Searching for Balance:

From Agency Measurement to Program Specifics

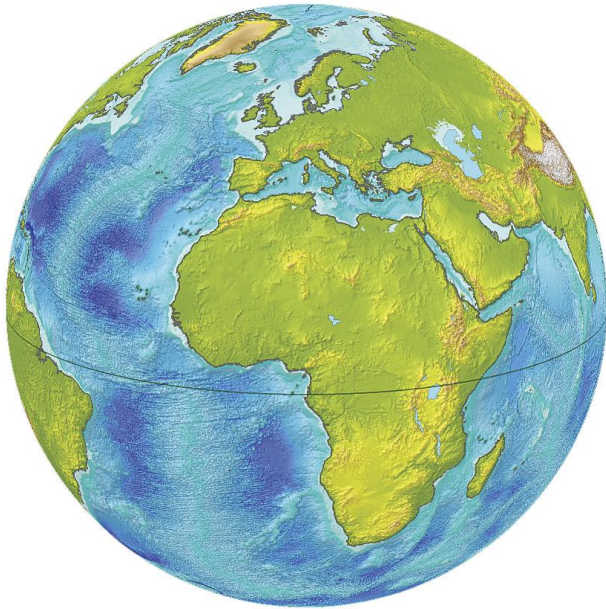**Leslie Wingender**

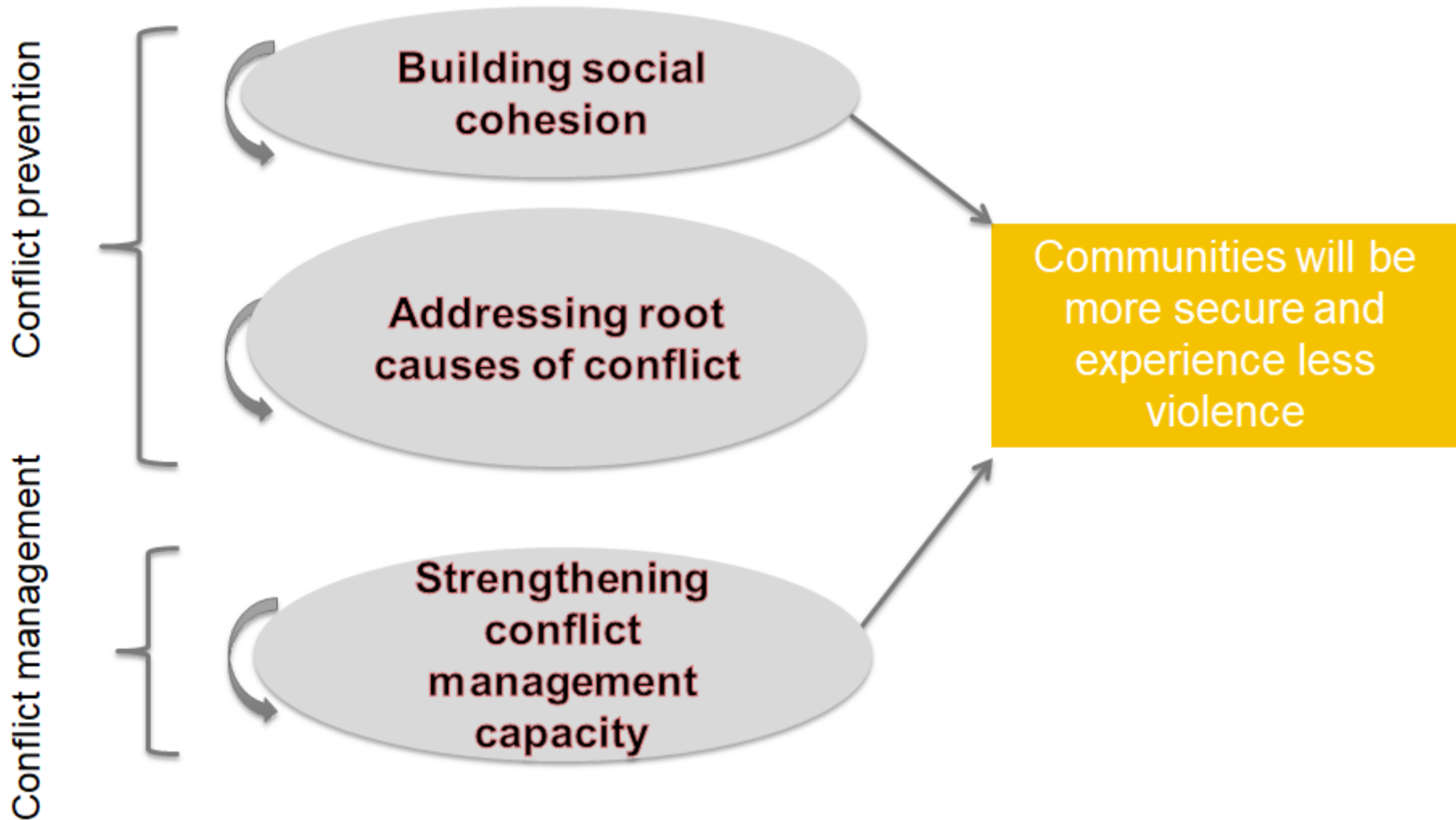Senior Advisor, Program Performance and Quality

