



INDICATORS

This chapter contains:

1. Descriptions of quantitative and qualitative indicators
2. The components of indicators
3. Ways to develop indicators
4. Indicator quality checklist

INTRODUCTION

“The only difference between stumbling blocks and stepping stones is the way in which we use them.”

- ADRIANA DOYLE

This chapter explains the purpose of indicators as a means of measuring change. It focuses on two of the most common types of indicators: quantitative and qualitative indicators. It describes the basic components of an indicator and outlines some very general suggestions for developing new indicators. It also includes important dimensions for analysis that need to be considered in creating indicators and very real risks in becoming indicator-driven.

What is the purpose of an indicator?

Indicators consist of information that signals change. An indicator is a quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to reflect the changes connected to an intervention. Indicators enable us to perceive differences, improvements or developments relating to a desired change (objective or result) in a particular context. “Indicators are inevitable approximations. They are not the same as the desired change, but only an indicator of that change. They are imperfect and vary in validity and reliability.”⁸

Where the desired change is concrete, tangible, and measurable, indicators are not needed. If the intended output was 500 brochures, no indicator is needed – simply count the number of brochures produced. Consider the example from a six-month long peace media radio program, in a context where inaccurate rumors often cause violence. The objective of the project is to increase the public’s access to accurate information within 24 hours of when the rumor that promotes violence started circulating. The desired change of substituting rumors with accurate information is concrete, tangible, and directly measurable. There is no need for a separate indicator.

Where the intended change is more abstract, indicators help approximate the change. For example, in order to monitor a change in the level of trust between groups, one might look at child care practices to see if adults from one group are permitted to care for children from the other group. To detect changes in equality one might monitor inheritance, land ownership, and employment.

An indicator is a quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to reflect the changes connected to an intervention.

⁸ Michael Patton, *Utilization-Focused Evaluation*, Third Edition, SAGE Publications, 1996, pp.159.

Indicators are used in establishing baselines, monitoring, and evaluation.

In peacebuilding, indicators enable us to work with many intangible issues that are often at the root of the conflict.

Indicators are used in establishing baselines, monitoring, and evaluation. Information is gathered in the baseline to set the target for the indicator. Indicators can then be used for determining progress toward results in monitoring as well as in monitoring the context of the conflict. For example, peace activists often track changes in militarization in order to be able to anticipate changes in the conflict context. If we want to know about changes in militarization, military recruitment is one good indicator. Recruitment may signal a number of different things: the replacement of an aging force, an increase in soldier/officer ratios, or a more equitable regional representation within the military. A more complete picture is obtained by adding additional indicators such as defense spending, force deployment, and arms purchases.

What changes in recruitment tell us depends on who we are and what we want to know. For some people, increasing recruitment may not represent the most important thing to know about militarization. Arms suppliers may want to know about anticipated demands for additional weaponry. Officer training academies may want to know the rate of recruitment in order to schedule officer-training programs accordingly. Bilateral aid agencies may want to ensure that their assistance is not being misused. Neighboring countries want to ensure that their relationships and their security are not in jeopardy.

Whatever recruitment signals to us, it does not tell us why there is an increase in militarization. Recruitment as an indicator cannot explain the complex governance and security issues behind the choice to militarize. At best, this indicator tells us that a change we are interested in is happening. Indicators cannot explain why or how that change occurs.⁹

In peacebuilding, indicators enable us to work with many intangible issues that are often at the root of the conflict. Success in selecting and developing good indicators is directly related to the depth of the conflict analysis, the understanding of the context, and expertise in designing effective interventions.

What are the basic components of an indicator?

Indicators need to contain certain basic information and also be able to pass tests of reliability, feasibility (see page 70 under Means of Verification for more information on feasibility), and utility in decisionmaking. The basic, minimal information contained in an indicator is outlined below. Not all this information is needed for each indicator.

⁹ Adapted from *RBM [Results-Based Management] in UNDP: Selecting Indicators, Signposts of Development*, (UNDP, 20002).

1. What is to be measured
 - what is going to change
2. Unit of measurement to be used to describe the change
3. Pre-program status/state, also known as the baseline (where possible)
4. Size, magnitude, or dimension of the intended change
5. Quality or standard of the change to be achieved
6. Target population(s)
7. Timeframe

The following table illustrates the different components from two example indicators.

