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TOWARDS LEGITIMATE STABILITY IN CAR AND THE DRC: EXTERNAL ASSUMPTIONS AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

Policy Report

JAIR VAN DER LIJN, TIM GLAWION AND NIKKI DE ZWAAN

STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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Authors' note

This paper is one of three in a collection comprising two policy studies and a policy report that synthesizes the two studies. In addition to this paper, the other two in this collection are the policy studies *Securing Legitimate Stability in CAR: External Assumptions and Local Perspectives* and *Securing Legitimate Stability in DRC: External Assumptions and Local Perspectives*.

The research for this work was done in cooperation with Cordaid, a development and humanitarian organization, working to end poverty and exclusion. Cordaid does this in the world's most fragile and conflict-affected areas, including the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Cordaid's Security and Justice program focuses on improving access to effective, accountable and inclusive security and justice services (through result-based financing approaches), ensuring that women and youth can participate meaningfully in peace and governance processes, and strengthening civil society capacity to lobby and advocate for positive change.

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Abbreviations

ANR	L'Agence nationale des renseignements (National Intelligence Agency)
CAR	Central African Republic
CLSP	Comités locaux pour la sécurité de proximité (local committees for neighborhood security)
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DRC	Republic of the Congo
FACA	Force Armée Centrafricaine,
FARDC	Forces Armees de la Republique Democratique du Congo
FPRC	Front Populaire pour la Renaissance de la Centrafrique
IDP	Internally displaced person
INGO	International non-governmental organization
MINUSCA	UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MONUSCO	UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
NGO	non-governmental organization
PNC	Police Nationale Congolaise (national police of the DRC)
SSR	Security sector reform
UPC	Unité pour la Paix en Centrafrique
VNG	Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten (International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities)

I. Introduction

External stabilization interventions often have unforeseen impacts on local dynamics in terms of state legitimacy and inclusivity. This affects the prospects for 'legitimate stability'. The process through which such external interventions and local actors interact and produce new, often unplanned, outcomes for good or ill is called 'friction'.[1] The project of which this is the synthesis report has explored the assumptions that underlay such interventions by international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and UN peace operations in the field of security and justice provision and compared them with the perceptions and experiences of local populations and key stakeholders, such as public authorities, politicians, community leaders, civil society representatives and the leadership of armed groups. This report unpacks the similarities and differences between the aims and objectives of external intervenors and the desires of local communities and key stakeholders.

The dominant assumption in the international development policy discourse, as exemplified in Sustainable Development Goal 16 and the Sustaining Peace Agenda, is that strengthening a state's capacity to provide inclusive security and justice will lead to a stronger social contract in which governments gain in popular legitimacy, which in turn contributes to legitimate stability.[2] Similarly, UN peace operations, while originally deployed under the UN's peacekeeping principles—consent of the parties, impartiality and non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate—have stretched these principles over the past two decades and are increasingly being given mandates to support and strengthen government institutions and to extend state authority.[3] During—and often also after—conflict, however, stakeholders do not have identical views on how the social contract should look. Consequently, strengthening the state may not necessarily lead to greater stability and may not be perceived by all to be legitimate. Moreover, as populations are often also divided, a focus on community needs, which many INGOs have attempted—or a people-centred approach, one of the latest concepts in UN peace operations—is often difficult to operationalize.[4]

Given these questions, this research project set out to understand the assumptions external intervenors have made about the provision of security and justice, and to contrast these with the desires and wishes of the local population concerning the social contract. The analysis looks at the discrepancies and similarities between the assumptions of external intervenors and the perceptions and experiences of local populations and key stakeholders, as well as the risks and opportunities linked to achieving legitimate stability that result from them.

This synthesis report first provides a short overview of the existing debates on the topic and describes the methodology used in the project. On the basis of two case studies on the Central African Republic (CAR) and South Kivu province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), it examines the discrepancies, similarities, risks

[1] Millar, G., Van der Lijn, J. and Verkoren, W., 'Peacebuilding plans and local reconfigurations: Frictions between imported processes and indigenous practices', *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 20, no. 2 (2013), pp. 137–43; and Björkdahl, A. et al. (eds), *Peacebuilding and Friction: Global and Local Encounters in Post-conflict Societies* (Routledge: London and New York, 2016).

[2] United Nations, General Assembly, Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, A/RES/70/1, 21 Oct. 2015; and, United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace: Report of the Secretary-General, A/72/707-S/2018/4318, Jan. 2018.

[3] The principles of peacekeeping were first formulated in UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim's report on the establishment of the second United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF II). See United Nations, Security Council, Peacebuilding and sustaining peace, Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 340 (1973), S/11052/Rev.1, 27 Oct. 1973; and De Coning, C. et al., 'Towards more people-centric peace operations: From "extension of state authority" to "strengthening inclusive state-society relations"', *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development*, vol. 4, no. 1 (2015), Art. 49, pp. 1–13.

[4] United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, 'Identical letters dated 17 June 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council', A/70/95-S/2015/446, 17 June 2015.

and opportunities identified with regard to the questions of the role of the state, the provision of security and justice, and inclusion and the social contract. Its recommendations aim to contribute guidance on how best to identify, account for and navigate the risks and opportunities identified. The synthesis report brings together the findings of two case studies, which are published separately.

II. State of the art and analytic concepts

A fundamental issue in society is that when humans interact, there will always be the potential for violence. Political philosophers from Aristotle to Montesquieu discussed how to overcome a possible 'war of all against all', triggering a continuing discussion on the social contract. Max Weber—who based his work on the reflections of Georg Jellinek—shaped the Western view on the definition of a functioning social contract: a state with a delineated territory, a specific population and a monopoly on the legitimate use of force.[5] However, statehood is a historical anomaly rather than a typical end-state of human society.[6] While some authors have labelled non-state systems as deficient, that is as 'failed' or 'weak' states, other scholars prefer to investigate their functioning as is, rather than in comparison with a Weberian state ideal. David K. Leonard, for instance, has reflected on how social contracts can be formed even today not just between individuals, but also between population groups.[7] Together with Mohamad S. Samantar, he delved into the situation in Somalia, which is often described as a 'failed state', and found that people can seek security in their kin group, and that contracts are often struck between clan representatives rather than the general population.[8]

A key issue of the social contract is the provision of security—and in its extended form the production of a sense of justice—to provide the necessary legitimacy for people to continue to adhere to the contract. State institutions will find it difficult to mobilize public support if they cannot provide security.[9] The typical way in which a modern state provides security and justice is by monopolizing the legitimate use of force.[10] The state must continually prove its primary claim on the use of violence.[11] However, it can quickly stray beyond what is socially acceptable as commensurate violence and itself become a threat to people's security.[12] Andreas Mehler, for instance, found that state security forces were more often part of the problem than a solution to Africa's security concerns.[13] When investigating security and justice it is thus important to go

[5] Weber, M., 'Die drei reinen typen der legitimen herrschaft' [The three pure types of legitimate rule], ed. J. Winckelmann, *Gesammelte Aufsätze Zur Wissenschaftslehre* (J. C. B Mohr: Tübingen, 1988/1922), pp. 475–88.

[6] Von Trotha, T., 'Vom wandel des gewaltmonopols oder der aufstieg der präventiven sicherheitsordnung' [On changes to the monopoly on the use of force or the rise of the preventive security order], *Kriminologisches Journal*, vol. 42, no. 3 (2010), pp. 218–35.

[7] Leonard, D. K., 'Social contracts, networks and security in tropical African conflict states: An overview', *IDS Bulletin*, vol. 44, no. 1 (2013), pp. 1–14.

