

Mapping Sustainable Peace in the Basque Country

A

Ground-truthing Pilot of the Sustainable Peace Project
February and June 2016, Bilbao, the Basque Country



A report by the Advanced Consortium on Cooperation, Conflict, and Complexity (AC⁴)
The Earth Institute, Columbia University

February 2017

ALC
Agirre Lehendakaria
Center for Social and
Political Studies



ehugune




Cover photo: Basque coastline, May 2015.
Photo credit: Kristen Rucki, 2015.

About the Authors

The Advanced Consortium on Cooperation, Conflict and Complexity (AC⁴) is housed at the Earth Institute, Columbia University. AC⁴ strives to foster sustainable peace through innovation and integration. AC⁴ works to enable and support integrative research and practice on sustainable peace, constructive conflict engagement, and sustainable development. This is built on an understanding that building peaceful and sustainable societies requires a systemic approach, leveraging the expertise and knowledge of scientists and practitioners from across disciplines and areas of practice. By connecting thought leaders at Columbia University and around the world, AC⁴ works to build opportunities to apply leading-edge science to generate solutions for some of our most pressing social and environmental challenges.

www.ac4.ei.columbia.edu

Acknowledgments

This report was written by Jaclyn Donahue, Kristen Rucki, Peter T. Coleman, and Joshua Fisher of AC⁴, the Earth Institute, Columbia University as part of a ground-truthing pilot for the Sustainable Peace Project. The Sustainable Peace Project employs leading science and local community perspectives to realize a vision of sustainable peace. The project has four separate but interrelated components, and the process of “ground-truthing” is one project component.

The authors would like to thank the Agirre Lehendakaria Center for Social and Political Studies (ALC) and EHU-Gune at the University of the Basque Country for organizing all logistics for the ground-truthing workshops, including identifying and inviting individuals to attend and arranging the venues. The authors would also like to thank workshop stakeholders for their participation in the workshops and engagement in the ground-truthing process that took place over the course of several months.

This report presents the view of the authors alone and does not represent the institutional views of Columbia University, the Agirre Lehendakaria Center for Social and Political Studies (ALC) or EHU-Gune at the University of the Basque Country. For further information, please contact Peter T. Coleman at pc84@tc.columbia.edu.

Suggested Citation:

Donahue, J., Rucki, K., Coleman, P.T., & Fisher, J. 2017. *Mapping Sustainable Peace in the Basque Country: A Ground-truthing Pilot of the Sustainable Peace Project*. Report. New York. The Advanced Consortium on Cooperation, Conflict, and Complexity.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	6
Introduction	7
Project Overview	7
Ground-truthing Overview	8
Ground-truthing in the Basque Country	8
Objectives.....	8
Methodology	9
Analysis.....	11
Discussion.....	20
Lessons Learned and Recommendations	24
For Sustaining Peace in the Basque Country	24
For AC ⁴ 's Ground-truthing Methodology.....	26
Conclusion	28

at the Earth Institute, Columbia University convened an interdisciplinary team and launched a multi-year initiative – the Sustainable Peace Project – that employs leading science and local community perspectives to realize a vision of sustainable peace. The initiative’s overall goals are to have a positive impact on communities globally, to increase understanding of sustainable peace, and to support the development of more adaptive decision-making processes. The assumptions which underpin the project include: sustainable peace is possible; articulation of a nuanced vision for sustainable peace is a vital step towards achieving it; and complex dynamics can be fruitfully understood by visualizing them. Therefore, by employing complexity science and causal loop diagramming, this AC⁴ initiative aims to enhance understanding of the conditions and core dynamics necessary for fostering sustainable peace.

The project has four separate but interrelated components. First, we are synthesizing leading evidence-based science on peace into a single complexity visualization of sustainable peace that will ultimately serve as a decision-making tool for citizens and policy makers at the international, national and civil society levels. Second, we are testing and validating our visualization model against what is known about peace systems. Third, local community perspectives are being gathered to inform the visualization through a process called ground-truthing. Lastly, a mathematical model is being developed to further assess the visualization’s utility and effectiveness.

This report focuses on the ground-truthing component of the project. Ground-truthing is a novel method of data collection and dialogue facilitation. In February and June 2016, AC⁴ piloted the Sustainable Peace Project’s ground-truthing methodology by conducting stakeholder workshops in the Basque Country. Through facilitated dialogue on sustainable peace that brought stakeholders together from across sectors and disciplines, stakeholders identified factors important to sustainable peace in the Basque Country. Following these workshops, the project team analyzed these factors, formulated a visualization of sustainable peace specific to the Basque Country, and revised the project’s general visualization of sustainable peace.

The experience of ground-truthing in the Basque Country resulted in a series of lessons learned and recommendations for the project’s ground-truthing methods as well as processes conducive to sustaining peace in the Basque Country. As the project continues to work towards its aim of enhancing understanding of sustainable peace, it is hoped that the visualizations of sustainable peace will be used as tools to provoke questions, reflection, and discussion about the past, present, and future of peace in the Basque Country. Continued dialogue with ground-truthing stakeholders is invited.

Introduction

In 2014, the Advanced Consortium on Cooperation, Conflict and Complexity (AC⁴)

at the Earth Institute, Columbia University convened an interdisciplinary team and launched a multi-year initiative – the Sustainable Peace Project – that employs leading science and local community perspectives to realize a vision of sustainable peace. The project's overall goals are to have a positive impact on communities globally, to increase understanding of sustainable peace, and to support the development of more adaptive decision-making processes. The project has four separate but interrelated components aimed at achieving these goals, and the process of "ground-truthing" is one project component.

Ground-truthing is a novel method of data collection and dialogue facilitation that a) relies on direct observation and engagement with community stakeholders to verify, refine or challenge models derived by inference; and b) employs evidence-based scientific models to structure community discourse on issues of concern to communities.

In February and June 2016, AC⁴ piloted the Sustainable Peace (SP) Project's ground-truthing methodology by conducting stakeholder workshops in the Basque Country. This report summarizes the goals and rationale of the SP Project and ground-truthing. In particular, it details the process, methodology, and outputs from the stakeholder workshops in the Basque Country as well as lessons learned.

Project Overview

In our world, defining and achieving 'sustainable peace' has too often proven to

be elusive. This is in part due to challenges comprehending peace in a world where violence seems pervasive. Additionally, the current scientific understanding of conditions and processes conducive to sustainable peace is fragmented. As a result, the complexity, multidimensionality, dynamism, and sustainability of peace are not well understood, and the pursuit of sustainable peace through coherent, measurable, and implementable policy agendas remains inadequate.

In 2014, the Advanced Consortium on Cooperation, Conflict and Complexity (AC⁴) at the Earth Institute, Columbia University convened an interdisciplinary team and launched a multi-year initiative that employs leading science and local community perspectives to realize a vision of sustainable peace. The initiative's overall goals are to have a positive impact on communities globally, to increase understanding of sustainable peace, and to support the development of more adaptive decision-making processes. By employing complexity science and causal loop diagramming, this AC⁴ initiative aims to enhance understanding of the conditions and core dynamics necessary for fostering sustainably peaceful societies.

The project has four main components. First, we are synthesizing leading evidence-based science on peace into a single complexity visualization of sustainable peace that will ultimately serve as a decision-making tool for citizens and policy makers at the international, national and civil society levels. Second, we are testing and validating our visualization model against what is known about peace systems. Third, local community

perspectives are being gathered to inform the visualization through a process called ground-truthing. Lastly, a mathematical model is being developed to further assess the visualization's utility and effectiveness. This report primarily focuses on the ground-truthing component of the project.

