Conflict Research Programme

South Sudan Synthesis Paper

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Executive Summary

Introduction to the Conflict Research Programme

The **overall goal** of the Conflict Research Programme (CRP) is to provide an evidence-based strategic re-orientation of international engagement in places apparently afflicted by the world's most intractable violent conflicts. Its premise is that in these places, the ability of public authorities to provide even the most basic level of governance is subject to the functioning of the 'real politics' of gaining, managing and holding power, which we argue functions as a 'political marketplace'. This approach helps explain the frustrations of state-building and institutionally-focused engagement; it can also inform the design of improved interventions, which reduce the risk and impact of conflict and violence in developing countries, alleviating poverty and insecurity. A key objective of our research, and a key contribution to the 'Better Delivery' agenda within DFID, is to make policies better targeted, more nuanced and rooted in a clear understanding of the social condition that undergirds persistent contemporary conflict.

The locations for research are **Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Somalia, South Sudan** and **Syria**. Our central hypothesis is that governance in these difficult places is dominated by the logic of a political marketplace. These **political markets** are turbulent, violent and integrated into regional and global networks of power and money. We also hypothesise that **moral populism** (most visible in identity politics, persecuting ideologies and violent extremism) is a counterpart to the marketisation of politics, and that the two

flourish in conditions of persistent uncertainty, conflict and trauma. Current policy frameworks and tools can neither capture the everyday realities of politics and governance in these difficult places, nor adjust to the dynamics of contested power relations. External interventions risk being enmeshed in logics of power and may end up inadvertently supporting violence and authoritarianism. At the same time, in all war-torn spaces, there are relatively peaceful zones: what we term **'pockets of civicness'**. These might be territorial (local ceasefires, or inclusive local authorities), social (civil society groups helping the vulnerable or countering sectarian narratives, or customary courts solving disputes fairly) or external (interventions that regulate flows of political finance).

The CRP will generate evidence-based, operationally relevant research that can enable real-time analysis of the dynamics of conflict, contestation, 'civicness' and public authority, enabling better interventions to manage and resolve armed conflict, reduce violence, and create conditions for more accountable and transparent governance. A core component of the CRP is to contribute to a better understanding of "what works" in addressing violent conflict across our research sites. We will develop comparative understanding of how different interventions affect violent conflict and the risk of renewed violent conflict across our research sites. We will also examine the contextual factors that affect the effectiveness of these interventions. Intervention areas selected for comparative research are **security interventions; civil society and community mediation interventions; resource interventions; and interventions designed to strengthen authority and legitimacy,**

including at the sub-national level. We envisage emerging findings from our political economy analysis of conflict drivers to shape our comparative analysis of specific interventions.

Our research methods include (a) comparative political ethnography (b) refined datasets (c) models of violence and political business (d) socio-political mapping of the structural drivers of conflict and the groups involved in political mobilisation and coercion and (e) action research exploring agents of change. We have a unique and robust infrastructure of local researchers and civil society networks across all our sites that will facilitate both fieldwork research and remote research. The CRP team is already closely engaged with key political processes – and regional actors - in the countries concerned, designed to promote peace, humanitarian action, human rights and democracy. This engagement is a key part of our method and will ensure that evidence-based research is effectively communicated to institutions engaged in trying to reduce the risk and impact of violent conflict in our research sites. Our emphasis is upon a mix of research methods and mechanisms for engaging in policy and practice. In line with this flexible approach, we will hold an annual in-country workshop with each DfID country office, and key stakeholders, to work through the implications of our research for them in a practical, flexible and responsive way. This will be supplemented by regular written and face-to-face/virtual communication with country staff.

CRP Research in South Sudan

South Sudan is an exemplar of a violent, fragmented, kleptocratic political marketplace. Its nascent state-level institutions are subsidiary to the transactional politics pursued by a narrow group of elites. This political system is historically rooted and regionalised, shaped by the legacy of decades of war such that stability has only ever been a temporary achievement. The eruption of conflict in December 2013 brings the salience of political marketplace analysis into sharp focus. Political economy analysis alone, however, is not enough. We also require a much better understanding of the powerful ideologies that mobilise violence, as well as the counter-logics that encourage peaceful relations and freedom to push for positive social change.

The CRP will undertake operationally relevant research in South Sudan to explore the political economy drivers of conflict, as well as the ideologies and conditions that encourage popular violence, and those that encourage peace and accountability. This will inform those in Her Majesty's Government (HMG) who engage directly with South Sudanese officials, such as during peace negotiations. It will also be crucial for wider analysis of HMG's broader interventions in South Sudan.

Research will be undertaken using a comparative, multi-methods case study approach, analysing the drivers of conflict and violence. Research will be informed by a series of workshops that develop the metrics and measurements for political markets, including tools to measure economic power and its interaction with political power. It will also be informed by broader theoretical development of how

and why persecuting ideologies emerge and flourish, and how and where this can be countered through alternative, peaceful logics of governance. Our comparative political marketplace case studies will highlight a range of possible solutions to problems that have beleaguered international interventions, helping donors to understand where something has or has not worked and why. Here we will give particular focus to the CRP's four intervention areas: building state capacity and legitimacy, including at subnational levels; security arena reform; resource management and community mediation and dialogue for peacebuilding. CRP will work alongside implementing organisations including Girls' Education South Sudan and churches involved in community mediation at a local and national level. All policy recommendations will be developed in consultation with a South Sudan Research Panel that will consist of a small group of representative and prominent South Sudanese academics and public intellectuals. We will also work closely with the UK funded Conflict Sensitivity Research Facility in South Sudan to ensure that research findings are communicated and influence HMG, other donors and their partners who work in South Sudan. Our operationally relevant research will be published in the form of policy briefs, memos and peer-reviewed journal articles.

Introduction

The first part of this paper combines a summary and review of literature on the evolution of complex and persistent violent conflicts in South Sudan. This review is structured around the analytical framework used by the CRP to examine the drivers of conflict and the prospects for peace, namely public authority and the logics of the political marketplace, moral populism, and 'civicness'. The review also explores the gender dynamics of conflict and violence. The regional dynamics that intersect with the trajectory of South Sudan's conflict are touched on in passing and examined in greater detail in the synthesis paper on the Horn of Africa.

The latter half of the paper then uses existing studies to provide an analysis of the impacts of international interventions in South Sudan and to identify priorities for future research into 'what works'. It focuses on interventions aimed at strengthening authority and legitimacy (including at sub-national levels), resource interventions and the management of land and boundaries, the 'security arena', and civil society and community mediation interventions.

The outbreak of civil war in December 2013 prompted a proliferation of policy papers and literature aimed at explaining the origins and trajectory of the crisis. Literature has documented the horror of the armed violence (Commission for Human Rights 2017; United Nations 2014). Explanations included divisions in the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), international state-building failures, resource competition and elite greed (Enough 2016; Small Arms Survey 2016). Recent reports also shed light on the socio-cultural, economic and other structural

factors that legitimise conflict-related human rights abuses including against women and girls, and in particular the treatment of females as "property" on the battlefield (see Amnesty International 2017; Justice Africa, CEPO and SSWLA 2016).   However, to gain deeper insights into the roots of the crisis we need to situate it in the longer history of governance in the region and not limit our focus to the actions of military and political elites. By drawing upon historical and ethnographic research on South Sudan, we can trace the political evolution of various authorities and of the conflict itself (de Waal 2016).

Alex de Waal (2011, 2014) has argued that the conflict is rooted in the turbulent politics of a system of violent transactional politics, a political marketplace, in which loyalties are bought and sold. After the events of December 2013, de Waal's argument quickly gained popular traction in policy debates and scholarship. Based on long-term observations of South Sudan's elite politics, de Waal's argument built on recognition that the SPLA developed a rent-seeking approach to aid from its early years in the 1980s and then funded its political market through oil revenues after the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

At the same time, the review of literature in this paper highlights that this 'political marketplace' explanation for conflict needs to be tested and developed. How has the political marketplace changed when oil prices, aid, and other fundamentals of the economy in South Sudan have fluctuated? How does it operate at, and connect to, the sub-national level and local governance? How does the national political marketplace interact with the regional political economy? How does this logic of

the political marketplace interact with other logics of authority? Previous literature from the post CPA era helps us to explore these questions and to identify gaps in our understanding of public authority in South Sudan that require further research.

In relation to interventions that work, it is now well understood that international interventions need to be developed from a confident and realistic understanding of the political economy of conflict. There is also an emerging appetite to understand how international interventions interact with the political market. Previous literature has shown how humanitarian aid can shape political legitimacy (Karim et al. 1996; Moro et al. 2017). In relation to resource interventions, literature highlights the shifting value of land (Leonardi and Santchi 2016) and growing number of conflicts over land. In relation to interventions in the security arena, literature has failed to consider the impact of neighbouring states and has often limited analysis to the formal security sector. Literature on mediations has often looked at either the local or international, and failed to see the relationships between these different levels. We suggest that there is much to be learnt to help fill these gaps in analysis by considering how these interventions interact with the contemporary logics of the political marketplace and the intentions of political entrepreneurs at the sub-national, national and regional levels.

This synthesis paper ends by proposing a research agenda and approach that responds to the findings and gaps

identified in the literature review and analysis. It highlights the implementing organisations that CRP will work alongside, including churches, courts and HMG-funded programmes including Girls' Education in South Sudan (GESS), the South Sudan Humanitarian Programme (HARRIS) and the Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility (CSRF).

Methodology

The paper draws upon a literature search conducted according to the following method. Instead of a traditional, comprehensive literature review of all the social science literature on conflict in South Sudan, this search focused on identifying empirically grounded social science literature on the drivers and effects of conflict in South Sudan. The search process itself consisted of two stages: a database driven search, and a 'snowball' search which augmented the database search and also formed the basis of our study of the 'grey' literature.[1]

Initially, eight social science databases were searched: Taylor and Francis journals, JSTOR, Cambridge journals, Oxford journals, Hein Online, Wiley Online, SAGE journals, and Project MUSE. The search results from these databases were then cross-checked against the search results from Tufts University's library search engines. One primary search string was used, and for each database a secondary search was carried out to supplement the results of the first search string.[2]

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[1] **For a working definition of grey literature, see Jessica Hagen-Zanker and Richard Mallett, 'How to do a rigorous, evidence focused literature review in international development,' ODI Working Paper, September 2013,https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/8572.pdf.**

[2] **The initial search string used was {"political economy" AND "conflict" AND "South Sudan"}. A secondary search was then carried out using the search terms {"conflict" AND "South Sudan"}.**

The following inclusion/exclusion criteria were applied:

Language: Only studies published in English were selected – this was recognised as an unavoidable limitation, given resource constraints, although in the case of South Sudan this will not affect the results significantly.

