

# The Purdue Peace Project (PPP)

*A locally driven approach to preventing political violence*

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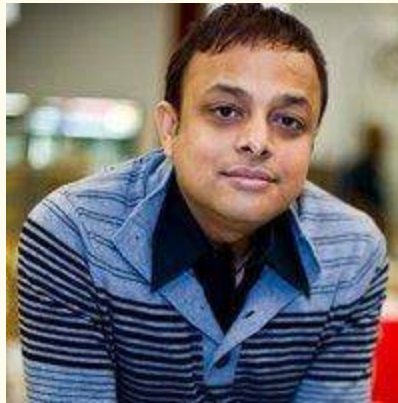


# PPP...It Began with A Conversation

- Fall 2011, Purdue University, USA



Mr. Milton  
Lauenstein



Dr. Mohan Dutta



Dr. Stacey  
Connaughton



# Our Mission

The PPP's mission is to convene groups of local citizens and leaders in areas where clearly identified situations threaten to lead to political violence, and to encourage and assist these citizens in their efforts to bring about peaceful solutions. In promoting locally driven and inclusive approaches to peacebuilding, our goals are twofold. First, we seek to reduce the likelihood of political violence and contribute to lasting peace. Second, we seek to add to the body of knowledge in this field by documenting and disseminating our work to practitioners and scholars alike.



# Our Purdue Team



**Dr. Stacey  
Connaughton**



**Grace Yeah  
Yeanay**



**Yaganoma  
Baatuolkuu**



**Jessica Berns**



**Dr. Jasmine  
Linabary**



**Jessica Pauly**



**Jennifer  
Ptacek**



**Daniel Kamal**



**Meghana  
Rawat**

# Our Extended Purdue Team



**Ms. Rosaline  
B. Obeng-  
Ofori**



**Dr. Agaptus  
Anaele**



**Dr. Christina  
Jones**



**Dr. Kelly  
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**Dr. Kai  
Kuang**



**Dr. Arunima  
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**Dr. Shavonne  
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**Dr. Liliya  
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Holmes**



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**Chris  
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**Tiwaladeoluw  
a Adekunle**

# Our Undergraduate Research Assistants



**Jesse Bohlin**  
*Women's, Gender  
& Sexuality  
Studies*



**Cody Denton**  
*Mass Comm*



**Allison Hemingway**  
*Film & video and  
Mass Comm*



**Courtney Bonness**  
*English and  
Professional  
Writing*



**Julia Donnelly**  
*English and  
Corporate  
Comm*

# PPP Approach

- We embrace **locally led peacebuilding**:

*“...an approach in which the people involved in, and most affected by, violent conflict work together to create and enact their own solutions to prevent, reduce, and/or transform the conflict, with the support they desire from outsiders” (Locally Driven Peacebuilding, 2015).*



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vDFmu4JwOow>



# The PPP's Local Leadership Model of P.B.

- Inspired by work on dialogue (Anderson, Baxter & Cissna, 2004; Barge, 2007; Barge & Little, 2002; Cooren, 2008; Deetz, 2006) and the practice of dialogue in peacebuilding contexts
- Dialogue should be inclusive and representative (Deetz, 2006)...tensional (Buzzanell, 2000)...and potentially transformative (Putnam & Kolb, 2000)
- Inspired by work on leadership as emergent and democratic
  - Leadership is fundamentally a communicative process (Fairhurst & Connaughton, 2014)

9



9

# The PPP's Local Leadership Model of P.B.

- Celebrate local citizens' agentic potential to exhibit leadership and affect social change (e.g., Barge & Shockley-Zalabak, 2008; Basu & Dutta, 2008; Dutta, 2004, 2005a; Dutta & Harter, 2009)
- Contribute to knowledge building and have positive impact on the world (Boyer, 1996; Frey, 2009)
- Contend that peacebuilding and political violence prevention are inextricably tied to communication and organizing (Norander & Harter, 2012)



# How PPP Finds Places to Work

## THEORY OF CHANGE

“If an **inclusive** and **representative** group of actors is brought together and given an opportunity to engage in **genuine dialogue**, they will develop effective strategies and activities to prevent political violence.”