To date, the project's visualization of sustainable peace has been informed by the expertise of academics and scientists, empirical evidence in the literature, and the experience and knowledge of stakeholders from the Basque Country. The project anticipates that the visualization of sustainable peace will continue to evolve as the project moves forward and we grow in our understanding of the dynamics of sustainable peace.

Ground-Truthing Overview

Through an ongoing process of ground-truthing, the visualization of sustainable peace is being further refined by the insights and experiences of local stakeholders. Ground-truthing is a term derived from work with remote sensing data, and the project defines it as a novel method of data collection and dialogue facilitation that a) relies on direct observation and engagement with community stakeholders to verify, refine, or challenge models derived by inference; and b) employs evidence-based scientific models to structure community discourse on issues of concern to communities.

The general visualization of the science of sustainable peace that AC⁴ employed in the Basque workshops was informed by archival, survey, and qualitative research with members of the academic community studying sustainable peace. The purpose of

AC⁴'s ground-truthing method is to test and refine academic understanding and assumptions against stakeholders' lived experiences in their communities, and then to incorporate the insights gleaned from this process into the general visualization of sustainable peace where appropriate. Insights from stakeholders who participated in the Sustainable Peace Project workshops in the Basque Country have informed the general visualization of sustainable peace.

Ground-Truthing in the Basque Country

Objectives

AC⁴'s ground-truthing methodology for the Sustainable Peace Project is in its pilot phase. Therefore, the objectives of the ground-truthing workshops in Bilbao, the Basque Country, were three-fold:

1. *To pilot a new methodology:* The workshops in Bilbao provided the forum for the ground-truthing pilot for AC⁴'s Sustainable Peace project. These workshops allowed the project team to develop and test the ground-truthing methodology and consider revisions for future ground-truthing workshops.
2. *To stimulate stakeholder discussion:* The ground-truthing process was meant to stimulate conversation and enhance understanding about the dynamics of peace among stakeholders within the context of the Basque Country. The hope is that this, in turn, will lead to broader community conversations regarding policies and practices conducive to enhancing peacefulness.
3. *To inform the visualization:* The ground-truthing workshop allowed the research

team to learn about peace and its sustainability in the particular context of the Basque Country from the workshop stakeholders. Information gathered during the ground-truthing process is being used to refine AC⁴'s general visualization of sustainable peace.

Methodology

AC⁴'s ground-truthing pilot in Bizkaia, the Basque Country, took place over the course of three workshops. These workshops were organized in collaboration with the Agirre Lehendakaria Center for Social and Political Studies (ALC) and EHU-Gune at the University of the Basque Country.

Workshop 1: February 1, 2016

The first workshop was held on February 1, 2016 and 12 stakeholders participated. These stakeholders, from the academic, public, and civil society sectors, were identified by the ALC. Prior to the workshop, participants were asked to reflect on two questions related to sustainable peace: What is your vision of sustainable peace? What would sustainable peace look like in the Basque Country?

Stakeholders were also asked to come prepared to share a story that represents sustainable peace, as it would look in the Basque Country, per the following guidance:

This story can come from your personal or professional life, the news, etc. It can be a story about a family, a neighborhood, a community, or even something at the regional or country level. *It should shed light on what you think is necessary for sustainable peace in the Basque Country.*

During the workshop, the project team provided an overview of the SP project. Then, each stakeholder shared her or his story of sustainable peace. As these stories were shared, the project team and other workshop participants listened actively to identify and record the processes, factors and conditions necessary for sustainable peace according to each storyteller. These processes, factors and conditions were recorded on Post-it® notes, which were collected at the workshop's conclusion. The project team then briefly introduced the highest level of its general visualization of sustainable peace.

Following this first workshop, the participants were asked to complete a brief survey of open-ended questions. Eight participants provided responses to the following: (1) What would sustainable peace mean in the Basque Country? (2) What are the three main elements that you believe would be vital for peace in the Basque Country to be sustained? (3) What are the biggest divides (issues, attitudes, viewpoints, etc.) that cause the most tension in Basque society today? (4) Given these divides, what are the things (events, challenges, opportunities, etc.) that unite people in Basque society across these differences? A ninth participant chose instead to discuss factors related to violence and sustainable peace in the Basque Country in the form of an essay.

The project team then analyzed the factors for sustainable peace identified by the stakeholders both during the workshop and in their survey responses. Over a three-month period, the team analyzed the information from the stakeholders, refined their analysis and then drew on concepts

from dynamical systems theory and causal loop diagramming to construct a visualization of sustainable peace specific to the Basque Country.

Workshop 2: June 14, 2016

The same stakeholders that participated in the February 2016 workshop were invited to a second workshop on June 14, 2016. Collaborators of AC⁴ and the ALC who were not present in February also joined the June workshop. The second workshop opened with an overview of the objectives and methods of the Sustainable Peace Project as well as a review of the February 2016 workshop. After a brief introduction to systems mapping and causal loop diagramming, the SP Project team introduced their process for creating the draft Basque Map of Sustainable Peace and introduced the core engine and dynamics that comprised the Basque Map. Then, in small groups, workshop participants were provided with a list of lower-level factors from AC⁴'s initial analysis and the core engine of the Basque Map. They were invited to manipulate the placement of these factors and their connections to the core engine and to each other, thus constructing their own Basque maps of sustainable peace. They were also invited to add additional factors to the map. The groups then presented their maps and there was open discussion about questions and insights raised by the mapping process.

The complete Basque Map of Sustainable Peace constructed by the project team was then introduced to the participants with the objective of soliciting feedback, verification, and points for refinement. Before presenting the variables and dynamics that

compose the map, the AC⁴ team also shared several key themes that they believe are reflected in the visualization. These overarching themes or meta-variables include *Justice, Recognition, Community, and Nonviolence*. Importantly, the map's variables and dynamics, as well as these central themes, were labeled in the English, Spanish, and Basque languages. The general map of sustainable peace was also introduced, with the objective of comparing and contrasting it with the Basque maps. The meaning and implications of the maps and the visualization process were then discussed.

Workshop 3: June 16, 2016

Lessons learned from the first workshop fed into the design of the workshop on June 16, 2016. This workshop involved a unique group of stakeholders, representing the public, private, academic, and civil society sectors and fields including business, fine arts, journalism, education, and law. Fifteen stakeholders participated.

Prior to the workshop, participants were asked to reflect on four questions related to sustainable peace. They were the same questions given to the first stakeholder group in the post-workshop survey, including: (1) What would sustainable peace mean in the Basque Country? (2) What are the three main elements that you believe would be vital for peace in the Basque Country to be sustained? (3) What are the biggest divides (issues, attitudes, viewpoints, etc.) that cause the most tension in Basque society today? And (4) Given these divides, what are the things (events, challenges, opportunities, etc.) that unite people in Basque society across these differences?