Focus on empirical data: From our search results we only selected studies that contained or referenced local level empirical data. For instance, we excluded comparative studies which were not based on empirical data/findings generated by the authors.

'Cut-off' points: In both searches, after a preliminary scan it became clear that the degree of relevance decreased substantially after the first 120 articles on most databases. Results after the first 120 were not considered.

It became clear that the systematic database search was missing key academic literature. A 'snowball' technique was therefore used to supplement the database search, where we (a) examined relevant social science literature known to us through our own research and expertise (including the books and grey literature in the personal collections of the lead researchers), (b) examined relevant footnotes and bibliographies of the articles and books that the database searches had yielded, and (c) drew upon the comprehensive bibliography of publications on South Sudan from 1850 to 2000 compiled by Tvedt (2000).

After the database and snowball searches, we examined the search results in greater detail, paying particular attention to the empirical data in the various articles. Some of the search results which initially

appeared to be empirically grounded were, on closer reading, either entirely theoretical or conceptual in nature, or relied on empirical data from larger cross-country databases. In particular, a number of articles purported to 'explain' the actual empirics of the conflict, and devoted themselves to a description of recent outbreaks of violence (notably in December 2013). These were discarded, and the remaining articles were read and annotated.

1. Examining the Evolution of Complex and Persistent Violent Conflicts

Violent conflict has been the dominant mode of political contention in southern Sudan3 since 1955. As such, the notion of the state as a legitimate, stable and singular political authority has routinely been questioned in studies of the Sudans. However, the birth of South Sudan in 2011 yielded hopes and agendas for change. These were vividly expressed by South Sudanese politicians in the new Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) government and influenced international interventions and support. Following the CPA in 2005 and national independence in 2011, the government of South Sudan (GoSS) was the recipient of enormous international goodwill, finance and technical assistance in support of building the institutions of a functional state. The UK, alongside others such as the USA, Norway and the European Union, invested heavily in this agenda. The shared assumption was that strengthening the capacity and legitimacy of the institutions of the nascent state was essential for peace and development in South Sudan. This reflects a broader international investment in state-building encouraged by the proliferation of new states since the 1990s, their apparent fragility and repetitive low performance on development indicators, and the more general assumption that good institutions and good governance are necessary for development.

In response, much of the scholarship on South Sudan reflects historical legacies, calling attention to existing forms of political authority and modes of governance while questioning the record of the SPLM. 'A bloodstained chronicle or a blank page?' Edward Thomas (2015: 53) asks, placing two quotations from President Salva Kiir's speeches, both made in July 2011, side by side:

A happy day like this should not dwell on bad memories, but it is important to recognize that for many generations this land has seen untold suffering and death

The Republic of South Sudan is like a white paper – tabula rasa!

Thomas' work on the ongoing war in Jonglei exposes persistent violence and deep social and economic inequalities within the new state. Even those convinced by the SPLM project identified a series of emerging problems. LeRiche and Arnold (2012) explore the history and prospects of South Sudan within this frame, while also highlighting the limitations of the CPA and indicating the significant loss to the SPLM in the death of John Garang. Additionally, Deng (2013) expounds on the vision of the late John Garang, and laments the fact that it was not implemented by his successors.

In this post CPA era of state-building, scholarship responded to the notion of South Sudan as a blank slate by highlighting the longevity of many of the governance institutions in South Sudan, including the chiefs and the chiefs' courts (Leonardi 2013). Echoing literature on legal pluralism throughout Africa, research also highlighted that customary authorities were not necessarily and clearly distinct from government (Leonardi et al 2010).

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3 This paper uses the convention of referring to 'southern Sudan' up to independence in July 2011 and 'South Sudan' thereafter, noting that (a) the usage in quotations from other authors is not always consistent and (b) 'South Sudan' is used where both meanings are appropriate.

Frustrations with the central South Sudanese government encouraged international donors and partners to explore working with local and customary actors. Recent research has also highlighted the resilience of these forms of public authority despite the current wars (Ibreck and Pendle 2016).

The outbreak of war in 2013 shifted the terms of the policy and academic debate to focus on the causes of violence within South Sudan. Since December 2013, with new concerns about the nature of the governing elites of the state, the international community has debated and often disagreed on the legitimacy of their own investments in state-building. In analysis on the causes of conflict, the focus has shifted away from a failed state, and there has been new space for recognition of the centrality of patronage politics.

There is rich historical material, including studies of the previous conflicts (1955-72 and 1983-2005), that suggests the explanatory value of the CRP 'logics of public authority' approach. We examine the evidence in three parts to synthesise material that is relevant to understanding the logics of public authority in South Sudan:

> (i)   We examine the nature of the state, South Sudan's political marketplace, and its relationship to conflict.
>
> (ii)   We consider studies of ethnic conflict that relate to the concept of moral populism.
>
> (iii)   We discuss civic forms of authority that relate to the concept of civicness.

The Analytical Framework

To explore the evolution of complex, violent conflict in South Sudan, the CRP will make use of a set of existing theoretical and conceptual insights that help to explain the political economy of contemporary civil wars. These build on Kaldor's analysis of 'new wars' (2007), de Waal's account of the political marketplace (2015) and the extensive work of previous scholars of Africa on the concept of public authority (for example Leonardi 2013; Lund 2006; Hoffmann and Vlassenroot 2014).

Our starting premise is that in settings such as South Sudan the state in practice is not a tangible set of institutions that delivers for citizens. In South Sudan there are a plurality of public authorities. At the same time, citizens do hope for state-like institutions and notions of authority. Plus, we understand war not as an aberration but as integral to the historical mode of governance in the Sudans. This suggests that the variety of forms of public authority, the ways in which they generate compliance, and the relations between them must be central to the explanation for, and potential resolution of, conflict.

This has yielded a conceptual framework for the analysis of public authority defined by the three logics of the 'political marketplace', 'moral populism' and 'civicness'. These are defined and explored individually below. The development of the nascent logics is ongoing and the refinement of the analytical framework will be integral to the CRP research itself. They cannot be fully explained at this point as the intention is for research during CRP to better develop and test these logics, so that they can be used as a framework for future understanding.   For example, in the first year we have proposed a series of workshops on the political marketplace, to

explore the theory, metrics, measurement and policy implications of the political marketplace analysis, drawing upon the knowledge and expertise of economists, experts in related thematic areas, and country specialists. In addition, there is more to be understood about vernacular understandings of 'civicness' and how people still have freedom to push for positive social change in the often oppressive context of South Sudan.

1.1 The 'political marketplace'

The view that South Sudan's political crisis and conflict can best be understood as rooted in a system of violent transactional politics, a 'political marketplace', has been put forward by de Waal (2011, 2014). It suggests that gaining and maintaining power is based upon a speeded up, dollarised mode of transactional politics, in which institutions are subordinate to bargaining for political gain. The 'political marketplace' understanding of the crisis is supported by an array of historical studies that provide insights into the nature of the SPLA and violence, patronage politics, and the state as an inherently predatory and violent force. This understanding of the conflict has now gained much traction in the policy literature (The Sentry 2016).

According to de Waal, South Sudan's political marketplace reproduces the logics of governance familiar from the political history of Sudan since the 1970s (de Waal 2015). During the 1980s and 1990s, the SPLA quickly became rent seeking and the leadership founds ways to acquire finances, including through the capture of aid. Then, after the 2005 CPA and the institution of the new SPLA-dominated Southern Sudanese government, funding of political budgets has largely depended on access to revenues from oil wealth. Yet the Kiir government has generally had a

weak handle on the management of the business of politics and has been consistently subject to 'rent-seeking rebellions' since its establishment. Its most significant miscalculation was the decision to shut down the oil pipeline in 2012, a decision which helped precipitate the crisis (de Waal 2014).

The historical significance of oil in the 1983-2005 war and peace agreement have been widely studied (Human Rights Watch 2003; Patey 2010; de Waal 2014). There has thus far been remarkably little analysis of the oil shutdown of 2012 and its implications, beyond the extreme austerity measures that were implemented out of necessity, and the fact that the security sector was largely exempt from budget cuts. There is, however, a general recognition that South Sudan is a rentier state par excellence, highly dependent on oil.

Since de Waal's 2014 article that summarised the political marketplace in South Sudan, the context has changed (de Waal 2014). Sources of funding for the political marketplace have fluctuated. Plus, the political marketplace appears to have fragmented. There are questions of whether public authority amongst the armed opposition internally also continues to follow this logic of the political marketplace. The CRP has the advantage of being able to observe, over time, the shifting nature of the political marketplace in South Sudan and, from this, to observe patterns in the way this logic is used.

The SPLA and violence

The violent struggle for control of South Sudan's political marketplace has largely been pursued by the political-military elite within the SPLA. Little has been written on the origins and early years of the SPLA, and

most of that has been either the memoirs of dissenters and critics (Akol 1995; Nyaba 1997) or compilations of sundry documentary sources that shed an unflattering light on the movement in its heyday (African Rights 1997). Only with rose-tinted spectacles can the period 1983-91 be described as 'golden years of revolution' (LeRiche and Arnold 2012). These studies, limited though they are, indicate that contemporary accounts that date the beginning of internal conflict within the SPLA to the split of 1991 are incorrect: the problems were present from the very foundation of the movement in 1983.