1. Scouting areas of conflict/potential conflict
  2. Baseline data collection
  3. Actor meeting
- Formation of Local Peace Committee***

1. Local peace committee does activities with the community
2. PPP monitors the projects, collects data and conducts post-evaluation



# Facilitate Dialogic Space...and Action

- Dialogue is “...a joint enterprise or a genuine meeting[s] in which people codevelop explanations and options by probing underlying assumptions and reasons why these assumptions operate as they do” (Putnam & Kolb, 2000, p. 98)
- A communicative process that focuses on understanding (Putnam, 2009)
- Relationally-oriented (LeBaron & Carstarphen, 1997)
- Privileges listening and understanding as opposed to persuasion

12



# Facilitate Dialogic Space...and Action

- We seek “...to continue discussion, **to value instability**, and to **temporarily** resolve issues with a **willingness to reopen conversation**” (Buzzanell, 2000, p. 257)
- “Dialogue aims to **transform the conversation** by focusing on presumptions that people bring to situations and by **creating something additive that never existed before**” (Putnam & Kolb, 2000, p. 98)
- Dialogue can be an **impetus for action** (Deetz, 2006)

13



# With this Approach, Local Citizens....

- Helped resolve a 13-year long chieftaincy dispute in Ghana
- Are working to settle a decades long land dispute in Nigeria
- Helped prevent violence between Muslims and Christians in northern Ghana
- Led a systematic grassroots effort to combat Ebola in Liberia



# Berekum Chieftaincy Project in Ghana

**Who is the legitimate leader of the community? A chieftaincy dispute lasting for more than 12 years**



“Local citizens and leaders, with the assistance of the Purdue Peace Project (PPP), have helped to peacefully resolve a 13-year chieftaincy dispute in Berekum, Ghana.

The announcement was made on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013.” – *Purdue University News Service*



# Ebola Prevention in Liberia



Photo credit: PPP





# Liberia in Focus: Peaceful Elections



## Projects sites:

- Montserrado
- Margibi
- Nimba
- Bong

## Nature of conflicts:

- Election violence



# Liberia in Focus: Peaceful Elections



## **Conflict context:**

- Tension between pen-pen riders, Liberian police
- Potential for election-related violence

