



# Michèle N. Ferenz

**Senior Mediator | Consensus Building Institute**

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## SUMMARY PROFILE

- Two decades of experience operating at the intersection of international development and crisis management as technical expert, strategic planner, mediator and facilitator with substantive expertise in climate change and environment, resilience, disaster risk reduction, post-crisis recovery, peacebuilding, and sustainable development.
- International development professional with a track record of success in policy and programme design and implementation. Deep knowledge of international development and humanitarian frameworks, policies and procedures, having served in senior positions for UNICEF at both global and field levels, and advised a range of multi-lateral agencies.
- Proven leadership skills, including oversight and mentoring of cross-functional, multi-cultural teams; resource mobilization and budget management; and policy advocacy and negotiation in complex and fragile environments.
- Extensive experience conducting assessments of technical assistance programmes and global strategies and providing guidance to improve results. Practiced at identifying and seizing opportunities to enhance organizational knowledge and action, leveraging a wide network of UN, civil society, research and private sector partners.
- Adept at aligning corporate mandates and capacities with emerging agendas, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Environmental, Social and Governance Safeguards of international organizations, and humanitarian system reform, at strategic and operational levels.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **Consensus Building Institute**

Cambridge, MA

2014-present *Senior Mediator*

Work as strategic planner, mediator and facilitator of public disputes in complex multi-stakeholder environments, focusing on international development, natural resource management, and essential service provision in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

1996- 2007 *Senior Associate and Program Director, Middle East*

- Team leader directing a multi-year conflict assessment and dispute system design process addressing long-standing land, housing, infrastructure, and development disputes between the Government of Israel and the Bedouins of the southern Negev Desert. This involved intensive negotiations with the Israeli Prime Minister, National Security Adviser, Attorney General, and other senior Israeli officials, as well as with Bedouin tribal leadership on the terms of mutual engagement; training and supervision of a team of 10 Arab and Jewish Israeli mediators; and resource mobilization from private sources and USAID.
- Worked as facilitator with United Nations Country Teams, government representatives and other stakeholders in Benin, Côte D'Ivoire, Mauritania, and Sudan to develop joint strategic priorities, plans, and monitoring mechanisms for United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs).
- Steered high-level multi-stakeholder dialogues on international economic and environmental policy issues through the Global Forum on Trade, Environment and Development (GFTED).
- Researched and single-authored a major evaluation of multi-stakeholder dialogues conducted under the aegis of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) from 1998 to 2001.
- Mediated successful Board-level resolution of organizational rift within major international NGO.
- Developed and delivered workshops on negotiation and stakeholder engagement strategies for major government, NGO and private sector clients, including the World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNITAR, Israeli Ministries of Justice and Environment, Palestinian Ministry of Environment, Water AID/UK, American Cancer Society and Hewlett Packard.

1999-2002 **CBI-IFPRI Joint Environment Mediation Service** Bethlehem/Jerusalem  
*Senior Program Manager*

Oversaw the start-up of this mediation institute, established by CBI in partnership with the Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI) and designed to introduce environmental conflict resolution to the West Bank, Gaza, and Israel. Recruited, trained and mentored joint teams of Israeli and Palestinian environmental professionals engaged in structured mediation interventions to address ongoing natural resource and development disputes, including in the following specific projects:

- Disputes settled over planning, water sharing, and Arab land ownership originating from the creation of a national park in the Galilee, Northern Israel.
- Conflict assessment of solid waste sites and landfill management issues in Ramallah, Palestine.
- Stakeholder consultations on pollution containment in the Wadi Zaimar/Nahal Alexander river basin, reconstruction of the Jerusalem-Ramallah road, environmental impact of a new seaport in Gaza, and joint operation of a sewage treatment facility in Kfar Sava and Kalkilia (efforts interrupted by the Second Intifada).

2013-2014

**East West Institute (EWI)**

New York, NY

*Director, Water-Food-Energy Nexus Program*

As director of a start-up in a new area for EWI, responsible for the design of a Board-approved strategic plan aimed at leveraging the organization's conflict management and area expertise in driving solutions to critical natural resource threats to global and regional peace and stability. Critical elements of this strategy included:

- Building policy advocacy and stakeholder mobilization function, drawing on EWI's broad network of senior government, UN and corporate leaders. This involved both the establishment of institutional partnerships with leading organizations in the field (e.g. International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and academic institutions) and extensive speaking and social media engagements on the conflict-resource nexus (e.g. hosted by UN-FLORES, the Austin Council on Foreign Relations, the Asian Development Bank, the Monterey Centre for Conflict Studies, Fidelity Investments and AECOM).
- Building EWI's capacity in the field of water, food, energy and climate diplomacy, with particular reference to the nexus among the four sectors in regard to policy coherence, infrastructure siting, and integrated approaches to managing social, environmental and economic dimensions of conflict-inducing disruptive technologies (e.g. biofuels, "fracking") and development activities (e.g. dam construction, land appropriation). Maintained special focus on fragile and conflict-affected regions, i.e. Horn of Africa, MENA and Central Asia, including Afghanistan.

