



CONFLICT
RESEARCH
PROGRAMME



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■

Workshop Report

Conflict Research Programme - 2018 Annual Research Workshop

1. Introduction

This report summarises the first Annual Research Workshop of the Conflict Research Programme (CRP), a four year programme designed to address the drivers and dynamics of violent conflict in the Middle East and Africa and to inform the measures being used to tackle armed conflict and its impacts. The workshop was held at the London School of Economics (LSE) from 26-28 June 2018. It brought together researchers focusing on each of the research sites: Iraq, Syria, South Sudan, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), including core country teams and incoming research fellows. Sessions took place across three days, and included site-by-site updates on research progress and plans, and presentation and discussion of draft articles for a special issue on *'Identity, Violence and Rentier States'*, a planned cross-cutting paper on 'What works' in security interventions, and cross-cutting themes for the second year of the programme. This report summarises the discussions and draws out emerging themes.

2. Emerging themes

2.1. Working with local researchers and civil society

As emphasised at the outset of the workshop, the guiding ethos of the CRP is the ownership of the research concepts, logics and products by our peers in each of the countries being researched. One way in which researchers are approaching this is through the formation of local research networks and boards. For example, one driving force behind the research in South Sudan is the South Sudan Research Network, a network of South Sudanese researchers. The individuals selected for the research network are based at the subnational level around South Sudan, in places that are strategic for the political marketplace. The first meeting with the research network was held in March, at which they were involved in selecting and honing down the research questions. A large part of the research is being carried out through this network. The focus of their research is threefold. They are exploring the relationship between political authorities and traders, including the role of traders in supporting political authority; the role of public authorities in security and protection, including chiefs, spiritual leaders and more formal security officials; and local and international humanitarian dynamics, including identifying local humanitarian activists, and exploring how international spending connects to the political marketplace. Supporting members of the network on their own trajectories as researchers is also a central aim. In addition, the CRP South Sudan team has established a panel of 11 South Sudanese academics and thought leaders, with the aim of developing an ongoing dialogue about the CRP research, and the related research of members of the panel.

Similarly, the CRP DRC team has leveraged a national research network that was initially built under the Justice and Security Research Programme (JSRP). RESCONGO, a Congolese research network on peace and security, was formally launched in September 2016, following a conference reporting some of the findings of the JSRP back to the academic community in the DRC. The network will build on the methodology employed for the JSRP in which researchers from the western part of the country would conduct research in the east, and vice versa, and would work together on projects. In addition, a new website will be launched which will facilitate exchange between researchers from different parts of the country. This will also enable researchers to participate in conversations about responses to the conflicts across the country. The CRP DRC team are now using the small grants

programme to extend the reach of the network and incorporate more subnational research, to develop the infrastructure of the network and bring in trainings in political economy research.

In Somalia, CRP will be collaborating with Peace Direct to hold a series of dialogues with civil society groups. This will comprise at least three in-country workshops along with some online consultations. The first of these dialogues will be held this year in Kismayo, in southern Somalia. The focus of the dialogue will be twofold: firstly, asking civil society groups for their perspective on what has been effective in terms of violence reduction, and secondly, they will be sharing aspects of the CRP framework and Somalia-specific research themes in order to get their feedback.

The Syria team has been working with a network of local researchers drawn from civil society. For the CRP, the Syria team have formalised this network and established a new academic hub, the Governance and Development Research Centre (GDRC), which was launched in Beirut, Lebanon, in May 2018. It aims to provide an academic incubator for Syrian researchers both inside and outside the country, to build their capacities and to form a bridge between local researchers and international scholars. In addition, the hope is that this will be an intellectual, innovative space for Syrian experts to freely exchange ideas and perspectives. It will explore the functions, structures, impacts, legitimacy and influence of Syria's public authorities and governance structures at the local and national level; examine the impact of the conflict on Syria's social cohesion, identity and gender relations, and will produce governance-related policy papers to support sustainable development processes in post-conflict scenarios. Like the research panels and networks in South Sudan and the DRC, the hope is that this research centre will provide a framework for Syrians to take ownership of this research process.

