

A Comparative Analysis of Action-Evaluation Across Multiple Cases

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Jay Rothman has developed action-evaluation as an "appropriate technology" for evaluating conflict resolution methods, including training in conflict resolution (Rothman 1997: 451). The appropriateness of action-evaluation stems from its consistency with the very goals and values of conflict resolution interventions. Whereas traditional evaluation practices are often imposed from outside and are unhelpful, action-evaluation encourages explicit, interactive goal formation and assessment among conveners, practitioners, and donors throughout the course of a project. Rothman argues that conflict interventions will greatly benefit when evaluative processes help to form, reach agreement on, and develop clear goals and definitions of success.

Action-evaluation involves documenting and monitoring the goals of all the principle stakeholders in an initiative. These stakeholders might include donor foundations, sponsoring institutions, local community-organizers, workshop participants, and possibly government agencies. The stakeholders are asked about their outcome goals (*what* their vision of success is), the motivations behind their goals (*why* they have them), and the process by which they see their goals being achieved (*how* they will reach them). Goals are "collected" for individuals within each stakeholder group and are categorized by an action-evaluator, who distinguishes between shared goals, unique goals, and contrasting goals within the group. This process takes place within each stakeholder group and then among all stakeholder groups in order to establish a baseline of goals for the entire project. This baseline is then fed back to the stakeholders in order for them to dialogue over their differences and to form common goals and visions of success for their project.

This is a brief sketch of action-evaluation in its ideal form. As the method has been applied in various test cases, it has been adapted as need or limitations require. Jay Rothman and his associates have collected action-evaluation data in a specially designed computer system, which facilitates comparison of goals within projects. While the usefulness of action-evaluation in individual interventions has been explored (see case studies in this conference), there has as yet been no examination of action-evaluation across all of the cases. Such cross-case comparison, which the action-evaluation database allows for, is sorely lacking in the field of conflict resolution. Although the data set is somewhat limited at this point, some lessons can be drawn from it as examples of what further cross-case research might teach us. This kind of analysis can reveal new information about the methodology of action-evaluation such as consistent difficulties in its application and its adaptability and utility in different contexts. This cross-case analysis can also provide substantive information about conflict resolution, such as what different actors and stakeholders view as successful conflict resolution, whether or not their visions are shared or contrasted, and whether values and approaches to conflict resolution vary significantly across contexts.

So far, Rothman's data set is mostly limited to establishing the baseline of formative evaluation--that is setting goals for projects rather than assessing progress toward those goals (as in summative evaluation). Currently, there are some twenty projects with which action-evaluation has been initiated. However, this study will focus on the fifteen projects for which the data is most complete. Briefly these are: five cases of ethnic conflict; two cases of community conflict (one particularly focused on racial conflict); two cases focused on "testing" and applying action-evaluation; a community business project; three university settings; and two cases of educators reflecting on the standards and values within their fields. These projects were initiated and funded by different institutions over different time frames, and can provide a fair amount of diversity.

This data lends itself most readily to a qualitative comparative research method such as structured focused comparison (George 1979). This method is focused in that it selectively examines the data according to the researcher's purpose and structured because the same battery of questions is asked of each case. My data analysis is focused on methodological issues of action-evaluation and the substantive information about conflict resolution gained from its application in these fifteen cases. I first examined each case and compared its features to that of other cases on such issues as degree of conflict within and among stakeholding groups (presence of unique goals, shared goals, and contrasting goals), specificity of goals, and time frame of goals. I then did a structured comparison of similar stakeholding groups across cases, looking for patterns in type and content of goals. For example, I compared the what, why and how group goals of participants across all cases that contained this stakeholding group. My analysis took into consideration the unique contexts and application of action-evaluation in each case. I examined all of the individual, group, and project goals available for each case. I did not examine any of the raw data, but instead relied on the action-evaluators' assessments and summaries of goals.

APPLICATION OF ACTION-EVALUATION ACROSS CASES: CONSISTENT DIFFICULTIES AND MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESS

One of the benefits of action-evaluation is its adaptability to different contexts and needs of stakeholders. Although there is an ideal process, most of the test cases have involved some deviation from it. For example, Deborah Bing reports that certain adaptations were needed in her work with action-evaluation in the Slovakian and Estonian interventions. It was necessary for Bing, as action-evaluator, to glean information about convener goals from already written project proposals rather than from individual stakeholder reflection. This occurred because action-evaluation was applied to projects already in full swing and also due to limited access to stakeholders (Bing 1997a). Bing suggests that action-evaluation can be adapted to projects already in process and also prove useful even without participation from all stakeholder groups, but that it is essential that the stakeholders be willing to be reflexive about their work (Bing 1997b). In other words, they must be willing to self-critically explore their own motivations and goals. Action evaluators Bing and Cobb both emphasize the import of reflexivity among stakeholders in their piece written for this conference (Bing/Cobb 1998).