2008-2013

**United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**

Global Headquarters, NY

*Senior Adviser, Division of Governance & Multilateral Affairs*

As Senior Adviser, covered Sub-Saharan Africa, supporting the senior leadership at global and country levels in promoting UNICEF's strategic priorities through engagement at Executive Board and in a host of UN inter-agency mechanisms, in particular those dedicated to countries in crisis or

transition. Working in close cooperation with (and, at times, on secondment to) the UNICEF Emergency Division, served as the thematic focal point for climate change and the UN peacebuilding architecture. Selected accomplishments included:

- Nominated for and trained as member of UN-World Bank-European Union Roster for Post-Conflict Needs Assessments, which led to deployment to Libya as focal point on social services in November 2011.
- Served as one of two co-authors of the thematic chapter on resilience of the 2011 Humanitarian Action for Children flagship report, contributing to risk analysis and recommendations for action on improving linkages between humanitarian and development programming.
- Served as HQ lead in DPA-coordinated planning efforts for post-conflict transition in Syria (December 2012-April 2013); and ensured, through advocacy in inter-agency task-forces, the integration of UNICEF's humanitarian and development activities into the UN posture in politically complex African countries (Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Guinea-Bissau, Niger, Mali, etc.)
- Contributed to development of key reports and programming tools produced by the UN System, including the MDG Africa Working Group's framework for MDG acceleration and guidelines for integrating climate change considerations into UN operational plans at country-level.
- Served as lead climate change and environmental sustainability technical expert and, in that capacity, drafted briefing notes and speeches on climate change for OED, including a major address delivered by the Deputy Executive Director in 2011. Also headed UNICEF Delegation at the intergovernmental negotiations in 2009 and 2010 (UNFCCC COP 15 and COP 16 meetings respectively), coordinating and overseeing activities pertaining to adaptation, disaster risk reduction/emergency response, water, education, and youth participation.
- Managed symposium, in collaboration with X-Prize Foundation and Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi, on incentive-based models for innovation for sustainable development in a climate-insecure world, with participation of the UNICEF Regional Office for Western and Central Africa.

2012

**United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**  
*Acting Country Director*

Tripoli, Libya

As Acting Country Director of UNICEF Libya, steered policy direction and implementation of \$10 million program comprised of education, child protection, and knowledge management functions in a complex post-conflict recovery context. This involved building UNICEF's new Country Office in Libya

from the ground up, including (1) Supervising and mentoring a team of 12 professionals in program planning, operations, security and logistics; (2) Negotiating a new programme of cooperation with Libya's transitional authorities and (3) fostering strategic alliances and cooperation with the UN Special Political Mission (UNSMIL), multilateral and bilateral agencies, and NGO partners. Selected accomplishments included:

- Forged agreement with the European Commission that secured two-year \$3 million financing for a UNICEF-managed education reconstruction and reform program.
- Devised joint child protection strategy with UNSMIL, including mine risk reduction and demobilization/rehabilitation of children affected by armed conflict.
- Raised visibility of child rights and issues through strategic communication, including interviews on *Al Jazeera International* and *BBC* on the re-opening of schools after the war.
- Promoted children's rights and issues as a priority in the Transition Plan of the interim Libyan authorities, through advocacy and technical support in the development of sectoral strategies in education and child protection.

1995-1996 **Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University** Cambridge, MA  
*Researcher*

Contributed to policy-relevant academic publications at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs through research scrutinizing institutional and implementation issues related to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and determined the effectiveness of global environmental assessments.

1994 **Charles R. Bronfman Foundation (CRB)** Montreal, Canada  
*Consultant*

Pioneered the development of the European arm of CRB's "Economics for Peace" project designed to promote economic cooperation with Middle Eastern states and designed an applied research program on Europe as a model of integration as well as opportunities for increased private sector involvement.