[8] Leonard, D. K. and Samantar, M. S., 'What does the Somali experience teach us about the social contract and the state?', *Development and Change*, vol. 42, no. 2 (2011), pp. 559–84.

[9] Migdal, J. S., *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ, 1988), p. 288.

[10] Von Trotha, T., 'Jenseits des staates: Neue formen politischer herrschaft' [Beyond the state: New forms of political domination], eds J. E. Akude et al., *Politische Herrschaft Jenseits Des Staates: Zur Transformation Von Legitimität in Geschichte Und Gegenwart* (VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften: Wiesbaden, 2011), pp. 26, 46.

[11] Koloma Beck, T. and Schlichte, K., *Theorien Der Gewalt Zur Einführung* [Introduction to theories of violence] (Junius: Hamburg, 2014), p. 20.

[12] Von Trotha, T., 'Die Präventive Sicherheitsordnung' [The preventive security order], ed. W. Ruf, *Politische Ökonomie Der Gewalt: Staatszerfall Und Die Privatisierung Von Gewalt Und Krieg*, (VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften: Wiesbaden, 2003), pp. 51–75.

[13] Mehler, A., *The Production of Insecurity by African Security Forces: Insights from Liberia and the Central African Republic* (GIGA Working Papers, 2009), p. 7.

beyond state-centred regime survival to emphasize how they are perceived from the bottom-up.[14]

For many actors in the policy world, strengthening the state remains a preferred avenue for delivering security and justice.[15] Peace operations are moving away from peace- and state-building and towards a narrow focus on security capabilities under the new term 'stabilization'.[16] The UN peace operations in both CAR and the DRC follow this logic. They follow the 'pacification war' idea, whereby a foreign power attempts to monopolize the use of force in the hands of a legitimate state institution.[17] Such stabilization interventions risk strengthening status quo forces and entrenching autocratic regimes.[18]

This study examines the social contract from a critical perspective on top-down and bottom-up assumptions on how security and justice can or should be delivered in CAR and South Kivu province. It acknowledges that populations are not just recipients, but participants in the shaping of state institutions.[19] It also recognizes that perceived 'chaotic' processes or the label 'crisis' in the two conflict-ridden countries are part of what shapes the state and its power structures.[20] It therefore analyses all the security actors involved at multiple levels to observe how their various order-making measures affect other actors' habits and people's perceptions of security.[21]

III. Methodology

This study involved two case studies: one in CAR and the other in South Kivu province in the DRC. Both areas have relatively similar population sizes of 4.7 and 5.7 million, respectively, but CAR is about ten times the size of South Kivu province (622 984 km^2 as opposed to 65 070 km^2). Both areas have a history of violent conflict and the presence of peace operations, and both currently host a UN peace operation—the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). While these two case studies do not allow for extrapolation and generalization, they do provide relevant insights that are applicable to other areas.

Each case study looked at the aims and objectives of external intervenors—the UN peace operation and two INGOs. In CAR these are MINUSCA, CORDAID and Plan International, while in South Kivu province these are MONUSCO, CORDAID and VNG International (the International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities). In addition to desk research on the most relevant policy documents and literature, over 20 interviews were held in CAR and nearly

[14] Randeria, S., 'Jenseits von soziologie und soziokultureller anthropologie: Zur ortsbestimmung der nichtwestlichen welt in einer zukünftigen sozialtheorie' [Beyond sociology and socio-cultural anthropology: on the position of the non-western world in a future social theory], *Soziale Welt*, vol. 50 (1999), pp. 373–82; and Hönke, J. and Müller, M.-M., 'Governing (in)security in a postcolonial world: Transnational entanglements and the worldliness of "local" practice', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 43, no. 5 (2012), pp. 383–401.

[15] See e.g. Fukuyama, F., '"Stateness" first', *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 16, no. 1 (2005), pp. 84–88.

[16] Karlsrud, J., 'From liberal peacebuilding to stabilization and counterterrorism', *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 26, no. 1 (2019), pp. 1–21.

[17] Von Trotha, T., 'Jenseits Des Staates: Neue Formen Politischer Herrschaft' [Beyond the state: New forms of political domination], 2011, pp. 41f.

[18] Schneckener, U., 'Unintended consequences of international statebuilding', eds C. Daase and C. Friesendorf, *Rethinking Security Governance: The Problem of Unintended Consequences* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 62–81.

[19] Meagher, K., 'The strength of weak states? Non-state security forces and hybrid governance in Africa', *Development and Change*, vol. 43, no. 5 (2012), pp. 1073–1101.

[20] Kalyvas, S. N., Shapiro, I. and Masoud, T. (eds), *Order, Conflict and Violence* (Cambridge: University Press: Cambridge, 2008).

[21] Glawion, T., *The Security Arena in Africa: Local Order-making in the CAR, Somaliland and South Sudan* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, forthcoming).

30 interviews in South Kivu province with key representatives of the UN missions and INGOs in the period January to June 2019.

In both cases, the desires of the local population and of key local stakeholders were also surveyed in four localities, which had been carefully selected to present the best overall picture. While they may not be representative of the entire CAR and South Kivu province, they contain a wide range of lived experience. In CAR the four localities were:

- Mbaïki, which had been government-held throughout the crisis;
- Ndélé, which had been rebel-held throughout the crisis and is currently in the hands of the Front Populaire pour la Renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC);
- Bambari, a contested town in which MINUSCA and the government control one side while the other remains heavily infiltrated by the group Unité pour la Paix en Centrafrique (UPC); and
- Bangassou, which saw a peak of violence in 2017 and is currently tense but calm and government-held.

In South Kivu province the four localities were selected along similar lines:

- Bushwira, a Kabare territory, is a generally calm area that has experienced hardly any conflict;
- Sange, an Uvira territory, has been affected by the conflict in Burundi as both Burundian rebel and government troops are regularly active, and there is also some activity by Congolese armed groups;
- Kipupu, a Mwenga territory, which is a contested area where the state is present but armed groups operate close by; and
- Kanyula, a Walungu territory, which is a post-conflict area.

The extent of the presence of the UN and INGOs in each of the localities in CAR and South Kivu province varied. Some have received more international attention than others. However, in the four localities in South Kivu Province, the international presence of MONUSCO and INGOs is relatively limited, as is the presence of local civil society.

In total, about 480 short interviews were held in the period February to April 2019. In each locality, about 60 people were interviewed, each selected at random in the street, both in town and away from the urban area. In addition to questions about their own background and a control survey about the current security and justice situation, respondents were asked a series of open questions about governance, security and justice, and the social contract in their 'ideal village'. While these questions sought to reveal respondents' desires and wishes for the future, respondents often answered questions with the current situation foremost in their minds. The interviews were conducted by CORDAID's civil society partners in local languages and recorded on tablets. In CAR these were: Cèrcle, Maison Prisca, Flamboyant and a team of Aristide Oula with Igor Acko. In DRC these were: SOS Information Juridique Multisectorielle (SOS IJM) and Action pour le Dévelopement et la Paix Endogènes (ADEPAE). The interviews were subsequently transcribed and translated into French. The results of the interviews were discussed in focus group meetings in order to obtain further explanation and triangulation in April to June 2019. In addition, in the period February to April 2019 over 30 key stakeholders—from among the public authorities, politicians, community leaders, civil society representatives and the leadership of armed groups—in CAR and nearly 40 in South Kivu province were interviewed by local researchers to gain a general understanding and triangulation. These interviews were conducted by Igor Acko and Sylvain Batianga-Kinzi in CAR and by four researchers of the

groupe d'études sur les conflits et la sécurité humaine (GEC-SH): Elisée Cirhuza, Éric Batumike Banyanga, Christian Chiza Kashura and Oscar Dunia Abedi. The local researchers were also involved in the focus group meetings, as well as in guiding the CORDAID partners in the conduct of the interview process.