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Overview

- Setting the Stage with Mercy Corps approach
- MC Measurement Framework: Design for Impact Guide
- Review process
- Key results and examples
- Gaps
- Next steps

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Global vs. Context specific

Agency vs. Programmatic

Theory of Change and Approach

The Design for Impact Guide

Conflict Management

Theory of change

Theory of Change: *IF people and institutions in conflict and post-conflict societies develop the tools, skills, and support they need to peacefully manage and address underlying causes of conflict cooperatively THEN we will see increased security and a reduction in violence.*

Impact 1
Reduced violence and enduring peace

6 indicators

Outcome 1.1 Increased cooperation across lines of division 3 indicators	**Outcome 1.2** Disputes resolved nonviolently 3 indicators	**Outcome 1.3** Disputes prevented through EWER System 1 indicator
Output 1.1.1 Joint projects implemented among communities to address underlying causes of conflict 2 indicators	**Output 1.2.1** Cadre of skilled mediators developed 3 indicators	**Output 1.3.1** EWER System launched 1 indicator
Output 1.1.2 Local institutions address community grievance 1 indicator	**Output 1.2.2** Institutions have increased capacity to manage conflicts 2 indicators	

Number of disputes resolved by program participants

View   Edit   Outline

ALPHA INDICATOR

Indicator sector title:

Conflict Management

Sector/Logframes:

Outcome 1.2:
Disputes resolved nonviolently

Indicator Source:

Mercy Corps

Direction of change:

Positive

Unit of measurement:

Number of disputes resolved

Disaggregation:

Dispute type, geographic area; sex, age, ethnicity/religion of disputants

Data collection sources:

Dispute Database Tracking tool via program mediators

Questions format:

Dispute Database Tracking Tool ⧉

Frequency of data collection:

Ongoing, yet collected monthly and reported quarterly

Data collection method:

Definition:

A dispute is a disagreement or an argument between two or more parties that can escalate into violence. A dispute is resolved when all parties agree to a solution to the disagreement or argument. Number of unique disputes resolved (reported as whole number) by trained participants will be reported cumulatively since the beginning of the program. The total number of disputes resolved will be reported quarterly by adding the total number of unique disputes resolved in each of the previous three months. This indicator will be calculated using the Dispute Database and it is highly recommended to also count the number of attempts to resolve disputes by the program participants, which is already part of the Dispute Database and does not require much extra effort. Adding this information will allow for more robust evaluation of the program to take place.

Uses of the DIG

DESIGN PHASE

- Review the Theory of Change
- Consider the outcomes your program aims to achieve
- Choose indicators related to those outcomes
- Build preliminary MEL Plan based on the indicators
- Budget appropriately for measurement

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Uses of the DIG

PROGRAM START-UP PHASE

- Verify/revise your program TOC
- Confirm the outcomes your program aims to achieve
- Develop the plan for measuring each indicator, using the indicator sheet on the DIG
- Reality check with budget, staffing and M&E system in country

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Key Questions of the Review

1. What indicators are being used by field teams and which ones are not?

1. What data are we collecting from these indicators?

1. What challenges do we see in the uptake and application of the indicators (i.e.. lack of guidance, time constraints, not adaptable, too adaptable, different interpretations)?

2. What impact can we show, if any?

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First Review at the Global level

- In 2015-2016 we had 23 relevant P&C programs

- We have a total of 22 indicators on the DIG

  Our programs are using 21 out of the 22 P&C indicators!

- Of the 21 indicators used, we have data on 15 of them (either baseline, midline, monitoring or endline)

- Three of our key indicators were used to varying degrees

  - # of disputes resolved (14/23)

  - # of reported incidents of violence (3/23)

  - % of people who believe the use of violence for a social or political cause is never justified (5/23)

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What can we say with the data overall?

- **607 disputes resolved** by program participants (from 6 programs reporting on this indicator)
- **2154 people have participated** in USG supported events, trainings, or activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation (across 7 programs)
- We have held **110 events, trainings and activities with key actors** in the conflict (across 4 programs)
- We implemented **63 joint projects** between conflicting groups (based on 4 programs)
- **38 new groups created** that are dedicated to resolving the drivers of conflict in two programs

But these are all outputs (except for disputes resolved...

