PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE PEACEBUILDING:

A PROGRAM GUIDE

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From the Director

The Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM) was established in September 2002 in the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) to lead USAID's efforts to identify and analyze sources of conflict. The Office supports early responses to address the causes and consequences of instability and violent conflict and seeks to integrate conflict mitigation and management into USAID's analysis, strategies and programs. CMM serves as the Agency's center for technical expertise in this field by enhancing the capacity of partners and USAID operating units for conflict management and mitigation through improving policies, strategies and programs for managing and mitigating conflict, developing and applying state-of-the art conflict analysis methodologies, and otherwise meeting Mission needs for research and program support on key conflict issues.

In 2004, the Congress established the Reconciliation Funds program to support people-to-people conflict mitigation and reconciliation activities, with the intent of bringing together individuals of different ethnic, religious or political backgrounds from areas of civil conflict and war. CMM manages an Annual Program Statement (APS) for grants to programs that provide opportunities for adversaries to come together to address issues, reconcile differences, and gain understanding and mutual trust by working toward common goals. Reconciliation grants provide support to a broader conflict programs, and serve as a natural test-bed for innovation.

This guide reflects the centrality of CMM's technical leadership commitment to advancing learning, theory, and practice. Developed in consultation with scholars and practitioners, it provides specific guidelines on the implementation of people-to-people peacebuilding programs for use by USAID and its development partners. These programs, conducted in some of the most difficult and challenging environments, require special care to ensure impact, capture learning and advance a "Do No Harm" approach. These guidelines aim to assist program designers and evaluators in how best to do just that.

As Director of CMM, I am pleased to introduce this program guide to my colleagues at USAID and beyond. I hope that readers find the information presented herein thoughtful, innovative, and useful. I encourage you to contact CMM with your comments and observations in order to help us improve future iterations of this guide, advance learning and ultimately contribute to excellence in practice.

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I. Introduction

Over half of the countries where USAID operates have experienced violent conflict in recent history. Many suffer from weak political and social institutions and, consequently, chronic instability, crisis, and under-development. These problems require long-term solutions. As a result, USAID supports efforts to build peace and undertake community-driven, conflict-sensitive development.

During the last eight years, USAID's country conflict assessments and analyses of global conflict trends have repeatedly demonstrated that there is no single cause of violent conflict, nor a single solution. As of 2010, USAID has catalogued at least seven broad families of peacebuilding intervention strategies and twenty-three variations within them.[1]

One popular approach focuses on those communities where elites or other societal forces have damaged or severed the relationships connecting individuals and groups of differing ethnic, political, religious, or other identities. Reasoning that strong, positive relationships will mitigate against the forces of dehumanization, stereotyping, and distancing that facilitate violence, this intervention brings representatives of conflicting groups together to interact purposefully in a safe, co-equal space to forge trust and empathy. The hope is that stronger relationships can benefit each stage and track of the peace processes, from enabling elite negotiators to reach a strong commitment to (re-)weaving the social fabric at the grassroots level in support of long-lasting peace. The wide variety of programs and activities which work along these lines may be dubbed *people-to-people*.

Opportunities to begin rebuilding frayed relationships can arise at various instances, from chance events or the actions of insightful leaders, within the conflict-affected country or externally. Outside actors from the country's neighbors and the international community often play an important role as mediators and facilitators. In conflict-prevention contexts, a people-to-people approach can be a tool to address and mitigate tensions before violence is triggered. During violent conflict and in post-conflict contexts, people-to-people approaches can be used to minimize the distance between the groups and seek common interests from which to build new relationships, institutions, and enterprises. People-to-people peacebuilding works to break down the barriers between the groups by re-humanizing the other, fostering empathy and mutual understanding, building trust, and creating relationships.

About this Document

This guide describes the state-of-the-art in people-to-people peacebuilding. Its purpose is to assist USAID staff at Missions, as well as partners in development and peacebuilding, to implement high-quality people-to-people programs.

The guide is structured around fourteen guidelines for program managers to follow. The document begins with an introduction to people-to-people concepts and terminology. The fourteen guidelines are grouped into three stages of the program cycle: design, implementation,

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[1] Theories of Change and Indicator Development in Conflict Management and Mitigation. 2010. USAID: Washington, DC. Available at http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADS460.pdf.

and monitoring and evaluation. Three notable cross-cutting challenges are also identified. The bibliography serves as an extensive reference for further research and learning.

While the guidelines described in this guide would likely be applicable to most conflict mitigation programs, the focus of this document is specific to people-to-people. Similarly, it is assumed that the reader already has a basic familiarity with the core concepts in the practice and theory of conflict-sensitive international development.[2] Finally, readers should not infer that the publication of this guide suggests in any way a preference at USAID for people-to-people programs over other approaches. Nor does USAID necessarily endorse the projects and approaches described throughout this guide in the illustrative examples.

The guidelines were identified based on extensive review of existing people-to-people programs and interviews in March-April 2010 with scholars of conflict resolution noted for their expertise in people-to-people approaches. On April 28, 2010, USAID and its contractor ARD, Inc. held a workshop in the Washington, DC, area to review the preliminary findings. This research, analysis, and writing was carried out by a team assembled by ARD, Inc., led by Dr. Eran Fraenkel and comprised of staff from Search for Common Ground. Further analysis, desk study, and writing was undertaken by Salamah Magnuson in May 2010 in close consultation with USAID/DCHA/CMM and with support from AMEX International, Inc. USAID carried out additional vetting and revision during the summer and fall of 2010.

Many thanks are owed to those individual and organizations who offered their invaluable input, including Diana Chigas (CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, Inc.), Eileen Babbitt (The Fletcher School, Tufts University), Mohammad Abu-Nimer (American University), John Paul Lederach (University of Notre Dame), Susan Allen Nan (George Mason University), Mari Fitzduff (Brandeis University), American University Peace and Development Institute, Equal Access, CRS, Conflict Partnership, IMTD, Mercy Corps, Peace and Reconciliation Group, Save the Children Norway as well as Sri Lanka Unites, The Karuna Center for Peacebuilding, and Youth Action Nepal. Among USAID staff, Dr. S. Tjip Walker and Kirby Reiling of the Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation managed the drafting process and readied the document for publication with assistance from Jessica O'Connor. Comments, questions, and requests for additional information should be directed to conflict@usaid.gov.