Subsequently, in order to discuss the opportunities and risks that follow from the similarities and discrepancies between the aims and objectives of the external intervenors and the desires of the local communities, 'policy labs' were organized in Bangui and Goma, North Kivu province, in May and June 2019. These focus group-style discussions of the policy implications of the preliminary results included the local researchers and interested prospective end-users of the research, including but not limited to the UN peace operation and the INGOs examined in the context of this study. Additional interviews were held with representatives of external intervenors who were unable to participate in the policy lab. This involved a separate meeting in Bukavu, South Kivu province.

IV. Case introductions

Central African Republic

General François Bozizé gained power in a coup d'état in 2003. He survived multiple rebellions with the help of France, peace operations and mercenaries from the DRC and Chad. In 2012 the strongest rebel groups joined forces in the Séléka rebellion. Given his own experience of military coups d'état, Bozizé had left the armed forces (Force Armée Centrafricaine, FACA) underfunded and consequently very weak. The Séléka alliance took its opportunity to take power in 2013. However, its rule was brutal, leading to large-scale resistance throughout the country and its overthrow by militia groups, colloquially known as the 'Anti-balaka'. The Séléka then splintered again into different groups, of which the FPRC and the UPC are the two most important.[22] A transitional government was set up in January 2014, until the constitutional order was re-established in 2016 under an elected government led by President Faustin Archange Touadéra.[23] Under the auspices of the African Union, the Government of CAR and 14 armed groups negotiated a peace accord in Khartoum, which was signed on 6 February 2019, but many hundreds of violations have already been recorded.[24]

The state in CAR is extremely weak. There has never been a state monopoly on the legitimate use of force in the country, and it is often suggested that the state does not extend beyond the Bangui city limits. The north-east of the country is de facto ruled by Séléka splinter groups. Elsewhere, armed groups from neighbouring countries, such as the Lord's Resistance Army, regularly roam the territory. Many regions are de facto cut off from Bangui and from each other, due to the limited infrastructure and the fact that important transport routes are controlled by armed groups.[25] More than one million refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) are awaiting safe conditions for return. Society is increasingly divided according to local identities linked to clan, religion and economic activity.

[22] Glawion, T. and De Vries, L., 'Ruptures revoked: Why the Central African Republic's unprecedented crisis has not altered deep-seated patterns of governance', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 56, no. 3 (2018), pp. 421–42.

[23] Marchal, R., *Brève Histoire d'une Transition Singulière: La République Centrafricaine De Janvier 2014 À Mars 2016* [Brief history of a singular transition: The Central African Republic from January 2014 to March 2016] (ROSCA-G&D: Paris, 2016).

[24] The Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the CAR reports 50 to 70 violations per week. United Nations, Security Council, 'Mankeur Ndiaye, the Special Representative and head of MINUSCA, briefed the Council', S/PV.8558, 20 June 2019.

[25] Cf. Lombard, L., *State of Rebellion: Violence and Intervention in the Central African Republic* (Zed Books: London, 2016).

The government is reluctant to reform and is increasingly proposing military measures to resolve the violent conflict. The president's constitutional position remains dominant, even though the Constitution of 2015 strengthens the legislature. The newly established Senate is yet to be constituted, while parliament does not balance the president as most members belong to his majority coalition. Judges and prosecutors are often exposed to violence and death threats, and lack functioning institutions to protect them. State representatives—such as prefects, judges and security forces—in peripheral areas are characterized above all by their powerlessness. They are given very few personnel or resources to carry out their tasks. While the institutions in the capital are gradually establishing themselves, the periphery continues to be neglected. Local mayors, 'Chefs de groupe' and 'Chefs de quartier', have in many cases been appointed decades previously, while in many parts of the country the judiciary is inaccessible to the population. The FACA is in the midst of a restructuring process.[26] The Ministry of Defence has plans to set up a garrison army with bases distributed throughout the country. For the first time since the outbreak of the crisis, several hundred soldiers have been stationed outside Bangui and have even been involved in combat operations.

The main burden of creating a secure environment, the protection of civilians and monitoring human rights falls on MINUSCA's shoulders.[27] It consists of over 2000 UNPOL officers and around 11 500 military personnel.[28] The mission is still at the beginning of its life-cycle. The MINUSCA personnel interviewed portray a picture of a mission that is likely to stay in place for a decade or more, as from their perspective this period will be required to establish the basic functions of the state in CAR—notably the FACA, police, gendarmerie and judiciary—and to make them operational in a sustainable manner.[29] However, MINUSCA personnel have also been involved in sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as human rights violations. In response, some contingents have distanced themselves from the population. This has led to a decrease in rapport with communities, which accuse troops of failing to guarantee public safety and siding with Séléka groups. Peacekeepers have become the targets of armed attacks and there have been 35 fatalities linked to hostile acts.[30] At the same time, MINUSCA plays the role of mediator, providing good offices in support of the peace process, while it is also mandated to support the extension of state authority and the deployment of security forces.[31] Today, the mission struggles to implement the Khartoum Agreement. On the one hand, armed group leaders have been given official state portfolios and thus fall under the UN's mandate of support to the state. On the other hand, when armed groups violate the accord, MINUSCA is the only military force capable of punishing breaches, raising demands from the government and population alike that it should forcefully engage the rebels. Next to MINUSCA, the EU Training Mission (EUTM RCA) trains soldiers vetted by the UN in Bangui. Since mid-2018, Russia has also been training soldiers on Russian weapon systems.[32]

[26] Vircoulon, T., 'La reconstitution de l'armée Centrafricaine: Un enjeu à hauts risques' [The reconstitution of the Central African army: A high risk issue], *IRSEM: Note de recherche* no. 36, Apr. 2017.

[27] United Nations Security Council Resolution 2448, 13 Dec. 2018.

[28] See the SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, <https://www.sipri.org/databases/pko>.

[29] Glawion, T., Van der Lijn, J. and De Zwaan, N., *Securing Legitimate Stability in CAR: External Assumptions and Local Perspectives* (SIPRI: Stockholm, 2019).

[30] United Nations, Peacekeeping, 'Fatalities by mission and incident type: DRC', Updated 30 June 2019.

[31] United Nations Security Council Resolution 2448, 13 Dec. 2018.

[32] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).

