

Effect of media and communication on diplomatic relations & peaceful disputes

Headline findings: Media and communication interventions have mixed effects on peace-building behaviour.

Geographical distribution: Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

Effect: NA

Confidence in study findings: Low confidence

Short summary

Media and communication interventions, such as radio programs and TV shows, have mixed effects on peace-building behaviours.

Long summary

The intervention

Media and communication interventions were directed towards citizen-oriented peace-building programs by engaging ordinary citizens in settings of violent intergroup conflict. The study included several types of media and communication interventions aimed at peace-building and conflict mitigation such as television and online media (Salam Shabab (Iraq) – A TV show and online community empowering Iraqi youth and promoting peace. and Yala Young Leaders (Israel/Palestine) – A Facebook-based youth movement/network fostering peace dialogue. The intervention also included Community and Public Awareness Campaign with prime examples being the *Public Awareness Campaign on the Comprehensive Peace Agreement* (Sudan) that focussed on educating the public on the provisions of the CPA Bill of Rights to build support for its implementation and the *National Memory and Peace Documentation Centre* (Uganda) that used media and historical documentation to facilitate national reconciliation.

How is the intervention expected to work

It is expected that these interventions in media and communication to work at both the attitudes at the individual level and a broader societal conflict dynamic. The intervention for peaceful disputes will work at diverse levels:

At the micro-level, interventions aimed at improving the participants' appraisals of threats to peace while at the same time enhancing their resources to engage in peacebuilding..

On the meso-level, these interventions seek to mobilize individuals into peace-building behaviours such as advocating for peaceful solutions or participation in intergroup dialogues that reduce tension in the broader community.

At the macro-level the interventions may influence individual behaviour in ways that could challenge the larger forces pushing towards violent conflict and so contribute to diplomatic relations and peaceful dispute resolution.

The evidence base

The cell contains one systematic review. The systematic review included 19 individual studies from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Croatia, DRC, Guatemala, Iraq, Israel, Myanmar, Pakistan, Palestine, Philippines, Rwanda, Sudan and Uganda. Of these 19 studies, 14 are interventions based on messaging. The review did not mention any effect size and the data was narratively synthesized.

The review evidence

There are seven studies included in the review reporting effects on peace-building behaviours. The reviews state only that the effects are mixed. No effect sizes are reported.

Confidence assessment: The review is rated low confidence. No effect sizes are reported.

Source: Ditzmann (2017)

Ditzmann, R. K., Samii, C., & Zeitzoff, T. (2017). Addressing violent intergroup conflict from the bottom up?. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 11(1), 38-77.