Stakeholders were also asked to come prepared to share a story reflecting on what is necessary for sustainable peace in the Basque Country, per the following guidance:

This story can come from your personal or professional life, the news, etc. It can be a story about a family, a neighborhood, a community, or even something at the regional or country level. *It should shed light on what you think is necessary for sustainable peace in the Basque Country.*

Similar to the first workshop, the project team began the June 16th workshop by providing an overview of the SP project as well as systems thinking and causal loop diagrams. Then, each stakeholder shared her or his story of sustainable peace. As these stories were shared, the project team and other workshop participants listened actively to identify and record the processes, factors and conditions necessary for sustainable peace according to each storyteller. These processes, factors and conditions were recorded on Post-it® notes, which were used during a mapping exercise. In small groups, the stakeholders engaged in discussion and worked to visualize the factors they deemed most important to sustainable peace in the Basque Country through causal loop diagramming. The project team also briefly introduced its general visualization of sustainable peace, inviting feedback.

Following this workshop, the project team analyzed the factors for sustainable peace

identified by the stakeholders in their stories. These factors were added to and enhanced the visualization of sustainable peace specific to the Basque Country constructed by the project team.

Analysis

This section provides an analysis and notes interesting observations of each of the Basque maps of sustainable peace. This includes the map created by the SP Project team following the February workshop, the four stakeholder maps created during the June 14th workshop, and the revised SP Project team map that incorporates insights from the June 16th workshop. In each map, all variables are connected through the core engine, which represents the most central, highest-level dynamics necessary for sustainable peace. The more peripheral variables represent factors that feed into these core dynamics.

Map created by the Sustainable Peace Project team (following the February workshop)

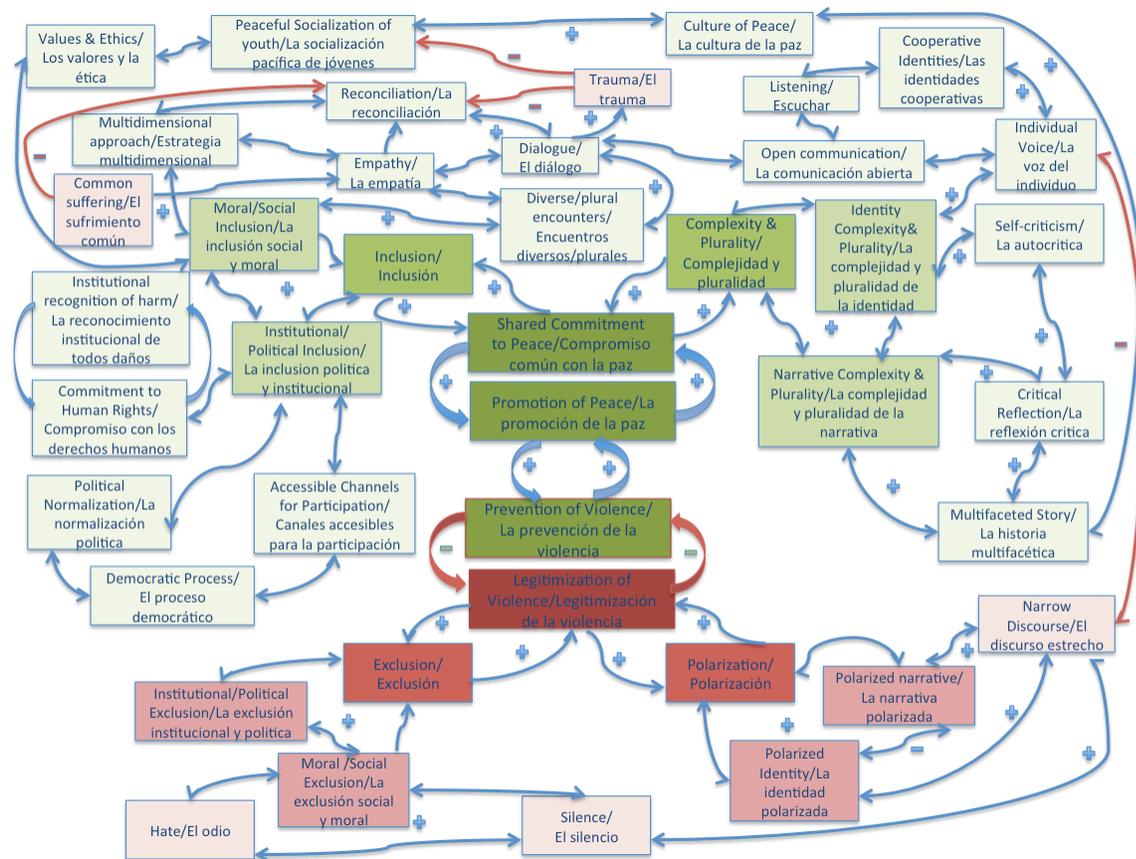


Figure A: Basque Map of Sustainable Peace 1: Map created by Sustainable Peace Project Team

Observations

- The map, which depicts two “systems,” a peaceful system and a violent system, is comprised mainly of reinforcing connections.

Connections between certain variables may be of interest to policymakers. For instance, ‘trauma’ and ‘common suffering’ may either inhibit or reinforce sustainable peace depending on how they interact with other variables. This is depicted by the reinforcing and inhibiting connections from those variables. The inhibiting connection between ‘narrow discourse’ and ‘individual voice’ could also be of interest. This visualization suggests that

advancing individual voice will broaden discourse. Conversely, it can also be inferred that if individual voice is not honored, the narrower discourse that may result will feed dynamics like polarization and ultimately risk shifting the system away from sustainable peace. Given that ‘individual voice’ is considered a component of a sustainably peaceful system and ‘narrow discourse’ a contributing factor to a violent system, the inhibiting connection between them may be an effective entry point for taking action to sustain peace. For instance, it may be worthwhile to ask how individual voice is honored in policymaking, and how policymakers can promote a public discourse in which there is room for individual opinion.

- In addition to lessening the negative impact of narrow discourse, this visualization also suggests that individual voice reinforces many other variables associated with sustainable peace, including 'multifaceted story' and 'culture of peace.' The unique positioning of this variable, in which it is shown to reinforce dynamics that promote peace and directly inhibit dynamics that enable violence, may make it especially interesting as an effective entry point for intervention to promote sustainable peace.
- The relationship between trauma, dialogue, silence, and reconciliation is notable. While dialogue is considered a factor that reinforces reconciliation, it is also shown as a factor that may reinforce trauma. Trauma, in turn, inhibits reconciliation. Participants also indicated that trauma can be transmitted across generations, thus inhibiting the peaceful socialization of youth. In the February 2016 workshop, stakeholders suggested that continually revisiting the past as part of dialogue processes may re-traumatize individuals and not be helpful. However, participants considered "breaking the silence" around traumatic events to be a way in which intergenerational transmission of trauma can be interrupted. The relationship between these variables indicates that while dialogue and conversation supports reconciliation and peaceful socialization of youth, it needs to be conducted in trauma-sensitive ways in order to be productive and beneficial.
- It is interesting to note that 'reconciliation,' 'dialogue' and 'empathy' have a relatively large number of connections compared to other dynamics. Although dialogue reinforces 'reconciliation,' it also reinforces 'trauma,' which inhibits 'reconciliation' in turn. An important question raised by this relationship is how to engage in dialogue in a way that is not retraumatizing, in order for it to effectively promote reconciliation. With the addition of 'multidimensional approach', the connections between 'reconciliation,' 'dialogue,' 'empathy,' and 'multidimensional approach' form a reinforcing loop, accounting for the emotions, physical interaction and processes that help to realize peace.
- While the subsequent stakeholder maps include the dynamic of courage with some placing courage onto the core engine (see Figure B and D), the above map does not include courage. From listening to the stakeholders' stories in February 2016, the project team sensed that courage was integral to sustainable peace in the Basque Country but had difficulty in representing this on the map and were interested to learn where stakeholders would place 'courage' on their maps.