Examples of Indicator Components

| | Example 1 | Example 2 |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Indicator Components</i> | Indicator: Increase the percentage of participants from the southern districts reporting an improvement in their relationship with the other(s) to the point where they now enter each other's homes from 20% in 2005 to 70% by 2008. | Indicator: Increase the number of men and women participating in at least two inter-community activities from 75 men and women/year in 2005 to 450 men and women/year for all ten program communities before the end of 2007 |
| <i>What is to be measured</i> – what is going to change | Participants reporting an improvement in their relationship with the other(s) | The number of men and women participating in at least two inter-community activities |
| <i>The unit of measurement to be used to describe the change</i> | Percentage of participants | Number of women and men |
| <i>Pre-program status/state, also known as the baseline</i> (where possible) | From 20% of the participants in 2005 | From 75 men and women/year in 2005 |
| <i>The size, magnitude or dimension of the intended change</i> | To 70% of the participants in 2008 | To 450 men and women/year before the end of 2007 |
| <i>The quality or standard of the change to be achieved</i> | Improved to the point where they enter each others' homes | At least two inter-community activities |
| <i>Target population(s)</i> | People in the southern district | Men and women from all 10 program communities |
| <i>The timeframe</i> | Between 1 January 2005 and 1 January 2008 | Between 2005 and the end of 2007 |

First and foremost, an indicator should concretely specify what is to be measured. In the following example, the indicator is measuring changes in mobility within areas controlled by the other side. There is an assumption that increasing mobility (a change in behavior) is a signal of increasing trust (a change in attitude or thinking).

Examples of Indicators

| Objective | Indicator |
|---|---|
| Increase trust between the two communities. | 50% of men, women, and children from each side increase their mobility within the areas controlled by the other side by at least one square kilometer per year. |

The unit of measurement in this example is square kilometers. It is important to set a target, i.e., to determine the size, magnitude or other dimension of the intended change. The example above contains two targets: “at least one square kilometer” (geographic) and “50% of men, women and children” (demographic). In this example, the indicator includes more specific information on gender and age that was not included in the objective. It has been included to allow program managers and decision-makers to see if, during the course of the project, any one segment of the population has been excluded or needs additional attention in order to achieve the objective.

Consider the following example where three communities have been unable to resolve disputes over shared natural resources, transportation, and garbage disposal. The conflict assessment revealed that past efforts to work together toward solutions always used positional bargaining, which resulted in threats and intimidation.

Examples of Indicators

| Objective | Indicator |
|---|--|
| Increase inter-community collaboration on public policy issues that address common interests. | Expand from twice/year to six times/year the number of public policy debates or forums where all three communities contribute interest-based solutions on natural resource management disputes by the end of 2009. |

In this example, it is assumed that contributing interest-based solutions (a change in process) reflects an increase in effective inter-community collaboration (a change in relationship). The unit of measurement is the number of instances where all three communities contributed interest-based solutions during policy debates. The size or magnitude of

change involves an increase from two debates/year to six debates/year. The target population is three communities and the timeframe concludes at the end of 2009.

This indicator focuses on process or implementation. It can be helpful for monitoring the collaborative process, but it cannot inform the practitioners of any changes at the outcome level. It is possible that the communities will succeed in offering interest-based solutions without coming to agreement on solutions and without increasing collaboration. Given the baseline practice of positional bargaining, there is a good chance that interest-based negotiation could enhance collaboration.

How do we set the targets of an indicator?

The previous example raises the question, “How much change is enough?” This is akin to the question, “What is success?” While there are no hard and fast answers to these questions, there are some basic guidelines.

- Know the size or magnitude at the beginning (see baselines).
- The amount of change needs to be large enough to be significant.
- The amount of change needs to be small enough to be achievable within the means (i.e., budget, staff, and capacity) of the project.
- Review past records and reports for previous experience.
- Ask yourself, “What does that mean in real terms?” For example, it would not be useful to set an arbitrary target such as “50% increase in the number of adolescent boys and girls who complete a peace education course in the province during their fifth year.” In the first year of the project, an increase of 50% of zero would be meaningless.
- Alert the donor that you will need to adjust the targets following the baseline and as you gain experience.
- Adjust the targets after the baseline.
- Adjust the targets after you have experience.

Once the basic components have been determined, potential indicators need to pass three tests before entering into final consideration.

How do we know the indicator will work?