Of the fifteen cases I examined, about half were able to include multiple stakeholding groups in their action-evaluation. These might be participants and conveners, students and professors, or as in the case of Bulgaria, participants, conveners, supervisors, and sponsors. Seven cases only include one stakeholding group. In the cases with multiple stakeholding groups, the groups differ radically in their number of constituents. Usually, the higher-level organizers of the project have fewer representatives--for example, there might be 35 participants and 10 conveners or 14 students and 3 professors. Fewer opinions and perspectives need to be reconciled within the smaller groups, and there are fewer instances of unique goals. Yet in these smaller groups unique goals might take on more importance. In a group of three one unique view can be important.

One persistent difficulty has been the lack of donor groups in the data set. This is problematic since many

organizations experience their most stringent and burdensome evaluative requirements from their donors. Donors are the ones who are most likely to impose rigorous evaluative procedures and to demand accountability for measurable organizational output. In general, the data set tends to include the stakeholders most involved with and committed to the project. A wide net is not cast to other groups that might be affected by the project such as other NGOs or government agencies.

Perhaps more problematic than any of these adaptations of action-evaluation is that many cases in the data set do not include what, why and how goals for the stakeholding group(s). In some cases, hows or whys are missing, and in a few cases both are missing. The reason this could be a problem is that the why and how goals are designed to help the stakeholders exercise reflexivity, the attribute of action-evaluation that would appear to be so essential. Both Ghais and Stobbe report specific difficulties with their why data (1998). My analysis indicates that the why question seems to be the least clear of the three questions, taking on different meanings in different cases and not always revealing the motivations behind a stakeholder's goals.

Despite noting these concerns inherent in the data set, my analysis of the adaptive applications of action-evaluation is somewhat limited in that it only includes a look at the final product (the data set) and not scrutiny of how the data set was produced. For example, I do not consider the training given action-evaluators and how they translate raw data into shared, unique and contrasting goals. Especially in cases where stakeholders don't list why and how goals, it may be hard to judge whether some unique goals are *potentially* contrasting goals. For example, in one of the cases of ethnic conflict a unique convener goal is "build sponsoring institution credibility". Without further exploring motivations behind goals and dialoging about the goals, it may be hard to judge whether or not this institutional interest is in conflict with other goals more focused on reducing ethnic tension. How reliable are the action-evaluator's filtrations of the data into categories? Is it safe to assume that another researcher could reproduce the same results? If not, what does this imply? Since projects have different action-evaluators, is it possible that distinct styles of the evaluators might inhibit cross-case comparison?

CONTEXTUAL DIFFERENCES IN ACTION-EVALUATION: WHERE IS IT MOST USEFUL?

Although action-evaluation can be adapted to various contexts, its utility in these contexts may vary. Are there certain kinds of projects that are more likely to benefit from action-evaluation? I break down the data set into two main categories: educational settings and settings of conflict. The former include the three university course settings and the two groups of educators. The latter include five cases of ethnic conflict and two community conflicts. The other three cases do not fit neatly into either category and were examined in light of the whole data set.

Some of the cases in the educational settings involve stakeholders who are very familiar with action-evaluation (such as persons who are researchers or practitioners of the method). Other stakeholding groups in the educational settings are either established conflict resolution scholars or practitioners, or persons receiving training in conflict resolution in an academic setting. It was my hypothesis that action-evaluation would be more thoroughly and less problematically applied in these educational settings where stakeholders are more likely to be experienced "believers" in conflict resolution, and in some cases more familiar with action-evaluation. I suspected that the conflict settings in the data set might face more obstacles in applying action-evaluation due to needs for confidentiality, the logistics of international coordination in some projects, and the more dubious status of action-evaluation among stakeholders (in other words, their lack of familiarity with and doubts about applying this new method). This hypothesis does not hold up after examining the data. Although the professors and researchers familiar with action-evaluation and conflict resolution were able to articulate clear goals, most projects also have stakeholding groups who were new to either action-evaluation or conflict resolution. Thus, as

far as the richness of the data (depth and specificity of what, why, and how goals), neither context holds an overall advantage.

