Outcome Harvesting + Attitude Change at the Grassroots

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Why Outcome Harvesting?

These programs are emergent, not 'log-framey'

Sample ToC: "If individuals are nurtured, equipped and connected with each other, with other peacebuilders and with sectoral experts then they will drive peace efforts …"

Complex contexts

Faith-based practitioner cultures

Needed: Flexibility to **identify and substantiate observable changes in behavior/action** *after* **they occur**

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Why + Attitude Change?

- **Objectively,** attitudes matter in inter-religious peacebuilding (and in all contexts of identity-based conflict).

- **Subjectively,** attitudes matter to faith-based practitioners. Evaluation must be relevant to their worldview.

"Attitude" as an **umbrella** for everything that's happening *inside* a person:

- Perceptions

- Fears

- Knowledge

- Beliefs

- Etc.

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Conceptualizing Results
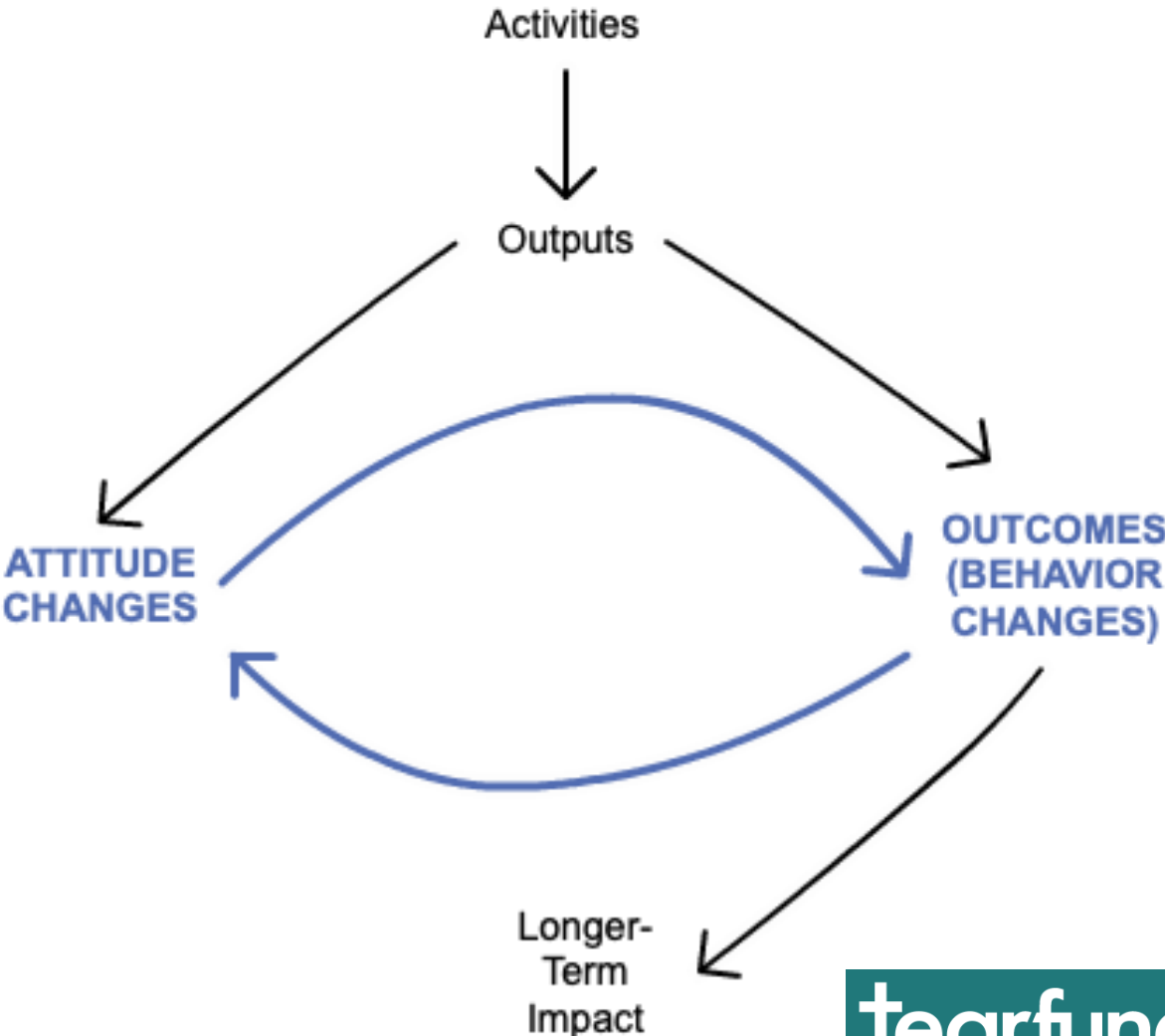
Lesson #1: How to Ask the Right Question