South Kivu province

It was in South Kivu province that the First Congo War (1996–67) had its origins. Since the end of the Second Congo War (1998–2003), the situation in the province has had less potential to destabilize the broader region. Nonetheless, fuelled by political opportunism and land and power struggles, local conflicts have multiplied. Consequently, the number of armed groups in the province has increased. Conflict in South Kivu province is often land-related, linked to farmer–herder conflicts over farming and grazing rights, as border delimitations are often unclear. Access to economic and natural resources is also a factor. With few income generation alternatives, people fight over access that they depend on for survival. Political and ethnic divisions are not really seen as major dividing lines.[33] South Kivu is a highly diverse province, and the frequently singled out Rwandophone Hutu and Tutsi Banyamulenge constitute just 0.4 per cent of the population.[34] The many local conflicts in the province are further exacerbated by spillover effects from conflicts in the region, particularly from Burundi and Rwanda, as well as the political and economic ambitions of regional actors such as Rwanda and Uganda.[35]

Much of what happens politically in South Kivu province is linked to national politics. In spite of major doubts with regard to the results and outcome of the December 2018 elections, the 2019 transition from President Joseph Kabila to President Felix Tshisekedi was the first peaceful, democratic handover of power in the DRC. In March, both leaders formed a coalition in parliament; and in May Sylvestre Ilunga, a Kabila ally, was appointed prime minister. Both camps continued to argue over further appointments and only at the end of July was agreement reached on cabinet positions.[36]

In the DRC, political parties are not vehicles through which social groups can push a political agenda. Instead, the primary focus is on benefits for the leadership. The country has been decentralized but the subunits lack administrative and service delivery capacity. Local administrators are appointed by the president in a hybrid system involving traditional chiefs and there is very little local control of power.[37] Following the Second Congo War, different rebel armies were integrated into the government armed forces, forming the Forces Armees de la Republique Democratique du Congo (FARDC). A number of the rebel forces included in the FARDC remained homogeneous units and refused to be deployed outside of their own provinces. The FARDC remains largely unaccountable and underpaid.[38] The Police Nationale Congolaise (PNC, national police of the DRC) was used by Kabila as a repressive force in the interests of the regime and police officers incentivized by patronage structures were required to extract resources from citizens rather than work for them.[39] In South Kivu, outside Bukavu, the physical presence of the state is limited to the FARDC. Communities have little access to the PNC or to other forms of justice, as these are distant and often corrupt. They therefore make use of a variety of informal justice providers. In the

[33] Irenge, L., 'Conflict analysis in South Kivu and Tanganyika Provinces', DRC Conflict Analysis, Tuendelee Pamoja II Project, Food for Hunger, Nov. 2017.

[34] Calderon, A. B. and Englebert, P., 'Tribulations tribales: estimations demographiques commentees des Ethnies Congolaises par Nouvelles provinces' [Tribal tribulations: Annotated demographic estimates of Congolese ethnic groups in the new provinces], eds S. Geenen et al., *Conjonctures de l'Afrique Centrale 2019* [Central African Conjuctions 2019] (Cahiers Africains, L'Harmattan: Paris, 2019).

[35] Hoebeke, H. et al., *Securing Legitimate Stability in the DRC: External Assumptions and Local Perspectives* (SIPRI: Stockholm, 2019).

[36] Bujakera, S., 'Congo president and predecessor agree on division of cabinet posts', Reuters, 26 July 2019.

[37] Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2018 Country Report: Congo, DR* (Bertelsmann Stiftung: Gütersloh, 2018).

[38] Muzeu, M., *Democratic Republic of the Congo: Focus on the Security and Justice Sector Reform in Accordance with African Union Guidelines*, Apr. 2018.

[39] Thill, M., Njangala, R. and Musamba, J., 'Putting everyday police life at the centre of reform in Bukavu', *Rift Valley Institute Briefing Paper*, Mar. 2018.

absence of state authority, this means that communities sometimes take the law into their own hands through mob violence, physical aggression and killings.[40]

MONUSCO is the main external intervention in the DRC. Its current mandated priorities are the protection of civilians, support for the stabilization and strengthening of state institutions, and assisting in key governance and security reforms. In addition, the mission is mandated to support disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR) processes.[41]

MONUSCO consists of over 1000 UNPOL officers and over 15 000 military personnel.[42] Although President Tshisekedi has asked MONUSCO to stay, the mission is at the end of its life-cycle. The MONUSCO personnel interviewed portray a mission that, in part due to budget pressures, is likely to end within a couple of years. They describe their aims in terms of the priorities required to establish the minimum sustainable justice and security provision within this compressed period.[43] A 2017 strategic review led by the UN Secretariat describes MONUSCO's strategic end-state as 'security conditions in DRC no longer pose a tangible threat to international peace and security and remain that way even after the Mission's departure'. MONUSCO has translated this into conditions that include: 'The reduction of intercommunal tensions and conflicts in the North Kivu and South Kivu Provinces to a level that can be managed by the Congolese authorities, with support from the UNCT [country team] and other partners'.[44]

Apart from the UN, a wide range of bilateral and multilateral donors have supported the re-establishment of state authority in the DRC, and South Kivu province more specifically. These efforts have included providing assistance to decentralization, SSR and justice reform programmes. In particular, donors have devoted their energies to the police system, but the armed forces and the justice system have also received some attention. A number of train and equip programmes, for example, have assisted the FARDC.[45] However, most activity has been put on hold since the most important donors, the United States and the European Union, imposed sanctions on high-level political and security officials after the political turmoil that followed the delayed 2016 elections. Moreover, international attention in the past has never been enough to include the entire province. The more rural areas in particular have been left behind.[46]

V. What is the role of the state?

Perspectives on the ground

Despite its poor record, the state remains central to popular aspirations in both CAR and South Kivu province. Although sometimes discussed in relation to eastern DRC, there is no general ambition for independence in South Kivu province. The discourse of armed groups tends to be protecting the country against foreign aggression, or the protection of one community against another. Armed groups may be anti-regime but are generally not anti-state.[47]

In both CAR and South Kivu province, the 'state' was idealized, albeit in an ill-defined way, by many respondents. In both cases, the desired characteristics most often

[40] Irenge (note 33); and Hoebeke et al. (note 35).

[41] United Nations Security Council Resolution 2463, 29 Mar. 2019.

[42] United Nations, Peacekeeping, 'Summary of military and police personnel by mission and post: Police, UN military experts on mission, staff officers and troops', 30 June 2019.

[43] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).

[44] Novosseloff, A. et al., *Assessing the Effectiveness of the United Nations Mission in the DRC/MONUC-MONUSCO*, Effectiveness of Peace Operations Network, no. 3 (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs: Oslo, 2019).

[45] Muzeu (note 38).

[46] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).

[47] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).

ascribed were strong, decentralized and accountable: s*trong* in terms of controlling its frontiers and being able to suppress rebellion; and *decentralized* primarily through local elections and devolving significant budgetary powers to the local levels.[48] In South Kivu province, decentralization is particularly framed within the concept of autochthony. Respondents argue that positions of authority should only be occupied by people who originate from their region.[49] *Accountability* is used in the sense of serving the needs of the people by applying tax and resource revenues in a traceable manner to obtain security and justice and for service delivery in education, health care and infrastructure development. In South Kivu province, the 'democratic' character of an ideal state was often emphasized by respondents, including the regular organization of elections for local leaders.[50] In CAR, respondents often referred to the state under former president and emperor Jean-Bédel Bokassa (1966–1979) as the mythical ideal of an 'ideal state'.[51]

In both cases, non-state actors—including armed groups and INGOs—were not considered a long-term alternative to the state. Even in the short term, respondents in both CAR and South Kivu province see the return of the current less-inclusive state as the lesser of two evils.[52] In CAR, general disappointment in the pre-2012 state contributed to the popular support for the Séléka rebellion. However, the new rulers did not bring the expected improvements so support for Séléka and 'Anti-balaka' groups has dwindled, even in the areas still under their control. The rebels are seen as illegitimate and many among the population want them prosecuted. Hatred towards the rebels is particularly high in state-controlled areas, such as Mbaïki and Bangassou, but even in Ndélé and Bambari people want the state to return. In these places, respondents do not refer to the return of the pre-2012 state but describe an inclusive state that includes their own representatives but excludes the rebels.[53] It is noteworthy that in South Kivu province, churches were not mentioned much as an important service provider in the 'ideal village', as these are currently often engaged in the delivery of basic education and health services and as a justice provider.[54]