What is the People-to-People Approach?

While there is no official or standardized definition of **"People-to-People" (P2P),** most generally agree that it entails bringing together representatives of conflicting groups to interact purposefully in a safe space. This type of work addresses divisions within a community that may be rooted in group differences such as ethnicity or religion, or status as a returning ex-combatant, displaced persons, or refugee. Projects in this arena address the prejudice and demonizing that reinforces the perceived differences between groups and hinders the development of relationships between conflict parties. The aim is to create opportunities for a series of interactions between conflicting groups in the community to promote mutual understanding,

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[2] USAID staff should consider enrolling, if they haven't already, in CMM's Conflict 102 course available through USAID University.

trust, empathy, and resilient social ties. As the health of the relationships between the groups improve, the likelihood of violence between them declines.

There is an assumed progression across a scale of healthy relationships which reasons:

Understand –> Appreciate –> Collaborate –> Prefer to Peacefully Resolve

In other words, changes in understanding between conflict parties lead their perceptions and knowledge of one another to more closely reflect the other's self-definitions and concerns. This reduces negative attributions, such as demonization. Better understanding does not imply agreement between parties, but a realization of the existence of different experiences and perceptions. An increase in appreciation goes beyond understanding to a new valuing of the differences between parties and a positive reception of the other parties. Working together collaboratively highlights the ability of conflicting, or opposing, parties to cooperate toward shared, substantive accomplishments. Finally, if parties prefer to peacefully resolve conflicts, then the new relationships show resilience when challenged by external events or provocation and parties do not return to former patterns of conflict.

One of the most important lessons learned from peacebuilding practice is that there is no single solution to resolving violent conflict. Peace processes that address behaviors and attitudes but ignore the social structures that generate grievances are unlikely to be effective. Likewise, fixing inequities enshrined in laws, institutions, and traditions may fail to change individual motivations for violence. The matrix below, developed by Mary Anderson and Lara Olson, reflects this finding. [3] One dimension of the matrix sorts interventions between those that focus on changing *attitudes* of the parties in conflict or on changing *institutions*—the rules, procedures, and practices—that give rise to their grievances. The other dimension of the matrix identifies whether the intervention is directed at *key people*, whose roles are critical to the conflict dynamics, or at *more people,* large groups of people who can provide broad-based support for peace processes.

Rarely if ever would a single program operate along the full spectrum in both dimensions. Due to the practical constraints of management, project goals are necessarily more limited. However, many programs together and overtime may add up to **peace-writ-large**, or widespread, deep, lasting, and positive peace which is more than the simple absence of violence.

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[3] Mary Anderson, *Confronting War*, available at http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/default.php.

	More People	Key People
Attitudinal		
Institutional		
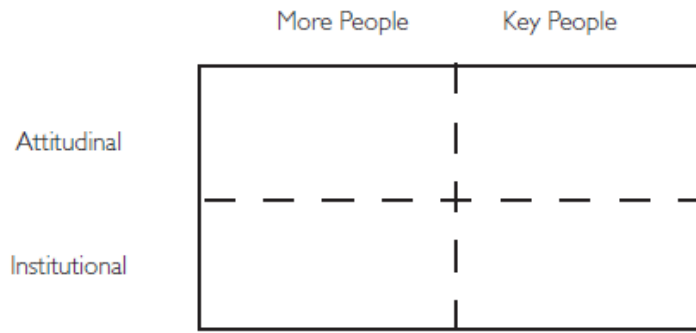
Adapted from Anderson and Olson, 2003

Within this framework, some P2P programs target key people and some target more people. In either case, the programs primarily function at the attitudinal level. To be effective in the long-term, these programs must make linkages to the institutional level. This suggests that the most appropriate type of program at one stage in the peace process may differ at another stage. P2P program staff must therefore think carefully about their program's strategy and approach.

In some cases, particularly those circumstances where relationships are especially fraught and dialogue has broken down, aiming to forge relationships may be the primary and end goal for a people-to-people program. While achieving peace-writ-large would still require substantial additional work in this case, the mere fact of contact and dialogue may nevertheless by a significant (and hard-won) accomplishment.

Violent conflict is never purely the product of mutual antipathy or hatred. Rather, conflicts are sustained through complex systems of grievance, identity, social patterns, institutions, and the behaviors of key mobilizers and leaders. Consequently, as the matrix above suggests, responses overall must address both the attitudinal and institutional dimension of a dispute. This process requires negotiation, social mobilization, and economic and political development, which of course requires people from different groups to interact. Thus, P2P may serve as an important stage or step in a broader peacebuilding effort. P2P methods for fostering dialogue, trust, and mutual understanding may be applied as a component in some complimentary aim.

As this discussion hopefully makes clear, simply bringing people together is not enough. High-quality P2P programs demand high-level strategic thinking about purpose and aim. Furthermore, the decisions taken at the strategic level carry important implications for the day-to-day management of the program and its activities. The rest of this guide is devoted to summarizing these overarching and practical questions in more detail in order to help those managing P2P programs to make reflective, informed decisions.

P2P program managers, those generally responsible for implementing or overseeing the program, must make strategic decisions about the *what*, *where*, *when*, *to whom*, *from whom*, *why*, and *how* of their work. Although considerations of the program's purpose, scope, size, audience, timing, sequencing, venue, staffing, and related aspects may appear routine, even mundane, on first glance, experience has shown that these details frequently determine whether a program succeeds or fails. A question of whether to allow media coverage, for example, can determine

how safe participants feel to express their views and would depend upon contextual and strategic issues related to the program and conflict. Thus, it is essential for P2P program managers to ask themselves strategic questions and think critically and reflectively about the answers. These strategic questions are referenced throughout the guide.