"Outcome" is unclear at grassroots. Say what you mean: "behavior change."

Asking about behavior without attitude does not resonate with many faith-based practitioners.

So we ask practitioners – in person and via surveys –
What changes in behavior or attitude have you observed during this project?

It becomes the evaluator's responsibility to distinguish attitude from behavior.

Barah: Peacebuilding Pilot, Upper Egypt

The Vision: Barah aims to bring together young people, across faiths from the governorate of Minya, to learn, engage and work collaboratively in order to contribute to peacebuilding in the community and different levels of society.

The Program:

- Dream of 2 inspired individuals
- 10 residential training camps – 4-5 days, safe space for 100 youth
- Participants shared in the vision to create a space for peaceful coexistence

Purposes of Barah Evaluation 2019

1. Review the progress of Barah to date, in order to inform the next-phase strategy.

2. Identify the various changes that Barah has influenced among youth participants – using the methodologies of Outcome Harvesting and attitude change research.

Behavioral Changes - Categories
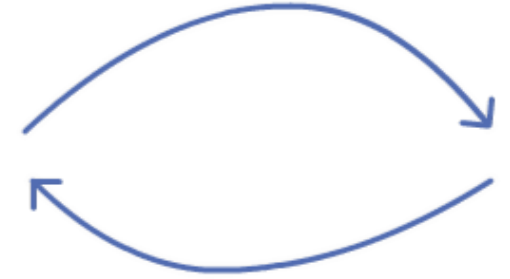
- Formation of new friendships, cross-faith and cross-gender
- Changes in body language and use of physical space within Barah group settings
- Changes in individual ways of communicating – e.g. pausing to formulate thoughts before speaking; listening differently
- People outside of Barah responding differently to those new ways of communicating
- New or increased engagement in other youth peacebuilding initiatives
- Shared spiritual practices across faiths
- Verbal expressions of difficulty in connecting Barah learnings to 'real life'
- Broad network forming by the three youth peace initiatives active in Minya

Attitude Changes linked to Behaviors - Themes

- Feeling of groupness, family, cohesion within Barah
- Change in perceptions toward people who are different
- Self-confidence in communicating and relating with others
- Broadened awareness of personal spirituality
- In communication, more calm and less reactive
- Frustration upon feeling that it is difficult to link the Barah experience to 'real life'
- Increased trust towards people who are different, especially within Barah and its network of relationships
- Increased ability to feel comfortable in the presence of people who are different, especially within Barah and its network of relationships

Key Learnings?

- Interrelationship between observed behavioral change (e.g. body language, ability to communicate, friendships) and attitude change

- Unexpected outcome – improved gender relations

- Unexpected outcome – difficulty in connecting Barah to 'real life'

- Strategy implications: how to re-integrate back into society, impact on community, trauma healing, how to access more difficult areas, speed of transformation

The Seek the Peace Partnership is a national network of Christian-Muslim teams learning together and working locally to create safe, just, and vibrant cities across the USA.

- Planning in 2017, launched in early 2018
- 2 national Consultations to equip teams
- 9 working groups in 7 states
- Local projects create diverse opportunities for Muslims and Christians (leaders and laypeople) to form or deepen relationships.

Implementing Outcome Harvesting: A MINDSET SHIFT

BEFORE: we only tracked outputs and random narrative accounts of positive events.