Stakeholder Map 1: Created by stakeholder group during the June 14, 2016 workshop

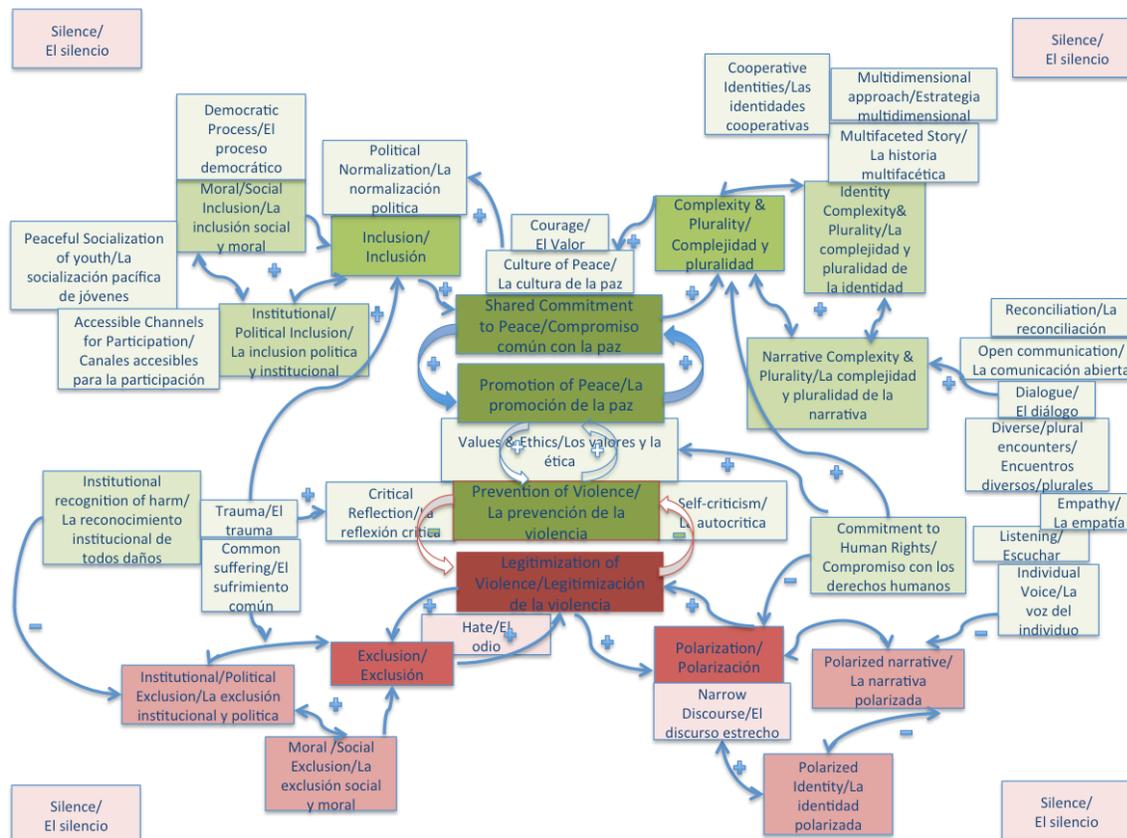


Figure B: Stakeholder Map 1

Observations

- There were no additional variables added to the map by the stakeholders.
- The map is framed by silence. This stakeholder group commented that silence is present throughout. The placement of silence as distant from the core dynamics of sustainable peace may suggest that silence inhibits sustainable peace. ‘Silence’ also seems to be important as a contextual factor in which to understand the other factors and dynamics in the map.
- Certain dynamics were placed onto the core engine, including ‘courage,’ ‘culture

of peace,’ ‘values and ethics,’ ‘critical reflection,’ ‘self-criticism,’ and ‘hate.’ The group commented that courage was needed to work on all other dynamics.

- Interestingly, there were no dynamics seen as directly reinforcing or inhibiting ‘polarized identity’ and ‘moral/social exclusion.’ This raises the question as to the weight that this group placed on those dynamics relative to sustainable peace in the Basque Country.
- This map also considers how certain dynamics may have a dual influence of inhibiting and reinforcing other dynamics. For instance, ‘commitment to human rights’ reinforces ‘complexity and plurality’ and inhibits ‘polarization.’ Other

stakeholder maps chose not to represent this duality.

Stakeholder Map 2: Created by stakeholder group during the June 14, 2016 workshop

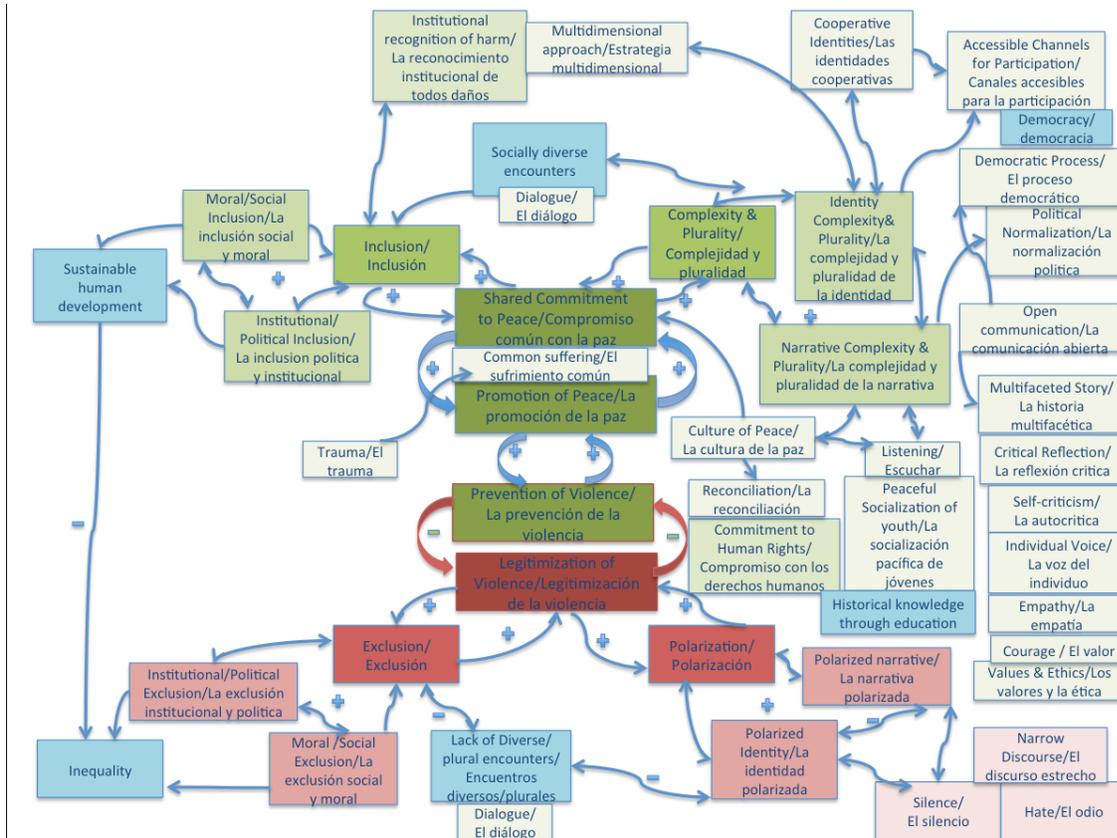


Figure C: Stakeholder Map 2

Observations

- This stakeholder map introduced six additional dynamics to the Basque Map of Sustainable Peace. These include: sustainable human development, inequality, socially diverse encounters, lack of diverse/plural encounters, transmission of historical knowledge through education, and democracy. It is interesting to note that while ‘democratic process’ was a variable identified by the AC⁴ team, this map also introduces ‘democracy’ as another distinct variable.