Based upon extensive research with scholars and practitioners, USAID assembled a list of fourteen guidelines to apply to the management of P2P programs. These guidelines provide a figurative anchor to the strategic questions and should be considered simultaneously. They are as follows:

1. Conduct Conflict Analyses & Articulate the Program Hypothesis
2. Ensure an Inclusive and Participatory Design
3. Design a Purposeful and Responsive P2P Program
4. Select the Implementing Partner Carefully
5. Engage the Strategic "Who?" & Decide "How Many?"
6. Foster the Willingness to Interact & Strengthen the Capacity to Constructively Engage
7. Identify Safe Space
8. Remain Responsive to P2P Program Timing
9. Convene Around Shared Interests
10. Sustain P2P Linkage
11. Magnify Results
12. Use Mixed-methods Approaches
13. Select Thoughtful Indicators
14. Disseminate, Feedback, and Engage in a Learning Process

Three cross-cutting challenges also emerged:
1. Do No Harm
2. Maintain Realistic Expectations
3. Track Shifting Incentives

In practice, good conflict and development programming, like the social world it influences, does not operate in a strictly linear fashion. However, in order for this guide to be as accessible and useful as possible, the guidelines have been assembled into three stages corresponding to the program cycle: design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Implementation is further divided into two parts: preparing the ground for engagement and working along and across fault lines.

II. Design

This section lays out the guidelines and program options for P2P program design, addressing the strategic questions of why, what, and who.

1. Conduct Conflict Analyses & Articulate the Program Hypothesis

Conflicts are complex phenomena. Peacebuilding best practices necessitate that programs are based on a thorough contextual analysis. Appropriate peacebuilding interventions must be informed by conflict assessments and additional detailed diagnoses of the conflict dynamics, supported by a deep knowledge of the relevant communities' cultures, history, customs, and language.

Conflict assessments serve as a diagnostic tool to gain a broad overview of destabilizing and peace enhancing trends and capacities in a society.[4] The assessments sift through the many potential causes of conflict and hone in on those that are most likely to lead to (renewed) violence in a given context.[5]

At the center of the peacebuilding program design is the **program hypothesis**. The program hypothesis articulates—usually in the form of an "if… then…" statement—the anticipated causal link between the proposed activities and their intended impact on the problems identified in the conflict analysis. The program hypothesis needs to be logical and strategic, linking the goal of peace writ-small to the vision of peace writ-large. This overarching causal logic is the Theory of Change. It will be difficult to evaluate whether or not the intervention met its stated objectives if the theoretical framework and program hypothesis are not articulated during the program design phase.

2. Ensure an Inclusive and Participatory Design

Peacebuilding programs should be designed through a process that significantly involves local partners and beneficiaries.

Regardless of whether the call for a P2P intervention comes from immediate stakeholders to the conflict, from governments, or from an external actor (e.g. a donor), those most immediately affected by the conflict need to feel close to the intervention and resolution of the conflict. Their inclusion and active participation during the design phase helps foster a sense of ownership in the intervention and engenders a vested interest in the program's outcomes.

Consultations with the local partners and beneficiaries can help determine if P2P is an appropriate intervention for the peacebuilding program. It is important to determine whether convening people from opposing sides of the dividing lines is likely to have a positive effect on

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[4] USAID's Conflict Assessment Framework (CAF) is a helpful reference. The document provides analytical guidelines for analyzing conflict in the context of development programming.
[5] Conflict assessments help to: 1) identify and prioritize the causes and consequences of violence and instability that are most important in a given country context; 2) understand how existing development programs interact with these factors; and 3) determine where development and humanitarian assistance can most effectively support local efforts to manage conflict and build peace.

the conflict dynamics. The exclusion or marginalization from the design process, by chance or intention, can lead to groups or subgroups attempting to undermine the peacebuilding intervention.

By designing the program in close consultation with the local partners, a level of familiarity and trust is established during this process. This trust often becomes a vital asset in the implementation of the program.

Local partners can improve the program design by helping to identify elements such as the following:
- **identity** groups, such as those of ethnicity, religion, or political affiliation, and their place in the current status quo;
- **key actors** and **spoilers**, or those who potentially have the means and motivation to make or break a peace process;
- **fault lines**, or areas of disagreement and misunderstanding;
- opportunities for positive engagement or intervention, and where and when to anticipate them; and,
- relevant laws or institutions, such as whose formal and informal approval is needed for the activity to take place.

When working with local partners and beneficiaries, the program manager needs to be careful to avoid setting unrealistic goals or over-promising. A perceived failure to follow through on promises or meet expectations can quickly lead to disillusionment and a lack of trust among program beneficiaries and their communities.

3. Design a Purposeful and Responsive P2P Program

Conflicts are dynamic, and opportunities for different peacebuilding interventions tend to ebb and flow with the situation overall. What might be an appropriate response at one point in the conflict may not necessarily be appropriate at another time. The challenge is to connect the appropriate peacebuilding interventions to the corresponding ripe moments[6] and windows of opportunity. While there is no prescribed way of conducting a P2P intervention, experience has demonstrated that the combination of a strategic approach with flexibility significantly improves the chances for success.

To work towards a program objective or foster a ripe moment for a peacebuilding intervention, the peacebuilding program design needs to build progressively and sequentially with component stages. Each component builds on and flows from the preceding one. Each stage has its own objectives and dynamics, enabling a program to progress towards the long-term objective. This approach contrasts with a program design that primarily expands horizontally, repeating the core of the program with new partners in newly targeted areas. While the P2P approach can be applied horizontally to reach more stakeholders in greater areas, part of its uniqueness is the purposeful deepening of its impact with the selected partners, thereby working vertically.

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[6] For more details, refer to I. William Zartman's book, *Elusive Peace* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995).

Those implementing the program should closely monitor the "pulse" of the conflict. While the program hypothesis provides the overarching framework for the program, it is essential to remain flexible in order to seize opportunities and mitigate challenges as they arise. Many seasoned peacebuilders find it helpful to devise back-up plans to deal with the inherent uncertainties involved in this work.

Flexibility and contingency planning enables the implementer to identify the precious (and at times fleeting) windows of opportunity, as well as to anticipate and enable ripe moments for intervention.