The Iraq CRP team has also contracted two local research partners: the Institute of Regional and International Studies (IRIS) at the American University in Iraq, Sulaimani (AUIS), and Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies, in Baghdad. IRIS is a policy research centre that provides in-depth analysis of the political, socioeconomic, and security issues facing the KRI, Iraq and the Middle East. Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies is an independent, nonprofit think tank based in Baghdad, Iraq. Its primary mission is to offer an authentic perspective on public and foreign policy issues related to Iraq and the region.

2.2. Approaches to studying public authority and the political marketplace

The study of the political marketplace can be approached from various directions, ranging from a more economic approach, drawing on new institutional economics theories of the firm, in order to understand actors for whom power can be reduced to a price function; to a richer, ethnographic direction, exploring for example how markets are run as rule-based systems, and what happens when the rules break down. Diverse approaches to studying public authority and the political marketplace were evident throughout the workshop. Researchers are employing an array of different methods as they attempt to capture the logic of the political marketplace and its intersection with moral populism, and to identify and untangle public authorities and political networks at local, provincial, national, regional and international levels.

The Syria CRP team, for example, are conducting innovative governance surveys within Syria. The aims of this are twofold. Firstly, the surveys will explore how public authorities and local governance structures, both *de jure* and *de facto*, actually function across seven major sectors: security, services, civil society, economic, political, social and justice. This mapping will analyse the institutions' regulations, internal structures, size, legitimacy, funding sources, networks and affiliations. Data will be collected through expert workshops and key informant interviews. Secondly, the surveys will measure the effectiveness of these structures in terms of accountability, transparency and representation, including popular perceptions of actually-existing public authorities, people's sense of security and belonging, the level of participation and the quality of services. This will be explored through in-country focus group discussions. The research will be conducted by local researchers based across Syria. The findings of this research will be presented on a public-facing, interactive, online platform.

In South Sudan, life histories have proved to be a rich source of data. These have predominantly been used to explore the role of traders in the political marketplace: researchers are able to ask traders about their life histories, how they became traders and developed their business relationships. As traders describe their own life histories, perspectives on bigger questions relating to their relationship to political authorities begin to emerge. This has resulted in long, qualitative write-ups of the life histories. Additional methods employed in South Sudan include court observations and the documentation of a peace process. Similarly, in Somalia, life history interviews will be used to explore how business people have become part of political processes. Court observations will also be conducted, with the aim of developing a broad overview and in-depth case studies exploring how people use customary and government courts in Somalia.

In the DRC, researchers are mapping conflict networks as a way both to understand political networks and to understand how the scales of violence are linked, demonstrating that the 'local' is never just local. They have been developing methods to map the networks of the first and second Congo wars, how these have shifted over time and transcend territorial boundaries. There has been a progressive fragmentation of these networks, seen today in a proliferation of armed groups, particularly in eastern DRC. They will also be mapping security actors and interventions, and provincial power centres and the capital, to understand how customary conflicts have metastasised into national security crises.

CRP researchers in Bukavu identified two additional arenas through which to explore how violence functions, produces and resists power: checkpoints and kidnappings. Checkpoints have become a central revenue generating tool for a variety of state and nonstate actors. Roadblocks are inherently political manifestations - they can be both a form of symbolic public authority and a goal of resistance, and can be used to tax, oppress, control, demark, disrupt and resist. They are now a feature of the landscape both in cities and rural areas. They can be about more than control of resources: for example, roadblocks are increasingly used as a tool for political resistance in urban areas, where youth groups have started to build them as a way of resisting state authority, protesting against the state and the political status quo, the lack of development and the lack of security. Such initiatives can also be subverted and turned in vigilante-like operations. Kidnapping, meanwhile, has become a key violent strategy of particular armed groups. There has been a steady increase in the number of incidents of kidnapping since 2015, justified as legitimate strategy not only by armed groups, including the state, but also by ordinary citizens. The reasons for kidnapping are varied, including as a means of exerting political pressure, for economic motives, or for vengeance. Both checkpoints and kidnapping can be studied to understand how power is produced and resisted. South Sudan has also seen an increase in kidnapping of national humanitarian aid workers, especially in April and May of this year. An avenue for future exploration could be how kidnapping functions in South Sudan's political marketplace.

