HS277f: Introduction to Planning and Implementation

Section 3: Tuesdays, 2 – 4:50pm, Room TBD
Fall 2018 (Module I)

Instructor: Nanako Tamaru
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Office Hours:

- Tuesdays, 12:30-1:30pm (no appt needed), Heller-Brown Building Rm. 241
- Tuesdays, 5-6pm (by appointment – see LATTE to schedule), Heller-Brown Building Rm. 241
- Via phone or Skype (by appointment – email to schedule)

Teaching Assistant: TBD
Email: TBD
Office Hours: TBD

Course Description

This course will provide students with an overview of the best practices in planning and implementation as core components of the project/program cycle in peacebuilding, development, and beyond.

Planning encompasses both analysis and design in the project/program cycle (see graphic below) and is a management function and a professional task. It is a process aimed at mobilizing resources to achieve specific objectives effectively and efficiently within a designated time frame. Planning is not a one-time function but is dynamic and ongoing. What plans have in common is that at some level they specify a goal, objectives, expected outcomes or results, along with the means to achieve them. *Implementation* is the process of carrying out, accomplishing (fulfilling, executing, producing, or completing) a policy, program or project. While we may talk about and define policies, program plans, project proposals, statements, and agreements, they become concrete via the implementation process.
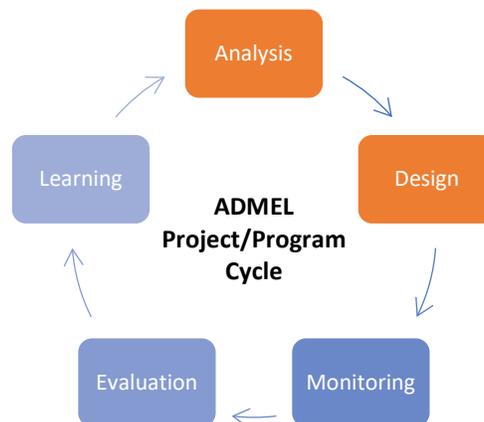
Planning and implementation require multiple sets of skills. Planning can be seen as a problem-solving exercise, involving definition of the problem, goal setting, identification of risks and opportunities, objective setting, strategy-making, activity definition, and identifying indicators and monitoring and learning mechanisms. Implementation, which is based on a plan, is a management function requiring

leadership, coordination, communication, organization, and other management skills. Implementation in conflict-affected contexts also requires situational awareness and conflict sensitivity.

The exercise of planning and implementation is influenced by the values and normative frameworks of individuals and institutions. We bring values about sustainability, empowerment, capacity, economic and social rights, gender, and participation to planning and implementation processes. Values are reflected in planning goals, objectives, and activities and influence the choice of skills, tools, and methods. Values are also reflected in what voices we include, forget to include, or disregard during the planning process. Similarly, the tools and skills selected are not value-free. Planning tools, by their nature, may be better suited to some types of planning than others. For example, the logical framework may be easier to apply to projects in which objectives, outcomes, and outputs are easily quantified than to projects that aim for outcomes that are less easy to quantify like capacity building, empowerment, or advocacy.

The course focuses on concepts and methods of project design in conflict-affected contexts, which includes activities related to conflict prevention, conflict management, and peacebuilding. Students will learn and apply fundamental problem solving, logic, and organizational skills applicable to all project identification, planning, and implementation functions regardless of their level and the situational context. Students will be trained to use fundamental planning tools – like theory of change and results frameworks – which are used by many organizations and donors, as well as best practices related to conflict sensitivity and gender analysis.