Once the basic components have been determined, potential indicators need to pass three tests before entering into final consideration:

- Reliability: Consistency of the finding regardless of who makes the measurement.
- Feasibility: Ease in collecting the information.
- Utility in decisionmaking: Critical to informed choices.

Consider a security reform program in which one of the objectives is “to increase the accountability of the armed forces.” The following table has

three different indicators for this same objective. Each indicator scores differently on the three quality tests.

Quality Tests

| Proposed Indicator | Reliability | Feasibility | Utility in decisionmaking |
|---|---|--|---|
| Within 12 months, 80% of all officers can cite the types and ranges of sanctions that correspond to the most serious human rights violations. | Involves some sort of test which is likely to yield the same results no matter who applies the test. | Testing a significant sample of officers is only feasible if there is full support and endorsement of such testing by the chiefs of staff. | This helps us understand what officers know and the degree to which ignorance is a factor. In conjunction with other indicators, it also may give us insights into the degree of influence officers have over soldiers. |
| Increase by 50% the number of sanctions from military tribunals that fall within anticipated norms by end of year two. | Unless the norms are stated, this is less reliable because it requires a judgment – does the sanction fall within the norm? | If access to records from military tribunals is difficult to obtain, this indicator is not feasible. | Is military justice a viable deterrent to human rights abuses by the military? |
| Increase by 30 % each year the number of people living near military bases who believe military leadership seriously investigates instances of alleged abuse and prosecutes it accordingly. | If all variables such as time of day, sample size, and selection methods are the same, the reliability should be within acceptable standards. | With both community and base endorsements and the requisite security, this could be feasible. | Are public perceptions changing proportionately to the changes being implemented by the military? |

The following checklist can help in assessing choices, and the value of those choices, among a variety of proposed indicators.

TARGETED

- Element of change: What is changing?
- Target group: Who is involved in the change?
- Location: Where is the change located?
- Timeframe: When is the change to happen?

MEASURABLE

- Specific unit(s) of measurement to be used: What will be measured, counted, weighed or sized?
- Reference to a baseline/benchmark for comparison: What was the measurement at the starting point?
- Qualities are defined: Words like “effective, appropriate, successful,” are defined clearly.

RELIABLE

- Quality of the information is credible.
- Assumptions are minimal, or at least clearly stated.
- Connection between the indicator and what you are trying to prove is direct.
- Everyone collecting the information will find the same thing.

Quantitative indicators are measures of quantities or amounts.

FEASIBLE

- Means of verification is viable and doable.
- Information can be obtained.

Qualitative indicators are people’s judgments or perceptions about a subject.

UTILITY IN DECISIONMAKING

- The information is linked to key decisions.
- The information has major importance in the decision.

What is the difference between qualitative and quantitative indicators?

Quantitative indicators are measures of quantities or amounts. An example would be a 50% increase in the number of people who enroll their children in ethnically mixed schools by the end of the project. Another example would be, “500 disputes resolved by trained mediators over 18 months.”

Qualitative indicators are people’s judgments or perceptions about a subject. An example would be, “25% increase in the level of confidence people have in their ability to circulate safely in all areas in their community by end of project.” Another example might be, “10% decrease in fear of violence in village D in 6 months.” Most qualitative indicators contain a number or numeric components so you need to look beyond numbers to what is actually being measured. Check to see if the change in question relates to some sort of opinion, belief, or way of thinking. If not, it is most likely a quantitative indicator. If it describes the implementation of an activity or a one-off event, it is almost certainly a quantitative indicator.

Examples of Quantitative and Qualitative Indicators

| Objective | Quantitative Indicator | Qualitative Indicator |
|--|---|---|
| Increase solidarity between 450 former enemies in five municipalities in Chalatenango over three years | Percentage of the former enemies in five municipalities in Chalatenango who have joined mixed-community organizations at the end of year one <i>Measures the size of membership in an organization</i> | Percentage of former enemies who, at the end of year one, routinely identify themselves as members of the larger community rather than belonging to one group or faction <i>Measures change in how they describe themselves; a quality of their identity</i> |
| Enhance capacity of regional and local government institutions and communities to monitor, report, and manage conflict in two years in three southern provinces. | Number of disputes reported at each level during the course of the project <i>Measures the incidence of reporting</i> | Number of instances at each level where authorities believe that monitoring reports lead to a timely intervention and the prevention of escalation over the course of the project <i>Measures the authorities opinion of the contribution of monitoring toward intervention and prevention</i> |

Programs combining both qualitative and quantitative indicators often demonstrate a richer understanding of the dynamics at play.