The composition of the SPLA after the CPA was shaped by the integration of multiple southern Sudanese militia that emerged during the second civil war, on the subject of which there has only been very limited academic analysis (de Waal 1994; Hutchinson 2001; Young 2003, 2006). The numerous 'tribal' militia emerged from a mix of local ethnic politics and rivalries, economic discontent and opportunities for enrichment from raiding and looting, and deliberate military strategy by the Sudanese government (in addition some militia within northern Sudan were associated with political parties with national political agendas.) By the end of the war, the largest constellation of pro-Khartoum militia was the South Sudan Defence Force (SSDF). There is small but detailed literature on how this group was constituted and incorporated into the SPLA after the 2006 Juba Agreement (Arnold 2007; Young 2006, 2012).

By the end of the long north-south war, the SPLA had come to resemble neither a classic guerrilla force nor a regular army, but rather a militarised and kleptocratic version of southern Sudan's administrative

tribalism. Clémence Pinaud has aptly described this as a 'military aristocracy' and 'military kinship inc.' (Pinaud 2014, 2016). The outbreak of the new civil war in 2013 caused the expanded SPLA to crack apart following the lines along which it had been stitched together eight years earlier. The split was ethnic insofar as the command structures of the constituent units had themselves been constructed on the basis of kinship and patronage. In turn, the GoSS turned to its own 'militia strategy' echoing that adopted by Khartoum thirty years earlier. A conflict that began as a conflict between two readily-identifiable 'sides' with political agendas, fighting for control of the state (Johnson 2014) rapidly morphed into a more complex, fragmented and widely-dispersed set of conflicts (Rolandsen et al. 2015). There is, however, a very substantial evidentiary gap concerning the dynamics whereby multiple local armed groups emerged: some incubated within the SPLA, others as outgrowths of the SPLA-in Opposition (SPLA –IO), and still others by different processes entirely (see below).

Extractive and patronage politics

A political marketplace does not function solely on the basis of personal corruption, material incentives and violence. Rather it is a market in which power is a commodity, and political projects are subject to market forces. Elements of this are apparent in the political competitions within the ruling party and security apparatus (Roessler 2016) and the anticipated electoral competition (Brosché and Högland 2016). Political leaders have also remade state regulatory frameworks in order to extract resources (Twijnstra 2015; Twijnstra and Titeca 2016).

A core concept in this regard is kleptocracy. In its commonsense meaning,

'kleptocracy' refers to the rule of thieves (Enough 2017); in its sociological meaning it refers also to the operation of a system of governance in which public office is allocated and utilised according to the laws of supply and demand, typically intermixed with violence, rather than by administrative rules and procedures (de Waal 2014).

The World Bank public expenditure reports for southern/South Sudan (World Bank 2007, 2013) are astonishingly candid in their documentation of bureaucratic dysfunction, parallel decision-making and resource-allocation mechanisms, and the extent of corruption. Ferenc Markó (2016) details a similar parallelism at work in the passport office in Juba, in which a model system of biometric passports is established alongside a shadow system in which decisions about who gets and does not get a passport are made on other criteria entirely. Santschi's analysis of the 2008 census illuminates how the exercise in counting people—in principle the simplest and most objective exercise that a state can undertake—was profoundly politicised in Sudan. In particular, the SPLM sought to ensure that the number of southern Sudanese voters was sufficient for their representatives to maintain their veto-wielding bloc in the national assembly (Santschi 2008).

Existing studies demonstrate the 'Janus-face' of South Sudanese institutions, and the way in which a formal institution with bureaucratic procedures coexists with a shadow institution, run on the basis of patronage and power politics. Larson, Ajak and Pritchett (2013: 21) provide the following example:

One donor official distinguished between the 'Real Ministry of Finance' and the 'Fake Ministry of Finance.' The 'Fake Ministry' is the one working with the donors and

technical advisors on budget allocations, promoting the outward appearance of high functionality, while the 'Real Ministry' is operated through backdoor dealings between South Sudanese officials, concealed from donor view. As the donor official says: 'The technical advisors help prepare budget allocations, but then the army generals wheel into the minister's office, and they make the real allocations.' While budget allocations are readily and publically available from MoFEP, the budget expenditures are only rarely (and then, only partially) shared.

Histories of the state and conflict in the Sudans

There is a rich historical and political science literature on the nature of the (united) Sudanese state. Not all of this work reinforces the view that the core problem is the transactional politics of the 'marketplace'. Indeed, the political pathologies that afflicted Sudan since independence in 1956 have frequently been ascribed to the shortcomings of the state inherited from the colonial era and the ethno-racial, economic and other inequalities bequeathed to it, or to the ineffective or counterproductive attempts by post-colonial rulers to transform the state into an Arab nationalist, socialist or Islamist state.

However, alternative explanations can also be woven into an overarching understanding that institutions have been subsidiary to a violent politics of bargaining pursued by the core at the expense of the periphery. De Waal (2006) provides a synthesis of five different approaches to understanding the causes of conflict in Sudan. These explain conflict either as a clash of identities and associated with the lack of a cohesive national identity; as a consequence of the inequality between

centre and periphery and economic exploitation; as a fight for survival with dwindling resources in the rural areas; as emergent from instability and intra-elite competition at the centre; or as a product of criminality, and a cycle of violence. It suggests that while each of these analyses has some traction, only an explanation that recognises the critical role of strategies adopted by Sudanese government to manage the periphery, based on political bargaining and sponsorship of militias, militarising governance, can embrace their various insights and explain the relationships between them.

These frameworks for understanding Sudan are relevant insofar as the post CPA and post-independence South Sudanese state in Juba is related to its immediate Sudanese predecessor in Khartoum. Much less has been written on the South Sudanese state and its predecessors, namely the regional governments of southern Sudan (1972-82 and 2005-11), or the governance functions of the rebel movements (Anyanya 1963-72 and SPLM 1983-2005). Among these are: Shepherd (1966); El Obeid (1980); Beshir (1984); Alier (1990); Tvedt (1994); Akol (2007) and Abusharaf (2013). Regrettably few have been written by southern Sudanese. There is, by contrast, a relatively rich seam of southern Sudanese writing on the political challenges of southern Sudan (Oduhu and Deng 1963; Joseph Garang 2010; John Garang 1987, 1992; Malwal 2015) and on the experience of the liberation movement (Akol 1995; Nyaba 1997; Madut-Arop 2006). Each of these historical pieces provide insights relevant to understanding the SPLM, even if they do not seek to produce a comprehensive account of the political economy of conflict.

The historical and anthropological literature on South Sudan does, however, contain rich material on local perceptions and experiences of government. This reveals the manifestations of public authority (without using the label) and vernacular concepts of the state. The striking absence of the state in many places and during many eras, or its peculiar if intermittent manifestations as an alien, brutal or kleptocratic force, means that South Sudanese people have become attuned to certain characteristics of government. Hutchinson (1996, 1998) and Leonardi (2007, 2015) have authored the leading publications in this area. An important finding of this research is that the state is seen as an alien Leviathan, defined by its capacity to kill and rob with impunity, outside the moral-social realm, and thus an entity to be feared. Insofar as state-building and creating citizenship involves establishing this kind of governing entity, it is a deeply troubling exercise.

The governance of the SPLM during the long war (1983-2005) is discussed in the memoirs of former SPLM leaders (Akol 1995; Nyaba 1997), in reports of humanitarian agencies (for a synthesised compilation see African Rights 1997) and in a few studies such as Øystein Rolandsen's account of the first SPLM convention of 1994 and the associated politics (Rolandsen 2005). These studies, along with those cited in the previous paragraph, show that the SPLM/SPLA was seen as a manifestation of government, differing from the government in Khartoum insofar as it was 'our' government. It was not seen as a revolutionary liberation movement in the sense of representing a democratic transformation of local public authority. Indeed, as John Young observed during the wars of the 1990s 'failures of SPLM/A governance are a significant

factor in both the generation of… conflicts and their resolution.' (2003: 425).

Another important theme is that South Sudan and the region has long been integrated into a violent capitalist global order (Collins 1971; Thomas 2015). What may have appeared in the late colonial era to be an ethnographic museum of peoples, untouched by modernity with their social structures frozen in time, was in fact the product of a sustained and extraordinarily violent encounter with external forces of violent predation and control.

1.2 Ethnic conflict as 'moral populism'

The logic of moral populism refers to the instrumentalisation of social identities and moral norms in political bargaining. In the case of South Sudan, for example, politicians have often used ethnic identities to mobilise support and forge relationships.   These identities are often exclusionary.

Existing literature on ethnicity and ethnic conflict in South Sudan is extraordinarily rich as over a hundred years of seminal, anthropological scholarship has asked questions about inter-ethnic fighting between the peoples of South Sudan. Even a cursory review is beyond the remit of this paper. The wealth of ethnographic and historical evidence and analysis concerning ethnicity, including identity change and the nature of ethnic boundaries, does not support an explanation of ethnic differences as the roots of conflict and instead reveals the complexities of identity politics within South Sudan and between South Sudanese groups and its neighbours. The popular idiom of ethnicity in South Sudan could be called 'everyday primordialism' (Fearon and Laitin 2000) – the widely-held belief that

ethnic identity is in the blood and non-negotiable, and that different ethnicities have different intrinsic characteristics. Historical and ethnographic research shows this to be fallacious and the processes of constructing and maintaining identity to be far more complex, and politically and socially-determined (Jok and Hutchinson 1999; Hutchinson 2001; Laudati 2011; Hutchinson and Pendle 2015; Pendle 2014).

A common thread across the history of South Sudan is that conflict and fear of conflict play important roles in making certain kinds of ethnic identity and identity boundaries salient. The role of the diaspora and inter-ethnic relations among exiled communities are also significant (Moro 2004). Historians have also shown that since colonial days and the system of 'native administration', the 'tribe' has been a unit of administration. Indeed, 'tribe' and tribal authorities were an intermediary in colonial conquest and pacification, local government on the cheap, and post-colonial counter-insurgency (Johnson 2012; Thomas 2015; Leonardi 2015). 'Tribe' may also be associated with the status of chiefs, who have emerged as an important social category in modern South Sudan (Ahmed 2002).