- This map comments on youth’s understanding, or lack thereof, of the Basque Country’s past, possibly contributing to different ideas between older and younger generations about sustainable peace. Transmission of ‘historical knowledge through education’ is needed for the ‘peaceful socialization of youth.’
- Group members indicated that many of the variables grouped near ‘culture of peace’ were in fact conditions that comprise a culture of peace. These include ‘reconciliation,’ ‘listening,’ ‘commitment to human rights,’ ‘peaceful

socialization of youth,' and 'historical knowledge through education.'

- Looking at this map, it is striking how many dynamics the group perceived as more closely related to 'complexity and plurality.' In particular, while the other maps viewed 'political normalization' as reinforcing to inclusion dynamics, this map places 'political normalization' as reinforced by both 'identity complexity and plurality' and 'narrative complexity and plurality.'
- Should this map inform policy, 'inequality' stands out as a particular area to be addressed. Should inequality at the level of physical and socioeconomic wellbeing

not be addressed, there is the sense that inclusion at the institutional, political, moral and social levels is incomplete.

- 'Silence,' 'narrow discourse,' and 'hate' are grouped. These create a reinforcing loop with 'polarized narrative' and 'polarized identity.' The relationship between silence and polarization is of particular interest. Instinctually, polarization is thought of as something that results from a physical or verbal action or emotional reaction. However, here polarization is reinforced by the absence of words or actions.

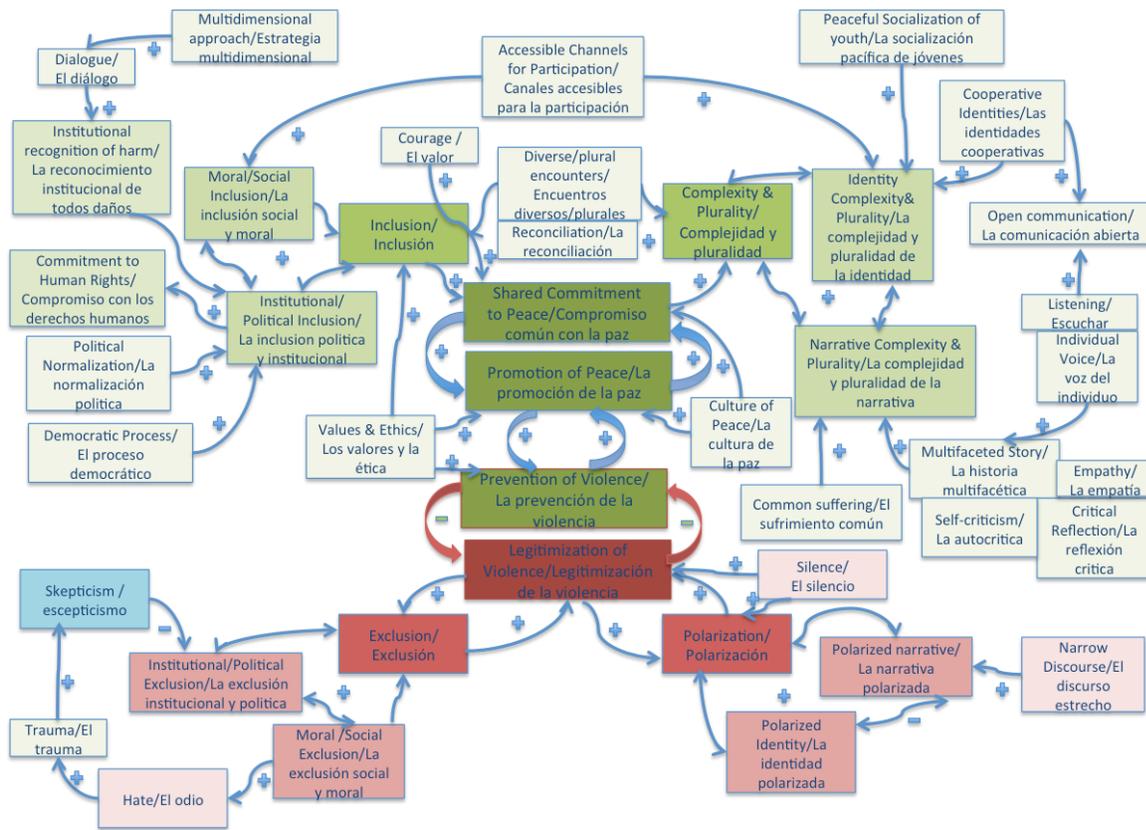


Figure D: Stakeholder Map 3

Observations

- The dynamic ‘skepticism’ was added to this map. The group commented that skepticism is a chain that unfolds, building negativity that influences other generations.
- Like Figure B, ‘courage’ and ‘values and ethics’ are emphasized through their placement near the core engine. ‘Reconciliation’ is similarly added to the core engine of this map, perhaps highlighting the importance of such processes to the achievement of sustainable peace in the Basque Country.

- In the above map, ‘peaceful socialization of youth’ reinforces ‘identity complexity and plurality,’ speaking to the need of ensuring that youth are included in the conversation, inform the Basque identity, and ultimately contribute to sustainable peace. This reinforces ideas about youth and the transmission of knowledge that were presented in Figure C.
- ‘Accessible channels for participation’ reinforces both ‘moral/social inclusion’ and ‘identity complexity and plurality.’ Similarly, in Figure C, ‘socially diverse encounters’ reinforces both sides of the core engine. This emphasizes the importance of such dynamics as,

arguably, contributing doubly to sustainable peace.

- There are a relatively large number of factors that reinforce 'institutional/political inclusion.'

Stakeholder Map 4: Created by stakeholder group during the June 14, 2016 workshop