While much CRP research is ethnographic, this is being complemented by a number of quantitative approaches. For example, one quantitative project is investigating transnational conflict in Africa, seeking to challenge the incorrect yet oft-cited figure that 75% of Africa's conflicts are internal. This data is misleading, as many civil wars have transnational involvement. This work points to the way in which neighbouring states, and sometimes more distant neighbours, are deeply implicated in the initiation, conduct, sustenance and resolution of conflicts. One of the findings is that in places where neighbouring countries would previously have intervened clandestinely or through proxies, this is being replaced by neighbouring countries sending troops under the mandate of the United Nations, African Union or a regional body as peacekeeping forces. The question this raises for scholarship and policy is the extent to which peace operations of African peace and security architecture are replicating earlier patterns of interstate rivalry.

2.3. Manifestations of the political marketplace

A threefold, preliminary categorisation of the political marketplace was presented at the workshop. One manifestation of the political marketplace is a highly competitive political system, in which there are multiple political firms competing with low barriers to entry. It is relatively easy to establish a political firm and acquire the political budget required to be a viable actor. This is highly relevant to the Congo, where there is a highly decentralised form of political revenue generation, as seen in the

case of roadblocks and kidnapping, mentioned above. A key empirical question in this context is to what extent this revenue is recycled into the political system, and to what extent it is possible for political entrepreneurs to secrete abroad. In the cases of South Sudan and Somalia, researchers codifying political firms according to their resource base and linkages, enabling us to see how they merge and divide.

A second manifestation of the political marketplace can be characterised as a 'functional kleptocracy', with a high level of monetised corruption and internal trading in allegiances within a system that is still relatively functional and centralised. Here, identity politics play a role, not as a resource for trading but for internal cohesion. Examples of this can be seen the DRC under Mobutu, or al Bashir in Sudan. Under Mobutu, the DRC was more clearly regulated as a monetised marketplace. In the 1980s, the regime lost its ability to regulate this political marketplace, and since then we have seen a fragmentation of patronage networks. Since the Mobutu regime finally collapsed in 1996, numerous fragmented, autonomous centres of power and competition have emerged, ultimately resulting in the highly decentralised political marketplace that we see today.

A third manifestation of the political marketplace is the general commoditisation of politics as is currently seen in the UK and the US.

A related question concerns the relationship between the political marketplace and a rentier economy, and how elements of a rentier economy – such as kidnapping, roadblocks, looting of antiquities or control of humanitarian assistance – underpin the political marketplace. The key question here is whether a rentier economy produces a political marketplace.

2.4. Humanitarianism and the political marketplace

The relationship between humanitarianism and the political marketplace is ambiguous. On the one hand, humanitarianism can feed into the political marketplace in highly tangible ways, for example, in the financial flows that can fuel marketplace logic, or in the way subcontractors who are part of the political marketplace may be employed to deliver humanitarian aid. This raises important questions about the particular forms of authority that may be produced or supported through international aid. On the other hand, many humanitarian actors are at the forefront of trying to promote civiness, supporting people in need regardless of who they are. Identifying local humanitarian activists, including those who are not part of the international humanitarian system, and thus may be less visible, may be key to identifying manifestations of civiness. The dynamics of humanitarianism and their relationship to the political marketplace are thus an important topic across many of the research sites.

Across the Somali territories, for example, international aid has been a major economic resource and a target of different political players since the mid-1980s. The substantial flows of money associated with the arrival of UNOSOM in the 1990s was associated with the re-capitalisation of warlords. Over time, hundreds of international and local NGOs have come to occupy this space, with increasing recognition of the role that they play in terms of governance processes, as gatekeepers in political processes from local to national levels. Many political entrepreneurs in Somalia have moved from positions in the aid industry, for example, as heads of international and local agencies, into prominent political positions in different parts of Somaliland, Puntland, and Mogadishu. However, humanitarian actors often play multiple roles in their local contexts: as deliverers of aid and assistance, and as potential mediators, but also potentially as representatives of certain interest groups. Future research could seek to better understand how these actors navigate their circumstances, in order to gain insights into the practical realities of generating some form of civiness in this context.