Yet the concept of ethnic difference as the primary social cleavage is itself a tenuous one, given the plurality and contestation associated with sub-ethnic identities. For instance, as Beswick finds, there are 26 major groupings and four dialects among the Dinka alone. For Beswick, the theme of ethnic conflict remains key to the history of the region but emerges as a 'factor of economics' and of 'totemic closeness to one's neighbours' (2004: 2). She shows that the constitution of identity in this region is bound up with violence, famine,

migration, and 'blood memories' extending into the precolonial era: 'fierce wars, ethnic struggles and expansion and external slave raids shaped the sociopolitical and religious culture of the region' (2004: 1).

Notably, during previous civil wars debates about the politics of identity concentrated less on the clashes between and within ethnic groups in the South, and more on the invocation of a difference between northern and southern Sudanese identity. The concept of a South Sudanese nation was shaped by opposition to the north and the legacies of race and enslavement (Deng 1995, 2005; Beswick 2004; Jok 2007; Leonardi 2011). This oppositional identity is more complex than south-north or African-Arab, given the Egyptian role in colonizing Sudan and the intermediate and ambiguous role of the northern Sudanese in that form of rule (Troutt-Powell 2003) and the 'African' nature of key elements of identity in northern Sudan, including the strong West African influence on nineteenth century Mahdism and twentieth century Islamism (Hasan 1985; El-Affendi 1990).

Ironically, the term 'Sudani' emerged during the colonial era primarily with reference to 'black' Sudanese, from southern Sudan and the Nuba Mountains, and especially to the 'detribalised' sons of former slaves. A prominent Sudani (in this sense) was Ali Abdel Latif, the leader of the 1924 White Flag nationalist movement (Vezzadini 2015). Some ambiguities of South Sudanese identity are manifest in the very name of the country and the decision that Arabic, the lingua franca across much of South Sudan, is expressly excluded as a national language. The fundamentally *political* process of constituting South Sudanese identity has been examined by a

number of authors including Frahm (2012) and Kindersley (2015).

Additionally, the religious element of South Sudanese identity is the topic of much attention by advocates and church people. Among the scholars, we can single out those have written on churches (Falge 2013) and traditional religions (Hutchinson 2001), those have focused on the Islamist perspective (El-Affendi 1990), and those who those who have explored what 'secularism' means in South Sudan (Saloman 2014). Gender is a theme throughout all of these studies.

This review suggests that while the politics of identity has consistently been significant in historical conflicts in South Sudan, the concept of ethnic conflict has little analytical purchase. Identity in South Sudan is plural, complex and politicised. Therefore, the lens of 'moral populism' will help us in exploring its significance in the political economy of conflict. This reminds us that political bargaining is also constrained and influenced by pre-existing ideas and relations from below; individuals and groups that feel excluded might also employ the bonds of kinship to exert leverage on political leaders. Whenever a leader makes an appeal to 'the people' or some segment thereof, he (less often, she) is making a bargain, and although the intent may be to manipulate, the other party to the bargain might also gain leverage. A series of recent studies of militias and 'community defence groups' provide insights suggesting the salience of identity and the potential for further investigation of the ways that moral populist logics are fuelling the current war (see below).

Militarised 'community protection'

A stark illustration of the ways in which political elites have harnessed relationships to their home communities to strengthen their positions at the national level is apparent from Naomi Pendle's (2015) study of the changing political significance of the *titweng*, cattle guards of the western Dinka. SPLA commanders employed them to strengthen their authority at the local level, armed them and later employed their members as a 'reserve army'. Some fought for the *Mathiang Anyoor* in Heglig in 2012, and on the side of the government in the current civil war; some formed a protection force for president Salva Kiir, *Dut ku Beny*. Both groups have been implicated in mass atrocities since 2013. Here we see the exploitation and militarisation of ethnic associations and the corruption of moral norms, in particular 'the local idiom of cattle keeping youth's legitimate use of violence to protect the home communities' (Pendle 2015: 432). Luka Biong Deng Kuol (2017) finds that the *titweng*, and their counterparts in the *gelweng* (the Dinka cattle guards that organised further south), retain some 'legitimacy and support' at the community level – despite their responsibility for extensive violence in Lakes state in 2014-15 and in the Equatorias then and since. The processes of forming these groups and enlisting young men is highly gendered. Male youth are often commodified for their ability to "protect," and rendered vulnerable to the recruitment of increasingly factious armed groups due, in part, to an aspiration by those youth and their families for a transition to the status of societally-validated manhood. Similarly, Pinaud (2014; 2016) refers to the gendered ways in which the "military aristocracy" is maintained, through the payment of

bridewealth as a way of precipitating modes of attachment and deference at local levels.

Relatedly, Young's (2016) research on the Nuer White Army suggests a moral populist pressure from below, reflected in the growing distance between these fighters and their ethnic compatriots among the political and military elites of the SPLA-IO. He supports a view that after December 2013, SPLA-IO leader Riek Machar did not directly mobilise these forces but instead capitalised on local grievances and rebellion. Although the White Army had origins in Riek Machar's attack on Bor in 1991, both then and since its role in violence has roots in local grievances. The White Army, Young suggests, pursued a 'popular war that had the almost complete support of the communities from which the fighters came and involved very little outside support' (2016: 15). Their motives, he suggests, need to be understood in the context of the December 2013 killings of Nuer in Juba and were motivated by 'deep-seated hatred of the Dinka and a desire for revenge' (2016: 15). Justice Africa similarly found that in Akobo gender and violence against women featured as part of the revenge narrative for the White Army and other youth in the area with sexual violence being cited as a main driver of revenge attacks at both the local and the national level (Justice Africa 2016). Breidlid and Arenson further enrich our understanding of this group with evidence that some of its leaders also have roles in peacemaking and conflict resolution, and that their turn to violence is partly explicable in the context of a 'government security vacuum' (2017: 39). This highlights that interventions that focus on the security sector in South Sudan need to understand that many South Sudanese primarily rely

on community-based security providers. The security arena in South Sudan is not limited to the formal security sector of government or the warring parties, but includes a fluid plurality of actors who have various and shifting relations with government.

Amid deep violence and protracted uncertainty, militias or community protection forces have emerged, evolved and either been captured by the political marketplace or presented external challenges to it. As Jok points out, there is a degree of ambivalence towards such groups within government, since on the one hand 'national leaders might see the dangers of parallel defence mechanisms' while on the other 'politicians look to informal forces as personal armies.' (2017: 41). Various studies reveal the diversity and fluctuations in the fortunes and relations of these armed groups and their changing relations to political entrepreneurs at the centre, or communities at the periphery. These include important studies on the Arrow Boys that establish their close ties to the community and concern for the 'public benefit' (Koos 2014), but also changes in their organisation and aims over time (Schomerus and Taban 2017).

Observing the waxing and waning of relations between 'community defence groups', the government and the community points to opportunities for interventions. The authority of elders, chiefs and customary authorities over these defence groups also appears to wax and wane over time. As Biong Deng Kuol has argued, we need to address gaps in knowledge about their motives and relations to local public authority including:

'for example, evidence of resistance among the titweng/gelweng to elite or military pressure to fight, sources of authority or legitimacy that might regulate their behaviour and conduct in violence, and signs of more productive, peaceful relationships that exist locally – among Dinka youth or between Dinka youths and Nuer community forces – all of which could provide constructive entry points for peace measures.' (2017: 26)

1.3 Civic Authority and 'civicness'

We recognise that in all war-torn places, there are relatively peaceful spaces or zones: what we term 'pockets of civicness'. These might be territorial (for example local ceasefires, or inclusive local authorities); social (such as civil society groups helping the vulnerable or customary courts solving disputes fairly), or external (such as interventions that regulate the flows of political finance). In spaces of 'civicness' ordinary people are likely to have greater freedom and be able to push for positive social change and accountability. The concept will be used to explore various ways in which people challenge or refuse to conform to the logics of the political marketplace and moral populism, and express commitments to the public good.

'Civicness' is still a nascent concept that will be refined during the CRP, with attention paid to vernacular definitions as articulated by South Sudanese people. By exploring this notion of 'civicness', the CRP will assist in developing interventions that recognise and respond to the ways ordinary people resist predatory and violent politics, garner greater freedom of choice, and push for change and accountability. It will also provide insight into the conditions under which international assistance (including humanitarian aid) might either exacerbate the violence associated with

the political marketplace, or facilitate the space needed to develop forms of 'civicness'.

The review finds that there are some useful historical and more recent studies of institutions, processes and norms concerned with the promotion of peace and social order that might counteract the dominant logics of the political marketplace and moral populism. These studies demonstrate the potential to uncover civic, deliberative actions in pursuit of the public good in South Sudan, even if these are marginalised or deeply connected to ideas about community, 'home' and custom that are sometimes invoked in exclusionary and violent politics (see above). While recognising the current social crisis, and the damage wrought by repeated cycles of violence, it is still possible to discern an enduring logic of civic duty and 'civicness' in South Sudan. Yet, these displays of 'civicness' are often relatively invisible and need intricate research to understand them.

The most relevant studies in the literature are those concerned with customary authority and law. Chiefs have often been seen as the principle example in South Sudan of the logic of authority that could be described as 'civicness'. It is clear that, in South Sudan, chiefs represent an extraordinarily resilient institution of local governance that has survived, and even been strengthened, during times of war (Leonardi 2013). Chiefs also have the potential to draw on rich cultures and practices of reconciliation, and to voice grassroots concerns, grievances and interests. However, unlike other customary and spiritual authorities such as the Nuer prophets, South Sudanese understand chiefs as inherently linked to government with a role of interlocutor between the

home communities and governments (including armed opposition groups). Many chiefs in South Sudan have built their legitimacy amongst their home communities by being protectors against the alien force of the governments that they achieve through relationship with governments (Leonardi 2013). Therefore, chiefs can appear to operate under a logic of 'civicness' as they can provide a peaceful way to push against government and push for accountability.