Programs combining both qualitative and quantitative indicators often demonstrate a richer understanding of the dynamics at play. Consider a program whose objective is to increase the political empowerment of women.

The **QUANTITATIVE** indicator is, “50 women elected parliamentarians in the next election.”

While this is a laudable objective and an adequate indicator, alone it does not provide the full story. Add to it one or both of the following qualitative indicators and we begin to see that there are other dynamics at play, such as the ability to exert influence once in office.

The **QUALITATIVE** indicators are:

“10% increase in women parliamentarians’ belief that their voices are making a difference in decisionmaking.”

“15% decrease in elected women’s perception that they are marginalized in decisionmaking.”

What are the other important dimensions for analysis?

Sometimes one set of information that includes all groups will hide the fact that there is a great discrepancy in that issue between some of those groups. It may be important to collect information on an indicator separately for each group. This is called data disaggregation. Typically, information is collected in ways that reflect the components most relevant to the project such as gender, identity, ethnicity, age, or area of origin. For example, if we are considering youth involvement in politics, an increase in the number of youth joining political parties may conceal the fact that young women are not becoming more involved. See page 216 in the Methods chapter for more information on data disaggregation.

What are the risks in working with indicators?

“When you’re up to your eyeballs in crocodiles, it’s hard to remember you were trying to drain the swamp.”

- Unknown

Humans want to succeed, particularly when being evaluated. As programs develop more reliable and valid indicators, there is a temptation to replace objectives with indicators. Some of the best-known examples of this phenomenon are in the education field where test scores were previously used as indicators of learning. As test scores become increasingly important for college education or school performance reviews, test performance has superseded and replaced the original learning objective. What used to be, “Achieve basic competency in algebra” has become, “Achieve at least 650 on the math portion of the aptitude test.” The result is improved test scores, but little change in the targeted skill and no evidence of skill use. The primary skill that improved is test-taking rather than skills in algebra.

A similar situation can be found in mediation programs that use the percentage of mediations resulting in written agreements as an indicator of success. It becomes part of the culture. At the end of mediations, program staff members ask mediators, “Did the parties reach a written agreement?” This conveys the message that this type of outcome is the most desirable. Parties who elect to conclude a mediation without a written agreement often believe that the mediation process was a success. Is the purpose of mediation to produce written agreements or is it to provide a safe forum for communication and dispute resolution? As Einstein said, “Not everything that can be measured counts.”

How do we develop indicators?

Many fields, such as health, political science and others, have already invested in research to develop indicators. This is often the work of professional researchers and social scientists. The challenge comes in developing units of measure for intangible issues such as trust, acceptance, and reconciliation. That challenge is made even more complex because of the importance of local context, culture, and perception. To make it still more difficult, we tend to put off thinking about indicators until we're late in the planning stages and facing tight deadlines.

Despite these challenges, peacebuilding practitioners can and need to develop new indicators and build on existing ones. Good indicators are context specific. Practitioners are supposedly well-immersed in the context and, hence, well-positioned to develop locally relevant indicators. Teaming up with social scientists may facilitate the process.

Here are a few tips for developing indicators:

1. Preparation

- Articulate your theory(ies) of change as well as the types of change specified in the objectives.
- Begin by determining what indicators have already been developed, tested, and refined in your program and other programs with which you are in contact. Keep an indicator bank. Ask other practitioners in peacebuilding for their indicators. Designate someone on your team as the indicator scout. Keep up-to-date with research on peacebuilding.
- Borrow from other professions. Public health is particularly rich in this area given its emphasis on behavioral change. Political science and psychology also offer a number of related indicators. Obviously, one cannot cut and paste indicators from other fields and expect them to work for peacebuilding. Nonetheless, indicators from other fields can serve to spark creativity in the development of indicators for peacebuilding.
- Make indicator development a continuous undertaking. Allocate time for learning and reflection. Unless you thrive under pressure, program design is not the best time to be developing indicators.

2. Generation

- Brainstorm all related things or dimensions that can be counted, measured, or sized and look for creative ways to combine some of those.