I also expected that action-evaluation, even if more difficult to apply, would reap more rewards in settings of conflict than in educational settings. Action-evaluation is deemed most appropriate for settings of conflict where goals and definitions of success are themselves in conflict. In educational settings, stakeholding groups are not necessarily antagonistic or in disagreement, and although it is still ideal to involve all stakeholders in an evaluation, it would seem less necessary to carefully itemize and converse about all three levels of goals in order to reconcile disparate interests and visions of success. I expected to see more contrasting and fewer shared goals in the conflict settings than in the educational settings. However, this is not the case. Neither context has many instances of contrasting goals either within groups or across groups in a project. This may be due to a variety of factors. First, the data is still in its initial stage. In most cases goals have not yet been discussed among the various stakeholding groups. Conflicts over meanings and interpretations of goals are most likely to arise once dialogue and action begins on them. Secondly, in this data set, even the conflict settings do not involve antagonistic stakeholding groups (e.g. a stakeholding group of Jews and one of Arabs). Rather, participants and conveners of projects are fairly united in purpose, and goals are often cooperative in the sense of democracy building and economic development rather than stated toward a rival group. Many of the cases of conflict in the data set are "train the trainers" environments, where even the participant groups are community organizers with experience in conflict resolution. In other words, even the conflict settings are educational--everyone is in a learner mode, so goals tend to be similar or at least compatible, rather than contrasting.

There is one notable difference between the educational and conflict cases that may be based in the distinctive nature of the two contexts. The educational settings clearly focus on goals of personal growth and change, demonstrating action-evaluation's emphasis on reflexivity. Students and in many cases professors remarked on their desire for personal change and awareness of their identity. For example some shared what goals are "learn about myself--what type of person I am", "to improve understanding of my own relationships and myself to better handle personal conflicts", and "the students learn to be reflective (or reflexive) practitioners and they will learn this from their professors who will model it as well as teach it didactically". This emphasis on personal change is not as evident in the conflict settings, although issues of identity are present in a common desire for community change in the form of interethnic understanding and cooperation.

I found this contextual difference over reflexivity particularly interesting in light of the ongoing debate about interest-based conflicts and identity-based conflicts. One might presume that in an educational setting, it is less likely that identities are threatened and therefore less likely that goals would be approached in terms of personal needs and values. Contrarily, I expected that reflexivity would be more visible in ethnic and racial conflict where values and identities are more likely to be in conflict. Instead, except for one case, material interests and resource development play a bigger role in the conflict settings. The lesser emphasis on reflexivity in the conflict settings is a surprise. One possible explanation is that reflexivity may be harder to accomplish in situations of identity conflict. Reflexivity under these circumstances requires that disputants see beyond blame of the other and begin to reflect on themselves. The identity issues underlying competing interests must be surfaced. Reflexivity about the deep issues at stake in a conflict can reap rich rewards, but it may be easier to be reflexive in a non-threatening educational environment. Also, it may be that the educational environments included in the action-evaluation data set are especially encouraging of reflexivity, as in the case of Stobbe's conflict resolution studies course (Stobbe 1998). Education is naturally reflexive when it strives to include the identities of students as necessary participants in their own empowerment.

It is not an easy task to separate identity and interest within any setting, and I don't want to risk drawing too

many conclusions about interests and identity based on the presence or absence of reflexivity in stakeholder goals. That said, it does seem that reflexivity is less likely to be found in a very interest-based context. Two projects in the data set are almost entirely interest-based. These projects are not concerned with changing attitudes but rather are interested in accomplishing a specific task in a specific time frame. This has many implications for goal setting, measurement of success, and perhaps even the utility of action-evaluation. Goals such as "gaining new understanding of the other side" and "to create a more just and peaceful society" are not as easily measurable and as quickly accomplished as goals like "provide incentives to retain existing businesses and attract new, appropriate businesses" or promoting and distributing a document defining conflict resolution education to educators and policy makers (two goals of these interest-based projects). Action-evaluation, with its emphasis on self-conscious reflexivity, is especially designed to get at base assumptions and disparate definitions underlying goals in conflict interventions. Its power in this regard is not yet fully displayed in the initial stages of the data collection. Yet it is remarkable how clearly this emphasis comes out in the prevalence of personal growth goals in different stakeholder groups in the data set.