Similarly, CRP research on South Sudan is considering the role of humanitarian dynamics, including the local humanitarian activists who are challenging logics of moral populism and the political marketplace, whether within or beyond the international system, and the ways in which international spending connects to the national political marketplace. The question of NGO salaries is important here – paid in dollars, this represents a significant amount of funding. Is this being used to fund

dynamics in the local political marketplace? Or is it being used to support families and communities who are struggling, in South Sudan, or in refugee camps in the region?

2.5. Justice

Questions of justice are relevant across the CRP sites in a wide range of ways. This is being explored most explicitly in the context of Syria, through a study of the documentation of violations being collected to inform transitional justice processes. All justice mechanisms depend on such documentation. The research is looking at this from two angles: studying firstly, the international documentation efforts, and secondly, the documentation efforts of civil society. The research has begun by focusing on international documentation processes, finding that these are heavily focused on issues of accountability. This, in turn, significantly influences what is being documented, and how. When documentation is undertaken for the purpose of criminal investigations, the focus is on linking particular perpetrators to a particular set of crimes. This is a narrow entry point for documenting human rights violations: what it misses is documentation of violations that will be able to support justice processes addressing the social and economic consequences of the conflict. Furthermore, the accountability-focused documentation has its emphasis on state actors, documenting crimes committed by the regime and regime-affiliated actors, with less attention to violations committed by non-state actors. Furthermore, the documentation effort is heavily focused on internal actors – a significant oversight given the level of engagement and responsibility of external actors in supporting armed groups committing human rights violations within Syria. The next stage of the research will focus on the documentation processes being undertaken by Syrian civil society organisations.

Issues of justice manifest in diverse ways across and within the sites. In South Sudan, for example, the control of justice mechanisms in the context of the political marketplace has informed contemporary dynamics of conflict and the construction of singular identities. Between 2005 and 2013, following the Comprehensive Peace agreement, political actors – framed as ‘people in Juba’ – prevented the functioning of border courts between Nuer and Dinka areas. Without the courts there were no regular opportunities for conflict to be reconciled and demands for revenge managed through compensation. By preventing these mechanisms for redress and justice, the political elite effectively enforced a state of feud between the Nuer and the Dinka and reinforced singular identities, allowing them to maintain and draw upon ethnically-based constituencies that could be easily mobilised to violence.

3. Small grants and fellowships

3.1. South Sudan

One of the CRP South Sudan small grants will be used to continue the South Sudan research panel, introduced above. A second will focus on the realities of South Sudan’s security arena, assessing security interventions from the perspective of ‘what works’. In partnership with Justice Africa, they will convene a meeting with peace activists and others to discuss this. Alan Boswell, a long-standing journalist in South Sudan and now a researcher, will produce an in-depth paper and shorter policy brief focusing on the current peace deal’s security provisions, and the impact of this for the conflict that spread throughout the Equatorias in 2016. A third grantee will focus on the local peacebuilding work of the organisation Concordis in Abyei, exploring the question of ‘what works’, and considering how such local peacebuilding relates to ongoing, higher-level peacemaking attempts.

Finally, an incoming CRP fellow will be conducting research on gender, sexual violence and control in South Sudan’s conflict. Her research asks how understandings of gendered and sexualised violence have evolved over time, and adapted to and resisted local, national and global forms of public authority, how militias and other actors understand sexual violence in the current conflict, and how this is influenced by external intervenors associated with the global humanitarian regime. This will be explored through ethnographic case studies of four armed groups across five field sites. From a ‘what works’ perspective, the research is based on the premise that for efforts to tackle sexual violence to be successful, we need to understand sexual violence in the conflict in all its complexity.

3.2. Somalia

Another CRP fellow will undertake research focusing on the idea of diaspora as transnational civil society, investigating the participation and potential role of diaspora communities in advancing social and political reforms in their homeland. He will focus on Somaliland, South Sudan and Iraqi Kurdistan, conducting interviews with diaspora activists who are active in their homeland. In Somaliland, for example, members of the diaspora have actively participated in political and social life since the founding of the Republic. Many of Somaliland's key political players have come from the diaspora. By investigating the role of diaspora participants in Somaliland, we can gain a broader understanding of civil society activism.

