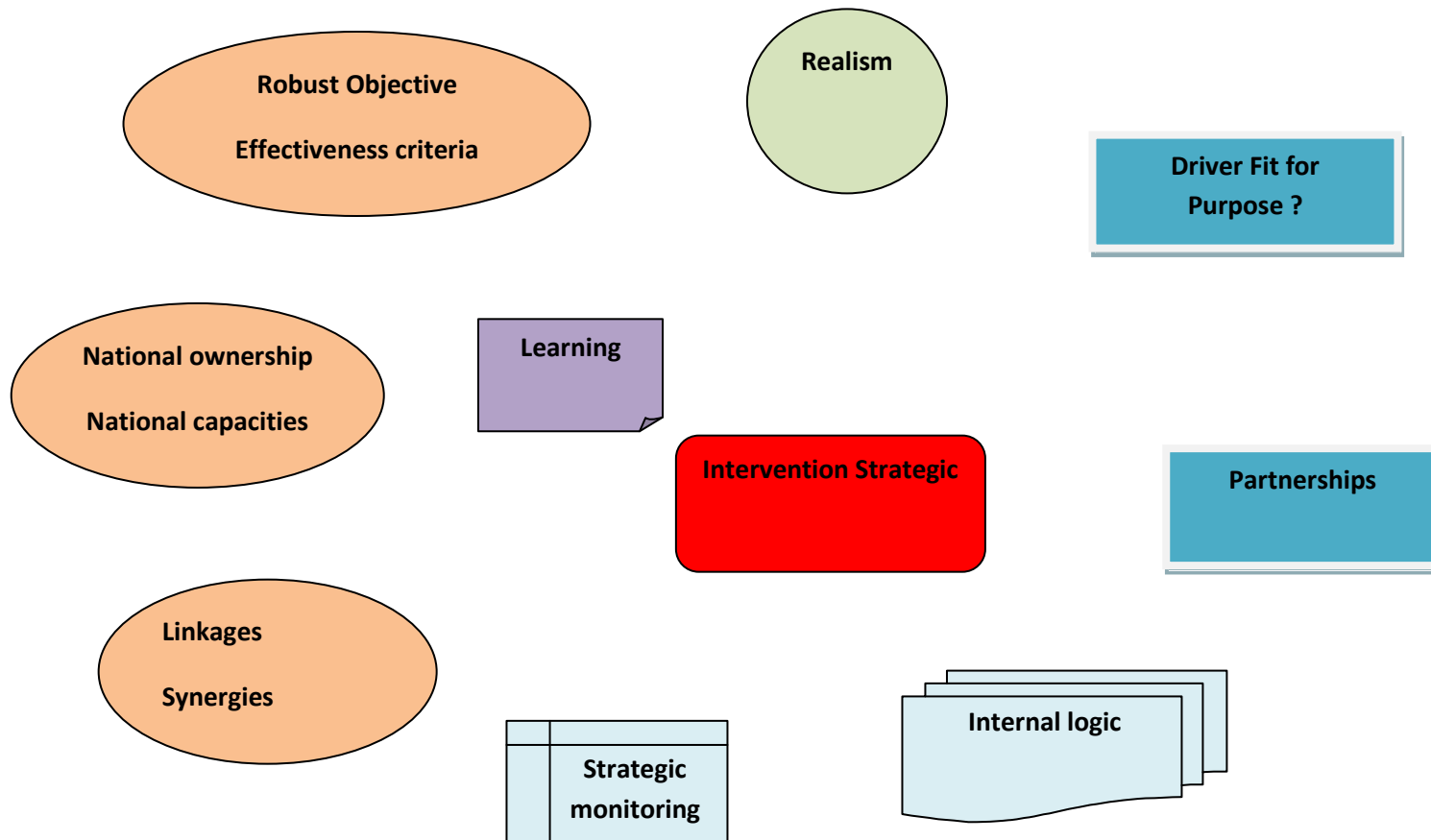


PEACEBUILDING HOW?

Assessing the Design of Peacebuilding Interventions



The above graph visualizes major dimensions to consider when designing or assessing a peacebuilding intervention. The central question is whether the peacebuilding intervention is 'strategic', which requires a credible argumentation linking it to an analysis of the conflict dynamics. The main areas on the left (objective, effectiveness, ownership, capacities, linkages and synergies) all relate to the outcome aspirations. There is also a critical attention point on whether the peacebuilding intervention has drawn on learning from other efforts, particularly in the same operating environment, possibly from experiences elsewhere in the world. On the right hand side are attention areas related to who is driving the intervention. At the bottom is the question of the internal logic of the intervention as it is designed, but especially the aspect of 'strategic monitoring'. 'Strategic monitoring' differs from classical 'project monitoring' in that it is not focused on whether the workplan and budget are being followed, but whether the intervention, as it is unfolding, remains strategic and will be likely to produce the desired outcomes. Adaptive management here is not about the minutiae of shuffling money around between budget lines or readjusting activity calendars, but about more significant adjustments in the pathway that is being followed to reach the objective.