"Outcome Harvesting represents a shift from activities to desired **results and changes and transformation.**" (Program Lead)

AFTER: OH creates a system in which we can gather evidence (or lack thereof!) of the catalytic nature of our work.

What are our **actual** goals? Do we need higher-level peace-writ-large change?

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Attitude and Behavior Changes Intersecting
Cyclically, over time

Promising Outcome for higher-level social change:

ACTION ALLIANCES
Christian-Muslim interaction undertaken with a specific outward-facing purpose in mind, often between leaders of networks rather than private individuals. Attitude change required.

"The alliance may or may not be visible at the beginning of the relationship. If it's truly the cutting-edge action alliance we're looking for, it has to take time."
(StP Program Lead)

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Attitude and Behavior Changes Intersecting
Cyclically, simultaneously

- An **unprompted self-profession** of attitude change *is* a behavior change (new level of transparent disclosure).

- **First-time hearers** of the Uighur suffering became sympathetic to cause and **promptly contacted Congressional Reps**

"There are early very indications that **providing participants with suggested action points that have a time bound sense of urgency** may help increase the likelihood of individual-level Outcomes." (OH Pilot Report, 11)

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Challenges in Implementation

General Evaluation:
- Geographic Spread led to minimal in-person training
- Evaluation feels inappropriate given relational context
- Lack of human and financial resources

OH Evaluation:
- Difficult to track participant long enough to prove behavior change
- Culture shift away from outputs

"It's like learning a new language. The steepest curve is at the beginning… It doesn't come easy." (PCI Program Lead)

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Lesson #2: How to Organize the Data

What changes in behavior or attitude have you observed during this project?

-Raw Data-

	Observable Change	Contribution of Barah Initiative	Significance
1	A Muslim male youth participant, developed more confidence because he had been exposed to a space where he feels safe to express his views. This confidence allowed him to take risks such as being invited by a local Christian priest to visit church and share a few words during the Sunday service. Before Barah, he felt like a passive member of society and just "let life sort of happen to him."		In this context, it is incredibly unusual for a Muslim to visit a church, let alone speak during the service.
2			

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Yellow = behavior change
Blue = attitude change

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Lesson #2: How to Organize the Data

	Observable Change	Contribution of Barah Initiative	Significance	Substantiated by:	Linked Attitude Changes
1	A Muslim male youth participant visited a Christian church and shared a few words during the Sunday service. Yellow = behaviour change Blue = attitude change	Barah give him safe space to express his views, which helped him develop more confidence.	In this context, it is very unusual for a Muslim to visit a church, let alone speak during the service. (However, this particular priest is committed to peace and does invite Muslim youth to participate).	Priest, other youth participants, self.	Confidence. Before Barah, he felt like a passive member of society and just "let life sort of happen to him." Now, he has confidence to take risks to contribute to peace.
2					

Lesson #3: How to 'Substantiate'

Substantiate behavior changes through **key informant interviews**.

> -> <u>No</u> to OH emails or letters if participants are unfamiliar with NGO eval culture! However do provide each interviewee with a multiple-choice substantiation form.

Include an interview with the person or group that changed.

> -> *In addition to* the independent observers that are emphasized in mainstream OH.

You can't 'substantiate' the attitude change component...

> -> ...but you can triangulate it against the behavior change – which helps to mitigate social desirability bias – and against other available data.

Challenge! Many Similar Micro-Changes

How to substantiate?

- Document *all* micro-changes, but selectively prioritize which ones you substantiate?
- OR cluster similar micro-changes into one collective change category?

Raw learning edge. Ideas welcome!

How to query 'peace writ large?'

- Collaborative significance rating: How likely is this micro-change to lead toward *higher-level* social change that aligns with our program goals?

Moving Forward

1. Any alternative solutions for the challenges we faced?
2. When/how to make attitude change component more rigorous?
   - Coding and analyzing substantiation interviews (for depth)
   - Better using surveys to gauge scope of change (for breadth & tracking)
   - Process diagrams and/or process tracing
3. How to scale up for application to bigger programs?