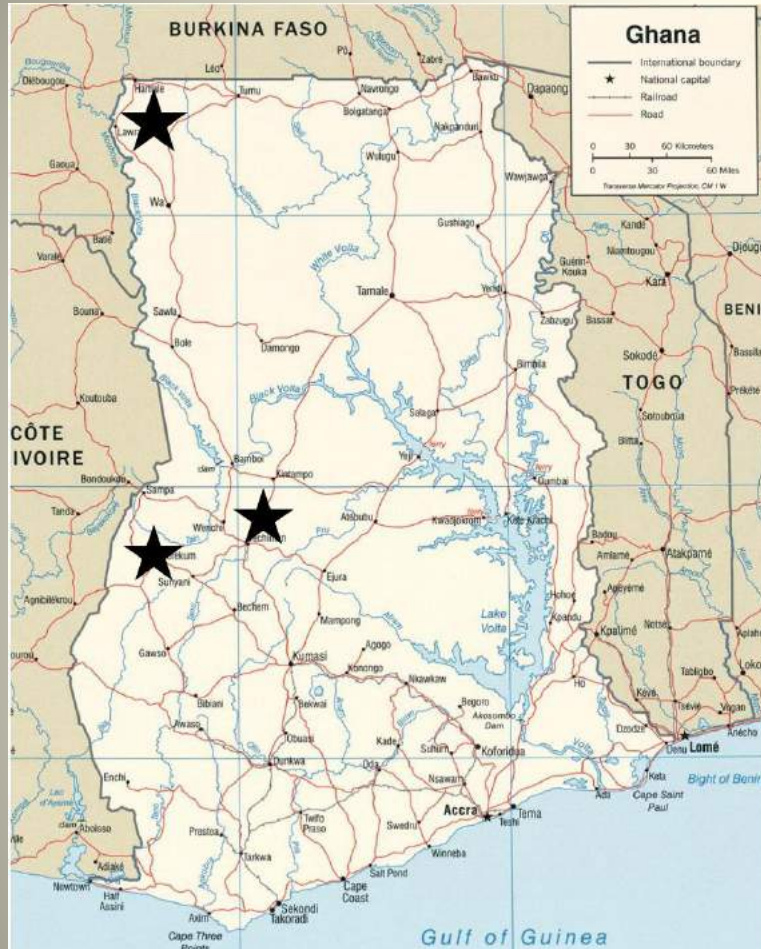
## **PPP-supported initiatives:**

- Continued collaboration with the Montserrado Pen-Pen Peace Network
- Dialogic meetings and the emergence of working groups in Bong, Margibi, and Nimba
- *Strategies implemented by peace committees include:* Confidence building weeks and outreach activities with relevant stakeholders

18



# Current Projects: Ghana



## Project sites:

- Tuobodom
- Lambussie
- Nandom
- Berekum/Kato

## Nature of conflicts:

- Chieftaincy disputes
- Land disputes
- Inter-ethnic conflicts
- Election violence  
(*Evaluation stage*)



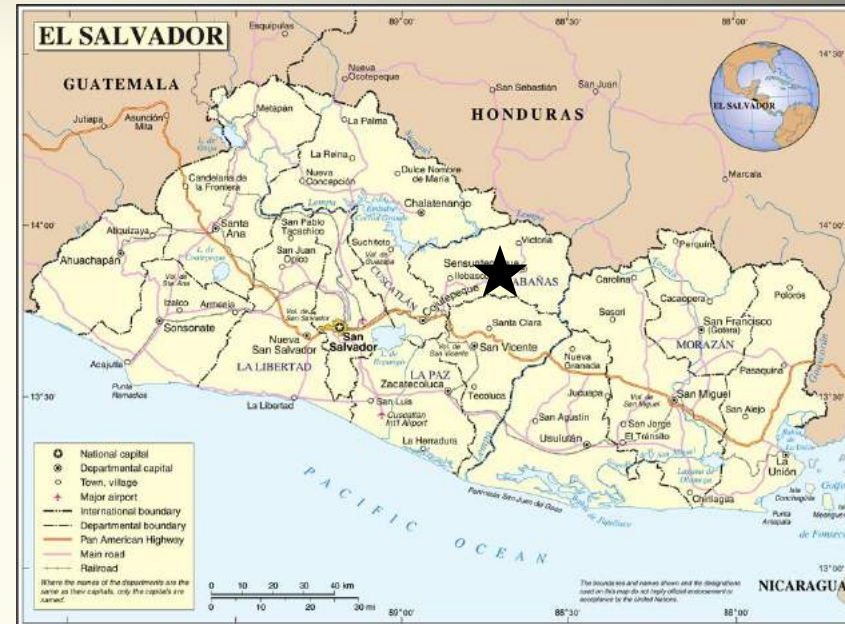
# Current Projects: El Salvador

## Projects sites:

- San Isidro

## Nature of conflict:

- Water and Social Relations



# Assessing the Impact of our Work

## Our approach to assessing impact is:

- **Systematic & Longitudinal**
  - Regular data collections & reporting to be able to identify critical incidents as well as compare changes over time
- **Rigorous**
  - Triangulation of methods, multiple coders in analysis, use of member reflections to validate findings (“debriefing meetings”)
- **Conflict- and context-sensitive**
  - Careful attention to cultural context and conflict when making ethical decisions regarding types of methods, participants, data collection strategies, etc.

21



# Assessing the Impact of our Work

## Our approach to assessing impact is:

- Participatory
  - In line with PPP's approach, we seek to work with local collaborators to identify indicators of impact.
- Reflexive
  - Careful attention to issues of power, difference and identity through journaling, reflexive discussions, post-travel interviews, etc.