However, certainly there are limitations to the notion that the chieftancy is consistently an example of 'civicness' and always in tension with the politics of violent kleptocracy and ethnic exclusion. A key problem has been the ways in which chiefs' courts reproduce and enforce gender inequalities and tolerate or even licence violence against women. Several studies foreground abuses of women (Mennan 2008; 2010; Ibreck, Logan and Pendle 2017), although they observe that women use the chief's courts and that they serve crucial roles in 'negotiating' settlements within communities. Additionally, while chiefly office has survived and adapted during protracted wars, at times it has become militarised (Jok and Hutchinson 1999; Thomas 2015). It has also been exploited by military actors – the SPLM/A sought to harness local customs and moral practices in its struggle again the government of Sudan (see, Leonardi 2007). Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that chiefs have sought to distinguish themselves from military authority and to promote civil methods of dispute resolution.

The power of chiefs in South Sudan has varied over time. Their role in customary courts, established since the 1930s, is central to their authority (Leonardi 2013),

but in some areas and periods they have also had important roles in the control of land (Hirblinger 2015). Chiefs have occupied a complicated and ambiguous position in the socio-political order. Exposed to the brutalities of external domination and pillage for many decades, South Sudanese society developed mechanisms for obscuring and dispersing the sources of indigenous authority. The individuals nominated as chiefs were not necessarily the most senior members of powerful lineages, nor were they the possessors of spiritual authority. Rather, they were brokers between people and the alien authority of the state (Leonardi 2007, 2015). Customary law itself is the product of contestation (Leonardi et al. 2011) and has evolved in response to diverse influences over time, including political and social pressures and practical needs to maintain order and 'prevent disputes from escalating into armed conflicts between different families, clans and communities' (Santschi 2014: 49).

Chiefs have contributed to limiting military authority and in conflict-resolution during past and present conflicts. They have sought to promote judicial redress as an alternative to the pursuit of revenge; and they have also taken lead roles in peace and reconciliation initiatives, with notable success in Wunlit in 1999. Their attempts to uphold law and order and have come under pressure (Small Arms Survey 2014: 4) and made them a target. They have also evolved in contexts of displacement, such as chiefs' courts in the protection of civilians sites in UN camps (Ibreck and Pendle 2016).

Beyond customary authority, there are, as Eddie Thomas and Natalia Chan (2017) argue, other 'positive spaces where civic values still have relevance', including the churches – indeed church leaders have historically taken the lead in peacemaking – while many teachers and scholars have also sought to maintain 'inclusive civic spaces.' There is an urgent need for further exploration of such spaces and the roles of actors such as teachers, prophets and lawyers (with the notable exceptions of Massoud 2013; Hutchinson and Pendle 2015). The academic literature is sparse on how teachers, religious groups, prophets and other forms of customary authority, community councils, community based associations and NGOs work against the logics of the political marketplace and promote civic values. We need to consider the extent to which these commitments are embedded in institutions and norms or reliant on interpersonal networks, and whether they are shaping collective action. Additionally, there is a need for further studies to explore the gender dimensions of civicness, given a historical norm validating violent masculinity and participation in armed groups, and the possibility that the participation of women in these mechanisms and initiatives may influence civicness.

1.4 Regional Conflict Dynamics

There is remarkably little academic writing on the conflicts in South Sudan in their regional context. This is despite there being deep rooted, historic, dynamic economic, political and security relations between South Sudan and its neighbours, and despite the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) being entrusted as the best medium for the peace negotiations. The reasons for this lack of writing include the country-level focus of most scholars and policymakers, and the fact that the region's diplomats and politicians tend not to write political histories or memoirs. Accounts of the

foreign policies and security strategies of north-east African countries tend to be written by officials in foreign ministries or scholars attached to think tanks associated with those ministries (e.g. Mesfin 2012). Others are more critical but not necessarily more detailed (El-Affendi 2001). Another reason for the scarcity of analysis is the covert nature of most of the cross-border security activities. Therefore, much of the political and economic trans-national activities are almost invisible. As a result, important aspects of historic and current wars are missed. For example, the leading role played by Ethiopian, Ugandan and Eritrean forces in military operations of the 1980s and 1990s is often ignored and publicly credited to the SPLA (some of which is detailed in de Waal 2004).

This lack of regional perspective not only limits understanding of South Sudan's wars, but also conceals the impact of these wars on neighbouring countries. For example, little has been written about the economic impact (for better or worse) of South Sudan's wars on neighbouring countries' economies, or the political and economic impact of the movements of refugees for host countries.

Each one of South Sudan's international borders has been crossed in anger in recent times. The most recent was the South Sudanese attack into DRC in an attempt to capture or kill Riek Machar and other leaders of the SPLA-IO (Boswell 2017). In 2015, the Ethiopian National Defense Force mounted a military operation into South Sudan in response to a cross-border raid in which more than a hundred children were abducted. Ugandan People's Defence Force units have been deployed inside South Sudan in support of the GoSS since December 2013, taking an active part in hostilities. Although Uganda

is broadly supportive of the GoSS, there are also active unresolved boundary disputes in which both sides deploy armed units. Kenya remains in occupation of the Ilemi Triangle and conducts military-scale policing operations against cattle rustlers in the Triangle and occasionally across the boundary into adjoining areas. Small military incursions across the border with Central African Republic are not uncommon. The border with Sudan remains actively contested and the boundary disputes remain unresolved.

Several of South Sudan's neighbours are engaged in providing covert military or financial support for armed groups inside the country. In addition, South Sudanese support to the SPLM-North and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) remains active, although not on the scale that existed in the immediate post-independence years. The rivalry between Egypt and Ethiopia over the Nile waters also has repercussions in South Sudan, with reports of Egypt pressing for military access to parts of South Sudan adjoining Ethiopia.

This kind of information tends to be presented as stand-alone reports on a case-by-case basis. The patterns of involvement, the rationales for it, and what it tells us about intra-regional politics, are less subject to analysis. The general pattern over the last six years appears to be one in which, during 2011-12, the GoSS used its relatively plentiful financial resources and armaments to engage in a conflict of mutual destabilisation with Sudan, while also seeking to extend its influence across other borders. Following South Sudan's financial collapse in 2012-13, the direction of engagement and destabilisation has reversed, with the neighbours now playing the roles of

purchasers in South Sudan's domestic political marketplace. However, in contrast to other countries subject to regional interference in this manner, it is remarkable how modest those external engagements have been. It would be relatively straightforward for neighbouring countries to sponsor and arm significant rebel forces in South Sudan, but at the time of writing, this is not happening.

CRP will seek to better understand the impact of regional political, economic and security dynamics on the evolution of violent conflict in South Sudan. We will produce specific research outputs that will consider the economic and political ties, and the political marketplace in relation to the region. This will intentionally include consideration of the impact economic interests have on countries' participation in the peace process, and the subsequent implications for the authority of IGAD in these negotiations.

1.5 Gender inequalities and violence

War in South Sudan has shaped 'social existence,' and the constitution of gender relations (see, Lubkemann 2010, 13). It has also contributed to 'everyday' structural violence (Luedke and Logan 2017). Some of the enduring impacts of war include continuing high rates of child marriage, exceptionally high levels of maternal and child mortality, and very low levels of girls' education. The confluence of factors that contribute to the extreme gender inequalities in South Sudan can be seen as manifestations of both the political marketplace – in which women and girls are largely treated as commodities – and moral populism, which appeals to social order based on gender assumptions and hierarchies.

Research relating to the second civil war (1983-2005) highlights the gendered nature of the violence including rape, abduction, and forced marriage by SPLA combatants that created an 'explosive mix of fear and resentment in communities that persisted in the post-war era' (Pinaud 2014). Jok and Hutchinson describe the emergence of a 'hypermasculinised and militarised world view' (2002: 101), which Jok argues is at the root of gender-based violence that has been persistent ever since (Jok 2006). Military actors sought to break down social norms that contradicted their imperatives, such as the 'weaning taboo,' which prevented sexual relations during breastfeeding. Men were urged to impregnate their wives to replenish the reserve of male fighters (see Jok 1999, Hutchinson 2000); a 'nationalization of the womb' (Jok 1999: 432). Hutchinson found that the customary ethical restraints protecting women and children from warfare and rape were eroded in the post-1991 wars (Hutchinson 1996: 338).

The SPLA also promoted some aspects of traditional Southern cultures and identities, particularly related to family, home life and patrilocal marriage (see Jok 1999). But in the context of war, patriarchal customary norms have constrained women's agency and entrenched gender equalities (Arabi 2011; D'Awol 2011), and made women vulnerable to violence (Lacey 2013). In her study of abductions of women in Jonglei state in the conflict between Lou Nuer and Murle communities after 2009, Lizzie Lacey finds that women are 'legitimate spoils of war' and argues that abductions, sexual slavery and sexual violence are directly rooted in the customary bridewealth system: 'a result of underlying patriarchal structures that value women solely for their reproductive capabilities and linked to this their role in commanding

value for the procurement of cattle' (2013: 91).

Marriage customs have tied young people into relations of dependency upon their elders for bridewealth payments. They have also created opportunities for political entrepreneurs to (re)distribute wealth, and political and military standing, at a local level (Leonardi 2007). Bridewealth may be a factor in military recruitment as, following the rising cost of dowry, 'youth may be driven to seek patronage elsewhere to escape their dependency on elders and relatives for bride-wealth' (Leonardi 2007: 402). Beswick (2001) documents the expansion of polygyny and leviratic marriage during the previous war as a means to consolidate 'political, military, and economic power' (Beswick 2001: 38). Pinaud describes how commanders, through gifts of bridewealth and wives to their subordinates, formed a lower stratum of followers that strengthened their position in the political economy (Pinaud 2014) and consolidated a military elite class (Pinaud 2016).

Since war broke out again in December 2013, the focus has largely been upon the documentation of sexual violence and abduction by warring parties, as well as domestic abuse, marital rape, early and forced marriage (Justice Africa 2016). A United Nations (UN) study found that 'during SPLA attacks, women and girls were considered a commodity and were taken along with civilian property as the soldiers moved through village' (UN 2016). There is a growing body of work revealing the exploitation of women's bodies as a form of payment, or compensation for the hardships of soldiers experienced on the frontlines of the current conflict (see Oosterom 2014: Justice Africa 2016; Luedke and Logan 2017). There are also

fears that the economic crisis has increased the risk of forced and early marriage (Justice Africa 2016; USIP 2012).