3.3. Syria

One of the CRP Fellows will explore the role of the media in the Syrian conflict, focusing particularly on successful alternative media interventions that promote counter-sectarian narratives and more inclusive discourse, and which act as non-violent conflict resolution interventions in war-affected communities. She will adopt an online ethnographic approach to observe some of the successful platforms, such as Syrian female journalist networks, and will additionally conduct 40-50 semi-structured interviews with staff and audiences, and a document analysis.

3.4. DRC

Three Conflict Research Fellows will be working on the DRC. One of these fellowships will be exploring public authority and resource management in the South Kivu, specifically considering the ways in which mining reform policy interventions, such as iTSCi, interact with public authorities, including different state agencies and non-state actors. The aim is to understand transformations in the DRC mining sector and the ways in which this affects public authority, from provincial to artisanal mining sites. This will be explored through multi-sited ethnography, interviews, and 'follow the things' exercises along the supply chain.

A second Fellowship will study roadblocks in the DRC as a political technology which can be used for the governance of mobile economies. Specifically, this research will ask how efforts to stem violent conflict by removing armed actors from Congolese mining sites affect the occurrence of road blocking as an alternative financing mechanism.

A third research approach, employed by one of the CRP Research Fellows, will explore the *entangled geographies* of resources in the DRC, asking how different resources differentially influence the conflict and how these resources are entangled in everyday lives. Alongside a policy paper, the outcomes of this research will include a mapping, visualising the multiple resource geographies at play and the violence linking them, and a presentation of the 'commodity stories' of five different conflict resources, documenting their circulation, exchange and use in everyday life, and how this affects the production of violence.

3.5. Iraq

One of the CRP fellows is focusing on Iraqi civil society peace activism, including feminist, youth, civil society and non-formally organised activists. Her research highlights the NGO-isation of women's and civil society activism in Iraq since 2003, the ways in which funding has shaped civil society, with neoliberal agendas depoliticising many activists. The context for activism in Iraq is complex. On the one hand there are examples of popular, grassroots activism. One example of this is a grassroots movement that began in Summer 2015, driven by exasperation at the corruption and mismanagement of the government and the ethno-sectarian system that has been in place since 2003. This grew into a large-scale movement with protests in large squares in Iraq's biggest towns, calling for 'Bread, Freedom and a Civil State'. More recently, in the context of Iraq's elections, there was significant mobilisation around reform of electoral law, with activists asking for reforms in order to include non-sectarian, smaller and secular parties. On the other hand, particularly since 2014 with the war against ISIS, the popularity of the Iraqi army has been extremely strong. The official discourse of success against terror dominates the political sphere, rendering any critique difficult. This is the context in which her research is situated, which will focus on non-formally organised civil society groups and activists, and the definitions of citizenship, justice, equality and class dynamics existing within youth movements.

A second Iraq-focused Fellowship explores the tensions between everyday nationalism and everyday peace in Kirkuk. Kirkuk is a multi-ethnic city that has seen long-standing conflict, and where Kurds, Arabs and Turkmen are all competing for positions of power. This research focuses on the old Bazaar in Kirkuk, Iraq, where different ethnic groups come together, as a site in which to study everyday nationalism and everyday peace. Everyday nationalism refers to the practices through which people enact nationhood and nationalism in their everyday lives. This is contrasted to everyday peace, the often-hidden, everyday interactions between communities that enact processes of conflict avoidance or minimising. In the bazaar, the nation is (re)produced in everyday practices, for example, through the clothes worn, flags or badges displayed, the language spoken or the TV channel playing in your shop. But elements of everyday peace can also be observed – these include using the language of the person you are talking to, going to shops of people of the same ethnicity (a form of avoidance), avoiding highlighting what part of Kirkuk you are from, reserved politeness, and not wearing signifiers that link to your ethnicity. However, the ethno-political dynamics of Kirkuk also have a hierarchical nature: some have a more legitimate entitlement to the space, and not all actors are equally like to engage in everyday nationalism.

4. Special Issue

The second day of the workshop focused on draft papers prepared for a planned special issue on 'Identity, Violence and Rentier States'. Draft papers were presented on South Sudan, Somalia, MENA, the DRC, Iraq and Syria.