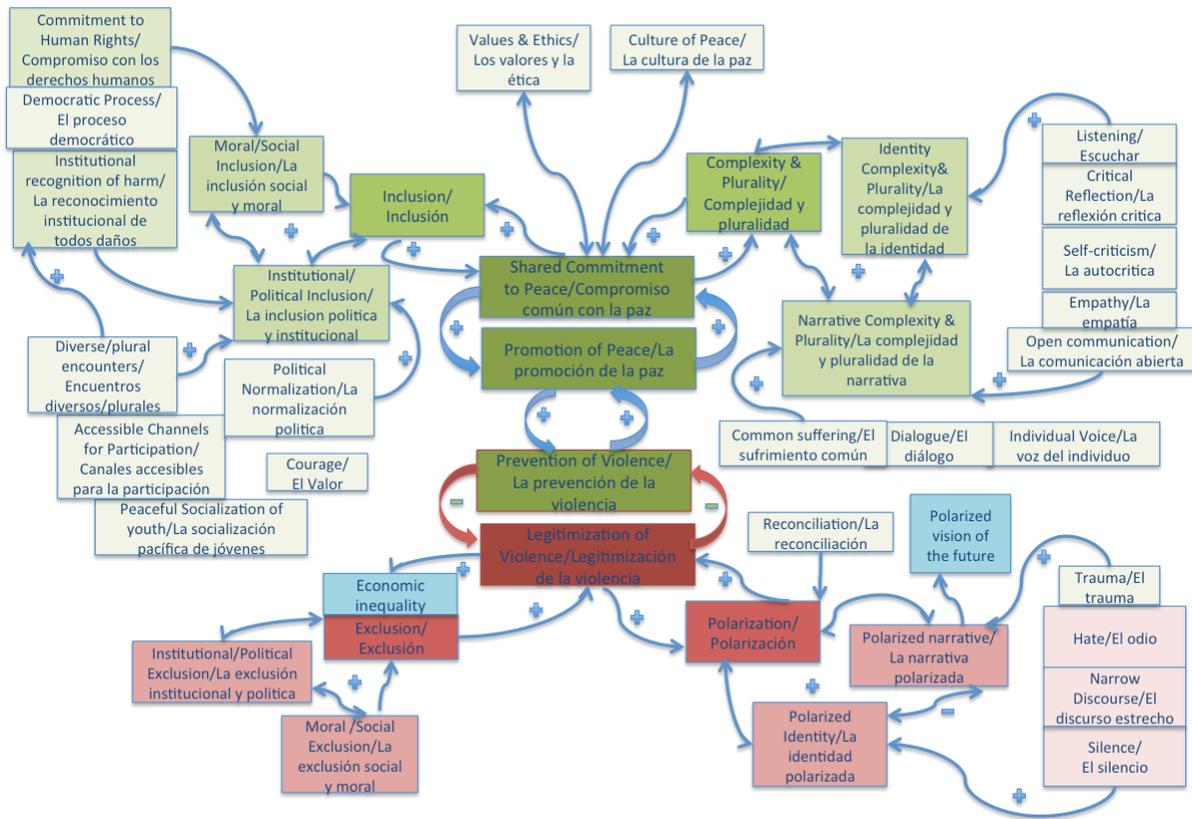


Figure E: Stakeholder Map 4

Observations

- This stakeholder group added the dynamics 'economic inequality' and 'polarized vision of the future.'
- Like Figure B, 'values and ethics' and 'culture of peace' connect closely to the core engine.
- Like Figure C, it is interesting to note the emphasis on issues of inequality. Here, the placement of 'economic inequality'

seems to equate it with 'exclusion.' From a policy perspective, it is insinuated that exclusion would continue should economic inequality remain unaddressed.

- Without the insert of + or -, it is unclear the role of the 'reconciliation' dynamic. While it could be assumed that 'reconciliation' would inhibit 'polarization,' it is interesting to consider 'reconciliation' as reinforcing 'polarization.' Perhaps, this instance would occur should there be

- Four new variables were added to this map. They are 'revisit past', 'common future project', 'political division', and 'mutual respect'. One variable was modified: 'narrow discourse' was changed more specifically to 'narrow public discourse'. The variable 'courage,' which was identified after the February workshop but not placed on the map, was also added.
- The role and impact of the past and future dynamics are highlighted in this map.
- Several disparate factors are linked to the new variable 'revisit past'. For instance, revisiting the past can reinforce an institutional recognition of harm, which reinforces institutional and political inclusion in turn. Dialogue is integral to these reinforcing dynamics. However, revisiting the past, often a key part of dialogue processes, can also reinforce trauma. These differences in impact may relate to the manner in which the past is revisited.
- There is mutual reinforcement between a 'common future project' and institutional/political inclusion as well as accessible channels for participation. The common future project bridges divides across groups in the Basque Country to work towards a common vision and goal for Basque society.
- 'Mutual respect,' while it appears distant from the 'common future project' on the map, does reinforce the common future project and is crucial to its foundation. 'Mutual respect' also indirectly inhibits the

'narrow public discourse' and 'political division.'

- The variable 'courage' reinforces 'open communication' and 'critical reflection'.
- Mutually reinforcing links were added between 'exclusion' and 'polarization' and between 'inclusion' and 'complexity & plurality' in the core engine.

Discussion

This section includes separate discussion and reflection on ground-truthing with the first stakeholder group, which participated in the February 1st and June 14th workshops, as well as with the second stakeholder group, which participated in the June 16th workshop. This is followed by discussion on the overall process of ground-truthing in the Basque Country.

First Stakeholder Group (February 1 and June 14 workshops)

Through conversation with the workshop stakeholders and the group mapping exercise, it was concluded that the mapping process was subjective to the individual's understanding and interpretation of the context. The dynamic of 'reconciliation' is a particular example of the subjectivity that is brought to the mapping process. As seen in Figures A through E, the stakeholder groups and the project team placed 'reconciliation' in different areas of the map. In Figures A, B, and C, 'reconciliation' is a dynamic that is reinforcing to a 'shared commitment to peace.' In Figure D, moreover, 'reconciliation' along with 'diverse/plural encounters' is represented as central, extending from the map's core engine. Interestingly, Figure E leaves ambiguous

whether ‘reconciliation’ is reinforcing or inhibiting to ‘polarization.’ This, in turn, raises questions about the universality of terms. Does ‘reconciliation’ hold similar meaning to all stakeholders in the Basque Country? Does a term such as ‘political normalization’ have a common definition inside and outside the Basque Country? Does ‘peace’ have a common definition across political and social groups? The subjectivity of language is a theme that was emphasized in the group discussion.

The stakeholder groups identified certain dynamics as ‘core’ to the Basque Map of Sustainable Peace that were not previously identified by the project team. For instance, ‘values and ethics’ and ‘culture of peace’ were either added to or directly extended from the core engines in Figures B and E. ‘Values and ethics’ are also more centrally placed in Figure D, while ‘common suffering’ is core to Figure C. In the discussion, members of one group mentioned that themes such as ‘culture of peace’ and ‘peaceful socialization of youth’ may be better represented not as variables in the visualization, but as conditions that emerge from the interaction of other dynamics. The stakeholders creating Figure B aimed to represent how a particular dynamic can frame others by placing ‘silence’ in each corner of the map. While silence is present throughout, there was acknowledgement that silence can mean different things across groups or individuals.

While the project team had the sense that courage was integral to sustainable peace in the Basque Country, it had difficulty in representing this on the map. Therefore, courage was purposefully left off of the

project team’s map, and ‘courage’ was provided on a Post-it® note to the stakeholders during the mapping activity during the June workshop. The stakeholders supported the idea that courage was integral and necessary to work on all other dynamics. In Figures B and D, for instance, courage is placed onto the core engine. Others commented that the broad dynamics, such as empathy, silence and democracy, were challenging to place on the map because they could connect directly to many other dynamics. The group was reminded of the fact that through causal loop diagramming all dynamics are connected through the core engine. When and how to make direct connections between specific lower level variables, however, is also something that may benefit from further discussion in the future.

Stakeholder groups were not limited to using only the dynamics that had been identified by the project team through their analysis of information from the February 2016 workshop. Certain stakeholder groups added the below dynamics to their maps, and these dynamics are shaded blue in the figures above.