The various dimensions correspond to a series of attention points, which can be expressed in question form, such as:

1. Is this Intervention Strategic?

- ▶ How does it relate to the conflict analysis, and the actor-mapping and actor-analysis?
- ▶ What aspect of the conflict dynamics does it seek to address?
Is the conflict factor it seeks to address likely to be 'ready', i.e. likely to be open to some influencing?
- ▶ If this proposal claims to relate to a 'priority', on what basis was something determined to be a 'priority', who determined so – whose priority is it?
- ▶ What is the proposed intervention's 'theory of change' in relation to Peace Writ Large?

2. Is the objective robust – how does it relate to criteria of peacebuilding effectiveness?

- ▶ What is the objective of the proposed intervention/action?
- ▶ Is this a robust objective – expressed in change-related terms (i.e. change as expected outcome or protecting something from unwanted change) If the intervention intends to be a 'contribution to' a wider objective, is the proposal clear about the nature of the contribution?
- ▶ How does the objective relate to e.g. the Reflecting on Peace Practice criteria of effectiveness?

3. National ownership-national capacities.

- ▶ Who has been involved in the design of this intervention?
- ▶ Who is actively engaged in (planned to be engaged with) this intervention?

- ▶ Who owns this intervention and its results?
- ▶ Who sets the criteria for 'progress' and 'success'? Who is involved in monitoring and evaluating this?
- ▶ How does this intervention seek to broaden and deepen national ownership?
- ▶ How is this proposal going to strengthen local/national capacities to manage their own affairs?

4. Linkages and synergies.

- ▶ Is the proposed effort likely to be able to exercise some meaningful influence on certain conflict factors on its own?
- ▶ Does the proposal envisage 'linkages' to or 'synergies' with the interventions/efforts of other actors, to maximize its own potential for influence/impact or the potential for larger cumulative impact? What other efforts does it seek to have linkages with?

5. Learning.

- ▶ Does this peacebuilding effort take into account the learning that can be had from previous efforts, particularly in this operating environment, and what worked well and not so well and why?

6. Fit for purpose.

- ▶ Who is/are going to be the main driver(s) of the intervention/action? How is this entity perceived by local/national actors – especially those that will or are likely to be touched by the proposed action? Will the driver be able to have enough credibility and trust especially among the range of concerned local actors?
- ▶ Does the driver have the required mix of interactive and strategic competencies to steer this action: political, relational, analytical, reflective and learning oriented etc.?
- ▶ Does the driver have the required 'technical' competencies to manage this action: designing, communication, advocating, strategic monitoring, adaptive management etc.?

7. Partnerships.

- ▶ If the action is intended to be carried out in partnership with one or more others – what does the proposal say about the (intended) quality of the partnership? Is there a history – track record of collaborating?
- ▶ Is there clarity about primary roles and responsibilities between the partners? Are there mutual accountability mechanisms?

8. Is the intervention realistic?

- ▶ Are the stated objective and pathway to it, realistic in light of the current situational conditions and the most plausible scenario for the medium-term future?
- ▶ Is achieving the stated objective realistic in light of the time frame currently envisaged for the intervention?
- ▶ Is the peacebuilding effort realistic in light of the competencies and capacities of the key driver(s) of the intervention?
- ▶ Is the peacebuilding effort and objective realistic in light of the financial resources that are (likely to be) available?
- ▶ Are the resource management procedures and delays likely to jeopardize the stated time frame?

9. Internal logic of the intervention

- ▶ How strong is the internal coherence or 'logic' between the goal, objectives, activities and resources? Is there a critical path that must be realized for the intervention to advance?
- ▶ Peacebuilding is never a linear journey: is there scope for flexibility, adaptation, reversal and renewal?

10. Strategic monitoring.

- ▶ How will does this intervention monitor its continued relevance in a changing environment?
- ▶ How will this intervention monitor the spread and depth of 'local/national' ownership?
- ▶ How will it monitor the strengthening of the capacities of local/national actors?
- ▶ When will there be moments of strategic reflection and real-time learning on the process or the pathway being followed, and its likely effectiveness? Who will be involved in that?
- ▶ How will (expected or unexpected, positive or negative) effects, influences, outcomes, impacts that occur while the intervention is ongoing be monitored and documented?