The paper on South Sudan explores the relationship between the political marketplace and identity politics, suggesting that while fluidity characterises the political marketplace, identity politics may shift more slowly. It centres on the story of Taban Deng, a member of the Sudan People's Liberation Army-In Opposition (SPLA-IO), who – following fighting in Juba in 2016 and the flight of Riek Machar – declared himself leader of the SPLA-IO and thus also First Vice President of South Sudan, according to a power-sharing agreement. He pledges allegiance to President Salva Kiir, who, with a comparatively larger political budget, can offer more benefits than Riek Machar. In many ways, this seems like the archetypal political marketplace manoeuvre. However, while loyalties are easily traded in this fluid political marketplace, Deng's support base is heavily reliant on singular Nuer identities, which are less easily changed. However, Deng – as a Nuer and a member of the SPLA-IO - represents an opportunity for the international community to salvage the peace deal. For Taban Deng, the international community can provide a constituency to legitimate his hold on power. However, Taban Deng was not able to control the armed forces of the opposition, and the war continued. On social media, he was described as *Nuer weu* (the Nuer of Dinka money). The term *Nuer weu* both reflects the singular Nuer identity that has been reinforced since the outbreak of violence in 2013, and an attempt by people to push back against the violence of the political marketplace by setting a moral boundary to Nuer identity, based on acceptable moral limits to exchange – limits which Taban Deng transgressed through his political marketplace transactions.

As in South Sudan, the paper on Somalia explores how singular identities and collective violence intersect. The paper on Somalia presents a detailed historical analysis of how clans and clan families became dominant identities, through the military mobilization for insurgency and counter-insurgency from 1988-91 and subsequently concretised in peace agreements and constitutional formulas from 1993 to the present. Such agreements are often premised on the idea that Somalia's four main clan families – Darod, Dir, Hawiye and Isaaq – are skin to fairly fixed ethnicities or administrative tribes. And yet, this does not stand up to historical scrutiny. The paper argues that the emergence of the clans as an organising principle and an ideology is intimately related to the organisation of collective violence and emerged at a particular historical moment of state collapse in the 1980s. The militarised, territorial clan family identities that emerged through this process of state collapse have been repeatedly recognised and reinforced by international state-building frameworks.

This process of external powers emphasising and reinforcing singular, sectarian identities is also starkly illustrated in the paper on Iraq, which examines the transformation of Iraq's political field between 2003 and 2014. The transformation of Iraq post-2003 was marked by the deinstitutionalisation of public authority across the political field, including the disbanding of the army,

purging of the civil service, and the rebuilding of ministries on an ethno-sectarian basis through the *Muhasasa Ta'ifia* (sectarian appointment) system, first imposed by the American occupiers. This divided Iraqi society along ethno-sectarian lines, destroying notions of secular citizenship and civic nationalism. This also led to the rise of militias to police ethno-sectarian division and defend resources secured in the political marketplace, ultimately resulting in Iraq's descent into civil war and the rise of Daesh.

A second paper on Iraq focuses on sexual violence committed against Yazidi women by ISIS. The paper emphasises that gender norms are not just one dimension of conflict but rather are central to the politics of violence and the construction of moral populism. Militant radical groups such as ISIS use specific gender norms, connected to perceived religious/sectarian identities, in order to morally justify and organise violence. ISIS reinforced patriarchal gender norms to organise the lives and behaviours of those under their control and to justify commodification of and violence against women and girls.

The DRC team's contribution to the special issue explores the role of ethnic identity as a currency in Congo's political marketplace, highlighting that money is not the only currency. Identity politics are integral to the functioning of the DRC's political order, with ethnicity as a key characteristic of trading networks. The political connections between identity and power go back to colonialism, when indirect rule confirmed identity as a marker of territory and power.

The MENA paper suggests that aggressive forms of sectarian identity politics, and elevated levels of external intervention and funding for warring factions from regional players, in Libya, Iraq, Syria and Yemen, are not new: rather, they are extensions of the logics of moral populism and the political marketplace that have long characterized the MENA 'system'. The paper argues that the best way to explain regional politics, societal tensions and conflicts since the oil boom of the 1970s is as a regional insecurity system, bound together by the logics of moral populism and the financial patronage of the political marketplace.