# What We Measure

- **Change over time**
  - Change in behaviors or perceptions
  - Change in media coverage and/or public discourse
  - Other kinds of outcomes that are project specific
    - **Note:** Indicators often co-determined with local citizens
- **Change at multiple levels**
  - Individual
  - Group
  - Community

*\*While being attentive to other organizations' work*



# How We Do it: Monitoring

- Field visits to observe local peace committees' activities and talk with community members and opinion leaders
- Documentation through photos, videos, audio recordings, field notes, reports
- Creation of internal reports about activities, preliminary outcomes, and next steps
- Reflections (e.g., journals, recorded conversations)
- Weekly calls with country directors and local collaborators
- Weekly team meetings
- Weekly calls with PPP consultant
- Media monitoring
- Post-travel interviews





# How We Do It: Evaluating

- **Collect data at multiple time points** before, during and after a project using multiple methods, which may include:
  - Media coverage
  - Focus groups
  - Interviews
  - Observations and field notes
  - Surveys (when appropriate)
- Data are **recorded** with permission, **transcribed**, and **analyzed** by team members to assess impact.
- Preliminary findings shared back in **debriefing meetings**



# Purdue University Mission

*Purdue University serves diverse populations of Indiana, the nation, and the world through discovery that expands the frontiers of knowledge, learning that nurtures the sharing of knowledge, and engagement that promotes application of knowledge.*





*Members from the PPP team presented research at the 2016 International Communication Association Regional Conference in Malaysia*

## Cultivate knowledge:

- Began in fall 2011
- 18 total projects across 4 countries

## Disseminate findings:

- Academic publications
- Presentations at academic and professional conferences
- Professional reports and white papers



# Learning



*The Purdue Peace Project team meeting to kick off the 2017 school year*

## Student members:

- Graduate research assistants
- Undergraduate research assistants & interns
- Volunteers

## University context:

- Course offerings and class visits
- Interdisciplinary opportunities to connect
- University support



# Engagement

## Global impact:

- Prevent violence in West Africa and Central America

## Global reach:

- Collaborations with local NGOs (e.g., Rice & Rights and International Alert in Liberia, MUFRA-32 in El Salvador)
- Presentations and practitioner writing for wider peacebuilding sector



*Members of the Berekum Peace Committee in Ghana*



# PPP's Commitment to the Scholarship of Engagement

- Developed the Relationally Attentive Approach to Doing Engaged Scholarship (Connaughton et al., 2017)
- Developing PPP's Local Leadership Model of Peacebuilding (Connaughton, Kuang, Yakova, 2017)
- 7 academic publications, 3 books in progress, practitioner publications, white papers, and blogs



# Currently....

- Developing a Predictive Model of the Likelihood of Political Violence Before, During, and After a (PPP) Intervention
- Enhancing our (Participatory) Methods of Monitoring and Evaluation
- Compiling Case Studies and Lessons Learned about Locally Led Peacebuilding from around the World
- Co-designing Collaborations with Catholic Relief Services, Alliance for Peacebuilding
- We look forward to further collaborative opportunities!



# Future Research: Our Own & Collaborations

- Researchers around the world in Communication, Engineering, Agriculture, Political Science, and Food Security
- Private and Public Sectors around the world

Working together to address complex social problems that threaten to lead to political violence.....

– For instance, in Tuobodom, Ghana....





# Future Project Collaborations



# Questions?

- Find out more about the Purdue Peace Project
  - **Contact:** Dr. Stacey Connaughton (director) at [sconnaug@purdue.edu](mailto:sconnaug@purdue.edu)
  - **Web:** <http://www.cla.purdue.edu/ppp>
  - **Facebook:** [facebook.com/PurduePeaceProject](https://www.facebook.com/PurduePeaceProject)
  - **Twitter:** @PurduePeaceProj
  - **Instagram:** @purdue\_peace\_proj

*The Purdue Peace Project*

*“Promoting Peace Through Local Action”*

34