Almost all students in the COEX program have real-world experience in planning and implementing projects. Students will be expected to evaluate and discuss their experiences, and those of classmates, in order to understand how planning works and doesn't work in practice. Class discussion and assignments will build upon these experiences to forge innovative ideas and analysis for project design in conflict-affected contexts. The concepts covered in this course lay the foundation for work students will do later in other COEX courses. This course is also teaches basic management skills that are addressed in greater depth in other courses at the Heller School.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Identify and understand links between planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation
- Comprehend how broader environmental factors (political, legal, institutional, financial, social, etc.) shape planning and implementation in conflict-affected contexts
- Use conflict and context analysis tools to understand how context-specific factors shape a problem/issue and identify potential interventions
- Explain why conflict sensitivity, gender analysis, and participatory practices are necessary for effective project design and apply best practices
- Articulate theories of how change occurs and construct a theory of change
- Develop a results framework that clearly links project activities to broader project goals and intended change
- Construct a concept note with requisite components (budget, theory of change, results framework, etc.) tailored for a peacebuilding request for proposals

Course Materials

Readings for each session will be posted on LATTE. Any additional materials will be provided prior to the relevant class session. Readings are subject to change – check LATTE regularly for the most up-to-date materials.

Grading/Course Requirements

Attendance and Active Participation – 15%

All students are expected to attend every class, barring documented illness. If you know you will be absent or late, for a legitimate reason, make sure you notify the instructor in advance. **Students taking this course for credit cannot miss more than one class session if they wish to qualify for course credit.**

Attendance, however, is more than just coming to class. **All students, including auditors, are expected to actively participate, which includes providing thoughtful contributions to class discussions and good faith participation in in-class activities.**

Active participation also means sufficient preparation. Make sure you read all materials listed below and in LATTE. Please check on LATTE before each class to see if extra readings have been added – or substituted. In preparation for each class session, it is recommended that you make notes from the assigned readings, capturing the author's primary argument as well as general details about each case study example.

Quizzes – 20%

There will be two quizzes (each worth 10%) – one on conflict analysis (Session2, Oct 2) and one on theory of change and results frameworks (Session 5, Oct 16). The quizzes will test concepts discussed and workshopped in class. If you do the readings and actively participate in class, the quizzes will be straight-forward and should not require any additional preparation.

Group Assignments – 65%

Students will be assigned to a small group to complete project planning and implementation assignments and in-class activities. Each group will be responsible for designing a conflict resolution/peacebuilding related project of their choosing.

All students are accountable for contributing to group assignments. Groups may decide how to delegate and manage the work, but it is important that every group member contributes their "fair" share to assignments. A "Group Work Code of Conduct" will be signed by each student at the beginning of the course and each student will evaluate their group members at the end of the course.

> **IMPORTANT!** Note that there are **SIX** graded assignments due throughout the course – this will require **effective time management and communication within your group** (much like P&I in the field!). You will have time in class to begin working on the assignments but will need additional time outside of class to complete the assignments.
>
> Assignments #1-3 are components of the Concept Note (Assignment #6) – these assignments will serve as a rough draft and an opportunity to get feedback before submitting the final version for a grade.

Assignment #1: Problem Statement (5% pass/fail*)

DUE Sunday, September 30 by 11:59pm

Each group will submit a narrative problem statement, planned intervention, and 3 conflict analyses (problem tree, actor map, force field analysis).

Assignment #2: Theory of Change (5% pass/fail*)

DUE Sunday, October 14 by 11:59pm

Each group will submit a draft theory of change visual. The draft can be submitted as an electronic document (e.g., MSWord, Powerpoint, other online platforms) or as a JPEG (i.e., complete the theory of change on a poster board or white board and submit a picture – please make sure it's legible!)

Assignment #3: Results Framework (5% pass/fail*)

DUE Sunday, October 21 by 11:59pm

Each group will submit results framework. The draft can be submitted as an electronic document (e.g., MSWord, Powerpoint, other online platforms) or as a JPEG (i.e., complete the results framework on a poster board or white board and submit a picture – please make sure it's legible!)

Assignment #4: Conflict Sensitivity, Gender, Sustainability (5% pass/fail*)

DUE Sunday, October 28 by 11:59pm

Each group will submit a narrative (maximum 2 pages) explaining how their project design takes into account conflict sensitivity, gender, and sustainability.

Assignment #5: In-class Presentations (10%)

DUE Tuesday, October 30

Each group will prepare a short presentation to "sell" their project proposal to prospective donors from the COEX Fund.