4. Select the Implementing Partner Carefully

P2P programs have a number of interested parties, or stakeholders, ranging from the donors/funders (e.g. USAID) to those acting as facilitators and mediators in the P2P activities. In between, it is not uncommon to find a number of intermediaries and partnerships, including grantees/contractors and their sub-grantees/sub-contractors. In this document, program managers are broadly defined to include both those individuals and organizations immediately involved in implementing the program in the field, as well as staff overseeing the program in upper management and within donor organizations like USAID. The implementing partner is the organization, as well as any sub-contracted organizations or individuals, responsible for directly carrying out the P2P program.

Selecting the appropriate implementing partner for P2P programming is one of the critical *who* decisions because merely physically bringing people together is not the same as fostering constructive dialogue. The success of the program hinges on the implementing partner's ability to earn and/or maintain the trust of the conflict groups across fault lines.

An in-depth analysis of the conflict helps determine whether the degree to which the implementing partner has or is perceived to have a stake or interest in the conflict. If a single implementing partner cannot be seen as neutral by the conflict groups, then it is possible for two implementing partners to be selected, one from each side of the primary fault line.

Please refer to Case Study: Making Peace from Within.

The demographic composition of the implementing partner's staff is one important criteria to consider.   When possible, the program staff should include representatives of the specific stakeholder groups in the conflict and broader society. However, as staff drawn from the conflict communities cannot be completely neutral or impartial themselves, it is often necessary to conduct mini-P2P workshops with the staff at the onset of the program implementation. The mini-workshops can serve the dual purpose of training the staff through experiential learning as well as mitigating internal divisions and tensions.

The facilitator who shapes the dialogue and interaction for P2P programming activities needs to be selected based on similar criteria. As with the selection of the implementing partner, program managers are likely to face tradeoffs. Beyond neutrality, the facilitator's personal and professional style frequently exert an important influence on the tone and feel of the program

overall. Naturally, the translators need to be trained as facilitators, understand the culture as well as be fluent in the language(s), and remain unbiased.

III. Program Implementation

This section lays out the guidelines and program options for P2P program implementation. It is sub-divided into two parts. The first part lists guidelines for preparing the ground for engagement, addressing the strategic questions of *who* and *where*. The second part lists guidelines for working along and across fault lines, addressing the strategic questions of *when* and *how*.

Preparing the ground for engagement

P2P programming is based on direct, and typically face-to-face, activities that specifically aim to reduce frictions along the conflict fault lines. However, before such face-to-face encounters can occur constructively, it is frequently helpful to first lay a psychological and social foundation for the cross-conflict exchange through separate activities for the respective groups. This is referred to as **single-identity work**.

> "Simply stated, single identity work involves engaging individuals singularly from within one community to discuss, address, and potentially challenge the causes of conflict, with particular emphasis on skills and confidence building measures. Single identity work most commonly, but not always, occurs when cross-community contact is untenable due to fear, suspicion or physical threat."[7] (INCORE)

Who participates and how depends on the conflict dynamics, context, and strategy. Although the primary fault lines may be between two groups broadly defined, such as two political movements or ethnic groups, there will be a number of secondary, internal divisions within each groups, as well as localized fault lines between sub-groups from both sides. Similarly, there may be shared conflicts, identities, or interests across the two major conflict groups that allow for linkages across obvious conflict lines. Finally, fault lines can also run between those who are and are not active combatants, and between the moderates and zealots.

Making Peace from Within

Kenya was devastated by ethnic violence following the 2008 Presidential election. During the violence, Bishop Cornelius Korir, from the Diocese of Eldoret, recognized that his position as a spiritual leader respected by the groups in conflict could be used to help stop the violence and foster constructive dialogue. He organized dialogues between members of affected communities and helped to improve peacebuilding capacity at the local level. It became a popular project with ever-growing levels of participation. Ultimately, under the Bishop's guidance, the participants created a community peace committee to help organize and facilitate the inter-ethnic dialogues. Initially the engagements were contentious with mutual accusations and incriminations. Instead of trying to halt this exchange, Bishop Korir allowed these dialogues to continue until an opportunity emerged to intervene and engage the participants in "visioning." Visioning is a step

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[7] Church, C; Visser, A; and Johnson, L.. "Single-Identity Work: An Approach to Conflict Resolution in Northern Ireland"; INCORE Working Paper; August 2002. http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/publications/occasional/SIW.pdf

whereby the facilitator leads the participants to think about or envision their ideal future, for themselves and their family. These dialogues progressed from one-on-one to involving more people as the initial participants found them to be helpful in addressing grievances and invited other like-minded people to join them. In combination with the implementation of small projects by multi-ethnic teams, a social contract was formed that served as a ceasefire agreement. Bishop Korir was able to bring the communities together across the fault line as a facilitator from the "inside."

At different stages of the conflict and with different objectives of the P2P programming, different categories of participants will participate in the P2P programming. The effectiveness of the P2P approach largely depends upon the willingness of the beneficiaries to interact with one another, as well as their capacity to engage constructively.

5. Engage the Strategic "Who?" & Decide "How Many?"

There are several layers of the strategic *who* in conflict contexts based on the conflict dynamics, social patterns, and fault lines within and between the conflict groups. How program managers address the strategic *who* depends on the conflict analysis and program hypothesis, program resources and funding, nature of the window of opportunity, and role of the implementing partner.

Program managers must identify and involve those who can most directly and positively contribute to the peacebuilding efforts. This usually means representatives of the major opposing identity or political groups, but also members of relevant organizations and institutions, such as political parties, NGOs, media outlets, and business communities.

How many beneficiaries or participants to address is a related strategic question. As described above, "more people" approaches aim to engage large numbers of people in actions to promote peace, while "key people" approaches focus on specific people deemed to be critical to the continuation or resolution of conflict because of their leverage or role. To reiterate, approaches that concentrate on "More people" but do nothing to link to or affect "Key people," or vice versa, do not lead to effective peace work. Similarly, activities on both tracks must link changes in attitudes (the main target of most P2P programming) to changes in institutions (relying on other peacebuilding methods).