Finally, a paper on Syria traces the transition from semi-rentier to rentier state. The paper documents the interrelated development of the political marketplace in Syria and of sectarianism, fostered through violence. It highlights how the decline in the contribution of the productive economy in the years preceding the outbreak of conflict in 2011 mirrors a decline in political stability and absence of violence over the same timeframe. This was accompanied by increasing restrictions on space for civil society and the feminist movement, and increasingly space for religious movements. By 2004-5, we see an increase in violent clashes based on identity across several parts of the country. A second paper traces the changing control of Raqqa during the war, through regime, armed opposition, JAN, ISIS, SDF/coalition control. The study clearly highlights the interrelationship between sectarian, singular identities, authoritarianism and the political marketplace.

The draft papers consider, in various ways, the relationship between violence, identity politics and the political marketplace. In numerous contexts, singular identities can be seen as emerging from violence. This will be explored in the first part of the introduction to the special issue.

The second part of the Introduction to the special issue will focus on identity in relation to the changing socio-economic context. There are three dimensions to this. Firstly, the information-based economy has reduced the importance of the territorially-based economy. An increasingly global class of educated people participate in a transnational, information-based economy, while, at the same time, there is an increasing underclass of people in service-type occupations, also often transnational, with a huge decline in the physically-based industrial work that was the backbone of nationalist ideology. Secondly, the shift from print technology to electronic communications has been hugely important. Thirdly, there has been a fundamental change in the nature of the state, with the globalisation of the economy and of communications facilitating evasion for the dominance of the state. The richest parts of society have seceded from the state, while those that remain have to carry the burden.

5. Security interventions

This year, research outputs have been commissioned from each of the five case countries or regions on 'what works' in security interventions. A number of preliminary conclusions have been reached which will be reflected in a cross-cutting paper.

A first, crucial conclusion concerns the distinction between a security 'sector' and a security 'arena'. Security sector reforms are premised on a set of basic assumptions, including the existence of a 'security sector', including an army, law enforcement, judiciary and transnational security. While various reforms may be seen as necessary, the security sector itself 'exists'. This is not the case in the CRP case study countries. Instead of a security 'sector' we can conceptualise a security 'arena', comprised of diverse, disparate and rivalrous security actors with widely varying levels of organisation, training, equipment and remuneration. Their rules of engagement depend on the desires of their political sponsors. The possibilities for intervention here are different from contexts in which a 'security sector' exists, and attempts at 'security sector reform' in such contexts are premised on incorrect assumptions.

A second conclusion emerging from this project, and reiterated throughout the workshop, is that peace agreements shape both what is needed and what is possible in post-settlement security interventions. The centrality of peace agreements has been problematic across all sites. In a political marketplace framework, a peace agreement is a bargain struck at a particular moment in time and is only as good as those political marketplace conditions. As one participant noted, a peace agreement "*sets up the chess board*": it is the beginning of a process, not the end, and can constrain the space for what happens next.

A third conclusion is that the nature and operating logic of public authority shapes how security is delivered and experienced. However much money goes into reform, if the prevailing logic is the political marketplace and moral populism, the investments will be co-opted by that logic. The key is therefore to figure out how to shift the logics.

Fourthly, in all of the case countries, regional dynamics are crucial. Security formations are commonly linked to outside power sponsorship, and so country-specific programmes, ignoring the geo-politics of the region, likely will not work. Understanding cross-border power networks is therefore crucial.

A fifth point is that political will matters – there must be demand for security sector reform both domestically and within the region. Relatedly, a lack of common vision for security sector reform – not only among national actors, but also amongst the donor community and powerful neighbours – will result in a fragmented and often overly technical approach for what are fundamentally political problems.

Finally, there is a need to distinguish between short term needs and risks – such as the maintenance of order – and long-term reform processes, such as security sector reform.

6. Year Two Cross-Cutting Themes

6.1. Civicism

The concept of civicism is central to the CRP, referring to the ways in which people try to constitute more humane forms of public authority.¹ It will be one of the cross-cutting themes for the second year of the CRP, and emerged during the course of the workshop in various ways.