Assignment #6: Concept Note (35%)

DUE Friday, November 2 by 11:59pm

Each group will submit a narrative concept note (with annexes) describing their project proposal. The concept note will include a problem statement, project description, timeline, budget, theory of change, and results framework. See COEX Fund Concept Note Assignment for additional details and grading criteria.

* "Pass/fail" means that if the assignment is completed and turned in by the due date, then it will receive a passing grade. Late submissions will receive a failing grade.

Graded Assignments Overview		
Description	**Due Date**	**% of course grade**
1 - Problem Statement/Conflict Analysis	**Sunday, 9/30**	5% (pass/fail)*
IN-CLASS QUIZ: Conflict Analysis	*In-class on 10/2*	*10%*
2 - Theory of Change	**Sunday, 10/14**	5% (pass/fail)*
IN-CLASS QUIZ: TOC/Results Frameworks	*In-class on 10/16*	*10%*
3 - Results Framework	**Sunday, 10/21**	5% (pass/fail)*
4 - Conflict Sensitivity, Gender, Sustainability	**Sunday, 10/28**	5% (pass/fail)*
5 - In-class Presentation	**Tuesday, 10/30**	10%
6 - Concept Note (with Annexes)	**Friday, 11/2**	35%

Guidelines for Written Assignments

All written assignments must be typewritten and include:

- Your group name in the file title
- Single-spaced in 11-point Calibri font with 1-inch margins (see the formatting of this syllabus as an example!)
- Citations in Chicago Manual of Style format (for guidance, see https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/books.html)

Your assignment must be **sent by email to tamaru@brandeis.edu and [TA email], as a Microsoft Word attachment by 11:59pm on the date as listed below or as otherwise agreed to by the instructor.** Do not wait until the last minute to submit your assignments - late submissions will be sanctioned by at least a half-a-grade down. If illness or another serious reason means that you are unable to finish an assignment on time, please notify the instructor before the due date.

Learning Disabilities

If you have a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and require accommodations, please bring it to the instructor's attention prior to the second meeting of the class. If you have any questions about this process, contact Marc Kiredjian, at mkiredjian@brandeis.edu.

Academic Honesty

You are expected to be honest in all your academic work. The University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually as section 5 of the Rights and Responsibilities handbook. Instances of alleged dishonesty will be forwarded to the Office of Campus Life for possible referral to the Student Judicial System.

Students must be aware that material (including ideas, phrases, sentences, etc.) taken from the Internet and other sources MUST be appropriately cited if quoted and footnoted in any written work turned in for this, or any, Brandeis class. Failure to cite resources properly may result in a referral being made to the Office of Student Development and Judicial Education. The outcome of this action may involve academic and disciplinary sanctions, which could include (but are not limited to) such penalties as receiving no credit for the assignment in question, receiving no credit for the related course, or suspension or dismissal from the University.

A student that is in doubt about standards of academic honesty (regarding plagiarism, multiple submissions of written work, unacknowledged or unauthorized collaborative effort, false citation or false data) should consult either the course instructor or other staff of the Rabb School Graduate Professional Studies.

Session Descriptions

Students are recommended to read the required readings in the order listed.
Note the page numbers for required readings.

Session 1, September 4 – What is P&I? Why is it important?

The course will begin by providing an overview of the ADMEL project/program cycle and how course concepts/tools fit within the cycle. We will also explore why thoughtful analysis and design are important in conflict-affected contexts.

Students will form small groups for the practice-related aspects of the course and group assignments. Students will create and sign a "Group Work Code of Conduct." Groups will begin the process of problem identification.