PATTERNS IN SUBSTANTIVE GOALS AMONG STAKEHOLDING GROUPS ACROSS CASES:

Cross case comparison of the action-evaluation data set can begin to explore difficulties and challenges in application of the action-evaluation method. It can also point to some contextual variations in the use of action-evaluation. However, the data set itself is most useful for exploring patterns in the substantive matter of conflict resolution goals. Do some cases have more disagreement or variation among their stakeholding groups than others? What is the nature of the variation? Are there patterns in the what, why, and how goals among similar types of stakeholding groups across projects? What other patterns can be noted?

Although instances of contrasting goals are rare across the entire data set, the absence of contrasting goals does not mean that goals are universally shared among all groups involved in a project. For example, in one of the university settings, the action-evaluator found no shared how goals among students, professors, and administrators. Does this mean that these groups are in conflict with one another or disagree about the goals for the project? Not necessarily. Rather, it may reflect that each of these groups is playing a different role in the process. Thus, different (i.e. not shared) goals may nevertheless be compatible goals as different groups seek to accomplish the visions of success appropriate to their role in the intervention process.

Role differences are noticeable across the data set wherever multiple stakeholder groups exist for a project. However, they are most notable and predictable in the educational settings. In these, there is a distinction of roles between the educators and those being educated. Although the educators are not above seeing themselves as learners and growers ("that my students and I will learn a lot from one another"), they tend to posit their goals in terms of contributing to the growth of their students, ("help expose students to a variety of theories, concepts, practices and skills in conflict resolution"). Student goals are more self-oriented.

In the conflict settings, role patterns are less clear. In the Bulgarian case, the divide pointed out by the action-evaluator is between the desire of the sponsors and supervisors to build democracy and to promote intercultural understanding while the participants seem most concerned with helping minorities via charitable work (see Ghais 1998). I expected to find this same division in other cases--specifically in the ethnic and racial conflicts where participants consist of individuals most affected by the conflict on the ground and organizing/sponsoring groups are from institutions based in the US. I expected participants to have specific, development goals and supervisors and conveners to have more broadly stated goals about group or societal change. This pattern of movement makes sense. Conveners, organizers and administrators are setting goals for a group of people and often have

organizational interests at stake such as testing a certain theory or program's viability. For example, sponsors in the case of racial conflict are trying to gain a "clearer vision of the role of an "external" intermediary organization, and wanting to understand barriers and components of collaboration across multiple agencies and neighborhoods". These goals clearly reveal the sponsors' need to justify their institutional presence. Participants, with a narrower vision, are more likely to pose goals in a more specific context, based on their awareness of the concrete needs of their community. This pattern did reveal itself in other cases, although more data would be needed to substantiate a trend.

When comparing stakeholder goals across cases, the number of roles to consider is multiplied. Depending on the purpose of an intervention (context) and the roles played by stakeholding groups, goals become more or less comparable and yet this fact is neither attributable to the presence of conflict nor to different visions of success. One way to combat this problem is evidenced in the racial conflict project, one of the few cases where stakeholders have had an opportunity to revise their goals after receiving feedback from the action-evaluator. Here, the action-evaluator has distinguished goals into different categories such as "goals for self", "goals for others in the project", and "goals for the community". This greatly facilitates goal comparison across projects and even within a project. For example, in this project's data, there are some differences in the convener and sponsor goals in the formative stage of the what goals. There are no shared goals for the two groups in terms of goals "for self" or goals "for others in the project". However, there are shared goals "for the community".

Again, take for example the educational contexts. In these, administrators, professors, and students all wear different hats. In a simplistic view of things, administrators are setting goals with an institutional perspective, the professors with a classroom perspective, and the students are setting goals for themselves and their future careers. Yet all groups share some interest in changing the world at large to one more peaceful. Students set goals for both their personal lives and for their future and present work in their communities: "to broaden career options and gain work experience as a path to success in the field", "to contribute to a more peaceful community and world". The stakeholders in another educational project have a more institutional role and an administrative perspective: "to challenge both students and faculty to integrate peacemaking principles into their life and work". If these goals were grouped as in the case of racial conflict (goals for self, goals for class, goals for community, etc.), it would be easier to separate out causes of differentiation in goals.