There is a largely shared understanding of what the state should deliver—security and services—but the focus depends very much on location. In both CAR and South Kivu province, in the more insecure areas respondents wanted the state to focus on the provision of security. The more stable an area is, the more attention is given to social service provision. Nonetheless, even in insecure areas respondents stressed that the provision of basic services is urgently required too.[55] The main difference between CAR and South Kivu province is sequencing. In CAR, respondents start with security.[56] In South Kivu, by contrast, respondents viewed socio-economic development—jobs, education and health care—as preconditions for stabilization. The latter argued that in absence of jobs, there is no alternative for youth than to join armed groups.[57]

Similarities and discrepancies: risks and opportunities

Although in both cases external intervenors also describe their aims as a strong, decentralized and accountable state that provides security and social services, there

[48] Hoebeke et al. (note 35); and Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[49] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).
[50] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).
[51] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[52] Hoebeke et al. (note 35); and Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[53] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[54] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).
[55] Hoebeke et al. (note 35); and Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[56] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[57] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).

are three key discrepancies between the perspectives of external intervenors and those of respondents.[58]

The discrepancy with regard to the role of the rebels in the future of the state in CAR is particularly stark. International efforts seek to support the Khartoum Agreement, which co-opts the leaders of armed groups into the state and thereby legalizes their de facto power and status as representatives of the disenfranchised population. While external intervenors may be unhappy with the result of the Khartoum peace process, MINUSCA is mandated to support it, which many see as the outcome of a legitimate national and regional negotiation process. Respondents, however, do not see the armed groups as representative of the disenfranchised population. They want them to disarm and leave, and to be prosecuted. This is not just the case in government-held, predominantly non-Muslim, areas. The armed groups have lost legitimacy in rebel-held areas too. The Khartoum process has become a central part of MINUSCA's mandate and the mission runs the risk of losing legitimacy in the eyes of the population. This risk is part of the classic dilemma of supporting elite pacts to ensure short-term stability, rather than ensuring long-term peace and an end to impunity. Already there have been frequent unsubstantiated accusations that MINUSCA is arming and providing support to rebels. On the ground, respondents see these accusations as very real, which creates fertile ground for anger against the mission and reasons for INGOs to distance themselves from MINUSCA.[59]

A second, less clear, discrepancy is at play in South Kivu province. External intervenors, both INGOs and peace operations, regularly try to make space for decentralization and local alternatives, because central government structures are frequently ill-equipped to resolve local problems. Local solutions have often been idealized among INGOs and academics as part of the 'local turn' in peace building.[60] Nonetheless, UN peace operations, as they implement peace agreements and follow constitutions, are generally ambivalent about decentralization. In South Kivu province, external actors often support decentralization as they follow the constitution and popular demand, which was backed up by the respondents. MONUSCO supports the Electoral Commission's preparations for local elections and trains local authorities. There is, however, a discussion about the way forward with decentralization in the DRC. On the one hand, further decentralization and local elections could provide greater legitimacy for and lead to enhanced accountability of local authorities. Confidence in local leaders—mostly traditional chiefs—is notably higher than it is in other state actors. On the other hand, their approval ratings are also still very low, and many of them have been involved in human rights violations and corruption, using 'community work' for personal gain. More importantly, further decentralization and local elections are a potential risk, since they could exacerbate local power struggles, border and land disputes and inter-communal tensions, and thus risk opening a Pandora's box. As the national government has not shown much interest in decentralization, thus far few results have been achieved. Nonetheless, the international community is likely to support local elections if and when they are organized, but it will not actively push for them.[61]

A third discrepancy, in South Kivu province, is on the sequencing of activities. Donors in South Kivu province have focused on stabilization and quick impacts through governance reforms and a number of infrastructure projects, such as roads. External intervenors have given less attention to what respondents perceived to be the key role

[58] Hoebeke et al. (note 35); and Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).

[59] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).

[60] MacGinty, R. and Richmond, O., 'The local turn in peace building: A critical agenda for peace', *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 34, no. 5 (2013), pp. 763–83.

[61] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).

of the state and of utmost importance: development and employment generation. As elsewhere, where priorities are not set and projects are not implemented in direct collaboration with the population (rather than their 'representatives'), there is a risk that the local population will not perceive INGOs and peace operations as relevant, or that they may even be considered 'useless'. They may come to be seen as unaccountable and, particularly when initial expectations are high, this can eventually lead to anger.[62]

VI. How should security and justice be provided?

Perspectives on the ground

In CAR and South Kivu province, respondents predominantly saw their national armed forces, the FACA and the FARDC respectively, as the preferred security providers. In CAR, the FACA is generally preferred by respondents as it is seen as the most effective institution in the country, and the only one willing and able to protect the population against violence—and armed groups in particular. Popular support for the FACA is particularly strong in militarized, contested and recently contested areas, such as Bambari and Bangassou.[63] Similarly, in South Kivu province faith in the FARDC as the preferred security provider was highest among respondents in Kipupu and Sange. In localities where the FARDC is absent, respondents asked that it be deployed to eradicate armed groups. In localities where it is present, respondents demanded that it improve and reform, for example, by paying FARDC personnel more so that they do not need to seek additional income by other means. Compared to CAR, however, respondents in South Kivu had significantly less faith in the FARDC. A number of respondents expressed substantial mistrust as, like MONUSCO, it is seen as being able but unwilling to act to resolve problems.[64]

In both CAR and South Kivu, support among respondents for non-state security providers is low. As discussed above, support in CAR for Séléka and 'Anti-balaka' groups is low, even in the areas currently under their control. Respondents see them as illegitimate and want them prosecuted.[65] As in CAR, respondents in South Kivu province see the different armed groups, including the self-defence groups, as a source of insecurity. Respondents would prefer them to be neutralized, or integrated into the FARDC and sent to another province.[66] Apart from the armed forces, respondents in both CAR and South Kivu province mentioned other state security forces, but the police and the Agence Nationale de Renseignements (ANR) in South Kivu province, and the Gendarmerie in CAR are clearly less on respondents' minds in such militarized contexts.[67] It is also noteworthy that, in spite of the attention from MONUSCO and INGOs, respondents in the four localities under review in South Kivu province did not recognize security coordination structures such as the Comités locaux pour la sécurité de proximité (CLSP, local committees for neighborhood security) as platforms for dealing with security. While stakeholders perceive the CLSPs as useful for discussing security issues, these structures often lack ownership, as well as the resources and capacity to implement decisions.[68]

The differentiation between the roles of the civilian police and the military is stronger among respondents in South Kivu province than in CAR. In CAR, respondents made little differentiation between the tasks of the armed forces, the gendarmerie and the

[62] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).
[63] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[64] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).
[65] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[66] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).
[67] Hoebeke et al. (note 35); and Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[68] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).

police. Respondents divided responsibilities by the gravity of the incident, not by task. Small disagreements can be resolved by the police, while larger criminal issues require the FACA's force. They wanted robust security provision to tackle the 'impunity' enjoyed by violent perpetrators. Human rights in these contexts were generally seen as a 'luxury good'.[69] In the areas of South Kivu province where insecurity is highest, respondents also wanted a robust security sector. Where the situation is calmer, however, respondents felt that a police presence was more appropriate. In the major towns in South Kivu province there is generally more awareness of the role of the PNC.[70]