1987-1992 **The New York Times & CBS News** Rome Bureaus, Italy  
*Reporter/Assistant Producer*

Served as member of production teams for programs such as *The CBS Evening News*, *60 Minutes* and *48 Hours*, and reported on current news events regarding the Vatican, Italian politics and culture, and Italian perspectives on global issues such as the collapse of communism. I also was a regular bylined contributor on

Italian finance and business to the *International Herald Tribune*, co-owned by the *NYT*.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2005-2009 **PRATT Institute of Design (New York), Visiting Assistant Professor**

Taught graduate-level classes on “International Environment of Business” and “Negotiation.” Voted “Best Professor” by students in 2008.

2004 & 2007 **University of Massachusetts Boston, Visiting Assistant Professor**

*Department of Conflict Resolution, Human Security and Global Governance*

Designed and taught graduate courses in “International Public Dispute Resolution” and “Negotiation.”

2006 **Columbia University (New York), Visiting Assistant Professor**

*Center for Environmental Research and Conservation (CERC)*

Taught course on “Negotiation Skills for Conservation.”

## EDUCATION

1996-2002 **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)** Cambridge, MA

*PhD in International Economic Development (all but dissertation)*

- Specialization in natural resource management and conflict studies
- First Year Field Research Paper: on Institution-Building for Environmental Management in Israel and the Palestinian Territories.

1992-1994 **Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University** Cambridge, MA

*Master's in Public Policy*

- Specialization in international environmental policy
- Thesis: Institutional Approaches to Joint River Basin Management in the Jordan Valley

1982-1987 **Brown University** Providence, RI

*BA in Political Science*

Magna cum laude

## SELECTED PROJECTS

**Facilitation of Water Management Disputes in the Lake Ontario-ST. Lawrence River System – International Joint Commission (IJC)**, April 2020-June 2021. Co-lead facilitation

of multistakeholder advisory group providing decision support to the IJC on technically and politically complex water regulation regime affecting shoreline property owners, First Nations, municipal services, regional electricity provision, navigation interests and ecosystem health in one of the transboundary basins shared between the U.S. and Canada.

**Negotiation Capacity Building for professionals from foreign ministries, the UN, regional and non-governmental organizations training to effectively mediate violent political conflicts – Master of Advanced Studies ETH Mediation in Peace Processes (MAS ETH MPP)**, March 2020. Designed and delivered curriculum on negotiation knowledge, skills and techniques for the module on “Mediation Methods.”

**Visioning and Strategic Planning – American Friends Services Committee (AFSC)**, April 2018-June 2020. Team leader managing a widely consultative process involving internal stakeholders and partners to define new comprehensive strategy for success for 2020-2030 for a Nobel-prize winning Quaker global peace and social justice organization. Lead on mainstreaming climate justice movements into program of action.

**Negotiation capacity building for African NGO coalitions engaging business and government stakeholders in the sustainable development of natural resources – International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**, January-September 2019. Design and facilitate workshops for skill building and engagement action planning in Uganda, Tanzania, Benin and Burkina Faso.

**Situation assessment and lead facilitation of a multistakeholder dialogue roundtable on economic opportunities for communities affected by coastal erosion in the greater Lomé area – International Finance Corporation (IFC)**, September-December 2019. Field assessment of public and private sector as well as broad-based community perspectives, on design of potential tripartite partnership for climate-resilient livelihoods support for coastal-erosion affected communities.

**Evaluation of Local Stakeholder Engagement in Climate Investment Funds (CIF)**, June 2018-May 2019 Lead on evaluation of the Pilot Program on Climate Resilience (PPCR) focused on mainstreaming adaptation in development planning and implementing projects with the participation and for the benefit of a wide range of stakeholders including at-risk populations. Field work in Tonga produced 30-page case study on stakeholder engagement and capacity for meaningful participation in adaptation projects.

**Consultative Review of Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) Civil Society Organization Constituency Guidelines and Facilitation of their implementation, including EITI CSO International Board member selection in an inclusive, transparent and effective way – Publish What You Pay (PWYP) and Global Witness**, February-July 2018 and March-June 2019. Conducted mapping of CSO self-governance arrangements in 10 multistakeholder global policy initiatives, interviewed 40 CSO stakeholders, and drafted recommendations for extensive revisions of the CSO internal procedures and practices on representation and division of labor at the EITI Board. Support newly created global CSO

reference group in managing a highly competitive Board selection process to optimize CSO representation at the initiative's international governance level.

**Participatory Development of Consultation Guidelines, Capacity Building and Facilitation of Consultations between Member States of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI), US Department of Interior and World Bank,** December 2015-December 2017. Created and facilitated coordination mechanism, including authoring of guidelines and operational plans, to achieve exchange and common positioning by the Implementing Country constituency at the Executive Board governing the tripartite EITI partnership (governments, private sector and civil society). Designed and delivered training in negotiation and multi-stakeholder facilitation.