Stakeholder role differences are also behind some of the variation in why and how goals across projects. Why and how goals tend to reveal more distinctions than what goals. Why goals are where stakeholders' personal interests and reasons for involvement in a project are most likely to be revealed: "I draw my inspiration and encouragement from Catholic social teachings", "having job satisfaction motivates the students", "my own personal code of ethics, my religious belief, combined with my belief in humanism and communitarianism guide me and compel me to do the work I do". Thus, although why goals tend to be of a certain category, they are unique. Though all different kinds of stakeholding groups at times include personal reasons, students were more likely to list personal aspirations and professors and administrators to list organizational interests like, "it is necessary for the program to offer to the students the appropriate skills for their success. For if not, the program itself will not be successful". The how goals are differentiated in their specificity and directness. Educators, with greater experience and knowledge than their students, were more able to articulate how goals. Students' lack of familiarity with their impending educational process rendered their goals more vague.

Stakeholder role differences cause variation in the substantive content of goals across all projects. But comparing similar stakeholding groups (groups with similar roles) across projects serves to emphasize just how many goals projects share in common. One challenge in this type of analysis is "matching" stakeholding groups across projects. Each case has its own number and varieties of groups. In the educational settings I combined stakeholding

groups into three categories: researchers, students and participants; directors and professors; and steering committees and leaders. For the conflict settings I grouped together conveners and participants. Except for Bulgaria (which had sponsors and supervisors), these were the only types of stakeholding groups. I then compared the what, why and how goals shared by stakeholding groups within projects with their "matching" groups in other projects to look for patterns and common goals. Below are the results of my analysis.

EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS:

Researchers/Students and Participants

What goals: (possible cases = 4) *Numbers following goals indicate the number (out of all possible cases) that shared the goal.*

- 1) Personal development: learn about myself and apply what I learn to myself. (3)
- 2) Learn about conflict resolution theories and methods (3)
- 3) To be a good teacher/educator (3)
- 4) To impact my community/society/world (2)

Why goals: (possible cases = 3)

- 1) To be a better teacher/educator (2)
- 2) Good communication and people skills (2)

How goals (possible groups = 4)

- 1) Learn about myself and others--practicing self-reflection (3)
- 2) Financial security/money (2)
- 3) Study and research, teaching and conferences (2)

Director/Professor

What goals (possible cases = 3)

- 1) To help students understand themselves, how they respond to conflicts, to help students engage in self-reflection (2)
- 2) To help students learn new theories and practices of conflict

resolution (2)

- 3) To help students facilitate work for peace (2)

Why goals (possible cases = 3)

1) We need to know ourselves in order to help with conflict resolution/

practice reflexivity (2)

How goals (possible cases = 3)

Some goals were of the same type--listing specific teaching methods (2)

Steering Committee/Leaders

Of the two possible cases, no common goals were found in the what, why, or how categories. Goals reveal disparate purposes of the two projects. In one case, the goals are not concrete - the purpose is to reflect on the values of an academic discipline. In the other case, educators are concerned with the legitimacy and image of their field, and a specific project is proposed that a group will work to accomplish in a specific time frame.

Overall Comments on Educational Settings: Note the emphasis on reflexivity in both Student/Participant and Director/Professor goals. Also note that student goals tend to be directed to their own development and professors' goals to the development of their students.

CONFLICT SETTINGS: Participants:

What goals (possible cases = 4)

1) Facilitate social programs (2)

2) Get support from local government; influence local political structure

(2)

3) Gain new understanding about the conflict and the other side (2)

Why goals (possible cases = 3)

1) Desire to help the needy/altruistic desire to help (3)

How goals (possible cases = 3)

Some goals were of the same type--two cases hint at cooperation with

other agencies including work with government and political action.

Conveners:

What goals (Possible cases = 7)

- 1) Improve intergroup relations/enable regular dialogue between ethnic groups/deepen communication and levels of understanding (6)
- 2) Model interethnic cooperation/model facilitation skills (3)
- 3) Promote democratic pluralism/civil society (3)
- 4) Help participants (2)

Why goals (possible cases = 3)

Some goals were of the same type--personal reasons were given (2)

How goals (possible cases = 5)

- 1) Communication and breaking down stereotypes (2)
- 2) Creation of a forum or regular meeting structure (3)

Sponsors and Supervisors

What goals (possible cases = 2)

- 1) Improved relations/enhanced intercultural understanding (2)
- 2) A clearer understanding of the conflict--and community conflict in general (2)

Note: No why or how goals are available from one case's sponsors, so only what goals could be compared.