Key people could be grassroots, mid-range, and top-level leadership, including political leaders, warlords, or other change agents necessary to a peace agreement. Key people could also include spoilers, or those with the potential means and motivation to derail a peace process.[8]

Careful consideration must be given to intra-group dynamics. When elites reinforce messages of extreme or highly exclusionary nationalist, racist, or religious ideologies, the emotions and antagonism may make constructive engagement very difficult. Single-identity work may be the best strategy in these contexts, complemented, perhaps by back-channel or track II peace process negotiations, such as those which led to the return of Nelson Mandela to South Africa.

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[8] However, USAID and its implementing partners are forbidden from providing material support to organizations designated in the Department of State's List of Foreign Terrorist Organizations.

Attention should be afforded to the power dynamics among the participants and with regards to their respective group. One of the central lessons of contact theory is that status equality is important for overcoming stereotypes and building empathy. Thus, the program should bring together individuals who occupy relatively equal positions in their respective societies and are therefore able to interact in an equal power dynamic. The question of equality and equivalence covers both the personal and the political, most notably as filtered through the prism of gender, but also age, education, and so forth. Similarly, maintaining an equal number of individuals from both sides of the conflict in the program is usually good practice. Needless to say, it is impossible to ensure absolute equality, and in some instances successful engagements have even occurred between groups and individuals with very unequal power dynamics.

The selection of who to involve is also necessarily a decision of who will not participate. Program managers must make this a conscious choice. Whether formally or informally, participation in a P2P program frequently legitimizes those selected and the interests they represent. The unselected groups may feel further delegitimized and marginalized, and may seek to gain influence outside of the process through (more) radical or violent means. Depending on broader community perceptions of the peace process, including the perceived neutrality of the intervener, the roles may be dangerously reversed, with those who participate being dubbed as traitors and those who are excluded gaining credibility as more authentic or legitimate advocates.

There are tradeoffs between repeat engagements with the same participants versus bringing new participants together. Repeated encounters may deepen relationships, making them more substantive and durable, but less widely distributed. Conversely, if the P2P programming brings new participants together with each activity, then more constituents will be directly affected but the depth of the impact of the engagement may be minimal, or even counter-productive.

6. Foster the Willingness to Interact & Strengthen the Capacity to Constructively Engage

In most P2P projects, much of the initial work should focus on fostering a willingness to interact among the conflicting groups. This often requires working with the single-identity groups, as described above, before creating opportunities to interact across fault lines. This willingness is generated by either building empathy or increasing the incentives for one or both of the groups to engage.

In building empathy, P2P-style programming within single-identity groups aims to change the perceptions of the other group through a process of demystification and re-humanization. The rationale here is that the single-identity group will be more willing to understand the others' perspective, including their needs and interests, on the basis of shared humanity.

In increasing incentives, the single-identity groups do not necessarily develop empathy for the other, but, through P2P programming, recognize that it is in their own interest to end the conflict. For example, if one group perceives the current intensity or status of the conflict is unsustainable, then they will be more likely to prefer a strategy of resolving the conflict through non-violent means.

> **Building Capacity of the Emerging Leadership to Engage with the other**
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> Northern Ireland is going through a process of reconciliation and healing to address 30 years of conflict and the residual divisions that continue to exist. In recent years, the act of bringing people together has evolved to address deeper issues, including the root causes of the conflict. INCORE implemented a program to engage a new generation of community leaders in debates focused on coming to terms with the past at an inter-community level. This process illuminated the reality that certain groups were not ready to engage with "the other" and needed guidance and support to address their own identity issues and build self-confidence in preparation for inter-community work. For this reason, INCORE included single-identity work prior to bringing people from opposite sides together. The single-identity component of the program focused on building the capacity of emerging community leaders to engage in these debates, as well as the capacity of established community leaders to mentor their peers in this regard. The mixture of single-identity and inter-community work made this program unique and extremely effective in both building and re-building intra- and inter-community relationships.

After building the willingness of the conflict groups to engage, P2P programming can strengthen the conflict groups' respective capacities for peace by enabling them to constructively engage with each other. This is accomplished through a combination of activities that leverage the indigenous capacity for engagement and builds additional and complementary conflict management, dialogue, leadership, and negotiation skills.

Once the willingness and capacity to engage constructively is fostered, P2P programming can focus on facilitating direct- and typically face-to-face-engagement, but only after the participants have demonstrated that they are prepared to listen to each other and engage at a deeper level. This second stage entails working with multi-identity group across the fault lines.
After deciding who and at which level the participants of the P2P programming will be, several key questions should be asked, including:

- How intense is the dehumanization of the other?
- Does a certain level of empathy exist, which can be built upon? Are there other sources of resilience or shared identity?
- Are there incentives in place to sufficiently motivate the conflicting groups to engage?
- What skills are needed for the participants to communicate effectively?

7. Identify a Safe Space

It is essential to establish a safe space physically and metaphorically in which the P2P program can take place.

Many of the guidelines and principles described in this document are related to establishing the metaphorical social space, but one important dimension that has not yet been addressed is media. Television, radio, the internet, and other forms of media can both spread and reinforce social messages for conflict and for peace. P2P program managers should be cognizant that events in the news, including reports of attacks or political developments, can rapidly change the social and psychological dynamics within a program, including for programs that take place in a remote location far from the conflict context.

Meanwhile, in some cases, the P2P program itself may be a subject of interest to the public and journalists. Although implementing partners may be keen to advertise their work and success—and indeed there may be advantages vis-à-vis the conflict to broadcasting news of peaceful exchanges—media coverage can also be detrimental to the program and even dangerous to the beneficiaries. Public exposure in the media makes participants less likely to put down their guard, lest they be seen as disloyal or even singled out as traitors by their home communities.

With these concerns in mind, an important and related decision in P2P programming is where to physically host the P2P program. The work can occur primarily inside or outside the territory where the conflict is active. There are tradeoffs to both strategies, and ultimately, the question as to what and where constitutes a safe space for everyone is best answered by the participants themselves.

A remote location: If the security situation or antagonistic environment prohibits bringing the groups together in their immediate context, then the participants can be brought to a safe, third location for the engagement. A safe neutral location creates an environment that separates the participants from the daily antagonism. The remote safe space provides an area that creates a supportive environment for the conflict groups to safely approach and cross the divide. One of the tradeoffs of selecting a remote location as the safe space is that those within the community and key actors who are not participating in the events can become suspicious of those who are participating. This can lead to accusations by those not participating of the participants of withholding information and even betrayal. A second tradeoff is that once the participants return to their community, they can feel isolated amidst a sea of antagonism and sharing their new perspectives can be dangerous and difficult to sustain. While a remote location creates a neutral environment, it is not necessarily a realistic environment.