Justice provision is perceived differently in CAR to how it is perceived in the DRC. In CAR, respondents expect the FACA to be involved in resolving communal and customary disputes. Justice provision is seen from a militarized perspective. Only a few respondents talked about more sophisticated non-military forms of justice provision. The armed forces are perceived as providing quick fixes against armed groups, theft and road blocks.[71] This is different in South Kivu province, where respondents clearly prefer a formal justice system organized by the state in which justice is provided by a formal judge in collaboration with the police. However, as formal justice is often physically removed and expensive, respondents listed a wide variety of potential justice providers: formal justice providers, such as the PNC, the ANR and the FARDC; and informal justice providers, such as traditional chiefs, paralegals, churches and local prophets. This reflects the current variety in the system of justice. Particularly in Bukavu and major urban areas, people are familiar with the division of labour. Especially in the countryside, however, where present, the FARDC is seen as a second best option.[72]

Similarities and discrepancies: risks and opportunities

The aims of external intervenors and the wishes of the local population in CAR and South Kivu province are by and large similar with regard to the security sector. External intervenors are also aiming for accountable and effective security forces, DDR or the military defeat of armed groups, as well as accessible justice for all. In both cases, MINUSCA and the EUTM in CAR and MONUSCO in the DRC, for example, support security provision by providing training and operational support to the military, the police and the intelligence services, and in the provision of justice.[73] In South Kivu province, external intervenors have invested in the development of a mobile court system.[74]

Currently, one of the biggest similarities are the views on the need for a DDR process in South Kivu province. The international community has invested heavily in past DDR processes, with mixed results at best. The main obstacles were always the key stakeholders themselves, who were less interested. However, the appetite among combatants in several armed groups to join the DDR process has recently increased dramatically, among other reasons due to exhaustion, FARDC operations and the change of government. Respondents want the DDR process to start as soon as possible. This is a great opportunity that should be seized. However, given past experiences and the unexpected scale of the demand, external intervenors are not ready and await the

[69] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[70] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).
[71] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[72] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).
[73] Hoebeke et al. (note 35); and Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[74] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).

development of a policy framework by the Congolese Government. There is a risk that this slow response will lead to missed opportunities.[75]

Another similarity is that both external intervenors and the respondents in CAR and South Kivu seek the establishment of strong but reformed and accountable armed forces. This presents opportunities as well as risks. It is an opportunity in the sense that it provides space for SSR. However, even though local populations and external intervenors may think alike, key stakeholders may have very different interests. In South Kivu, these frustrate reform processes and at times incite local communities to resist external efforts. Civil society may be involved in projects, but is often reactive and ends its involvement at the end of a project. Meetings often depend on participation fees. This demonstrates that local communities need to be involved in SSR in addition to key stakeholders in order to guarantee local ownership, but this is rarely the case. Given the common interest in SSR, channelling efforts through structures other than the existing ones, bypassing current stakeholders and cutting out the middle man could increase pressure on those stakeholders to make progress in reforming the security sector.[76]

At the same time, there is also risk attached to this similarity. Popular support for the armed forces combined with international interest in further strengthening them and the evident self-interest of the armed forces themselves could result in a further emphasis on international approaches that already too often prioritize short-term, militarized security solutions. This consensus means that strengthening the armed forces is more likely to make progress than reforming them and making them more accountable, as that could face greater resistance. Such an emphasis on strengthening military security institutions has already led to the armed forces in CAR and South Kivu province often being seen as the most effective tool for dealing with what in essence are rule of law and policing challenges. This is particularly the case in CAR, where the EUTM, as well as France and Russia have focused much attention on supporting the FACA. Further strengthening the armed forces may promote a vicious circle of militarization of internal affairs in which popular support for the armed forces leads to more international support for them, resulting in increased capacity, which in turn increases popular support.[77]

An additional risk of strengthening the armed forces in CAR and the DRC is that by increasing their capability to bring security, their capacity to do harm and be used in abuses against the population also grows. This is particularly worrying in tense situations where the use of hate speech is already frequent in political discourses.[78]

A further discrepancy is that while to the respondents in CAR the 'return of the state' means a robust actor bringing security and justice, to external intervenors it means rule of law-based institutions. The former signifies robust and securitized action, while the latter requires adherence to rules and regulations, including on human rights and international humanitarian law. Unlike the respondents, external intervenors generally recognize the classic separation of tasks: armed forces ensure external security and deal with rebellions if required, while police forces and the gendarmerie ensure internal security and counter crime. Respondents demanded security and an end to 'impunity' through tough action. For them, witchcraft was also high on the agenda. These at times different priorities and popular demands can go against international calls for the rule of law. This puts the government in an awkward

[75] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).
[76] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).
[77] Hoebeke et al. (note 35); and Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[78] Hoebeke et al. (note 35); and Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).

position, as it faces contradictory international and national demands, and there is a risk that if it is not seen to be acting it may lose popular support.[79]

Informal justice provision is debated particularly among external intervenors. Respondents in CAR and South Kivu province indicated that, ideally, they would prefer a functioning, accessible and non-corrupt formal justice system to informal justice provision. However, informal justice providers currently appear to be better recognized by their communities, although they are at times corrupt and certain forms of 'justice' end in violent popular justice or human rights violations. Some external intervenors are convinced that informal or hybrid justice provision is a good alternative. The risk is that this support for informal or hybrid justice provision might affect the establishment of formal justice structures that the respondents eventually desire.[80]

VII. Who should be part of the social contract?

Perspectives on the ground

In both CAR and South Kivu province, the population is only in favour of inclusiveness to a certain extent. In South Kivu province, 'tribalism', ethnic identity and autochthony lie at the centre of the citizen-state-society relationship. Although respondents often aspire to social cohesion and inclusivity, they frequently do not fully accept diversity. Particularly in Sange and Kipupu, the Banyamulenge, who have a cultural association with Rwanda, are excluded from the ideal social contract and often referred to as 'foreign' or 'Rwandan'. Respondents sometimes accepted their presence but were less forthcoming about accepting their political rights. These tensions are exacerbated by competition between pastoralist and farming communities linked to dependency on land for livelihoods. Key stakeholders—particularly politicians, community leaders and the leadership of armed groups—often have an interest in perpetuating these tensions as they are an important source of power and resources.[81]

In CAR, respondents were often even more clear about their rejection of inclusivity. The non-Sango speaking part of the population, those with perceived 'Arab' roots, were not welcomed back even by the Muslim population. However, as in South Kivu, there is a wish to return to an idealized, unspecified past when Muslims and Christians were able to live together. This means that respondents encouraged the displaced Muslim 'non-foreign' population to return, in part because it is seen as important for trade. Nonetheless, respondents list conditions for the return of displaced persons and inter-communal peace. These include the need for them to 'change their bad behaviour', the financial compensation that is expected from the international community, and for prosecution of the worst human rights violators.[82]

Similarities and discrepancies: risks and opportunities

Unlike many of the respondents, external intervenors, INGOs and UN peace operations generally stress the importance of inclusivity. In South Kivu province, INGOs and MONUSCO have invested in several rounds of community dialogue.[83] In CAR, senior representatives of MINUSCA stressed that the Central African population and political leadership have to accept that they cannot exclude a part of the population as

[79] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[80] Hoebeke et al. (note 35); and Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[81] Hoebeke et al. (note 35); and Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[82] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[83] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).

foreign, as many of them have lived in CAR for generations. While for many Central Africans this is a highly emotive topic, external intervenors tend to look at it more legalistically and technically, and to emphasize the need for Central Africans to accept this. In fact, many external intervenors fear that 'Central Africaness' might easily be manipulated during upcoming elections, with highly negative consequences.[84]