- Ask the parties or stakeholders in the conflict what they consider to be significant signals of change. When two women serving as community dispute resolution facilitators in Burundi were asked how we could prove that their work had resulted in change in their communities, they replied, “You could go talk to the local magistrate and ask him how his work has changed now that he refers so many cases to us.” Clearly, the local magistrate had come to value the dispute resolution work of these women.
- Break issues into smaller components. Rather than measure reconciliation, consider its components: mercy, justice, truth, and peace. To measure capacity, focus on skills, technical knowledge, process, motivation, and opportunity. This practice also goes by the name of factor analysis where all factors that influence the change are identified and, where possible, weighed according to the degree of influence each factor has.
- Use deductive logic. What would we have to see to know that objective X has been achieved? For example, seeing Hutus circulate in formerly Tutsi-only neighborhoods might mean that participants feel secure enough to expand their circle of mobility. Of course, we would need to verify that the Tutsis are still there.

Good indicators are context specific.

Map out the dynamics or factors involved. Common mapping methods include systems mapping, factor analysis, and force field analysis. Systems mapping can be helpful in illustrating and understanding how certain elements in a system can have far-reaching consequences if changed. For more information on systems mapping, see *The Fifth Discipline* by Peter Senge.

Advanced Concept

Borrowing from Social Capital

In a landmark study on social capital for the World Bank, Narayan and Cassidy mapped out their understanding or hypothesis of the factors influencing social capital as a framework for their research. They then looked for indicators of change in those factors. Their approach illustrates one way of developing indicators and some of the challenges and difficulties in working with intangible issues.

Social capital refers to the resources that accrue to a person or group by virtue of their relationships and networks. The map on the following page illustrates the different factors that Narayan and Cassidy believe contribute to social capital. It also illustrates their thinking or logic on how different phenomena are interconnected. Their paper includes specific questions that serve to detect signals of changes within each of the factors. The authors link specific types of change (e.g., the behavior of asking a neighbor

to care for a sick child) that contribute to a larger factor (e.g., neighborhood connectedness), which when combined with other factors influence social capital. Every country and every culture requires its own factors (or at least factors adjusted and amended to reflect local realities).

The work on social capital is also cited here because of subsequent efforts to look at the relationship between social capital and violence. For more information, see The Nexus between Violent Conflict, Social Capital and Social Cohesion: Case Studies from Cambodia and Rwanda by Nat J. Colletta and Michelle L. Cullen (World Bank, 2002).

3. Refinement

- Keep focused with the mantra, “What do I need to know and what information will tell me what I need to know?”
- If your objective is not providing clarity, consider rewriting your objective.
- Once you have a couple of possible indicators, look for ways to make them increasingly simple.