Within the conflict context: If the participants determine that it is best to hold the events at a location situated within the context of the conflict, it can create an increased level of transparency. While not all community members will participate in the event, they will have an increased awareness of the events. Staging the events in the context of the conflict requires the consent of the local government, which sends an implicit, if not explicit, message by (at least some of) the decision-makers that they support the purpose of the event. This can create a safer environment for the participants. The increased understanding, reshaping of perceptions, and beginnings of building trust occur within the conflict context and a realistic environment. However, a tradeoff is that in certain contexts, these locations create opportunities for spoilers to try to derail the process, including through violence and intimidation, to discredit the participants and process.

Working along and across the fault lines

Once the ground has been prepared for engagement, P2P programming works along and across the fault lines to positively affect the patterns of communication and interaction by bringing conflict groups together around common interests. Goals include increasing constructive engagement by increasing interaction, addressing common interests, building confidence, and promoting mutual understanding and positive attitudes. How the conflict groups are brought

together can impact the quality and quantity of interaction, as well as communities' future willingness to engage.

8. Remain Responsive to Timing

Program managers must make continual strategic decisions of *when* to intervene. P2P can be used in a variety of ways: as an ongoing program in its own right, as a trigger or catalyst for peace processes, or as support for other peace processes already underway. Depending on the context, it is good practice for program managers to reconvene at regular and planned intervals, although the length intervals may differ.

One potential consequence of conducting P2P programming over a long period of time is that if the P2P engagement does not produce the expected results, the participants and other stakeholders can become disillusioned and their apathy and cynicism might be reinforced. Alternatively, the impact of P2P programming that occurs over a short period of time, even if the engagement is intense at the time, if not properly supported, can fizzle and also lead to apathy and cynicism.

In any case, it is important that one does not remain committed blindly. In some situations, it becomes necessary to reassess whether the timing, selected approach, participants, location, and any combination therein are still appropriate. It is also crucial to bear in mind that P2P programming always exists in relation to the broader environment, which also influences participants' attitudes and behaviors while they are engaging in the P2P engagement. One should regularly assess whether outside circumstances have altered the participants' incentives too greatly to continue as planned. As discussed above, developing back-up plans for changes to the context is a good practice that should complement an attitude of realistic patience.[9]

9. Convene Around Shared Interests

P2P programming can work towards several objectives simultaneously. For example, two conflicting communities can be brought together to address a mutual lack of gas supplied to the communities. A committee to address this concern can be formed and engage the communities in a public dialogue regarding this concern. The most immediate objective of the engagement is to address the source of the grievance by ensuring an adequate provision of gas. Working with the local government to improve the provision of gas can serve as a tangible dividend of cooperation and increase residents' confidence that by working together, they can address shared interests. The second, equally important objective is to bring the informal and formal leadership from the conflicting communities together to begin building trust and professional relationships.

Connectors can be used in P2P programming to maximize the potential for success of the constructive engagement. Connectors are positive factors for peace and cohesion, and are typically analyzed as part of the conflict or "do no harm" assessment. They fall into the categories like the following: systems and institutions, attitudes and actions, values and interests, experiences, and symbols and occasion.[10] For example, in preparing for the engagement, after

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[9] For more details on group processes, refer to Bruce Tuckman's article in the Psychological Bulletin, Volume 63, Number 6, 1965, and visit http://www.mph.ufl.edu/events/seminar/Tuckman1965DevelopmentalSequence.pdf.

[10] Do No Harm Project. CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, Inc.

consultations with both groups, the facilitator determines that football is a common interest. In this case, the facilitator may use a common football match or club to forge links between the participants.

Creating a safe purpose: At the most basic level, P2P programming increases interaction across the fault lines. When the intensity of the conflict is such that there is no casual or daily interaction between the conflict groups, one technique for bringing people together is through a safe purpose that addresses shared interests but avoids any immediate source of tensions or underlying causes of the conflict.

The positive change in attitude occurs from repeated engagement and increased cooperation around the safe purpose. Though ultimately limited, this technique creates a pocket of safe space within the conflict for healthy relationships to develop.

Building confidence: There are certain situations that arise during a conflict which present opportunities to make progress towards peacebuilding by addressing relatively simple issues ("low hanging fruit"). A P2P approach to the issue can demonstrate to the conflict groups the value and feasibility of working together across fault lines and solving problems. Success on simple problems builds confidence for solving the more serious ones. It is important to also address perceived grievances, the human experience of the impact of the conflict on both sides, and conflicting views of its history and escalation. These differences of perception do not have to necessarily be resolved by the program, but they do often need to be listened to and the feelings understood and acknowledged.

Mitigating flash-points: There are often readily identifiable flash-points or triggers for violence in any on-going conflict. A P2P approach can be a tool to bring the conflict groups together to identify triggers and flash-points, to devise strategies for preventing violence, or to develop shared plans for mitigating the spread of violence once it occurs. This process not only reduces the risk of major violence breaking out, it builds mutual understanding, and provides a basis from which to build a broader and deeper understanding (see the Making Peace from Within example on page 14).

Addressing root causes: As the health of the relationships between these groups improves, so does the likelihood of the groups participating in constructive dialogues to address the underlying or root causes of the conflict. However, in some contexts, the conflict groups can come together to discuss the root causes without having worked progressively up to this point. In these instances, the P2P approach becomes part of the formal or informal peace process. Empowered and trusted leadership, supported through sustained or intermittent dialogue, can envision and actively work towards transforming the conflict from being destructive towards constructive growth.

10. Sustain P2P Linkage

As discussed, P2P programming primarily works to create attitudinal change among large groups of people or key people. It seeks to transform attitudes and perceptions and to build relationships and trust across conflict lines.