Translating civicism

Part of the CRP's approach to civicism concerns the various ways in which the logics of the political marketplace are challenged in the vernacular.² This emerged as a theme at the workshop,

¹ See CRP Inception Report, 2017, p3

² CRP Inception Report, p12

considering the different ways in which civicism may be translated or vernacularized, and the implications of this for what we consider as manifestations of civicism.

The CRP DRC team are using the term *Citoyenneté*, meaning citizenship, in a literal and more symbolic sense, in place of *civism*. This follows from a workshop held in Kinshasa on Congolese understandings of *citoyenneté*. Youth activists, including emerging youth non-violent social movements, have been using the notion of *citoyenneté* as an act of protest. Every Saturday morning, youth activists have been participating in what was once a state-imposed citizen service – Salongo. This was originally imposed by Mobutu as part of civic duty, but is now being used by the youth activists to subvert the state. In what has become a quietly subversive action, every Saturday, youth activists clean up garbage in their neighbourhoods, for which they are locked up by state security. This has taken on particular importance as December's national elections approach. *Citoyenneté* thus has a double meaning – it is partly something imposed by the regime, but also a framework of resistance against it.

In Syria, the relevant term might be *Madani*, which also has a dual meaning. It is associated with civicism and civil society, but also with being urban – in Arabic, *Medina* translates to city. Also important is that *Madani* is about community and collectivities, rather than individualism. As a *Madani*, when you are promoting the *Medina*, you are promoting the neighbourhood's or community's interests.

This overlaps with the word *civic*, derived from *civicus*, which has similar associations with the town and with the collective. The word came into English from Latin. In the Roman republic, the *civic crown* was given to people who saved the lives of fellow citizens in battle. Civicism could then be about helping fellow citizens to avoid violence.

Manifestations of civicism

Diverse manifestations of civicism can be found across the CRP sites, undertaken by an array of different actors in the midst of conflict. Wide-ranging examples emerged throughout the workshop, indicating the breadth of forms of civicism that could be explored during the second year.

For example, in the DRC, refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) are primarily hosted by Congolese communities, where they are integrated into society and provided with support. Structures of support are created in order to resolve tensions. Researchers noted that there was a great deal of civicism in these relationships, in these communities, and in the actions that they take to help communities in need. Research amongst lawyers and paralegals in South Sudan reveals another form of civicism. Legal activists at the margins are able to provide some resistance to the dominant logics of the political marketplace in South Sudan. Their ability to act in a highly constrained environment stems from their social and cultural capital, including their engagement with the different forms of power, their understanding of status legality, and their connections to various actors, including humanitarian organisations and customary authorities. Though small in number, their ability to challenge the system demonstrates the kind of political agency that is possible in such a challenging environment. In Syria, examples of civicism can be seen in the communities seeking to stay outside the war; such as the group of businessmen in Hama in Syria, who paid armed groups to leave the city, representing a locally-driven initiative to keep the city secure.

Manifestations of civicism may also be transnational, something evident in the role of diaspora communities supporting social change in their 'homeland'. This topic will be explored by one of the CRP Conflict Research Fellows, as described above. Alongside promoting civicism, diaspora communities might also play a role in fuelling moral populism or funding the political marketplace. Examples of this emerged numerous times during the course of the workshop: from the development of moral populism amongst members of the Iraqi diaspora in London in the 1990s, later transported to Iraq, to Nuer diaspora influence on online shared identity building, and the splits in the South Sudanese diaspora according to politics.

6.2. Mediation and peace agreements

Community level dialogue and mediation, including elements of support for civil society, is one of five types of 'intervention' identified for further study in the CRP inception report. This will be the subject of a policy report in year 2. A discussion of this theme on the final day focused particularly on the challenges and limitations of international support to local initiatives. One participant argued, for example, that, *"once you touch local mediation you spoil it. In Hama, if international actors had tried to intervene they would have spoiled it immediately. All you can do is create better conditions, an enabling environment"*.

The DRC Congo team will be exploring under what conditions local mediation or local peacebuilding is successful in preventing the emergence or re-emergence of violence.