the conflicts and increasing the political stake of peace<sup>230</sup>.
- ⇒ Civil society, whether indigenous or external can facilitate dialogue or mediation between parties in a conflict by building trust and understanding, and confidence between the grassroots membership of the divided communities. They can create a safe unofficial space for middle ranking members in advance of negotiations. An example is the religious community of Sant’Egidio in Mozambique<sup>231</sup>.
- ⇒ Civil society can monitor compliance and violations of human Rights in a society by ensuring the peace processes and any peace agreements reached address the structural injustices that give rise to the conflict as well as accountability and effective sanctions against perpetrators of violations.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Anderlini, “Women at the Peace Table: Making a Difference,” 18; quoted in Marshall et al. “Women in Religious Peacebuilding.” Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2011. p. 8. Available at <http://www.usip.org/publications/women-in-religious-peacebuilding>.

<sup>224</sup> An interview with Virginia Bouvier, Senior Program Officer at the Center for Mediation and Conflict Resolution at USIP, conducted for and referenced in Marshall et al. “Women in Religious Peacebuilding.” Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2011. Available at <http://www.usip.org/publications/women-in-religious-peacebuilding>.

<sup>225</sup> Interview with Mari Fitzduff, director of the Program for Coexistence and Conflict at Brandeis University, conducted for and referenced in *ibid*.

<sup>226</sup> Interview with Maryann Cuismano Love, associate professor of politics at the Catholic University of America, conducted for and referenced in *ibid*.

<sup>227</sup> Interview with the director of the Women’s Program at the World Conference of Religions for Peace, Jacqueline Moturi Ogega, conducted for and referenced in *ibid*.

<sup>228</sup> Interview with the founder of the Global Peace Initiative of Women, Dena Merriam, conducted for and referenced in *ibid*.

<sup>229</sup> Susan Hayward: Rumi Forum: Religious Peacebuilding; Approach of the USIP. September 23, 2014

<sup>230</sup> Paul van Tongeren, Malin Brenk, Marte Hellema and Juliette Verhoeven ed, *People building Peace*: Lynne Rienner Publishers, London 2005. Available at [www.cr.org/downloads/CivilSociety\\_ParticipatinginPeaceProcess\\_2005\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.cr.org/downloads/CivilSociety_ParticipatinginPeaceProcess_2005_ENG.pdf)

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid*

## 6.5 Institutions

Engaging both the religious and secular institutions in developing peace curriculum especially on training youths to combat extremism and radicalization<sup>233</sup> and also developing laws that promote peace and harmony to ensure checks and balances within the institutions.

## 7. GAPS AND REMAINING QUESTIONS

While many of the fundamental theories of change between religious and secular peacebuilding are similar, religion does provide unique access points and benefits in peacebuilding. The identity-forming aspects of religion as well as its ideals and organization can provide added value to peacebuilding. If religion or religious identity is directly invoked in the conflict, addressing the driving narratives and identities is necessary to build peace.<sup>234</sup> The organization of religious groups also provides a structure for population outreach and engagement in peacebuilding. On a deeper level, the emotional resonance of religious motivations for peacebuilding and its ideals cannot be replicated and can support peacebuilding in any context. Finally, divine influence and transformational experiences cannot be disregarded as a potential source of change. Religion is a key way many people engage with and interpret the world, shaping norms and behavior, and as such can be a powerful force to build social cohesion and trust in support of peace.

There is an overall dearth of evidence on inter-religious peacebuilding, forcing programmers to rely on evidence from research and evaluations in peacebuilding and development programming that may be less valid in an inter-religious context. Contact theory has the strongest evidence base in both secular and religious programs, lending credence to the Healthy Relationships and Cooperation on Mutual Interests theories of change. Trauma Healing also has strong influence at the individual level. While these may be a component of a broader strategy, all these theories must have a complementary approach that translates individual level changes into the socio-political level, such as changing group behavior towards preventing violence. While the Public Attitudes approach seeks to effect the sociopolitical change, there is mixed evidence about what changes occur using media and what makes media more effective. There is also a focus on media programming that does not look at how religious networks might affect group attitudes.

Within the behavior-focused approach, the Pressure for Change, Building Networks and Alliances all have strong evidence for how religious actors and organizations can create change for peace. While numerous case studies support each theory of change and provide some lessons, meta-analysis that can generate broader lessons about how, and under what circumstances, such approaches are relevant and effective do not exist. For example, is there something about the parties to the conflict, such as individual leaders' religiosity or the source of their support, which makes them amenable to religious figures acting as intermediaries? Are general indicators of conflict ripeness sufficient in inter-religious conflict mediation or resolution?

The Building Skills and Processes approach is acknowledged as crucial in many circumstances, particularly with religious actors that are not used to sustained mobilization or other programming, but is not an end in of itself. Capacity building must be a step towards creating broader change, with the goals being to change conflict dynamics rather than simply the number of trainings held.

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<sup>233</sup> Palwasha Kakar: Rumi Forum:Religious Peacebuilding; Approach of the USIP. September 23, 2014

<sup>234</sup> See, for example, Kelman, H. "The Interdependence of Israeli and Palestinian National Identities: The Role of the Other in Existential Conflict." *Journal of Social Issues*, 55(3) 1999. p. 581-600. Available at <http://scholar.harvard.edu/hckelman/publications/interdependence-israeli-and-palestinian-national-identities-role-other-existen>.

Finally, religious actors have been less inclined to engage in institution-focused approaches to peacebuilding. Most commonly, they have called for transitional justice, but have not focused on building peacebuilding institutions themselves. While this may reflect the separation of religion from the state in many countries, there is little research into how religious actors view the value and practice of institution building work, and why they do not focus on institutions.

Looking at actors, research has not examined in what ways religious actors are most effective at contributing to peacebuilding, particularly across faiths. The influence of religious actors is assumed in many programs, but the effects of organization and hierarchy, ideology, political context, and personal skills on the kinds of change religious actors can support goes unexplored.<sup>235</sup>

As the field of inter-religious peacebuilding develops, program design, monitoring and evaluation must develop alongside. Few evaluations explicitly examined the inter-religious aspects of programs or religion's added value. What are the differences in monitoring and evaluating inter-religious versus secular programs, such as in content, focus, and approach? What are the most accurate ways to trace individual versus cumulative level effects of an intervention?<sup>236</sup> What is the effective way to negotiate and approach the inherently divine aspect of inter-religious work?

The field of inter-religious peacebuilding is growing quickly and shows enormous capacities to promote peace. Programs, such as the EIAP, are a step towards building a community of practice and the knowledge surrounding such work so that inter-religious peacebuilding can reach its full potential.

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<sup>235</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>236</sup> Abu-Nimer, M. "Religion and Peacebuilding: Reflections on Current Challenges and Future Prospects." *Inter-Religious Studies*, 2015. p. 16-17. Available at <http://irdialogue.org/journal/religion-and-peacebuilding-reflections-on-current-challenges-and-future-prospects-by-mohammed-abu-nimer-2/>.

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