Required Readings:

Setting the scene, working in peacebuilding:
- Craig Zelizer and Valerie Oliphant, "Introduction to Integrated Peacebuilding," in *Integrated peacebuilding: innovative approaches to transforming conflict,* ed. Craig Zelizer (Boulder: Westview Press, 2013), **Chapter 1 pg. 3-26** (for students new to peacebuilding, also read Chapter 2 pg. 31-49)

Why thoughtful and intentional design is important:
- Matt Andrews, Lant Pritchett, and Michael Woolcock, *Escaping Capability Traps through Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA)* (Center for Global Development, June 2012), **pg. 1-7**

Introspection on how we (Westerners/Americans) consider peacebuilding/development problems:
- Courtney Martin, "The Reductive Seduction of Other People's Problems," *Bright,* January 11, 2016, https://brightthemag.com/the-reductive-seduction-of-other-people-s-problems-3c07b307732d.

About the ADMEL project/program cycle:
- Peacebuilding Evaluation Consortium, "Guiding Steps for Peacebuilding Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation," **pg. 1-9**

Groups should plan to meet and conduct background research prior to Session 2. By Session 2, groups must decide on their conflict context, have an idea of the problem/issue they want to address, and be able to describe the broader conflict context (e.g., main conflict drivers, who is involved).

Session 2, September 18 – Conflict Analysis
The first step in project design is to analyze the broader conflict and/or context surrounding the problem/issue you want to address. We will discuss why conflict analysis is a necessary component of project design and learn how to use three analysis tools – problem tree, actor map, force field analysis.

Required Readings:

Overview of conflict analysis:
- CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, *Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) Basics* (Cambridge: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2016), **pg. 14-21 and FAQ pg. 76-80**
- Siân Herbert, *Conflict Analysis: Topic Guide* (Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham, 2017), **pg. 12-18**

Why/how to integrate gender into conflict analysis:
- Sanne Tielemans, *Gender & conflict analysis toolkit for peacebuilders* (London: Conciliation Resources, 2015), **pg. 6-23, skim questions pg. 27-31**

Recommended Readings:

Framing of conflict analysis and the other components of design; introduces conflict sensitivity and gender mainstreaming:

- Vanessa Corlazzoli and Jonathan White, *Back to Basics: A Compilation of Best Practices in Design, Monitoring & Evaluation in Fragile and Conflict-affected Environments* (DFID and Search for Common Ground, March 2013), **pg. 9-16**

ASSIGNMENT #1 Problem Statement/Conflict Analysis DUE on Sunday, September 30 by 11:59pm

Session 3, October 2 – Theory of Change

QUIZ on conflict analysis

This session will introduce a program design tool called "Theory of Change." Prior to designing any intervention, practitioners must test their assumptions and analyze whether the project activities indeed contribute to achieving the change they desire. We will also explore common conflict-related theories of how change occurs.

Groups will identify the types of change they hope to accomplish through their projects and will begin constructing a theory of change.

During this session, the instructor will meet with each group to review and discuss their problem statement and planned intervention.

Required Readings:

Overview of Theory of Change:
- Eileen Babbitt, Diana Chigas, and Robert Wilkinson, *Theories and Indicators of Change Briefing Paper: Concepts and Primers for Conflict Management and Mitigation* (Washington, DC: USAID, 2013), **pg. 1-11**
- Marjan van Es, Irene Guijt, and Isabel Vogel, *Theory of Change Thinking in Practice* (The Hague: HIVOS, 2015), **pg. 15-16, pg. 20-27**

Pros and cons of Theory of Change approach:
- CARE International UK, *Defining Theories of Change* (London: CARE International UK, 2012), **pg. 5-9**

Types of change relevant for peacebuilding and conflict-affected contexts:
- Cheyanne Church and Mark M. Rogers, *Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs* (Washington, DC: Search for Common Ground, 2006), **Chapter 2 pg. 11-24**

Session 4, October 9 – Results Framework
(Guest Lecturer: Min Ma, Independent Evaluator and Consultant)

Building on our knowledge of causal change, in this session we will focus on understanding the purpose and components of a results framework (or logical framework / "logframe"), a foundational tool for program design and a common donor requirement.

Groups will have an opportunity to transform their theory of change into a results framework, which links the project activities to intended higher level change.