This inclusion-exclusion discrepancy is omnipresent in both cases and harbours a real risk. In CAR, respondents expressed a perception that external intervenors are trying to force the Central African population to accept foreigners.[85] In South Kivu, one interviewee noted the risk that external intervenors are quickly perceived as partisan when involved in dialogues.[86] Eventually, such perceptions could delegitimize external interventions more generally. In fact, in the absence of extensive knowledge of complex local dynamics, involvement in inter-community dialogue initiatives risks intensifying conflict and strengthening spoilers.[87]

At the same time there are also opportunities. Respondents in both cases expressed the need for reconciliation and coexistence, although they questioned how and whether this would be possible. In CAR, while the debate about 'foreigners' is very heated, there also seems to be space in calmer settings to discuss the rights of 'legal' foreigners.[88] In South Kivu, respondents saw a role for INGOs in particular in stimulating dialogue.[89]

VIII. Conclusions

In policy and academic debates, local solutions and informal, non-state or hybrid security and justice provision often receive a lot of attention. Similarly, failures and mismatches between external intervenors and local populations are frequently discussed. This research finds that in CAR and South Kivu province the gap between the aims of external intervenors and the wishes of local populations is not as large as is often assumed, particularly with regard to the role of the state and the provision of security and justice.

Most respondents in CAR and South Kivu province would prefer a strong state and formal security and justice provision. Non-state solutions are not seen as good alternatives. Weak, corrupt or non-inclusive state institutions, or even their complete absence, may drive populations temporarily to look for alternative solutions, but that does not mean that they prefer to do so. The efforts of peace operations, such as MINUSCA and MONUSCO, and of INGOs to strengthen state structures are therefore in line with the wishes of local populations.

There is, however, also a clear tension with inclusivity. While respondents in CAR and South Kivu province often expressed hopes of returning to an idealized past of inclusivity and harmony, they find the related diversity much less acceptable. Efforts by external intervenors to support inclusivity are much less welcome to large parts of the population. They would often prefer to exclude 'foreigners' because of a history of conflict or because they perceive them as competitors for resources. In such non-inclusive contexts, if state building is not complemented by 'horizontal' peacebuilding and does not sufficiently incorporate the political economy of the conflict, strengthening state institutions and capacities risks strengthening the structures of inter-communal conflict.

[84] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[85] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[86] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).
[87] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).
[88] Glawion, Van der Lijn and De Zwaan (note 29).
[89] Hoebeke et al. (note 35).

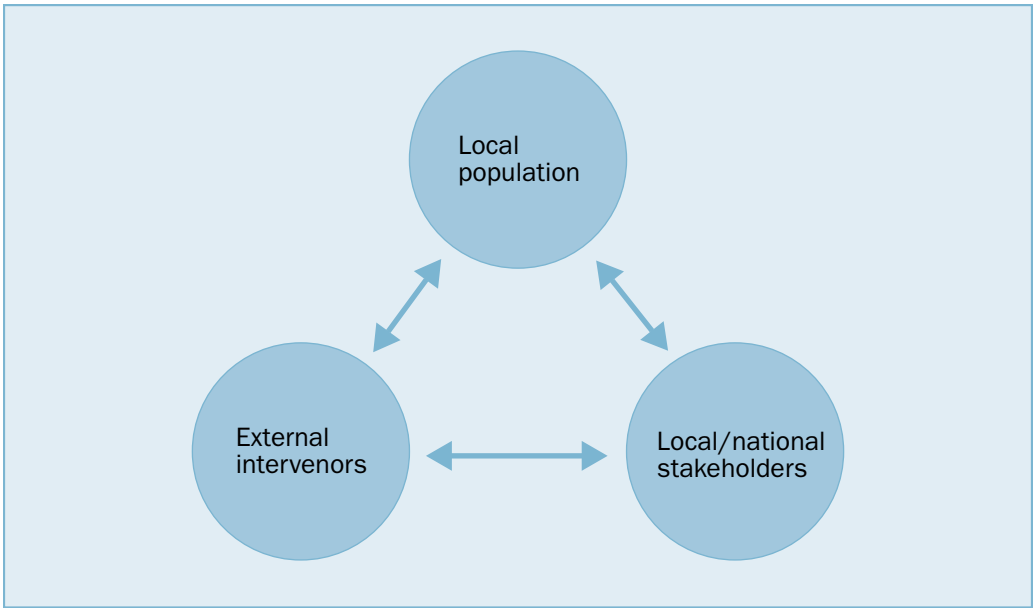

Figure 1.1. Triangular intervention relationship

Source: Authors' conception.

This is an example of how while they may talk about the same topics, external intervenors and local populations may mean slightly different things. Often, the devil is in the detail. Both may want the 'state' to take care of security, justice and development—but what kind of state are they referring to? Would it be more inclusive or exclusive? Is it more a robust security provider or would it prioritize the rule of law? Is it more centralized or decentralized? Unpacking these details is important in a people-centred approach.

Moreover, although external intervenors aim to match the local population's aspirations on many topics, the way in which efforts are undertaken can lead to resistance. Often, frustrations are not so much about *what* is being done but *how* it is being done. The inclusion of local communities in planning, implementation and the evaluation of efforts is perceived as important for creating accountability and ownership, and ensuring that communities feel that they are not being treated as an object but instead being listened to.

Part of the *how* of intervention is working directly with communities, not just their assumed leaders. The objectives of external intervenors and the desires of the local population may be the same, and they may mean the same thing, but the influence of structural challenges and the interests of key stakeholders—public authorities, politicians, community leaders, civil society representatives and the leadership of armed groups—cannot be ignored. Key stakeholders—national and local, state and non-state—often require funding, capacity and an interest in implementing what the population wants and missions are aiming for. This intermediary layer can frustrate external interventions to their own advantage and convince populations that the interventions are ill-intended. Thus, the key stakeholders also need to be included in the navigation of the discrepancies and similarities between what external intervenors aim for and local populations desire, and the risks and opportunities that result.

Navigating discrepancies, similarities, risks and opportunities

Navigating the discrepancies and similarities between the aims of external intervenors and the desires of populations, and the resulting risks and opportunities will

Table 1.1. Typology of the five possible configurations of the triangular intervention relationship

	Local population	Key (local/national stakeholders)	External intervenors
Discrepancy			
Elite pact			
International disconnect			
Complete disconnect			
Similarity			
Common understanding			
Leadership blockage			

 = disagreement between parties;  = agreement between parties.

Source: Author's conceptualization.

require different approaches in different contexts. Understanding the triangular relationship between local populations, key stakeholders and external intervenors is an important aspect of this (see figure 1.1). To begin with, the relations *between* these groups are often inconsistent, as actors may agree on some issues but disagree on others. In addition, they are not three homogeneous unambiguous units as there are often different views *within* each. Each configuration of the triangular intervention relationship has different types of risks and opportunities for external intervenors, and therefore requires different kinds of actions to identify, account for and navigate it (see table 1.1. for summary of configurations).

The discrepancies and similarities between what these groups want with regard to the future of the state, the provision of security and justice, and inclusion in the social contract are the subject of this research. In this typology, there are five types of configuration in the triangular intervention relationship: elite pact, international disconnect, complete disconnect, common understanding and leadership blockage:

Elite pact

Elite pact is a situation in which external intervenors help to implement an elite agreement that does not have wide popular support. The Khartoum peace process in CAR is an example of this.