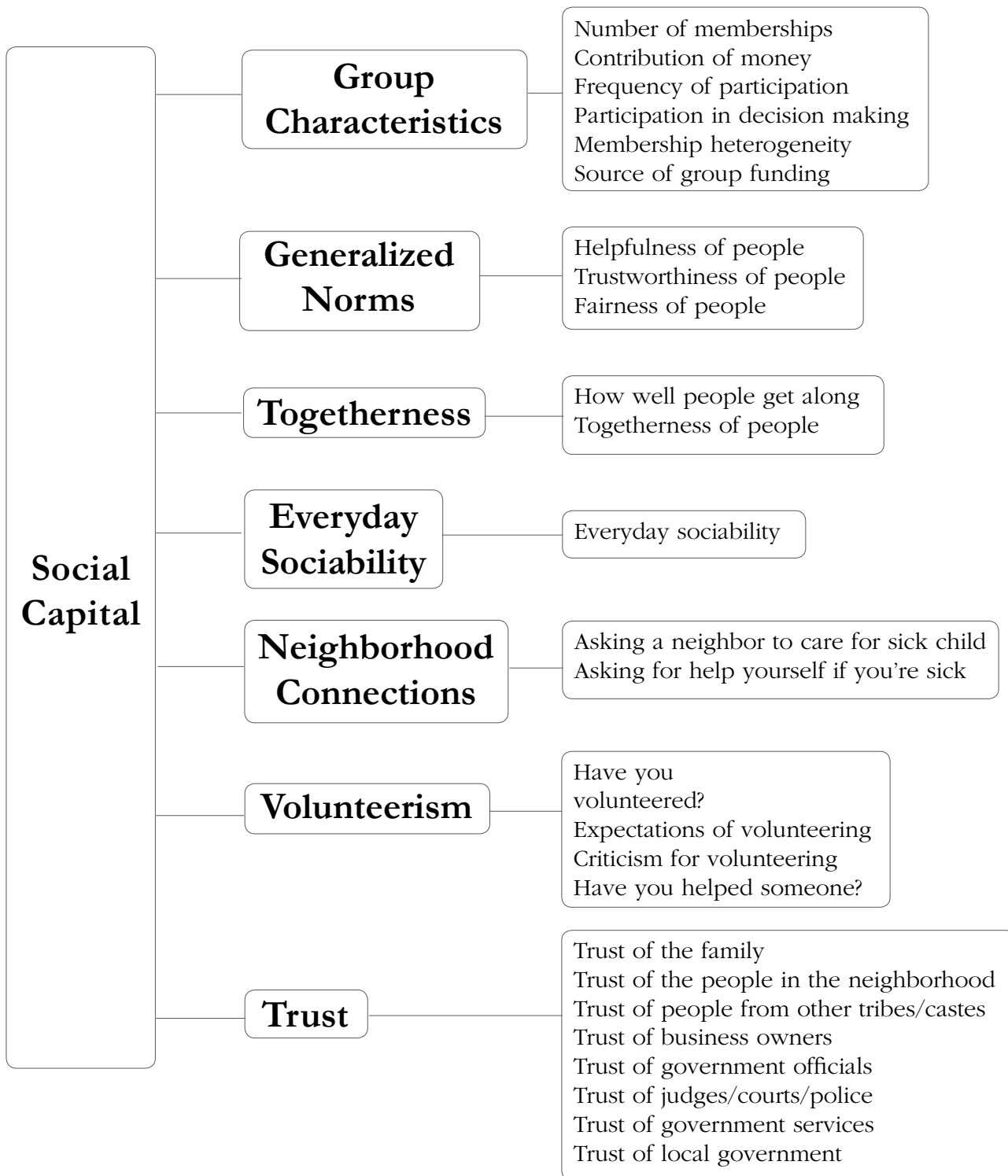
4. Testing Indicators

Many people invest great amounts of time and energy developing new indicators and then wait until the middle of the program — or worse, wait until the end — to put them to use. They risk an unpleasant surprise, and potentially their credibility with donors, if the indicators are flawed or not useful. Experience suggests that it is prudent to test new and newly modified indicators for their utility in decision making as early as possible, preferably during the design phase while there is still time to make changes. Test both the most promising indicators and those which are also viable but not as ideal. This helps ensure there is an alternative in the event that the ideal indicators don't survive the test.

This test is different from a test of the data collection method. The idea is to determine the utility of the indicators in the analysis and subsequent decisions. Pick hypothetical extremes using fictitious data and consider how the different extremes will influence decisions. If vastly different information has no influence over the decisions, the indicator is probably not useful and should be changed.

Experience suggests that it is prudent to test new and newly modified indicators for their utility in decision making as early as possible.

The Dimension of Social Capital, Narayan and Cassidy



If indicators tell us what has changed but not why, how do we find out why it changed?

The underlying assumption is that the change took place because of the activities the project implemented. However, in working with intangible changes, this assumption can be very difficult to substantiate. A more credible approach is to identify and acknowledge all the major contributing factors and illustrate how the program contributed along with the other factors. This implies some analysis and understanding of the many forces bearing on the issues under consideration.

Consider the rapid increase in human rights abuses by the military in Burundi in the late 1990s. The work of Human Rights Watch and others helped substantiate the increasing abuses. Why was this change happening? The factors contributing to this increase in abuses included massive and rapid recruitment, an increase in the ratio of soldiers to officers, a reduction in the duration and quality of basic training, poor supervision, and an atmosphere of impunity. Indicators can tell us that change is occurring, but determining why change happens requires additional research and analysis

Advanced Concept

There are a number of other more sophisticated types of indicators outlined in the following table. The examples illustrate how each type of indicator might fit within the example's intended outcome.

Goal: Increase acceptance of interdependence of all parties to the conflict.

Intended Outcome: Increased knowledge of sensible, responsible people on all sides of the conflict.

Potential Indicators:

Examples of Advanced Indicators¹⁰

| Type of Indicator | Description | Example Indicator | Performance Question |
|----------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <i>Simple Quantitative</i> | <i>Requires only one unit of measurement (in addition to time)</i> | <i>Number of neighborhoods using program-related processes</i> | <i>Are we covering enough areas?</i> |

¹⁰ Adapted from *Managing for Impact in Rural Development, A Guide for Project M&E*, Section 5-21, IFAD 2000.

