Appendix D:

Round II, Survey A Results

	Approximately what percentage of the multi-party cases over the last 5 years that that you mediated or participated in where parties were negotiating agreements (i.e., consensus-seeking) began with a formal conflict assessment?	Approximately what percentage of the multi-party cases over the last 5 years that you facilitated or participated in where parties were sharing information or providing advice but not negotiating formal agreements (i.e., consensus-building) began with a formal conflict assessment?
Cynthia Josayma	n/a	n/a
Larry Fisher	50	25
Cindy Cook	25	0
Sean Nolon	75	25
Martha Rozelle	0	0
David C. Batson	100	50
John Jostes	50	25
Michael Eng	75	50
Austin McInerny	50	50
Judith McKay	25	50
John Stephens	50	0
Laura Kaplan	75	n/a
Tom Fee	75	75
Bill Potapchuk	25	25
Murl Baker	50	25
Gail Bingham	100	50
Roger Conner	0	0
Kathleen Bond	25	75
David Bidwell	25	25
Susan Senecah	75	50
karen wianecki	0	0
R. Elaine Hallmark	25	0
Finn Bille	25	25
Julie McKay	0	0
Kathleen Conway	25	n/a
Jan Fritz	100	100
Robin Roberts	75	75
Susan Chapp	0	0
Judie Talbot	25	0
Averages	**41**	**27**

3. What are the most critical challenges you have faced in conducting conflict or situation assessments?

4. What are some of your basic principles or underlying philosophical assumptions about conducting conflict or situation assessments?

5. What would you like to learn about the practice of conducting assessments?

RESULTS:

Tim Hicks
3. Educating parties about the need for and the purpose of an assessment phase. Funding

4. A mediated collaborative negoation to resolve the issues at hand is not always appropriate. For collaborative negotiations to resolve the types of issues we are talking about, certain conditions must exist (willingness of the critical parties to participate, willingness to send adequate representatives to the table, a workable power relationship matrix, adequate funding, etc.) and an assessment provides the mechanism for determining whether these conditions exist and also for helping to establish those conditions.

5. Reasonable expectations regarding time and budget. How to conduct most efficiently. "Marketing" techniques for helping parties and convenors understand the need and commiting the resources.

Tom Taylor
3. Getting parties to admit there are conflicts Building a shared understanding of the conflicts from different points of view. Getting parties, particularly those in power positions to agree to participate. Getting agency sponsors to be agree to inclusive and open-ended processes.

4. Everyone has their own perspective on the problem, the solution, their image, their image of the others and the best way to get to a solution. The assessment needs to allow venting. The assessment's 2nd most important purpose is to help the parties think through if and how they want to be involved.

5. How to do an assessment without calling it a "conflict assessment?" How to organize and present input so that it contributes to a shared understanding without leading the process in one direction or another? How to share results without violating confidentiality?

Cynthia Josayma
3. Ensuring that enough time is allocated to insure that a balanced process can occur.

4. That parties with more power will have little or no incentive to participate.

5. How to engage major stakeholders who don't percieve any gain in participation.

Larry Fisher
3. 1) Lack of understanding of the role and importance of situation assessment (on the part of sponsoring agencies and some parties). 2) Orthodoxy in the use of tools and methods (on the part of neutrals) 3) A variety of challenges in the drafting, editing, and roll out of assessment reports. 4) Confidentiality issues. 5) (Perception of) limited resources.

4. 1) Some aspect of assessment is critical to neutral involvement in any complex multi-party conflict. 2) The method, scope and strategy for an assessment should be tailored to the case and context. 3) As far as practicable, stakeholders should be involved in crafting protocols and in participating in information gathering and interpretation. 4) Assessment findings should be shared initially with all participants for review/response. 5) As far as practicable and appropriate, assessments should be documented as a baseline framing of issues that becomes a reference for participants.

5. 1) The application of various alternative methods for conducting assessments, including polling and social survey, web-based technologies, broad public dialogue forums, etc. 2) Innovative ways of enhancing stakeholder participation in assessments.