The main opportunities and risks of elite pact are that: (*a*) they may lead to short-term stability but risk the long-term sustainability of peace as grievances among the population persist; (*b*) external support for state or non-state structures that lack popular support risks creating illegitimate institutions that are subsequently hard to deconstruct; and (*c*) external support for what are perceived to be illegitimate or unpopular priorities risks delegitimizing the external intervention.

Efforts to deal with limited popular support could include: (*a*) broadening the 'pact' through better inclusion of representatives of local communities in planning, implementation and evaluation; (*b*) increased attention to communication and public information to explain the efforts and choices of the external intervenors; (*c*) persuading local/national stakeholders to publicly support, advocate for and take full responsibility for the agreements they have made, thereby ensuring that they cannot hide behind or blame external intervenors; or (*d*) surveying the desires and

wishes of local stakeholders and populations in order to increase the external intervenor's understanding of and ability to navigate risks and opportunities.

International disconnect

International disconnect is a situation where external intervenors strive to achieve something that is not desired by local stakeholders and communities. International pressure for human rights in CAR is an example of this, as Central African stakeholders and communities generally prioritize stability and robust efforts to 'end impunity' over human rights compliance.

The main opportunities and risks international disconnect are that: (*a*) external efforts with limited support from populations and key stakeholders risk non-cooperation by national and local stakeholders or, if enforced or incentivized, half-hearted cooperation. Without local ownership, achievements may not be sustainable in the absence of external support; (*b*) external efforts that drive local stakeholders, such as governments, to implement unpopular policies or undertake unpopular actions risk delegitimizing them; and (*c*) external efforts that push for unpopular measures risk delegitimizing external intervenors and diminishing their popularity.

External interventions are usually supposed to be for 'the people' and therefore as a general rule it is unusual to push unpopular aims. However, external intervenors must also live up to their own standards and regulations. Inclusion, human rights and international humanitarian law are essential principles that cannot be abandoned. In such cases, there is little else to be done other than: (*a*) pay increased attention to communications and public information; (*b*) counter narratives of exclusion; (*c*) undertake human rights education; and (*d*) deliver on popular issues, in the form of a 'peace dividend', in order to 'win the hearts and minds' of the local population.

Complete disconnect

Complete disconnect is a situation in which populations and stakeholders want different things while external intervenors strive for yet another, third, option. Lacking any ownership, this situation is unlikely to lead to a sustainable situation either. This is a theoretical configuration that in practice was not encountered in this research. In the absence of any local anchor point or counterpart, external interventions are unlikely to take place at all. However, surveying the desires and wishes of local stakeholders and populations can help to find entry points for interventions.

Common understanding

Common understanding is the ideal situation in which everyone involved agrees on the desired future outcome is not very common in conflict situations. If encountered, these conditions primarily require technical support and resources. Its main opportunities and risks are that external intervenors might not respond rapidly enough, as with DDR in South Kivu province, which risks dissipating momentum. In addition, external intervenors, key stakeholders and populations might speak in similar terms, such as in CAR and South Kivu province where they all talk of the primacy of the 'return of the state', but can often mean very different things. This risks raising false expectations, disappointment and, ultimately, violent tension.

Thus, even under these most positive circumstances, it is important that efforts include: surveying the aims of local stakeholders and populations in order to unpack them and increase external intervenors' understanding; and including local communities in planning, implementation and evaluation.

Leadership blockage

Leadership blockage is a situation in which external intervenors aim and local populations hope for similar outcomes, but key stakeholders have different interests. This is the case for example with regard to SSR in South Kivu province, where external intervenors and local populations have similar views on the future of the provision of security and justice but key stakeholders are blocking progress because they could lose their positions of power in the reform. Similarly, while the seeds for dialogue and decreased inter-communal tension in South Kivu are present, local stakeholders often block progress as they have an interest in perpetuating conflicts because they are a source of power and resources.

The main opportunities and risks of leadership blockage are: (*a*) popular support for external intervenors' efforts that are blocked by stakeholders provides an opportunity to involve communities. Bypassing current stakeholders and cutting out the middle man creates space to increase pressure on stakeholders to make progress; (*b*) external efforts to strengthen institutions, such as the armed forces, risk continuing a vicious circle of militarization in which militarized contexts increase popular support for strong institutions, further strengthening them, which again increases popular support; and (*c*) external efforts to strengthen institutions, such as the armed forces, while reform and greater inclusivity are blocked by key stakeholders, risk increasing the capabilities of such institutions to do harm and to be used in abuses against the population.

IX. Policy recommendations

Every context is different. Each configuration of the above described triangular intervention relationship—elite pact, international disconnect, complete disconnect, common understanding or leadership blockage—has its own risks and opportunities. Each requires its own context-specific recommendations. This synthesis report focuses on the overarching conclusions and cross-case recommendations. These will have different general implications for every organization active in conflict-affected settings. More specific conclusions and recommendations for the UN peace operations and INGOs dealing with security and justice in CAR and South Kivu province are presented in the two background papers that accompany this synthesis report. However, the following interlinked recommendations to external intervenors, UN peace operations and INGOs are also relevant to other conflict-affected locations.

Invest more in local knowledge. Interventions at the local level require extensive local knowledge to prevent doing harm by affecting conflict dynamics negatively. Even dialogue projects can empower spoilers as they are given a seat at the table. Hence, external intervenors should invest more in gathering local information and intelligence by better involving local communities in these processes.

Survey and understand the aspirations of populations. Although surveys are costly to produce, knowing what communities want is important for gaining direction on what is required. This is not standard practice among external intervenors, UN peace operations and INGOs. The surveys conducted by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative are an important start to measure perceptions of and trends in security and justice provision. Such surveys should become standard procedure in peace operations and they should be complemented with interviews on desired future outcomes. This would better contextualize the surveys and provide guidance at the strategic level on what external intervenors should aim to contribute. Moreover, it is important to incorporate an analysis of the configuration of the triangular intervention relationship between

local populations, key stakeholders—public authorities, politicians, community leaders, civil society representatives and the leadership of armed groups—and external intervenors, to improve navigation of strategic risks and opportunities.

Strengthen two-way communication flows between local communities and external intervenors. The communication networks of all external intervenors, both INGOs and peace operations, are currently still too thinly spread. This risks actions being taken by external intervenors on the basis of too little local awareness. It also risks raising unrealistic expectations among the local population of what external intervenors can deliver, which in turn could generate new frustrations. External intervenors need to invest more in two-way interfaces for collecting information and intelligence on what communities desire, for improving accountability and for disseminating the motivations behind the decisions made.

Involve local communities more in planning, implementation and evaluation. Criticism of interventions by respondents was often not so much about *what* has been done, but *how* it was done. External intervenors need to engage communities early on in the planning and design of programmes, and throughout the process, as it can increase ownership and a sense of accountability, and consequently lead to more sustainable outcomes.

Work more directly with communities: cut out the middle man as much as possible. The position of community representatives comes with power and interests that do not always favour the desires of the population or sustainable peace. Monopolization of the lines of communication needs to be prevented, as for example public communication through community leaders can prevent information from trickling down to communities. Information and access to power are power. Although community and civil society representatives are important influencers, external intervenors need to invest more in more direct relationships with community members to avoid distortion.

Dare to emphasize international norms and frameworks over local dynamics and interests. To ensure a sustainable peace, it is essential to promote adherence to the rule of law, human rights and international humanitarian law. Such rules should therefore remain of primary importance. This means that at times external intervenors may have to object to the desires of populations and stakeholders and will have to balance their fulfilment within international norms and frameworks.

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