Intractable Peacebuilding:
Evaluating a Generation of Work Across the Israeli-Palestinian Divide

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Thursday Talk
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Presentation

- Research Overview: Four Evaluative Studies
- Introduction: Twenty Years since Oslo…
- *Will Seeds of Peace Ever Bloom?* Conventional Wisdom
- The Empirical Record: Key Findings
- Contextual Challenges
- Intractable Peacebuilding: Lederach’s Platform Model
- Questions, Discussion
Research Overview

   Traces peacebuilding activity among 824 Israeli & Palestinian SOP participants (first 10 cohorts), from adolescence through adulthood

2. Evaluation of USAID/CMM APS Fund (2012-13)
   $10m annual grant fund for people-to-people; 25 grant projects studied

3. “Intractable Peacebuilding” Study (USIP/S-CAR, 2013-14)
   In-depth developmental profile of innovation and perseverance – 4 NGOs

   €5m annual grant fund for peacebuilding; 36 grant projects studied
Oslo Accords Signing, 1993
“Will Seeds of Peace Ever Bloom?”

More than 20 years after peace-building people-to-people programs between Israelis and Palestinians began, the jury is still out on whether they have actually made any noticeable difference to the conflict. I’m hard-pressed to identify a single prominent leader who has emerged on either side who is a graduate of the people-to-people projects, despite the fact that... the first teenagers would now be in their mid-30s.

- Matthew Kalman, Haaretz, 2014

Few Results from Mideast Peace Camps

“Long-term positive impact, if any, fades... activities expire with the end of the meeting”;

“Programs have failed to produce a single prominent peace activist”;

“.... a waste of time and money.”

- Kalman, San Francisco Chronicle, 2008
Protest at Israeli Ministry of Justice, 2008
Key Findings: SOP Study

• 52% of all 824 alumni engaged in peacebuilding activities for 2-3 years after camp; significant drop after high school coincident with compulsory Israeli military service.

• 144 graduates (17.5%) active in peacebuilding as adults (ages 21-30), working for more than 40 peacebuilding initiatives.

• Similar percentages of Israeli and Palestinian alumni remained engaged over the long-term, despite contextual asymmetry;

• *Program-related factors*, especially follow-up programming, had more influence on long-term engagement than gender or nationality, in “peace process” and intifada conditions.
### Cross-Sectoral Adult Engagement

#### Dialogue/Negotiation
- Al-Quds University/Peace Now Dialogue
- Creativity for Peace
- Crossing Borders
- Givat Haviva
- Hands of Peace
- Heartbeat Jerusalem
- Independent dialogues at multiple Israeli, U.S. universities
- Israeli-Palestinian Negotiating Partners
- New Story Leadership
- Peace Camp Canada
- Peace it Together
- Peres Center for Peace
- Sulha Peace Project

#### Advocacy/Protest
- Alternative Information Center
- American Task Force on Palestine
- *Bat Shalom*
- *B’tselom*
- The Campus is Not Silent
- Coalition of Women for Peace
- *HaMoked*
- Holy Land Trust
- Middle East Nonviolence and Democracy
- New Profile
- Palestinian Campaign for the Right of Entry/Re-Entry
- Peace Now/Settlement Watch
- Student Activist Coalition at Tel Aviv University

#### Education/Media/Mixed
- Conflict Resolution MA/PhDs
- Campus for All
- Faculty for Israeli-Palestinian Peace
- Geneva Initiative
- IPCRI
- Just Vision
- Jerusalem Stories
- Middle East Education & Technology (MEET)
- Olive Tree Program
- One Voice
- Peace NGOs Forum
- Palestine Note
- Search for Common Ground
- Sixty Years, Sixty Voices
- *Zochrot*: Remembering the Nakba in Hebrew
“Seeds of Peace was more than a fleeting experience for me. It was a life changing turning point. It was an eye opener, a way to gain perspective of what is happening in my own backyard and an opportunity of getting to know the people who live there.

It was the first brick with which I have built my life journey, from a relatively un-involved and naïve 13 year-old who traveled to Seeds of Peace Camp in Maine in 1996, to the peace activist I am today (2014).”

- Lior Finkel, Israeli Director, Peace NGOs Forum

It significantly empowered me as a person, as a woman and a Palestinian. They put us through serious negotiations, serious [dialogue] sessions, offered me training… helped me get a scholarship to study in the USA…

For someone coming from my background, from the refugee camp… I wouldn’t be where I am now, working for international organizations in Palestine, doing different things that I feel very passionate about.

- Bushra Mukbil, Palestinian graduate
CMM Study: Key Findings

- Diversification – environment, health, economic development, agriculture, emergency management, alongside classic methods

- Contextual challenges – asymmetry, delegitimization, marginalization;

- Successful adaptive strategies
  - Integrating uni-national/intra-group and intergroup elements
  - Focus on capacity building/concrete benefits, issues of clear shared interest/common concern
  - Dialogue embedded within larger change strategies

- Positive micro- and meso- level local outcomes; little macro-impact

- Largest donor in the field; donor policies matter
Innovative Models for Intractable Peacebuilding

• *The Abraham Fund Initiatives* – Education, Employment and Policing Interventions

• *Friends of the Earth* – *Middle East*: Environmental Peacebuilding

• *Hand-in-Hand Schools*: Integrated Bi-lingual School Network – Active Communities – “A Civic Power”

• *Bereaved Parents Circle Families Forum*: Integrated Personal and Historical Narrative Methodology
Lederach: Conflict Transformation Platforms

“A context-based, permanent and dynamic platform capable of nonviolently generating solutions to ongoing episodes of conflict…

A transformative platform [is an] ongoing social and relational space, in other words, people in relationship who generate responsive initiatives for constructive change…

A platform is responsive to day-to-day issues that arise in the ebb and flow of conflict while it sustains a clear vision of the longer-term change needed in the destructive relational patterns.”
Beyond the “Peace Camp” Demographic in Israel

• Ultra-Orthodox
• Immigrants from Former Soviet Union
• Palestinian citizens of Israel

Pervasive Challenges, Inherent Limitations

• Asymmetry
• Legitimacy
• Marginalization
40,000 people in dialogue

\[
\frac{40,000}{12,000,000} = 0.0033\% \text{ of the population has EVER had a meaningful dialogue with the other side}
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Questions, Discussion

“We must be the change we wish to see in the world.”
*Bridge over the Wadi Arab-Jewish Bilingual School, Kafr Kara, Israel*