Cindy Cook
3. Political forces and how they affect consensus-building processes.

4. I'm leaving this blank, 'cause I can't respong fully in the time that I have to fill this out.

5. I'd like to learn how others have handled cases in which the act of writing an assessment makes on the neutral a party (at some level) to the dispute. E.G. the assessment names issues that some parties want to remain unnamed.

Sean Nolon
3. 1. Convincing the convenor and funders that the assessment process was a whorthwile expense. 2. Convincing the parties that the effort is worthwhile.

4. The assessment process serves educates both the facilitaor(s) and the parties. The skill with which the assessment can be a significant factor in whether or not a situation is appropriate for a consensus approach.

5. How the assessment process can be used to create a sense of ownership among the participants that provides the momentum needed in the next stage.

Martha Rozelle

3. 1. Building a trusting relationship with all parties 2. Managing the expectations of my client, i.e. his or her not knowing the outcome ahead of time; having patience with the process; valuing the importance of the neutral role. 3. Having enough time to uncover and understand the core issues of the situation.

4. I don't use a fixed method. I assume: 1.there is more than one version of the problem to be addressed and developing a clear problem statement with all stakeholders is important. 2. Even though I try my best to identify all stakeholders and speak with them, there will always be at least one stakeholder who will enter part way through the process. 3. I need to make the client comfortable with being "uncomfortable" during the situation assessment and subsequent proces.

5. When you say "formal" conflict assessment---does that mean there are standard methods for conducting one? I'm intersted in learning standard or creative methods.

David C. Batson

3. For consensus-seeking processes: Convincing parties that an assessment adds value to thier efforts that is worth the cost and time required. I have typically dealt with the cost concern by having EP{A pick up the assessment as part of a convening effort. For nonconsensus-seeking processes: Overcoming the perception of the parties that no "conflict" exists &, therefore, no assessment is necessary. I do not use the term "conflict assessment" in nonconsensus-seeking situations, though seek the same types of information & provide feedback.

4.

5.

John Jostes

3. Convincing convenors that the assessment is worth the investment

4. Conflict/situation assessment is dritical to understanding who needs to be at the negotiating table. Conflict/situation assessment helps the parties to reflect on some core questions such as what their alternatives are, what they want to get out of the effort, how the facilitator/mediator can be most effective Conflict /situation assessment contributes to scoping the fact-finding process and establishing the collective information needs of the parties

5. Practical approaches and alternative methods (i.e., best practices) How to proceed when the process is under funded given the information/negotiation needs of the parties How Conflict/situation assessments can worsen existing situations.

Michael Eng

3. 1) Developing clear expectations about the goals of the assessment; 2) Determining the role of participants in planning an assessment (in addition to the role of teh sponsor); 3) Determining how the assessment results will be shared with all the participants; 4) percentage of the available budget cost that can be devoted to conducting an assessment; 5) determining whether to recommend a process design or present suggested process design option; 6) determining whether a draft assessment report for discussion/confirmation is sufficient, or whether a "final" assessment report is necessary; 7) determining whether assessment reports should be private to the participating parties or made publically available.

4. 1) Fairness and impartiality towards all parties in conducting the assessment; 2) Transparency and clarity of the purpose and procedures of the assessment; 3) Independence of the assessors (from the spnsor); 4) Accountability of the assessor for the final deliverable product of the assessment; 5) Respect for confidentiality requested by participants; 6) Careful consideration for the sensitivity of various issues; 7) Sensitivity to parties' reluctance to make initial formal commitments to engage in a conflict resolution process.

5. 1) Alternative tools in additional to traditional confidential interviews for gathering assessment information (along with their advantages and disadvantages); 2) how other neutral practitioner colleagues are approaching the challenges associated with conducting assessments; 3) ways to bring down the cost of conducting assessments without losing their benefits; 4) learning about others' successful and effective assessment designs.