**Mediation services and training in furtherance of the Implementation of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises – US National Contact Point,** 2018-present and OECD, Vienna, March 2015. Mediate human rights disputes arising from complaints against US-based corporations for conduct in foreign countries under the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. Provided mediation training for government focal points (National Contact Points/NCPs) responsible for managing complaints arising from alleged violations of revised OECD Guidelines on human rights standards and socially and environmentally responsible corporate behavior.

**Participatory Design and Implementation of Education Projects – Inter-American Development Bank, Haiti,** May-June 2017. Lead training for 30 Education Ministry officials and IADB staff to enhance capacity in managing internal teams and participatory decision-making involving a broad range of external stakeholders, from local communities to national authorities, in the planning and execution of education projects with a focus on governance, infrastructure provision, teaching quality and monitoring & evaluation.

**Government of Malaysia Stakeholder Engagement for Social Protection,** June-September 2017 and October 2018. Co-designer and resource person for workshops involving senior Malaysian government representatives from PM's office and ministries, agencies and think tanks involved in social protection. Workshop combined skill building and direct dialogue on options for improving social protection. Participants strengthened mutual understanding of how government and non-governmental stakeholders could collaborate to address social protection challenges in a complex political and institutional landscape.

**Political Acumen for Senior UN Leaders – UN System Staff College,** June 2017, Bonn; June 2016, Nairobi; June 2015, Turin. Lead training session on consensus building in the context of complex UN development and humanitarian operations (e.g. Myanmar and Sudan) for 25+ members of UNCTs as part of the Leadership Skills Course curriculum managed by the UN System Staff College (UNSSC).

**High-Level Panel: Rethinking Reconstruction & Recovery in Conflict Settings – World Reconstruction Conference 3,** Brussels, June 2017. Moderated for an audience of 500 plenary session with Ministers of Nigeria and Iraq as well as Senior Leaders from the EU, the

World Bank and the UN on the changing strategies and instruments for effective crisis response, including in large-scale humanitarian emergencies.

**Facilitation Training for Lead Facilitators of UN Programme Criticality Exercises – UNDP and OCHA**, June-July 2017. Lead design and delivery of training in facilitation and mediation for UN personnel deployed to guide UN Country Teams through joint assessments of the level of acceptable risk in the delivery of programme activities in high-risk environments.

**United Nations Working Group on Transition in Complex Emergencies – UN Headquarters**, NY, February 2017. Prepared and facilitated inter-agency planning and visioning retreat addressing strategic positioning and priority work products to be developed jointly in the context of the UN's new imperative to maximize coherence and complementarity in dynamic, multifaceted crisis environments (New Way of Working).

**Social Services and Governance: Recovery & Peacebuilding Assessment – European Commission via Particip GmbH, Central African Republic**, June-August 2016. As Chief Coordinator, led stakeholder engagement and analytical exercise to prioritize reconstruction and peacebuilding interventions in the areas of essential service provision, food security/resilience, and good governance/public administration reform in Pillar 2 of the CAR RPBA devoted to renewing the state-society contract.

**Nepal Energy Conflict Prevention and Mitigation – World Bank, Nepal**, January-August 2016. In response to significant community opposition to World Bank-supported hydropower and electricity transmission projects in Nepal, served as leader of a team that conducted a stakeholder assessment and proposed conflict resolution mechanisms, including institutional capacity building for meaningful prior, informed consent and grievance procedures, in furtherance of: (1) conflict prevention and the mitigation of conflict at three project sites and (2) dispute resolution systems-building in Nepal's energy sector.

**UN Senior Leadership Retreat on SDG Implementation in Europe and Central Asia -- UNDG**, Istanbul, Turkey, November- December 2015. Designed and facilitated joint retreat of the UNECE and the Regional UN Development Group focused on developing strategic guidance and a plan of action addressing priority support needs for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) implementation.

**Global Senior Leadership Strategic Planning Meeting – Negotiation Training, WHO**, Geneva, November 2015. Designed and delivered training for 60 WHO country representatives focused on key negotiation challenges arising from the 2030 Sustainable Development agenda and the call for improved accountability for results.

**Leadership Retreat on Change Management – Oxfam America**, Boston, October 2015. Co-designed and co-facilitated senior leadership retreat focused on strategic and operational alignment within the framework of Oxfam 2020, a fundamental reconfiguration of the Oxfam confederation for enhanced impact.