The impact for the broader peace is more significant if these personal transformations are translated into actions at the structural and institutional levels. Individual change may not be sustainable without structural change, and structural change may not be possible without individual change. Similarly, more people approaches are not likely to be sustainable without the support of key people, and vice versa.

P2P programming can work across multiple levels to forge linkages between the individual-relational and the relational-structural levels through Track I, II, and III dialogues.[11] P2P programming and additional complementary programming interventions can help to mobilize and aggregate inclusive interests through institutions such as civil society, religious organizations, traditional leaders, and others.

The aggregated interests can be expressed through mid-range leadership who serve as the interlocutors to convey to—and press—those change agents who can affect the socio-political structure. Through a positive re-enforcement mechanism, societal messaging from mid-range and top-level leadership can reflect the changes at the relational level to help legitimize, reinforce, and sustain the trust that is built at the relational level.

11.   Magnify Results

Sustainable peacebuilding requires the involvement of people from various levels and positions in society. Even P2P programs that lack the capacity to work beyond their current population can expand the scope of the P2P programming impact by "advertizing" their successes, demonstrating the potential impact of their work to other communities.

Program staff should think creatively about how to most effectively make use of old and new media, including how to encourage the exchange of views and perceptions (where appropriate given the conflict analysis). Depending on the context, a combination of radios, cell phones, newspapers, television broadcasting, and internet web sites can be used effectively.

The advancement of and increasingly common access to information communication technologies (ICT) has had a significant impact on P2P programming. When face-to-face interaction is difficult due to constraints of geography or security concerns, ICT enables large numbers of constituents to be reached at low risk and cost. Through features like chat and voice/video streaming, the internet can provide a "space" for interactive convening and facilitative, constructive P2P engagement.

In certain contexts, culture can work as a peace connector to facilitate cross-conflict interaction. Cultural expressions, such as art, music, dance, drama, celebrations, sporting events, and symbolic icons may help to change the perceptions and attitudes of the groups, as well as magnify the results of the P2P engagement.

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[11] See USAID's Toolkit on *Supporting Peace Processes* Toolkit, 2009.

IV. Monitoring and Evaluation

This section provides best practices, lessons learned, and program options for P2P program monitoring and evaluation, assessing the effectiveness of the P2P program across the spectrum of strategic decisions. The program hypothesis is the conceptual starting point for the program's design, and, consequently, for its monitoring and evaluation as well. After all, in order to determine whether a program has succeed in its goals, it is necessary to understand what those goals were and, particularly for conflict, why they were identified as goals in the first place.

One of the challenges in measuring the impact of peacebuilding generally and P2P programming specifically arises from the extremely fluid nature of most conflicts. As a result, the conflict analysis and diagnoses at the start of the program could change dramatically by the middle or end of the program. Selected objectives and corresponding indicators at the onset of the program may not be relevant or even possible to measure at the later stages of the implementation. However, there is a tradeoff for adjusting the program design in response to the shifting context. The data for the revised objectives and indicators may only exist (or be feasible to collect) over a relatively short period of time compared to the program duration. This makes any reliable comparison of the "before" and "after," and causal impact, difficult to discern.

Another challenge in measuring impact is that P2P interventions focus on behavioral and attitudinal change. These changes are largely *intangible*. It is easy enough to measure how many schools have been built and how many trainings conducted, but whether the other has been "humanized" in the eyes of another is a far more difficult proposition. This has been compared to measuring the wind, which must be judged by its secondary effects on windmills, trees, waves, and other physical bodies. Related to indirect observation is the question of *causality*. Even if there is a reduction in violence, how does one know if it is the result of one P2P intervention rather than another, or even some outside, uncontrollable influence? Programs should look for ways of assessing sustained attitudinal and behavior change, preferably over a number of years.

The timing of the monitoring and evaluation do not necessarily adhere to the process of transformation. Changes in perceptions and behavior are not likely to occur linearly. There is no direction correlation between the number of P2P activities and change in perceptions; six trainings, for example, do not result in a proportional six-fold increase of mutual understanding. Indeed, it is difficult to conceive of what a unit of mutual understanding would even mean. Instead, the pattern of attitudinal change could follow a step-like pattern with plateaus separated by steep rises; it could follow a cyclic path that circles back on itself, with negative perceptions increasing during the initial interaction or storming phases; or it could follow yet some other trajectory.

12.   Use Mixed-methods Approaches

Fortunately, the accuracy of measuring changes in knowledge, attitude, and behavior can be improved through approaches that draw upon a variety of methodological approaches, and could include both qualitative and quantitative examination. The use of such "mixed-method" approaches to monitor and evaluate P2P programming is recommended due to the complexity and multi-faceted nature of the conflict context and peacebuilding interventions.

As discussed above, it is not always possible to anticipate where significant changes will occur in a program. Thus, program staff should consider applying methodologies that capture "emergent outcomes." These methods include, but are not necessarily limited to, the Most Significant Change (MSC) Methodology and Outcome Mapping. Both approaches lend themselves to participatory forms of evaluation and learning.[12] For example, the MSC technique involves the collection of significant change stories emanating from the field level, and the systematic selection of the most significant ones by panels of designated stakeholders and/or program staff. This approach allows many project stakeholders to become involved both in deciding the types of change to be recorded and in analyzing the data. Participatory approaches to monitoring and evaluation also spread the opportunities for learning more widely.

13.   Select Thoughtful Indicators

The program design and component stages have corresponding output and impact indicators with stipulated methodologies and intervals for monitoring and evaluating.[13] These indicators typically fall on the continuum of knowledge, attitude, and behavior. It is best practice to review the indicators designed at the onset of the program as implementation progresses and revise them when necessary, being mindful of the tradeoff between consistency and comparability.

It is possible to record changes in knowledge and attitude that may lead to behavioral change as they occur during the course of the program. In addition, evaluations can record what happens in the P2P physical and metaphorical space, as well as record how the program has removed barriers to enable a shift in behavior to take place. While surveys are appropriate to measure changes in knowledge and attitudes, good practice to measure and record behavioral change relies on observation.