Austin McInerny
3. developing the questionnaire and identifying the correct people to interview

4. ensuring confidentiality for participants

5. question development methods for presenting findings

Judith McKay
3. Time has been a challenge, especially when there are many parties and time is of the essence.

4. Taking a multi-modal approach that will best meet the needs of all parties

5. Ways to conduct them with more speed, yet without sacrificing accuracy and that early establishment of rapport.

John Stephens
3. 1. The time is essential to bulid rapport and trust even more than creating firm data to determine if third party assistance is feasible and, if so, how to design the

process. Yet the stories tend to be repetitive, but one cannot cut short the personal contact because rapport could be compromised. So, in short, the large amount of time commitment. 2. Lack of understanding/appreciation by clients about the conflict assessment and other planning demands; largely undercompensated financially. 3. Responding to new events that have exacerbated tensions while the assessment/design phase moves forward.

4. 1. Unless the parties are well-known to one another, the forum is familiar, and the time is unusually brief, some kind of conflict assessment is essential. 2. Conflict assessment is to build trust and rapport, and to inform the potential participants to an equal or greater extent as the goals of gathering information and creating a report/assessment. 3. Confidentiality is important, bordering on inviolable. However, none of my work is "secret" - I will tell anyone who I meet/talk with and about what topic. I do not divulge the contents of the discussion. 4. It is important to make the situation assessments fully public for inspection.

5. 1. Principles, methods and experiences about face-to-face, telephone and e-mail modes of conflict assessments. 2. Building understanding of the need and appropriate compensation for this work. 3. Considerations of solo vs. team assessments

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Laura Kaplan
3. Conducting an assessment around politically hot topics--sometimes even opening the discussion and asking questions can have negative consequences (or potential convenors fear there might be negative consequences). Budget constraints--it can be difficult to get the assessment funded at a level that will allow you to do an assessment that is thorough and inclusive. Defining the subject under consideration...presenting problem vs. other interpretations of the problem (those of the interviewees and your own as the assessor.)

4. Best to be as inclusive as possible and get as many perspectives as possible. Best to guard against forming your own (assessor's) evaluation / intervention hypothesis until all the data is in. Best to offer (and keep!) as much confidentiality as possible, and be transparent about the limits of that confidentiality. The assessor should become informed about the limits particular to the given situation. Must let the interviewees know how the information they provide will be used, and by whom. Assessor, client(s), and interviewees should have a clear, up front understanding about who will have access to the final assessment report, i.e. public or non-public, available to interviewees or not. Assessment reports should be impartial documents. Clients should not have the right to edit or change assessment findings or recommendations, although assessor and client may need to negotiate sensitively about the manner in which findings will be presented to others. An assessment should always consider the possibility that a given situation is not right for mediation, collaboration, or other ADR process. On a related note, assessor should aware of their own self-interest in the process (e.g. financial stake in potentially facilitating a project, or desire to please a client) and strive not to let it affect their findings and recommendations.

5. No specific learning needs. I'm just interested in seeing what others are thinking and doing.

Tom Fee

3. The costs of the issues assessment phase not being understood by convenor or participants as critical for increasing effective design of quality decisionmaking processes. Whether the assessment should be formal or informal, oral or written, attributed or screened.

4. A necessary step in process design

5. Listen and get a more comprehensive perspective on practices and the differences of approach and the contexts that drive variety.

Bill Potapchuk

3. Working with unorganized stakeholder groups Dealing with underlying issues such as race, class, and culture that are difficult to discuss and analyze without trust building Desire of convening agency for speed Whether the data is to be used by the parties to jointly shape the process or by the convening agency to guide/game the process

4. Conflict assessment should be owned by parties Conflict assessment is a path to the table in difficult/deep rooted conflicts In urban policy arena (my specialty) most parties are at the table with each other all the time, I think it is important to maintain historical and holistic perpspective

5. I think we are seeing more and more situations where the conflict we are working on is a part of a stream of issues among a reasonably stable set of parties. How do we help parties to augment their situational/issue work with a deeper analysis of governance, decision making, dispute resolution systems, etc.?