**UN Consultative Meeting for Yemen – UNDP**, Cyprus, August- October 2015. Guided the United Nations in Yemen in the design and facilitation of broad-based dialogue with influential

national stakeholders not affiliated with warring parties, as well as with the international community, on scenario-based planning to respond to priority peacebuilding, development, and humanitarian challenges.

**WASH Advocacy & Fundraising – Catholic Relief Services**, March-October 2015.

Supported CRS field offices in 15 priority countries to produce technical materials showcasing the strategic relevance of CRS WASH programmes in fragile states, with a special focus on institutional and technical innovation.

**Strategic Planning Retreat on Humanitarian Systems Reform – Oxfam America**,

Washington, D.C., April 2015. Led cross-functional retreat of senior-level staff resulting in organizational research and advocacy plan in the lead-up to the World Humanitarian Summit, 2016.

**Strategic Planning Workshop on UN Policy Frameworks for Transition and Challenges Encountered in the Field – UN DPA UN DOCO**, March 2015.

Facilitated four-day workshop for 30 UN agency and peacekeeping/special political missions staff from ten crisis countries on issues including integrated conflict assessment, M&E systems, global reviews of the peacekeeping and peacebuilding architectures, and successes and challenges in the implementation of integrated strategic frameworks.

**Infrastructure and Basic Services Component, Ebola Recovery Assessment – European Commission via Particip GmbH**, Sierra Leone, Liberia, February 2015.

Led a collaborative strategic planning process with UNICEF headquarters, regional and country-level education and protection staff to provide field-informed technical inputs for the UN-World Bank-EU Ebola Recovery Assessment (ERA). Enhanced profile of education and social welfare in the final report, enabling the EU to promote assistance in these sectors as a matter of priority.

**Addressing Impasses in Global Fund Grant Allocations – Grant Management Solutions**,

Washington, D.C., November 2014. Led mediation training for 30 francophone team leaders assigned to problem-solve country-level issues associated with multi-million-dollar grants from the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS, REPORTS AND SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Vandeweerd, V., Ferenz, M. and Whisnant, R. (2020) "Institutional Innovation to Power the Blue Economy: New Partnership Possibilities Between Development Actors and Private Investors," *Journal of Ocean and Coastal Economics*. Under review.

*Implementing SDG 4 on Education: What Will It Take?* Center for Education Diplomacy, Washington, D.C., April 2017.

*Food Security and Conflict in the Middle East*, panel member, U.S. House of Representatives, Hunger Caucus, Washington, D.C. April 2015.

*The Role of Renewable Energy in Securing Water and Food*, panel member, IRENA Side Event: Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week, UAE, April 2015.

*Beyond Technical Fixes: Mediating Water and Energy Disputes*, Conference Presenter, UN ESCWA Expert Meeting on the Food-Water-Energy Nexus, Amman Jordan, March 2015.

Ferenz, M. and Schaitkin, H. (2014), *Triggering Cooperation across the Food-Water-Energy Nexus in Central Asia*, "EastWest Institute, IUCN and IWA, available at: <http://www.ewi.info/idea/triggering-cooperation-across-food-water-energy-nexus-central-asia>

Matz, D. and Ferenz, M. (2005), "Consensus Building Processes in Society and Genetically Modified Organisms: The Concept and Practice of Multistakeholder Processes," Chapter 2 in Omamo, S.W., and von Grebmer, K. (Eds.), *Biotechnology, Agriculture and Food Security in Southern Africa*. Washington, D.C.: IFPRI Publications, pp. 37-70.

Ferenz, M. (2004) Book Review on Banuri, T. and Najam, A. (Eds.), *Civic Entrepreneurship: A Civil Society Perspective on Sustainable Development, Vol.1 – A Global Synthesis*. In *Ecological Economics* Vol. 48: 143-147.

Susskind, L. E., Fuller B.W., Ferenz, M. and Fairman, D. (2003). "Multistakeholder Dialogues at the Global Scale." *5 International Negotiation* 8: 45-76.

Susskind, L. and Ferenz, M. (2001). *"Good Offices" in a War-Weary World: A Review of the Practice and Promise of Track One and a Half Diplomacy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Law School, Program on Negotiation. Working Paper 01-1.

Ferenz, M. and Rule, C. (1999). "The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's RuleNet – an Experiment in On-Line Consensus Building." In L. Susskind, S. McKernan, & J. Thomas-Larmer (Eds.), *Consensus Building Handbook*. SAGE Publishing, pp. 879-900.

Ferenz, M. (1999). "Civil Society in the Middle East – A Review of the Literature." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*. Vol.28, No.1 (March), pp.83-99.