14.   Disseminate, Feedback, and Engage in a Learning Process

Once an evaluation has been completed, the findings should be used to reflect on ways to improve the evaluated activity and/or future activities. They should also be disseminated widely so as to contribute to the upstream policy development thinking and program design, and help address challenges in the field by validating program hypotheses and theories of change. Over time, sharing and disseminating these findings will contribute to more effective peacebuilding intervention strategies by demonstrating the value of comprehensive conflict analyses, honing program hypotheses or theories of change, and improving the methodologies for determining appropriate forms of intervention.

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[12] See Rick Davies and Jess Dart (2005). "The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique: A Guide to Its Use." Available at http://mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf. See also Outcome Mapping Learning Community at http://www.outcomemapping.ca/.
[13] USAID programs will need to also collect data for F indicators in the Foreign Assistance Framework.

V. Challenges

Do No Harm

The Do No Harm principle dictates that peacebuilding interventions must not put those living in violent contexts at greater risk than they would otherwise face without the intervention.[14] It could be considered the strategic *why not* decision. Given the nature of P2P programming it is critical to strictly adhere to this principle throughout a project's lifecycle.

P2P programming may have a profound effect on the relationships, dynamics, and power structures within and between the conflict groups. It is likely that the standing of the informal and formal leaders will be modified, although it can be difficult at the beginning of the intervention to predict exactly how their standing within the community will change. Because of the inherent level of unpredictability, implementing partners must envision possible manifestations and repercussions from the interventions multiple steps ahead and then base programming decisions on this scenario analysis.

The "winners" and "losers" of the status quo may change at any stage in the process. The marginalization of spoilers can have a similar impact, changing their relative position and standing within the group. These changes could provoke a backlash from those who perceive they stand to lose prestige or control against the perceived winners, program staff, and the process itself.

Program staff and their ongoing monitoring of shifts in the local context can help assess whether the program is creating, or increasing, risk for those involved. USAID staff and the implementing partners need to be open to reorienting the P2P program to avoid harm as the conflict dynamics change. In such situations, the program can be changed to address the peace writ-small goal for a more indirect approach or choose to focus on a more narrow aspect of the peacebuilding effort, whichever is more feasible at that time.

Echoing the theme throughout this document, P2P programming requires in-depth and real-time understanding of the conflict dynamics, flexibility, responsiveness, and patience.

Maintain Realistic Expectations

Conflicts may be classified along fluid spectrums of intensity and duration. The intensity spectrum ranges from peace with minor, latent conflicts to open conflict marked by violence and atrocities. The duration spectrum ranges from short outbursts of violence to a stable, self-serving stalemate.[15] A particular conflict can shift along these spectrums and may change depending on, among other factors, the phases of the conflict (pre-conflict, crisis, sustained open conflict, and post-conflict recovery). In any case, the duration of the program is bound to be shorter than the entire conflict transformation process, which can occur over decades.

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[14] Do No Harm Project. CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, Inc. http://www.cdainc.com
[15] For more detail, please refer to I. William Zartman's "Analyzing Intractability", in Crocker, Chester A.; Hampson, Fen Osler and Aall, Pamela (eds.) Grasping the Nettle: Analyzing Cases of Intractable Conflict (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2005).

When using P2P programming, USAID staff and implementing partners perpetually confront the dilemma of having to produce "long-term results with short-term resources." The inconsistency between funding policies and the realities of peacebuilding affects both program design and expectations for program impact.

While peacebuilding requires sustained and long-term efforts, government funding cycles occur on a shorter cycle. As a result, the designs of peacebuilding interventions reflect funding cycles rather than the temporal needs of the peacebuilding intervention. P2P programming is based on a theory of change which depends on the community and key actors realizing attitudinal change, mutual understanding, and positive interaction. This is an organic process of change that occurs over time through recurring constructive engagement, which can in turn be both expensive and lengthy.

In short, it is not realistic to expect USAID or its implementing partners to achieve the delivery of peace writ-large from a singular peacebuilding program, let alone on a timeframe nicely aligned with fiscal cycles. The goal in most cases must be an incremental step on the path to larger impact. Indeed, P2P secures only one of the essential components of peacebuilding while contributing to other essential components.

Meanwhile, practitioners should remain alert and informed of innovative methods being developed to better monitor and evaluate the impact of peacebuilding interventions, and integrate them into P2P programming as appropriate. As more tailored monitoring and evaluation techniques are incorporated into P2P programming, its successes and shortcomings can be better communicated.

Finally, all stakeholders need to remain cognizant that claims of success are themselves not necessarily neutral. Donors and implementing partners also have agendas and interests that, while legitimate, may not always align with the needs and interests of beneficiary communities as those communities define them. Such awareness should not be cause for cynicism, but rather realism and transparency.

Track Shifting Incentives

While it is generally good practice to maintain relationships with host government officials, this relationship can affect the implementation and effectiveness of the P2P program due to the constantly shifting power dynamics in the country. Similarly, conflict resolution work depends on implementers maintaining relationships with conflict parties outside the government, but the power dynamics across these groups and within their leaderships is also in regular flux.

There are two important power dynamics to track. The first is the host country leadership's support for the programming, which could exist for a combination of reasons. These motivations range from: believing in the goal of the peace writ-small and large, to believing that they would personally benefit from the proposed peacebuilding intervention, to being pressured internally by the threat of a return to violence or externally by the international community.

The second power dynamic to understand is that the government is not a unitary actor, but rather composed of individuals.[16] Each government individual makes choices based on two incentives: those specific to their position within the government and those specific to their position within, or external, to one of the conflicting groups. These incentives can be complementary or contradictory. Support for the P2P program depends on whether government representatives' incentives are complementary or contradictory to the program goal.

Working relationships with government officials, as well as the conflict-affected communities are important to securing support for the P2P program, but can also endanger the program. USAID staff and implementing partners need to monitor the government representatives' shifting incentives and understand the impact and consequences of their relationships with these officials. At times, extending the horizon of the government officials' vision and enabling them to see, and become committed to, a longer-term perspective of peace for their country and respective constituents can help garner and maintain support for the program.

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[16] For more detail, refer to Barbara Geddes' book *The Politician's Dilemma: Building State Capacity in Latin America* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1994).

Resources

The following tools, resources, and mechanisms are available for reference.

Program Design

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