Murl Baker

3. In March 2003 I was the conflict resolution specialist on a team looking at timber conflict (using natural resources to further conflict). Obviously thjis conflict has multiple causes. Trying to name and deal with the many causes of conflict and put them in coherent framework was difficult.

4. It is critical for those involved in the conflict to name the conflict causes. Equally critical for those involved in the conflict to decide on the measures they willing to use to resolve conflict. Conflict prevention is twice as important as conflict resolution.

5. I'm interested in natural resources conflict and conflict within multi-ethnic communities. I'm interested in approaches and methods other practicioners have successfully used to define issues and establish processes for resoultion or conflict prevention.

Gail Bingham

3. - time constraints (learning what is of most concern to someone who has never met you requires trust building, which in turn takes time) - parties who have little, if any interdependence, and such fundamentally different interests that they can't or won't talk about one another's concerns - different understandings (or misunderstandings) about what negotiation or consensus-seeking is - lack of trust in the entity hiring me to do the assessment - role overlap

4. Consensus-building and consensus-seeking processes are voluntary. The old saying "the process belongs to the parties" recognizes this. Assessments that are conducted with this premise in mind are more useful in establishing a foundation for success.

5. - tools to supplement interviews (dangerous but interesting)

Roger Conner

3. In public disputes, participants at table are limited by pressures from constituencies; external political events cannot be "frozen" while the process goes forward; staff for the group must have mastery of the substantive field in order to draft agreements; without a deadline public consensus processes can go on forever; with a deadline, the end-game pressures can be enormous.

4. Follow the question where it leads (Socrates)

5. Not certain; am concerned that a dynamic, fluid process of ascertaining what kind of "table" or "process" or "intervention" is appropriate cannot be reduced to a formula. I see a danger that the "assessment" as a first step may bias the process of analysis toward the tools the assessor knows.

Kathleen Bond

3. Conducting an assessment within the reality of time and budget. At some point you need to narrow the focus/scope and that's a critical step.

4. *Keeping an open mind. *The underlying conflict/situation may be very complex and not what it seems at first glance. In some cases, a history may be generations-deep. *Listen. Listen. Listen.

5. Learning about different approaches for different conflicts/situations.

David Bidwell

3. Quickly, three things stand out to me: 1. Support from clients to spend time performing assessements. 2. Lack of information available to stakeholders prior to

the beginning of a process. (A great deal of their opinions are based on poor or little information.) 3. The desire of stakeholders to use the assessment to voice positions or work a political position, rather than share full information with the facilitator.

4. Transparency of process and establishing trust by asserting independence.

5. How to better translate the information gained through assessment to shape the planning of consensus-based processes. How to prepare clients for possible results and better communicate results with clients in a way that minimizes resistance.

Susan Senecah
3. Scheduling Face-to-face vs phone interview quality Lmiting participant numbers when a "status" was conferred on the process by participants--dealing with those who wanted to participate but didn't really bring a different perspective or power to the mix and budget/time were constrained.

4. The process is more about relationships, according legitimacy, allowing grief/anger/hopes to be expressed, inviting reflection on topics not otherwise engaged (e.g., BATNAs, concern for others' outcomes, fears, perceptions), and process education/comfort than it is about surfacing information (although that's important too, for sure).

5. Whatever's offered! I can always learn more.

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karen wianecki
3.

4.

5. I would be interested in learning more about the framework for conducting assessments, the approaches that practitioners have used in the field that have worked well and those which have not proven successful. I would be interested to learn if there are specific types of situations where conflict assessments are not appropriate or helpful and how to identify these.