Required Readings:

Overview of Results/Logical Frameworks:
- Cheyanne Church and Mark M. Rogers, *Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs* (Washington, DC: Search for Common Ground, 2006), **Chapter 3 pg. 25-42**
- Carlisle J. Levine, *Catholic Relief Services' (CRS) Guidance for Developing Logical and Results Frameworks* (Baltimore: Catholic Relief Services, 2007), **pg. 1-10**

Clarifying different levels of change (activity -> intermediate obj -> objective -> goal):
- Marjan van Es, Irene Guijt, and Isabel Vogel, *Theory of Change Thinking in Practice* (The Hague: HIVOS, 2015), **Spheres of influence, pg. 106-107**

Pros and cons of Results/Logical Frameworks:
- Oliver Bakewell and Anne Garbutt, *The use and abuse of the logical framework approach* (Stockholm: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency-SIDA, 2005), **"Debates on the LFA" pg. 11-15**

Recommended Readings:
If you're still confused about what a logical/results framework is and its components, read this guide as well:
- Search for Common Ground, *Goals & Objectives Module* (Washington, DC: Search for Common Ground)

Assignment #2 Theory of Change DUE on Sunday, October 14 by 11:59pm

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Session 5, October 16 – Re-assessing project logic and activities

QUIZ on theory of change and results frameworks

This session will focus on fine tuning project plans by (re)testing the project logic and assessing how/whether projects take into account best practices like stakeholder inclusion, conflict sensitivity, gender analysis, and sustainability.

During this session, the instructor will meet with each group to review and discuss their theory of change.

Required Readings:

Test your change pathway using the RPP Matrix:
- CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, *Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) Basics* (Cambridge: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2016), **pg. 34-47**

Check whether all key stakeholders are considered and how your project may impact them:
- AusAID, *The Logical Framework Approach* (Australian Government, 2005), **Stakeholder Analysis pg. 8-10**; **Stakeholder analysis matrix pg. 28-29**

What is conflict sensitivity and why it's important:
- Huma Haider, *Conflict Sensitivity: Topic Guide* (Birmingham: GSDRC, University of Birmingham, 2014), **pg. 4-5**
- The Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, *How to Guide to Conflict Sensitivity* (February 2012), **Conflict sensitivity in the programme cycle pg 7-13**

Assignment #3 Results Framework DUE on Sunday, October 21 by 11:59pm

Session 6, October 23 – Project wrap-up; Lessons from P&I in practice
Building on the best practices covered in the previous session, we will discuss what project implementation looks like in the field and how those best practices are applied (primarily by looking at common mistakes by practitioners and other barriers/obstacles).

This session also introduces the final components of the concept note assignment – budget and timeline. These are basic, yet fundamental components of any project planning and implementation.

Required Readings:

Proposal budget basics:
- "Developing a Proposal Budget" Handout, **pg. 1-2**

Developing a project timeline using a Gantt Chart. Sign up for a free trial and start constructing a timeline for your project:
- SmartSheet: https://www.smartsheet.com/blog/gantt-chart-excel (make a Gantt Chart in Smartsheet, not Excel)

Reflections on best practices in P&I in the field:
- Ruth Marsden, "Exploring Power and Relationships: A Perspective from Nepal," in *Inclusive Aid: Changing Power and Relationships in International Development,* eds. Leslie Groves and Rachel Hinton (London: Earthscan, 2004), **pg. 97-107**
- Mary B. Anderson, Dayna Brown, and Isabella Jean, *Time to Listen: Hearing People on the Receiving End of International Aid* (Cambridge: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2012), **Principles of Participation, Ownership, and Sustainability pg. 67-74**

Assignment #4 Conflict Sensitivity, Gender, Sustainability DUE on Sunday, October 28 by 11:59pm

Session 7, October 30 – In-class Presentations
Assignment #5 In-class Presentations will be presented in this session. Each group will have an opportunity to pitch or "sell" their project proposal to a group of donors from the COEX Fund.

Required Readings:
N/A

Assignment #6 Concept Note (with annexes) DUE on Friday, November 2 by 11:59pm