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Second Review--Digging in deep:

- **22** Countries sent M&E plans

- **78** Plans M&E were received

- **11** Programs were designated Conflict Management

- **5** Small group feedback sessions with field teams

- **1** Survey to all Peacebuilding related staff

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Second Review with Field Staff

- Which indicator(s) or data have program staff found useful to make programmatic decisions **at the beginning of a project** (ie after a baseline)?

- What is the data that is most used during **monitoring** to improve program quality? And least used?

  What is the data that is most useful to assess whether a project is **on track to meet its objectives**?

  What data are program managers or country directors most interested in? Least interested in?

  What data is most useful to communicate results to program participants, colleagues and donors? What data is not used?

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Trends in DIG Indicator Variations
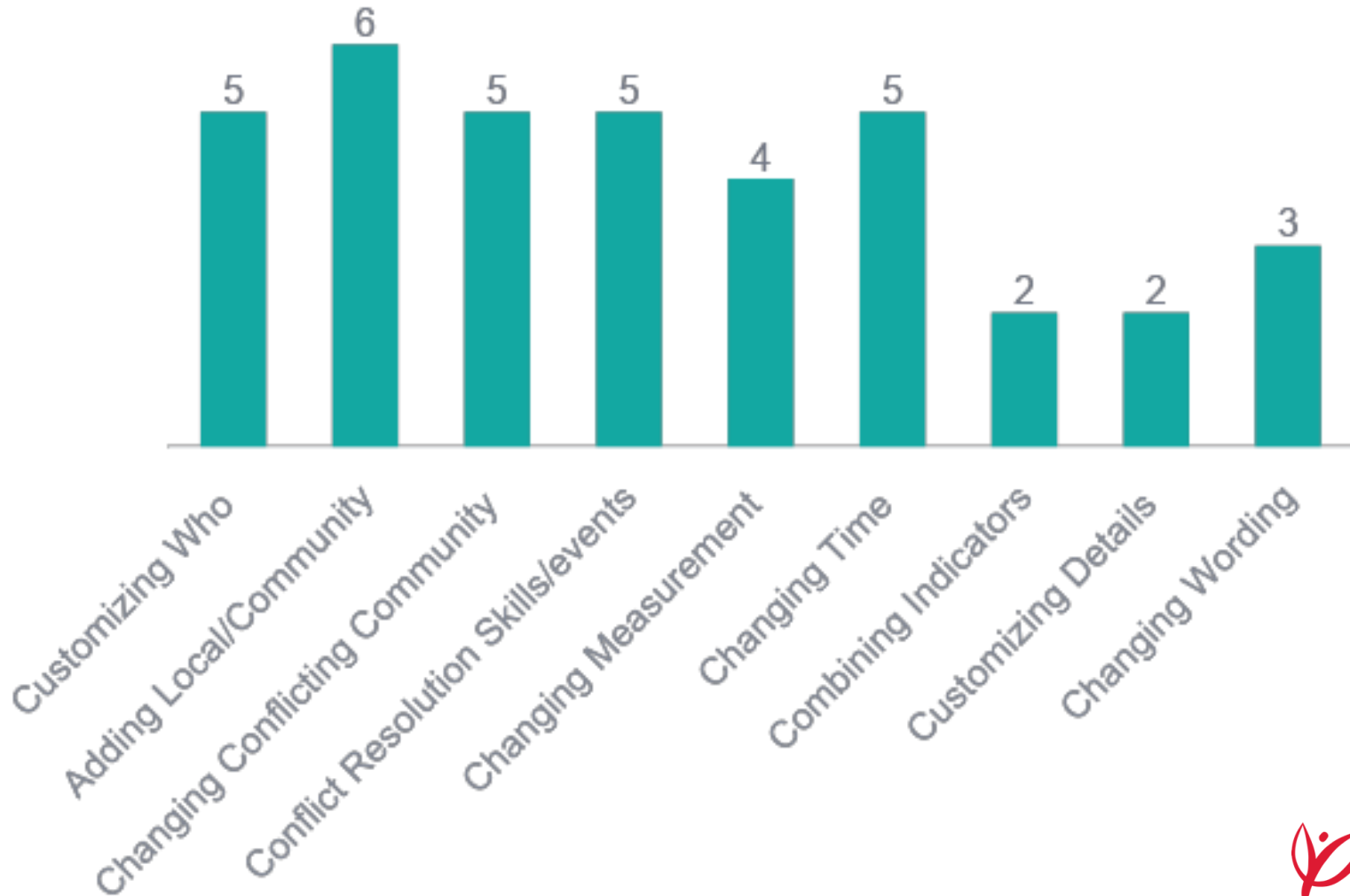
Percent of people who believe their communities are peaceful, safe and secure.