While violence against women has become increasingly visible, there has been less consideration given to the ways in which women have participated in conflict or have exercised positive agency through everyday survival strategies and civil activism by and on behalf of women (Jok 2006). For instance, in UN Protection of Civilians sites women have sought to win rights and justice through the customary courts, albeit in careful and often unsuccessful negotiations of custom (Ibreck and Pendle 2016: 41-44). There is a need to investigate the malleability and adaptability of concepts and definitions of gender in conflict and post-conflict environments, and to consider whether and how gender identities are re-negotiated through processes of violence and resistance (Luedke 2014).

Additionally, more attention is needed to the constitution of masculinities, looking beyond their role in violence, including recognising vulnerabilities and gendered violence against men and boys (see Carpenter 2016; Luedke 2014) who are targeted in the violence, conscripted into armed groups, and subjected to forced marriage and sexual violence. The exclusion of men and boys from the way that gender is conceptualised and operationalised fails to recognise linkages between men and women's vulnerabilities in conflict-affected settings (Carpenter 2016). There is also a need to question whether the marginalisation of men and boys may be fuelling a backlash against international efforts to empower women and promote and protect their rights (Leonardi et al. 2010) and exacerbating

'everyday' violence against female populations (Luedke and Logan 2017: 6).

CRP will look at gender as a cross-cutting issue that prompts questions across our various research themes and of the interventions that we will study. We will seek to develop a constructive relationship with others working on gender in South Sudan including the What Works Programme. This will ensure that research does not duplicate findings that have already been established.

2. What Works in Addressing Violent Conflict

A central objective of the CRP is to deliver operationally focused evidence on interventions directly aimed at reducing violent conflict and preventing conflict recurrence.4 It is also concerned with understanding the contextual factors that affect the effectiveness of these interventions. Below, we survey the four broad intervention areas that the CRP will examine and discuss the implications for the CRP's research agenda in South Sudan.

2.1 Strengthening authority and legitimacy (including at sub-national levels)

When the CPA was signed in 2005, for the SPLA, the South Sudanese and key international partners, the Government of Sudan's (GoS) commitment to a referendum on Southern succession was paramount to the legitimacy of the agreement and its ability to end the SPLA-GoS war. Alongside this, the CPA formed a new Government of Southern Sudan, dominated by the SPLA/M. For many, this GoSS was simply a sovereign state government in waiting. After the CPA, however, South-South conflict continued across South Sudan and was sometimes explicitly targeted against the state. Many donors hoped that by improving the capacity and legitimacy of GoSS, including through service delivery, they would increase people's voluntary compliance with this new government. Donors invested billions in this state-building agenda in the hope that it would build state legitimacy (Moro et al. 2017).

The violence in Juba in December 2013 and then in July 2016 has led to a shift in international thinking, including in the UK. DFID spending now focuses on humanitarian programming with additional spending on essential health and education services. After the outbreak of war, donors had growing concerns about the kleptocratic nature of government leadership and there were fears that their spending was building the legitimacy of potentially kleptocratic government leaders. In the South Sudan context, the 'state' is understood as interchangeable with 'government' as there is no separate framework of 'stateness' to which people make reference. Since December 2013, donors have debated how best to relate to government and the implications for state legitimacy. At certain points, this debate has divided donors to the extent that they have been unable to work together.

What works?

State-building approaches have generally come under criticism for being ahistorical and decontextualised. In South Sudan, the current consensus about the 'kleptocratic' nature of government leaders also raises questions about the lack of responsiveness of donors to these realities before December 2013. As the state-building approach was technical and ahistorical, it neglected the political tensions that spilled over in December 2013 (Pantuliano 2014).

Research has also questioned assumptions that legitimacy is built through service provision. Research by the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC) has highlighted that citizens' opinions of GoSS are not only shaped by the provision of basic services. Instead,

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4 Component 1 of CRP ToR focuses on the question of 'What works in addressing violent conflict in developing countries?'.

access to services was considered far more important, whether provided by international stakeholders or the state itself (Maxwell et al. 2016; Moro et al. 2017). They highlight that state legitimacy is political and shaped by political structures, ideas and agency (Moro et al. 2017). In South Sudan, the SPLM leaders relied on liberation 'capital' to legitimise their actions and ask for patience when they failed to deliver as a nascent, young government (Moro et al. 2017). However, in the current war this 'liberation capital' is fading. The South Sudanese perceived security as a basic expectation of government and the ongoing war highlights the failure of the current government in this key responsibility (Moro et al. 2017). Ethnicity also has a role to play in notions of legitimacy. Leaders have used it to mobilise armed combatants and voters at election time. At the same time, the SLRC research found that South Sudanese are rarely involved in decision-making about their needs and priorities, with government, donors and their partners instead often outlining their needs (SLRC 2016: 3-4).

Importantly, external legitimacy has long been key to the SPLA/M (Moro et al. 2017: 16). From the outset, the SPLA only became a leading rebel group because of strong regional and global support. This highlights how significant international (including HMG) support (or lack thereof) and donor spending has been for the legitimacy of the government in South Sudan.

In relation to the current focus on humanitarian spending, it is clear that humanitarian aid can have consequences for legitimacy and public authority. These, in turn, can shape conflict. In the 1980s and 1990s, southern Sudan was the locus of important innovations in humanitarian

action, including most notably Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), the first UN-authorised relief programme that crossed the front lines of an internal war to provide relief to civilians in areas controlled by rebel forces. One strand of the literature on OLS consists of reviews of the humanitarian operations and the context in which they were operating. The most influential of these are the review of OLS commissioned by the UN itself (Karim et al. 1996) and the independent review of humanitarian crises and operations in a political context (African Rights 1997). One of the issues hotly debated in these reviews is the extent to which humanitarian actors generate an economy based upon relief and relief operations, which distorts the local economy and can generate incentives among warring parties to maintain a humanitarian crisis in order to obtain access to relief resources, or to manipulate relief supplies in support of military goals. On occasions, assistance itself has generated local conflicts; for example, where it is seen to be allocated unfairly between rivalrous communities. Such cases even include the provision of aid to church groups that has created competition for the resources provided (Falge 2013). Literature also highlights how OLS acted as local substitutes for state administrations, shaping and re-shaping the social and political landscape (see Riehl 2001. This analysis could also be relevant to post-2011 and post-December 2013 dynamics.

A second strand of literature is concerned with the political economy whereby humanitarian crises are generated and generate benefits to those in power (Duffield 1993, 1998, 2001, 2002; Keen 2008). A counterpart to this is the study of coping strategies and the extent to which social capital and social networks are

central to the ability of communities to withstand famine (Deng 2010).

The current civil war has revived interest in these debates, as some of the older military tactics appear to have recurred. However, since the early 2000s, oil has been by far a greater resource and resource curse than aid (Patey 2010). There has also been interest in the 'peacekeeping economy' generated by the presence of UN peacekeepers. Findings also indicate accusations of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) made against peacekeepers, showing "outside" interveners' role in the political economy of sexual violence in a South Sudanese context. This also highlights the importance of structural economic factors in facilitating abuse against civilians. However, one analysis indicates that the resources provided by the peacekeeping economy are modest in comparison to oil rents (Rolandsen 2015). Yet, as the stability of a large income from oil wanes, there is a new need to ask questions about the role humanitarian aid is playing in the war, the economy, patronage and the logics of public authority.

Implications for CRP's research agenda

As DFID's spending in South Sudan does not currently focus directly on state-building, but instead focuses on HARRIS and basic service delivery (through Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) and the Health Pooled Fund), CRP will focus on the impact of humanitarian spending and basic service delivery for the legitimacy of public authorities including the state. Even if building legitimacy is not the intention of these programmes, there may well be unintended impacts. CRP will question in what conditions this spending promotes inclusive politics at the national and sub-national level, and builds the legitimacy of

public authorities who support 'civicness'. In this process, CRP will work alongside humanitarian partners and GESS in particular, who operate in the selected case study sites (outlined below). This research will engage with ongoing debates about the appropriate relationship between GoSS, armed opposition groups, donors and their partners, including in the delivery of humanitarian aid. This is pertinent as relations during the current conflict have led to a growing sense of anti-international sentiment from the state, narrowing the space for humanitarian access and leading to the targeting of aid workers.

It is evident that the ability of local humanitarian workers to survive and to continue to operate in the extremely turbulent context of South Sudan depends less on their institutional placement than it does on their personal networks and skills at understanding and navigating the political marketplace. A successful local humanitarian worker must possess elements of the same skill set as a political entrepreneur. The same is true for journalists, human rights advocates, church leaders and others who seek to promote humane values and practices such as judges, lawyers and local peacemakers. The CRP will use a life history methodology for exploring these individuals' strategies, and how best they have been supported by international partners.

2.2 Resource interventions and the management of land and boundaries

International actors and NGOs have often worked on the assumption that conflicts are based on resource scarcity, including conflict between pastoralists and between pastoralists and agrarian farmers. In response, resource management is often

proposed as if it was a technical, apolitical exercise. These assumptions, however, mask much more complicated realities, including local and national political involvement in many of these conflicts (SLRC 2016). Assumptions about the technical and neutral nature of interventions also makes them more easily captured by certain political interests.

Land and boundary conflicts provide an example of this. Land has long been the focus of inter-communal conflict within South Sudan and conflict between governing authorities (and investors) and local communities. These conflicts are often bound up with questions of resource ownership and extraction. These are particularly salient in areas where there are resources that can be used to fund the political marketplace such as oil, other mineral resources, timber and commercially-viable farmland, and in urban areas. Contestation over the control of land penetrates many institutions of governance and is intrinsic to the functioning of public authorities in South Sudan. People and authorities draw on various ideas on which to base their claims for land, including livelihoods, history and current political and military power. In examining land disputes, we may see the interplay between the logic of the political marketplace, the invocation of moral populism (especially by community leaders), and attempts to pursue civil struggles in the legal arena.

Historically, land has not been perceived as a salient issue in conflict in South Sudan, as there was no shortage of it. Yet, increasingly, violent actors explicitly conflict over land or accuse government forces and militias of pursuing land grabs. As Leonardi and Santchi highlight, South Sudanese perceptions of the value of land have changed in times of war but also in times of peace (Leonardi and Santchi 2016). The increase in land disputes includes top-down manipulation and land grabs, but is also a result of people attempting to gain security over land by excluding others (Leonardi and Sancthi 2016).