Examples of Advanced Indicators

| Type of Indicator | Description | Example Indicator | Performance Question |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <i>Complex Quantitative</i> | <i>Combines two or more units of measure (in addition to time)</i> | <i>Number of respected leaders who maintain at least three new relationships with people from the other side during the first six months of the project</i> <i>Percentage of people who can name at least three people from the other side who they consider sensible and responsible at the end of 10 months</i> | <i>Are enough respected people with influence engaged in preparatory work?</i> <i>Are new relationships being established?</i> |
| <i>Compound</i> | <i>Contains some sort of standard that requires definition or additional assessment</i> | <i>Spheres of influence of participating respected leaders, mapped quarterly</i> <i>Or</i> <i>Increase in capacity to communicate with the other parties, assessed quarterly</i> | <i>Are we reaching enough people? Where are the gaps?</i> <i>Or</i> <i>Do people have the skills, knowledge, resources, and motivation needed to communicate?</i> |
| <i>Scales and Indices</i> | <i>Scales or indices combine multiple indicators. Relatively rare in peacebuilding and conflict resolution</i> | <i>Change in ranking on the Awareness Scale/Index</i> | <i>How and how much has the awareness of the others' interests improved?</i> |
| <i>Proxy Indicators</i> | <i>A symbolic or approximate change relating to the desired outcome</i> | <i>Ratio of the use of non-judgmental language versus the use of judgmental language in intra-group gatherings during the first six months of the project</i> | <i>Are people talking about the conflict among themselves in new and constructive ways?</i> |
| <i>Open-ended Qualitative</i> | <i>Allows respondents to determine the qualities of the project that they deem to be important</i> | <i>Perceptions of the people about the accomplishments of the project</i> | <i>How does the larger community perceive the project?</i> |
| <i>Focused Qualitative</i> | <i>Focused on specific qualities of interest</i> | <i>Percentage of respondents who perceive positive changes in relationships at the end of year one of the project</i> | <i>How does the community perceive changes in relationships?</i> |



“We neglected to do a baseline at the beginning of the conflict. However, we just got an accurate carbon 14 reading on their positions!”

Written by *M. M. Rogers* and illustrated by *Ariv R. Faizal, Wahyu S., Ary W.S.*
Creative team for Search for Common Ground in Indonesia

What are the pitfalls to universal conflict transformation indicators?

Local realities and unique contexts make universal indicators difficult and somewhat risky to use.

Numerous attempts have been made at developing universal and generic indicators. It would certainly be helpful to be able to choose indicators off the shelf. However, local realities and unique contexts make universal indicators difficult and somewhat risky to use. The social capital example in the Advanced Concept on page 57 illustrates the great lengths to which researchers have gone to adapt indicators to each of the cultures and situations they were considering. This is not to say that new indicators must be developed from scratch for every program. Rather, they need to be modified and made contextually relevant. This may be easier than developing new indicators from a blank slate.

In sum...

Indicators are a means to measure change. They are the raw materials for much of monitoring and evaluation. Yet indicators are approximations, based largely on assumptions: the smaller or more accurate the assumption, the more reliable the indicator. A mix of qualitative and quantitative indicators usually reveals nuances and greater insight into what is happening. Given the difficulty in creating peacebuilding indicators, once indicators have been found, there is a risk of losing sight of the objective by over-emphasizing the indicator. Indicators borrowed from other fields or other cultures always need to be reconstituted and tested for each particular context and culture.

Further Reading:

Nat Colletta and Michelle Cullen, *The Nexus between Violent Conflict, Social Capital and Social Cohesion: Case Studies from Cambodia and Rwanda*, Social Capital Initiative Working Paper No. 23, World Bank, 2002.

Deepa Narayan and Michael F. Cassidy, *A Dimensional Approach to Measuring Social Capital: Development and Validation of a Social Capital Inventory*, Current Sociology Vol. 49 No. 2, Sage Publications, March 2001.

Michael Quinn Patton, *Utilization-Focused Evaluation*, SAGE Publications, 1996.

UNDP, RBM [Results-Based Management] in UNDP: *Selecting Indicators, Signposts of Development*, (UNDP, 2002).