Overall Comments on Conflict Settings: The pattern of the stakeholders in the Bulgarian case--participants having specific development goals and more distanced stakeholders having broader goals of modeling interethnic cooperation--appears to be a pattern across cases.

Overall, substantive content of goals is different in the educational and conflict settings. Within the two settings,

there are a surprising number of common goals. Unfortunately, the goals are fairly vague and not operationalized into measurable standards of success. As has been mentioned, baseline goals are expected to be broadly stated. In later stages of action-evaluation, once goals are discussed and revised among stakeholder groups, goals should become more specific. In two of the cases that have progressed beyond the baseline stage (see case studies by Ghais and Stobbe) goals indeed became more specific, and as Rothman predicts (1998: 7) goals also became more realistic and concrete. That is, after feedback and discussion, stakeholders agreed on a few concrete, realistic, specific goals that would be the priorities for their project. In these two cases, differentiation among goals decreased in stages beyond the baseline. It remains to be seen if this would hold true in other cases. If there are truly antagonistic goals in a project, discussion and specificity on goals may lead to more conflicts among stakeholders. It appears that this may have occurred in the case on race relations--more contrasting goals were revealed when goals were further explored beyond the baseline. This is a good sign if action-evaluation can surface underlying conflicts and assumptions of stakeholders. Until later stages of action-evaluation are reached for more projects, no systematic analysis of the method's true potential in this regard can take place.

This data set represents a fair amount of diversity in terms of location, time frames, and convening organizations of interventions. However, the fact that this data set is limited to two main types of contexts makes it fairly easy to analyze. In my cross-case comparison, there were three outlying cases that didn't fit neatly into either educational or conflict settings. I matched the stakeholding groups of these three cases as best as I could with other cases in the data set, but no common goals were found. What could be gained from a cross case comparison of very disparate contexts? How would the analysis be different if data existed from many different cases, or if data gathering were in more advanced stages? The more contrasting goals and distinct visions of success that the data set contains, the more it can reveal about standards in the conflict resolution field. It is probably not possible or desirable to have one vision of successful conflict resolution for the whole field. Just as the stakeholding groups play different roles and therefore have different, although not contrasting or oppositional goals, there can be multiple conflict resolution interventions with different purposes and roles. Their goals may be different, but better understanding of them will help with coordination and networking of project efforts.

With the limited information contained in the data set, it is not possible to make sweeping conclusions about the application and effectiveness of action-evaluation and the advantages that this "appropriate technology" of evaluating conflict resolution initiatives has over other methods. With this data, judgment cannot be made about how useful the persons involved in action-evaluation found it to be, especially when we consider that most of the test cases have only reached the baseline evaluation stage. Because the data set is currently at its first stage, the data is static - there is no way to systematically analyze how goals change over time. In the cases where goal changes have been monitored over time (see Ghais and Stobbe), action evaluators found that the substance of stakeholder goals did not significantly change over time, although goals became more specific and agreed upon. But for the most part, stakeholders have not had the opportunity to see how action-evaluation alters their processes, or alters them differently than an alternative interactive, goal-setting process.

This cross-case comparison of action-evaluation can and has served to point out difficulties and necessities of applying the action-evaluation method, the considerations of applying action-evaluation in different contexts, and patterns in substantive goals among stakeholding groups and projects. The main lessons to be drawn from this study are: 1) the importance of itemizing what, why and how goals for stakeholder groups, as a means of encouraging reflexivity about goals and thereby rich data; 2) the realization that reflexivity is more easily encouraged (or more naturally occurs) in some contexts than others, and that this may be related to the degree to which identities are at stake in a conflict; 3) the need for action-evaluation to be clearer about goal categories-- "unique", "shared", and "contrasting" are helpful categories, but there is unexplored, undifferentiated ground lying between absence of contrasting goals and absence of shared goals. One way to explore the compatibility of goals

within that realm would be to differentiate categories of goals that find common ground despite different roles that stakeholders may have in an intervention; and 4) the need for action-evaluation to progress beyond the baseline stage. Although there are many common goals among similar stakeholding groups across projects, until further stages of action-evaluation are engaged, goals are not specific enough to portray the rich variance of visions of success and theories of practice that are the basis of stakeholders' goals and priorities.

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