- Socially diverse encounters
- Lack of diverse/plural encounters
- Democracy
- Inequality
- Sustainable human development
- Skepticism
- Polarized vision of the future
- Economic inequality
- Historical knowledge through education

The stakeholders discussed the implications of the mapping process and the dynamics that were included based on their stories of

sustainable peace. There was a comment regarding how the experience of the group may have created a preference for the inclusion of certain dynamics in the Basque Map of Sustainable Peace. Specifically, while all of the individuals at the February workshop and most at the June workshop were Basque, not all were born in the Basque Country. Therefore, they may have stronger experiences of the dynamics of 'Identity Complexity and Plurality' than other people living in the Basque Country. However, another individual commented that 'identity complexity and plurality' presented a new, and somewhat difficult, way to think of oneself. There were also comments on the importance of the process of self-recognition in terms of forming identity.

The stakeholders also discussed how the map was more focused on internal dynamics than to external factors. This is seen as representative of a cultural norm in the Basque community that "problems are taken care of at home" and that the work necessary for sustainable peace must be taken upon themselves even if the international community is willing to assist.

Second Stakeholder Group (June 16 workshop)

The Basque Map of Sustainable Peace created by the project team was updated to include additional insights made by the second stakeholder group. The discussion at the June 16th workshop largely reinforced the points raised by the first stakeholder group. Therefore, the project team decided to build upon, as opposed to reconstruct, the Basque Map of Sustainable Peace.

The additional factors which were added to the Basque Map of Sustainable Peace were 'revisit past', 'common future project', 'political division', and 'mutual respect'. In addition, the variable 'narrow discourse' was edited to read 'narrow public discourse', and the variable 'courage', previously identified, was added to the map.

Over the course of the workshops, courage was mentioned in the context of speaking out against violence, and also in connection with reflection. Thus, the variable 'courage' reinforces 'open communication' and 'critical reflection' on the map. However, stakeholders in the June 14th workshop also acknowledged this variable's overarching importance. Exploring and identifying factors that directly reinforce courage to build and sustain peace may be an important stream of future research.

The 'common future project' variable was of particular focus. The idea of a common future project was conceived as a space where Basque people can work together toward their vision for Basque society. The concept of a common future project bridges two important divides. First, it can challenge groups within Basque society to move beyond the divisions and polarizing public debates. Second, it can lessen generational gaps and facilitate intergenerational dialogue about tackling challenges and meeting future goals.

The past was seen as having a particular hold on the development of a common future project. The stakeholders observed that Basque people often revisit the past. In fact, an extraneous revisiting of the past often informs current decision-making and

responses to problems. While the stakeholders acknowledged that it is important to learn from the past and address past conflicts and injustices, the common future project was seen as a way to refocus energy away from the past and move forward constructively.

In addition, the 'common future project' and 'institutional/political inclusion' are mutually reinforcing. The stakeholders spoke of the inclusion of all Basques in the common future project, regardless of gender, sex, age, origin, or class, and emphasized that politics should be people-oriented as opposed to party-oriented. As noted in the above observations of Figure F, mutual respect is important to refocusing this orientation and inhibiting continued divisions.

Stakeholders in the second group, echoing several in the first group, mentioned that while advances in dialogue, understanding, and reconciliation are made at interpersonal and local levels, they are not necessarily reflected among the broader, more polarized public, where structured, official discourse may be difficult to transcend. Thus, 'narrow discourse' was changed to 'narrow public discourse' to more accurately reflect this. This group also mentioned the importance of the subjectivity of language, and the idea that certain words like "peace" can be devalued or used to varying ends. Additionally, following the stakeholder workshop, it should be noted that the conceptualization of 'shared commitment to peace' infers a strategic component. The participants in the second stakeholder group discussed the importance of a common strategy for working toward sustainable peace.

This second stakeholder group also commented on the physical representation of the Basque Map of Sustainable Peace, stating that the two dimensional representation was limiting to the dynamics of sustainable peace. As this group focused on bridging past, present and future dynamics to form their vision of sustainable peace, a three-dimensional causal loop diagram was thought to better represent the connections between these dynamics.

Overall Reflections on Ground-truthing in the Basque Country

With a few exceptions as seen in Figure F, the Basque Maps of Sustainable Peace do not as obviously account for past, present, and future dynamics, unlike the general map of sustainable peace created by the project team. It may be possible to view the dynamics on the Basque maps through a past, present, and future lens if the dynamics are rearranged. However, the rearrangement may raise questions as to whether certain dynamics actually are past, present or future, or would ideally be past, present or future.

Stories and observations by both stakeholder groups also contributed to the understanding of the variables' parameters as broad and inclusive. In recent history, the predominant violent conflict in the Basque country has been political and identity-based, and much of the discussion focused on this context. However, several stakeholders emphasized that sustaining peace involves looking beyond the lens of these prominent divisions to promote a systemic peace. For example, 'legitimization of violence', a variable that contributes to a violent system, when viewed in the context of the Basque

Country, may be interpreted as the use of violence to accomplish political objectives. However, violence in other forms was also discussed. For instance, addressing gender-based and domestic violence and not tolerating their existence were mentioned as factors that must be addressed in order to sustain peace. A culture that legitimizes violence as a method of conflict resolution and glorifies it in the media was also mentioned as an obstacle to peace. Additionally, given the context, variables such as 'inclusion' and 'exclusion' could be wrongly interpreted as applying only to political affiliation, national identity, victim and prisoner representation, etc. However, in addition to these, participants in both workshops mentioned that promoting the inclusion of all people, specifically women and youth, is key to sustainable peace. Stakeholders indicated that sustaining peace in the Basque Country should be approached in a broad and holistic way.

The project team hopes that the mapping process and these Basque Maps of Sustainable Peace will be used to provoke questions, reflection, and discussion about the past, present, and future of peace in the Basque Country. The process of listening to stakeholders and constructing the map has already inspired such questions among the team. For example, stakeholders mentioned a sense of desperation and urgency (influenced by exclusion and polarization) as a factor that led to legitimization of violence in the past. On the other hand, collective responses to crises were also cited as leading to constructive, innovative organizations, including the citizen-led peace movement. What are the conditions and dynamics that determine whether action in response to

extreme circumstances will promote or inhibit sustainable peace? The process of mapping sustainable peace in the Basque Country was undertaken in part to provoke and to potentially begin to answer questions like this one.

In general, workshop stakeholders commented on the importance of convening groups and providing spaces that allow for reflection on both the history and context of their homeland as well as on a sustainably peaceful future for the Basque Country. The workshops were designed to bring stakeholders together from across sectors and disciplines so that opinions and experiences could be encountered and shared.

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

This section details lessons learned and recommendations from ground-truthing in the Basque Country in two distinct ways. First, the dynamics identified by the stakeholders and the experience of mapping and analyzing their relationships in the form of causal loop diagrams resulted in several recommendations for sustaining peace in the Basque Country. Second, as a ground-truthing pilot, this section considers the lessons learned during the Basque Country ground-truthing and how such lessons may influence the project's methodology and subsequent workshops in other locations going forward.

For Sustaining Peace in the Basque Country

The following lessons learned and recommendations are based on the discussion and subsequent analysis of factors, dynamics, and conditions identified as important for sustaining peace. This information comes solely from the three

workshops conducted in February and June 2016 with a small group of stakeholders, as well as the follow-up surveys answered by some of the participants at the February 2016 workshop. This information was interpreted and analyzed by the project team.

In order to be effective and beneficial, dialogue should be trauma-sensitive.