R. Elaine Hallmark
3. 1. Lack of time to complete them and work with parties before some critical deadline for a decision or action. 2. Lack of understanding of the purpose of an assessment, and how it might fit with an actual convening process. 3. In a very few situations, I have experienced difficulty in developing the specific focus of a "situation" assessment with the project sponsor. They may have very mixed motives in undertaking it, and not be clear on what they hope to learn from it. If their focus is too broad and generic in scope it makes it difficult to get a clear picture from participants on the potential approaches for any future activity.

4. 1. They are very helpful and necessary in determining whether a collaborative approach will be useful, and in designing such an approach. 2. I often see an assessment as at the beginning of a continuum in a convening process, and not always something clear and separate. It can be very difficult to break off this "continuum" process to recruit a different person to serve as the convenor, designer and/or mediator/facilitator of the process. The precise "hand-off" points are different for different cases and may not be productive at all. Many participants see the assessment process as the beginning of the "getting to the table" process, which in itself is often a negotiation. Trying to bifurcate this process is not always helpful. You may not be able to recommend going forward with a process or giving up on a process until you find out if the parties can in fact come to agreement on the process itself. I think it depends on what kind of a conflict is at issue, how intense it is, and what investment parties have in the conflict.

5. I would like to learn what is generally considered the best context for an assessment, how and by whom it is best initiated, whether parties have to agree and request an assessment and then a range of what has worked best in terms of practices for actually conducting assessments. I would also like to learn how others see assessments fitting in with convening processes.

Finn Bille
3. that the situation--urgency, economy, and other factors--have not allowed for a thorough assessmnet

4. 1. That it is important for me, the mediator/facilitator/consultant, to feel confident about engaging. 2. That assessment must be continuous and process design flexible.

5. 1 How to do so efficiently 2 How to find key indicators of future opportunities, problems 3 How to refine my own analytical assessment in my nearly complete guide/book.

Julie McKay
3. -resources (time and money) -understanding what the agency (client) hopes to achieve through an assessment and their expectations of what it will lead to (including what may be asked of them) -for stakeholders to genuinely reflect on whether collaboration is in their interests, as opposed to using assessment process to advocate for substantive interests

4. -should be based on perspectives of all stakeholders -should lead to implementable actions -should be process focused, focusing on whether and how collaboration could occur, but also insightful as to whether issues are negotiable and how -outcome of assessment should not always indicate that collaboration is the best option, if such is not the case- practitioners need to be honest about when collaborative efforts are best used

5. different techniques- those most effective and efficient for the purpose

Kathleen Conway
3. Engaging sponsorship of a conflict assessment Obtaining funding

4. Conflict assessments explore the issues, the necessary parties and assess the willingness of the parties to proceed. It establishes a framework to design process options.

5. Practical experiences in engaging interest, initiating the assessment process, obtaining funding, obstacles and how and why they were resolved or not resolved.

Jan Fritz
3. obtaining accurate information

4.

5.

Robin Roberts
3. Being sure that all parties have the same background information about the project in question. Being sure that all parties understand the background information. Contacting parties not traditionally involved in consenus-building projects. Getting the client sponsoring the project to consent to interviews with "unpopular" stakeholders.

4. Try to find and interview stakeholders who haven't participated in past ADR processes. Try to find out under what conditions the stakeholders would agree to meet. What would a successful meeting look like. What would have to be the outcome of a meeting in order for the parties to participate. Being optimisitic but honest about whether conditions are ripe for a facilitated process. Share the draft convening report with all parties (for their review and comment) prior to finalizing it.

5. How to sell the need for an assessment report to reluctant clients who baulk at its costs or usefulness.

Susan Chapp
3. Finding common ground

4. That there is a common ground that can be found to work from

5. Overcoming obstacles

Judie Talbot

3. Identifying the political / cultural framework that serves as the framework or point of departure for the collaborative, and establishing a realistic and solid workplan to address and work through the issues.

4. My perception of a situation assessment is that of the more traditional approach: information is obtained through stakeholder interviews at the start of a process and is summarized in a report

5. How we can obtain the information associated with a situation assessment through means other than the traditional situation assessment process.