

# Storytelling in monitoring

- a workshop to strengthen peace and human rights work -

## The background

In the past ten years, various new tools and approaches have been developed for monitoring our work in the sphere of conflict transformation and human rights, primarily in order to provide frameworks with a focus on qualitative changes. In that context using stories in order to grasp those qualitative changes became a 'promising star' on the scene. The 'Most significant change' (MST) approach which was introduced in 2005 in development work is probably the most popular sign of this shift.

Today the interest in using stories to understand qualitative changes is even more present, as much as the call for fundamentally new ways to approach and integrate monitoring. However, storytelling only appears sporadically in our work and often without a deeper knowledge of the underlying narrative work. Mainly because there are no respective trainings. This means missing out on the full potential that storytelling, and stories, hold for monitoring: the potential to be taken to the experienced reality of those concerned; the potential to re-build monitoring as a space of learning and growth; and the potential to touch and be touched and thereby connected with people - which is crucial in conflict transformation.

This workshop was created to realise this potential..



## Storytelling in monitoring peace and human rights work

Why should we ask people for their stories?

As Jerome Bruner states: narrative thinking is a way of thinking that is fundamentally oriented towards making sense of human action in the social context it is situated in. In other words, if we ask people for their stories, we ask them to show us how they experience the world. To take us to their world. And this visit to their world holds everything we need (to know) when it comes to monitoring. It allows us to see through their eyes, feel through their hearts and reason based on their assumptions. It will tell us what matters to them, and why, and 'where they are' regarding the change process.

But there is more. If we invite people to share their stories we will not only learn if change is happening. We will create space for them to see it too. In this way monitoring becomes a genuine place for joint learning and their collective owning of the transformation process.

As experienced practitioners of conflict transformation and human rights work, we believe that monitoring needs to be newly practiced. It needs a narrative way of thinking, it needs people's stories.



## What to expect from this workshop

The three-day workshop takes you on a journey into storytelling as a narrative method and approach in monitoring. You will be introduced to the 're-dignifying practices' - that stand central as a way to be and work with peoples's stories - and to the basic format of storytelling. You will experience storytelling yourself and you will develop and facilitate a storytelling circle. After this application phase we will close with an evaluation and re-connect again the fundamentals of the story practice and method. Through this mixture of theory, practice and application you will get both a basic understanding and first experience. As you leave you will be ready to integrate the work with stories as part of your monitoring system.

The workshop is designed to work with a maximum of 12 participants, to ensure highly participatory and tailored learning. It will combine synchronous and asynchronous sessions through input, individual and small group work, peer learning, structured plenary discussions and presentations, narrative circles and reflective elements. It will also contain a practical phase to apply the learnings in your own work.

We intend to allow you to work as flexibly as possible. Specific arrangements regarding the timing will be agreed upon and confirmed with the group once registration has closed. While we will try to accommodate your needs and adjust session times to take into account different time zones, some flexibility might be required.

This workshop is the second in a series and can be booked separately or in combination with the first workshop 'Building a new narrative for monitoring'.

### About us

**Kerstin Gollembiewski** is a peace and conflict consultant who has been working in the sphere of conflict transformation and human rights for more than 15 years. While she has been focusing more and more on the accompaniment of PM&E processes, she started to learn about the narrative approach and to integrate it in her work around societal change at home and abroad. After ten years in Rwanda and the Occupied Palestinian Territories she is currently living in Hamburg.

**Gesa Bent** is advisor, facilitator and trainer on gender-sensitive planning, monitoring and evaluation in the peacebuilding field. She works with activists, civil society organisations, political foundations, women\*s movements and networks. In her practice, she facilitates participatory processes for learning and exchange and accompanies people in building strategies for social change and long-term impact. She works internationally and lives in the Wendland region in Germany.

### Workshop information:

- Time and duration of workshop: **30. - 31. January and 20. February 2023**
- Closing date for registration: **09. December 2023**
- Expected workload: two and a half days of synchronous and asynchronous sessions and the implementation of a story circle
- Place: online
- Language: English
- Fee: 1100 Euro / in combination with 'Building a new narrative for monitoring' 2100 Euro  
Self-funded participants with limited financial means can contact us for the possibility of a reduced participants fee.
- Participants: This workshop is right for you if you are practicing or overseeing monitoring in the field of conflict transformation, human rights, or other fields of social change

For more information and to register, please send an email to:

**[rethinkingmonitoring@posteo.de](mailto:rethinkingmonitoring@posteo.de)**