Moreover, ethnic and clan identities are rooted in and reinforced by the allocation of customary land rights, and as scholars of conflict in Africa have observed this is central to explaining the ethnic organisation of violence (Boone 2014). While issues of land governance, the effects of land policies and the exploitation of land as a resource for the political marketplace in South Sudan's current conflict are yet to be fully explored, there is a body of existing scholarship on South Sudan that illuminates the political significance of land and boundaries in conflict. This has several components, including: international boundaries; internal administrative boundaries; the status of borders and border trade; conflict over land including special questions concerning urban land; and conflict over grazing land or land rich in oil, minerals, teak, wildlife and water sources.

Internal administrative boundaries have emerged as sites of conflict and extraction, compounded by the numerous disputes and uncertainties over the status of administrative units and borders following the end of the 1983-2005 war, and the 2015 executive decision to increase the number of states in South Sudan from ten to 28. Among the studies of these phenomena are Schomerus and Allen (2010) and Cormack (2016).

Hirblinger (2015) shows how traditional authorities have been co-opted as a mechanism for state control of land. The

large-scale population movements during the long war created complex dynamics of land claims (Schomerus and Allen 2010). Following the CPA, the prospects of re-establishing some form of status quo ante in terms of land occupation and land rights were remote. For as long as there has been recorded or remembered history, people and communities have moved and land rights have been renegotiated (Thomas 2015). This includes a pattern of cross-border movement between South Sudan and northern Uganda, with populations moving back and forth multiple times over the last half century (and longer), though never before with the scale and speed of the 2016-17 exodus. Internal displacement associated with the current war in Equatoria has led to a plethora of new land claims which are not accommodated within existing legal mechanisms (Justin and van Leeuwen 2016).

Urban land has been a particular focus of dispute and conflict since the CPA, especially with the dramatic growth of Juba and the increasing value of urban real estate (Grant and Thompson 2013; McMichael 2015). Informal networks of patronage served as the central mechanisms for allocating land in situations of legal uncertainty, or overriding legal process (McMichael 2014) with different levels and institutions of government wrangling among themselves (Badiey 2013).

Implications for CRP's research agenda

The logic of the political marketplace provides a useful framework in which to understand resource management in South Sudan, including resource capture by the political marketplace. 'Civicness' also provides a way to understand inter-community relations that can be built through resource sharing. The CRP will

use these frameworks to look at resource conflicts but also the long-term implications of interventions that have been designed to improve resource management.

The CRP will work alongside the South Sudan Law Society (SSLS) and local civil society groups in our case study locations to ensure that the research impacts on the practice of implementing organisations and that our recommendations are relevant to the policy community. The SSLS has carried out various work on land and resource management in the post CPA era.

2.3 Security Interventions

The constitutions of South Sudan have asserted security as a primary responsibility of the national government (for example, Transitional Constitution of South Sudan 2011, Part 4 53.1.a). The government security arrangements in South Sudan have been shaped not only by national politics and decisions, but also by internationally supported peace agreements including the 2005 CPA, the subsequent 2006 Juba Declaration and now the August 2015 agreement. The security provisions have often been highly politicised sticking points of such agreements (LeRiche 2015). Military groups' exclusion from the peace agreements has only made them feel more insecure under the new arrangements and more willing to create their own security provisions for themselves and the communities with which they are associated (see Young 2012). The wartime experience of the 1980s and 1990s had created a plurality of armed groups and security providers in what became a complex security arena. The CPA demanded that 'Other [non-SPLA or

SAF] Armed Groups' either be absorbed into the Southern government forces or be disarmed (or join the then-existing Joint Integrated Units with the northern army). The SPLA and other government forces were meant to become the sole provider across all of South Sudan. The government security forces evolved rapidly in this post CPA era as they absorbed new troops at different times (Snowden 2012). However, this imagined government monopoly over security was a massive departure from the reality of security arrangements at the time. Many South Sudanese had spent the last two decades fighting the SPLA and did not trust them to provide security. The violence since December 2013 in South Sudan can be seen as a trajectory from exclusion of some armed groups ten years before at the CPA.

In attempts both to increase the security of the government and to move towards a government monopoly on violence, the government carried out a series of disarmament campaigns amongst non-state actors after 2005. The first major disarmament exercise following the CPA was conducted in Jonglei, aimed at the Nuer 'White Army' and other militia (Small Arms Survey 2006-07; Arnold and Alden 2007). Community concerns about having to rely on only the government for security prompted communities to violently oppose disarmament. Much bloodshed followed. The violence used by the government to disarm only further increased people's perceived need to have other security providers beyond the government (Rands and LeRiche 2012; Saferworld 2012; Young 2010). Many South Sudanese still reply on local defence forces for their own physical security (Saferworld 2017).

The international community (including the governments of the USA, China, the UK and Norway) until December 2013 largely acted on the assumption that promoting the government security forces would be synonymous with ending conflict and protecting human security. The post CPA literature on security sector reform (SSR) in southern Sudan indicates the difficulty of professionalising and downsizing a military establishment that was being enlarged in accordance with two intertwined logics; namely, the need to challenge or deter the Sudanese Armed Forces in the event of a militarily-contested separation and the need to establish military dominance throughout the territory of southern Sudan, which was militarised in a highly fragmented manner (de Waal 2014). The key documentation on the SSR process shows that external technical assistance of various kinds was utilised towards these goals (Lewis 2009; Rands 2010; Snowden 2012; Small Arms Survey 2009). A focus on the technical nature of reform often resulted in a blind eye being turned to the politics and emerging nature of the government security sector. To the extent that disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) efforts proceeded, they did so because they were consistent with the overall political-military goals of the SPLA leadership (Munive 2013, 2014; Phayal, Khadka and Thyne 2015).

Since December 2013, international actors have been more cautious in their approach to SSR. December 2013 was a brutal reminder that the SPLA and other national security actors were not engaged in SSR with the aim of a state monopoly on the provision of security. After December 2013, it was also untenable to hold that the SPLA was a homogenous force; it appeared to better resemble a loose collection of militias. Previous SSR programmes had

been based on the assumptions of a state-centric model of security.

Despite scepticism about this formal, state-centric SSR, the demand for SSR has remained and has been a key part of the 2015 ARCSS agreement that continues to gain external funding. Yet, at the same time, the security arrangements under ARCSS are largely blamed for the July 2016 eruption of violence in Juba. Plus, in reality, authorities and institutions that provide security in South Sudan remain more fragmented than ever. Many South Sudanese rely primarily on local defence forces for their security (Saferworld 2017). Therefore, in South Sudan it is better described as a 'security arena' than anything that would imply a firm structure or government monopoly.

A consistent gap in the SSR literature and policy is analysis of the extent and impact of neighbouring states' involvement in security in South Sudan. Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda are each extensively engaged in security provision in South Sudan, and as they remain so and indeed deepen their involvement, the South Sudanese security sector is likely to bear the imprint of the security and political priorities of these actors, as well as their modes of operation. It is also important, as has been mentioned, to investigate the gendered dynamics of the security sector's mobilisation and SSR. Duriesmith's (2015) study of DDR programmes after the CPA calls on us to reflect on the ways in which interventions not only fail to challenge gender inequalities but can even entrench patriarchal authority and militarised masculinity.

Implications for CRP's research agenda

The CRP's research will focus on a broad understanding of a 'security arena'. It will consider some of the longer-term implications of previous and current programmes that are explicitly focused on SSR, as well as looking at other ways this arena has been intentionally or unintentionally changed. It will also consider the implications of broader regional engagement in the South Sudan security arena. Lastly it will consider the gendered dynamics of the security sector mobilisation and SSR. To ensure its policy relevance, the CRP will work with a regional expert on this research on the security arena.

2.4 Civil Society and Community Mediation Interventions

The proliferation of conflict in South Sudan over decades has resulted in deep divisions between and within communities. In response, there has also been a rich experience in interventions in conflict mediation at different levels, involving diverse actors including national elites, churches, regional bodies and international diplomats and policymakers.

The 1990s and early 2000s were especially notable for the innovations in local peacemaking throughout southern Sudan. South–South violence had coloured the 1980s and 1990s as a result of the Anyanya II split with the SPLA, the 1991 split in the SPLA, and as local defence forces formed to defend themselves against the predatory nature of the SPLA. Shifting elite politics and international conditions of humanitarian aid also created space for formal SPLM recognition of civil public authorities that would eventually host these local level peace dialogues. Church groups, civil society organisations and customary authorities felt empowered to press for a more accountable SPLM and local reconciliation

and peacemaking. By the end of the 1990s, after periods of famine, people also had a new demand for peace (Duany 2014). The 1999 Wunlit Peace Agreement between the Western Dinka and Nuer is often cited as indicative of the potential achievements of local peace agreements. This agreement is described as "people-to-people" in contrast to an elite agreement. This peace between people of SPLA controlled areas and people of the homelands of Riek Machar (who had defected from the SPLA in 1991) pre-empted Riek Machar's return to the SPLA a couple of years later.

Bradbury, Ryle, Medley and Sansculotte-Greenidge have documented how, by the 2000s, local peace meetings had "become an established part of the complex intervention by humanitarian and human rights organizations in Sudan" (Bradbury et al. 2006: 6). Local peace meetings and their support by the international community proliferated in the post CPA era. Therefore, local peace agreements in South Sudan are also often multi-layered and involve regional and national governments as well as external actors such as the UN, international donors and international NGOs (Santschi 2014). Wunlit was arguably only successful because it included stakeholders from the SPLM/A leadership (Santschi 2014). However, despite being multi-layer, they have been criticised for only focusing on the local and ignoring the reality that violent conflict at the local level cannot be separated from the wider armed conflict and politics (Bradbury et al. 2006).

Santchi has also highlighted that local justice and conflict resolution mechanisms are strongly intertwined in South Sudan; chiefs try cases and are also involved in local peace processes (Santchi 2014). For

others, the lessons learned from Wunlit include that people-to-people peace initiatives are "not about conferences…. People-to-people requires months and indeed years of mobilisation and awareness raising, working with chiefs, elders, and women" (Ashworth 2014).