- *I believe words like peaceful, secure and safe **can be interpreted differently per person**; to ensure data is collected in a reliable fashion, we should assign definitions to these words.*

- *We don't use this indicator for two reasons: 1. it's very difficult to **distinguish between these two words in local languages**, and 2. it's very difficult to make people understand these two concepts and their differences in a household survey*

- *Challenges: human resources to conduct survey, **funds to implement surveys**, training of volunteers to ensure questions are asked properly, and **turn over of residents in some areas** (also related to year round residents vs. seasonal residents)*
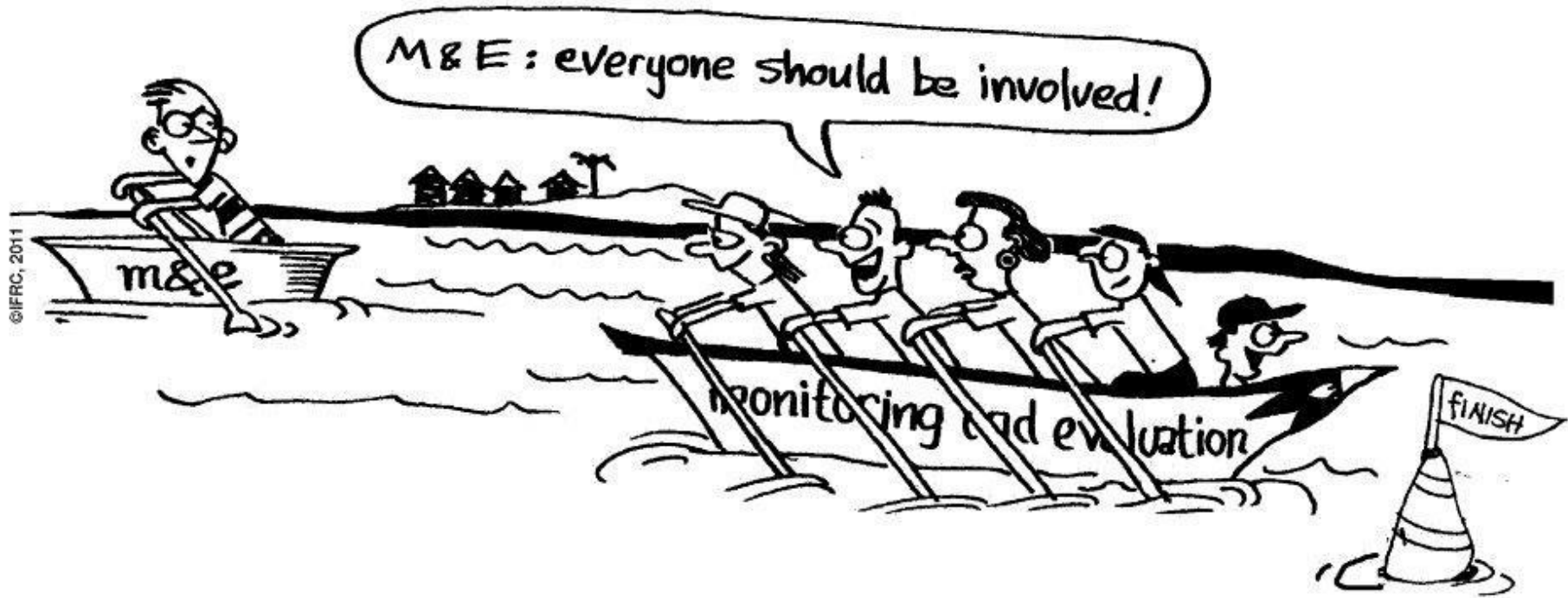
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What gaps did we find?

Lack of monitoring indicators

Emphasis on baseline and endline surveys

The most critical time to rethink indicators is at start up….but this is the hardest time operationally

M&E is for everyone involved...not just the M&E staff

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Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) cartoon ©17 ifrc boat teamwork (link)

We have a board meeting coming up and could use a little input from the evaluation team.

Sorry, we're not scheduled to provide input until year 3.

freshspectrum.com

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) cartoon ©17 ifrc boat teamwork (link)

What do we want to know and when?

We need to think about the information we can get, could get, need to get throughout the program cycle

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What are each of our interests?

HQ/Global

- Applicable across contexts
- Applicable across approaches
- Technically sound
- **Get on the phone and share examples of this!**

Field

- Best practices
- Guidance
- Examples
- Contextualization
- Based in reality
- **Get on the phone and talk with us about this!**

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Beyond Indicators--what else is needed?

- How to contextualize indicators
- Support to teams at start-up
- General guidance on key M&E steps:
    - *Proposal budget*
    - *Start up support*
    - *MEL plan and implementing it*
    - *Data flow mapping*
    - *Workplan and MEL activities calendar*

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What's next?

Credit: Mindmeister (link)

- Piloting revised framework
- P&C and MEL teams to engage earlier on
- Prioritizing M&E as a Program Management tool!
- Conduct evaluations
- Plan for research and other studies on top of good M&E

Thank You!

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