Although dialogue was identified as an important process for building and sustaining peace, the potential for dialogue to be a re-traumatizing experience for participants should be considered. Dialogue sessions should be thoughtfully organized in a way that will minimize this risk, with special consideration of how the past conflict is addressed. Consulting individual dialogue participants about their needs may be helpful.

Revisiting the past, while important, must be done thoughtfully and intentionally in order to promote sustainable peace.

Talking about past events, a key part of dialogue processes, was identified for its potential to re-traumatize. It was also mentioned as a factor that may contribute to institutional recognition of past harm, which is seen as promoting sustainable peace. A thoughtful and intentional revisiting of past events should be one strategy among many used to achieve the goals of promoting a multi-faceted, complex narrative and ensuring inclusive institutional recognition of all harm.

There is value in creating spaces in which people with diverse experiences, backgrounds, and opinions can interact.

Diverse, plural encounters were identified as a factor that can contribute to unity and

sustaining peace. There is a need for creating inclusive spaces in which these encounters can take place. The aim of creating these spaces would be for individuals to encounter and appreciate each other's experiences and think critically about situations so as to engage in dialogue that is free from group affiliation or an 'us versus them' mentality. In addition to diversity of experience, these spaces must encourage representation of all groups, regardless of sex, gender, age, or class, and ensure their voices are heard.

Recognizing individuals' experiences and points of view as unique and complex may lead to broader, more inclusive, and more peaceful discourse.

Honoring the voices and experiences of individuals may be a way to lessen polarization and promote empathy. Encouraging individuals to acknowledge and reflect upon their own unique points of view, and ensuring a space in which these points of view are recognized in their individuality and complexity may lessen narrow, polarized discourse, open up space for complex narratives, and erode the culture of silence, which was identified as a pervasive condition in the Basque Country.

Peace education for youth could help sustain peace in future generations.

The involvement of youth is key to sustaining peace in the Basque Country. Educating youth for and about peace may include providing a multifaceted depiction of history as well as skills for critical thinking, reflection, and nonviolent conflict resolution. The manner in which depictions of history are transmitted is important. Trauma-sensitive education is important in depictions of history, the goal being to

increase understanding of history without continuing anger or division.

Addressing inequalities through inclusive policies may also mitigate issues worsened by marginalization, such as deepening societal divisions.

Inequality may include material inequality, inequality of voice and representation, unequal opportunities, and inequality in access to information. Continued inequality puts Basque society at risk. The history of the Basque Country has seen divisions turn violent, and the isolation of certain individuals or groups could threaten the stability that has been gained.

A common future project promotes a peaceful vision for Basque society and removes focus from ongoing divisions and revisiting the past.

The Basque people have known crisis and violence and have responded with resilience. In the current stable period, the challenge is to formulate a vision of peace and ensure processes are put in place to ensure the sustainability of that peace. A common future project can make material the vision of peace and well being and unite Basque society in working towards the goal of constructing an inclusive and sustainably peaceful society.

For AC⁴'s Ground-Truthing Methodology

Ground-truthing workshops as a space for genuine dialogue about sustainable peace

The ground-truthing setting brought stakeholders together in order to reflect on, share and discuss their experiences of sustainable peace. The conversation was rich, and the experiences often shared were personal just as much as they were political,

social or cultural. The project team learned that such a gathering was an unusual occurrence in the Basque Country but was deemed meaningful and important by the workshop stakeholders.

The establishment of trust both among stakeholders as well as between the stakeholders and facilitators was important to a rich dialogue. At the outset, the facilitators aimed to establish trust by providing insight into the purpose and objectives of the SP project. Their partnership with the Agirre Lehendakaria Center and the University of the Basque Country may also have helped establish trust among stakeholders. It is recommended that the research team reflect on what other factors may have facilitated the establishment of trust during these ground-truthing workshops, and what it may mean for ground-truthing in other locations.

In addition, while the project is focused on sustainable peace, the conversation often referred to violence, especially in light of the Basque Country's historical and political context. Moreover, the project team did not provide a specific definition of sustainable peace prior to the stakeholders' stories in order to allow for the presentation of subjective experiences and understandings of peace. Still, the project team should consider how discussions of peace as the inverse of violence reconcile with the project's definition of sustainable peace.

Systems thinking and causal loop diagramming are useful tools but may be difficult to digest within a workshop's time constraints

The project team provided a brief introduction to concepts of systems thinking and causal loop diagramming. The stakeholders were invited to engage in these concepts by constructing their own maps and considering connections and relationships among dynamics. Stakeholders were interested in the concepts and enthusiastically engaged in the mapping activity and having deeper discussions about the dynamics of sustainable peace in small groups. However, at the conclusion of the workshop, stakeholders reflected that feelings of confusion remained. For future workshops, the project team is considering a more detailed discussion with stakeholders on drawing connections between lower level variables, addressing when it makes most sense and how best to depict a connection between variables. The project team should consider additional methods of explaining complex systems and causal loop diagrams to stakeholders, including visualizations, metaphors, and participatory activities.

A one-day workshop creates time constraints. In February 2016, there was not enough time for the stakeholders to engage in a mapping exercise as the workshop was initially conceived. In June 2016, a more robust introduction to systems thinking and causal loop diagramming may have helped to ease uncertainties about the concepts. The research team has considered the benefit of holding workshops with the same group over consecutive days, but would have to assess the feasibility on a case-by-case basis depending on stakeholder availability. Since it is more likely that, going forward, ground-truthing workshops will be one day

only, the project team will reflect on the feedback from stakeholders in the Basque Country in constructing future workshop agendas.

The project's ground-truthing approach will likely be refined to allow for scale-up and comparison of findings across locations

Ground-truthing in the Basque Country was successful. As a pilot, it provided important insights into the process of ground-truthing workshops and stakeholder feedback was valuable. Some of the points that the pilot highlighted are:

- The ground-truthing approach is time and resource intensive. In order to carefully understand the dynamics of sustainable peace in the Basque Country as discussed during the February 2016 workshop, some project team members dedicated several months to their analysis. Should there be simultaneous ground-truthings, this time commitment would be less feasible.
- The dynamics or terms provided during the group mapping activity on June 14, 2016 were not defined. Some stakeholders expressed uncertainty about what was meant by some factors, either because they could not recall the context in which it was discussed in February 2016 or because the research team ascribed the term to a set of concepts described by the stakeholders. Therefore, it may make sense to provide a glossary with reference to the stakeholders' stories in order to define these terms. A glossary may also aid the project team when comparing findings across ground-truthing locations, where the same term

may be used but take on a different meaning.

- Translation services were important to facilitating dialogue among the project team and stakeholders. Translation services, where necessary, should be used at future ground-truthing workshops.
- The general visualization of sustainable peace was refined in order to incorporate insights provided by the stakeholders in the Basque Country workshops. However, these insights were about sustainable peace more generally as opposed to specific feedback on the general visualization itself. The project team will consider how they can respectfully incorporate the general visualization into a context-specific mapping activity for future ground-truthing.

Conclusion

The overall purpose of AC⁴'s ground-truthing is to test academic understanding and assumptions against stakeholders' visions for sustainable peace. The ground-truthing workshops in the Basque Country accomplished its objectives and enriched the Sustainable Peace Project. The lessons learned from ground-truthing in the Basque Country will inform the project's approach going forward, and AC⁴ invites continued dialogue with the ground-truthing stakeholders in realizing a vision for sustainable peace.