Current attention has returned to community level dialogue and mediation not only to accompany elite level talks but as a possible alternative whilst elite talks are failing to gain traction. Many donors and partners are still trying to understand appropriate local public authorities and networks of authorities to work with. The South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) has been a focus for a sudden, relatively recent flurry of donor funding. The attraction of the church, the SSCC and other faith-based organisations is that they appear both to have legitimacy at a very local level and across ethnic divides, and also to have representation nationally and internationally.

HMG and other concerned countries, at the same time, continue to engage in high-level peacemaking that contributes to the context for these community level dialogues. South Sudan's national peace processes have generated a small but vibrant literature of their own. There are important accounts of the 1965 'Round Table' and the 1972 Addis Ababa talks by participants (Alier 1990; Beshir 1984). There are important critiques of the IGAD process that led to the CPA (Rolandsen 2011; Young 2005, 2012; Johnson 2012; Jok 2017) including explorations of the issue of self-determination (Johnson 2013) and the delinking of the negotiations for southern Sudan from those for Darfur (Srinavasan 2013) and the approach to dealing with security arrangements (de Waal 2017).

For a detailed account of the negotiations leading to the CPA, we have the memoirs of the chief mediator Gen. Lazarus Sumbeiywo (Waihenya 2006) and Hilde Johnson, then Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs (Johnson 2011). The personal accounts of participants are likely to be somewhat subjective and selective. For the recent peace process, Hilde Johnson, then UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), has also written an account (Johnson 2016), which may be handicapped by the fact that she was excluded from some of the key deliberations and felt the need to defend her record against public criticism. Only in one instance—the talks in Abuja in 1992—do we have an account based on a systematic evaluation of documentary evidence including notes of the meetings (Wöndu and Lesch 2000). The detail provided by Wöndu and Lesch illustrates the importance of such properly-documented analyses. The archive of materials from the IGAD negotiations from 1994 to 2005 is located at IGAD headquarters in Djibouti but has not been accessed by any researcher. The World Peace Foundation Sudan Peace Archive has a compilation of documents from the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) (2009-12) during the period in which the AUHIP was responsible for facilitating the talks between the GoS and SPLM on post-referendum and post-secession arrangements, and subsequently the negotiations to resolve the border war of April 2012.

This literature collectively highlights that mediation has tended to be studied at the community, local or international level without tracing the important relations and tensions between mediation interventions at different levels, and between actors at different levels. There is still a lack of understanding about the conditions in which community dialogues are captured by the national political marketplace and when they are able to preserve space for 'civicness'. For example, there was much discussion about civil society inclusion during the 2014 IGAD discussions but there has been little documented about the nature of the civil society that participated and the impact of their interaction with IGAD. There is also a lack of understanding about how things at the community level can influence dynamics at the national and international level. Wunlit, for example, is discussed as pre-dating national SPLA reunification and then the CPA. These interactions between levels are not understood. However, they are important for HMG to understand not only their work on community mediation and their work on national peacemaking, but also how these link together.

Implications for CRP's research agenda

As HMG intends to invest in community level mediation, the CRP will use the framework of the three logics to explore how such mediations reduce conflict and also build authority. It will ask under what conditions these mediations result in 'civicness', rather than being captured by the political marketplace and moral populism. The research will consider the impact of donor funding on these community level mediations and the conditions in which this increases (not detracts from) their ability to produce peace, accountability and greater freedom of choice for South Sudanese.

In order to do this, the CRP will focus on the church and faith-based organisations. Since Wunlit, the church has been involved in hosting these community level mediations that have often involved chiefs and spiritual leaders. Now, the SSCC has

also become a prominent, donor funded actor. Plus, unusually, the church has a presence in all the case study sites we will explore. They will not be the only mediators considered, but will be a focus.

At the same time, HMG continues to be involved in national peacemaking efforts through the Troika and support to IGAD. The CRP is interested in the links between these community level mediations and the formal and informal national dynamics, and will critically consider the role of IGAD.

3. Research Agenda

One particular added value of the CRP is its capacity to be flexible and to respond to events as they unfold and new research questions as they are posed. Our research has the potential for rapid turnaround with research outputs in response to both immediate events and new questions. As HMG interventions and interests adapt in South Sudan, CRP also has the potential to be responsive. The schedule of research activities and outputs outlined below is consequently provisional and subject to revision.[5]

We begin with the hypotheses that: (1) the state is a political marketplace in which key actors bargain for loyalty and support based on monetary transactions and the use of violence to eliminate rivals; (2) this system is inherently unstable, predatory, turbulent and prone to erupt into violence; (3) there is a parallel and related logic of governance based on the instrumentalisation of moral norms and constructs of religion and identity to cultivate power (moral populism/symbolic patronage); and (4) the political marketplace faces resistance in the form of public authorities that privilege a countervailing logic of 'civicness' that aspire to greater freedom of choice and accountability. The aim will be to explore and elaborate upon these existing ideas and to reveal the more complex nuances and contestations of this political marketplace at subnational and local levels, including its possible fragmentation. By observing over time, we will be able to see how conflict, the changing economy and changing international relations impact the political marketplace. This will provide opportunities to see which international interventions have the potential to have more positive influence over time.

The research will examine vertical relationships between political entrepreneurs active in the national political marketplace and the people in their home communities from whom they garner support, including the human and material resources for warfare. It will seek to enrich our understanding of the networks and transactions that underpin the power of individual elites and provide insights into the ways in which these might be challenged or transformed towards civil, accountable relations of governance. This will give insights into which networks and transactions might be more amenable to international influence.

The research will also consider what international interventions to mitigate conflict work in South Sudan, and how they work. The research will use the framework of the three logics to explore the impact these interventions can have.

3.1 Key Research Questions

Examining the Evolution of Persistent Violent Conflicts

i.   What are the key economic resources that fund the political marketplace? How do these economic and political powers interact? How has the nature of the political marketplace changed in response to changing economic circumstances and the ongoing war?

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[5] All such changes will be undertaken in consultation with DFID.

ii.   How do elite level actors in South Sudan mobilise support from and maintain relationships with other levels of public authority in South Sudan?

iii.   How do these elite actors mobilise support amongst a constituency?

iv.   How do these mobilise armed combatants to fight on their behalf? To what extent do political marketplace entrepreneurs exploit and perpetuate ethnic, gender and generational inequalities?

v.   What role are businessmen playing in the political marketplace and violent conflict in South Sudan?

vi.   What political space is there for South Sudanese themselves to push back against the terms of the political marketplace and involvement in violent conflict? What space is there for increased freedom of choice, change and accountability?

vii.   How and to what extent do local norms, beliefs and identities matter? What role do moral factors or forms of 'symbolic patronage' play in either sustaining the political marketplace or counteracting it, given that land, cattle, bridewealth and other material resources may also have symbolic value, while narratives of identity, including gendered identity, and memory may also be deployed for politically strategic ends to mobilise violence or demand peace?

viii. How does the South Sudanese political marketplace interact with other logics of authority at a regional and international level? How do elite level actors build relationships internationally? How and to what extent are these relations built upon monetary/material transactions? Are they changing over time and place and what are the main factors which effect change / impact relations?

ix.   Do other levels of public authority that have influence at subnational and local levels also operate by the logic of the political marketplace? Do they challenge or counteract this logic and present alternative logics of governance?

Examining What Works in Addressing Violent Conflict in Developing Countries

i.   Building State Capacity and Legitimacy

How do international humanitarian and basic service interventions contribute to shaping the capacity and legitimacy of state actors and other forms of public authority? How and to what extent do they contribute to undermining or constructing the legitimacy of local and national public authorities, including through rule of law promotion and humanitarian responses, especially food aid? How have humanitarian actors and those providing basic services contributed to the capacity

and legitimacy of public authorities e.g. local officials, national elites, or chiefs, through their distribution of aid and governance of the PoC sites?

ii.   Natural Resource Management

How and to what extent do government, international or community level interventions aimed at managing natural resources fuel or prevent conflict? How do they relate to ongoing processes of resource capture associated with the political marketplace logic? To what extent are they preventing or contributing to the emergence of civicness?

iii.   Security Sector Reform

What has been the longer-term impact of formal security sector reforms in the post CPA period at the national and local levels? How have regional actors shaped reform processes? What logics of authority are supported by these reforms? How have local public authorities informally reformed the security arena? How have concepts of masculinity and gender norms been defined in the security arena and are they considered in SSR interventions?

iv.   Community Level Dialogues and Mediation

How have community level dialogues and mediation interacted with other local governance mechanisms? How do they relate to national, regional and international mediation initiatives? To what extent have local peace agreements been based on the logics of the political marketplace, moral populism and civicness? Under what conditions do these mediations promote South Sudanese freedom of choice and help people push for change and accountability? What do these local dialogues highlight about the contrasting

logics of elite peace agreements? What does this teach us about the conditions and opportunities for external interventions? What roles have the Church and faith-based organisations played in mediation?

4. Research Approach and Methods

4.1 Political marketplace case studies

The political marketplace workshops series will involve CRP researchers, including an economist, and DFID economists, in developing the methods and metrics for political marketplace research, both at a general or theoretical level and also in application to each of the five CRP countries, including South Sudan. Please see the concept note for the political marketplace workshops for further details. The work of CRP will also include a researcher who is experienced in economic analysis and whose principal role is to develop the political marketplace toolkit through the above workshops and by working alongside the country-focused researchers. This toolkit will be used in each of the countries, and then experience in the field will feed back into to the development of the theory and toolkit over the course of CRP.

In South Sudan, to make use of the toolkit, we will employ a comparative case study methodology. Working in specific areas will allow us to establish the in-depth information (or proxy and indirect indicators) needed to assess and measure a political market, including: market organisation, sources and nature of political financial flows, prices and political business objectives, strategies and skills.

Our sites (examined in more detail below) are similar in the sense that they are ideal sites in which to examine power networks associated with the political marketplace, but they are diverse in terms of the ethnic identities of people who live there, the basis of local economies, their histories of violence and their geographic locations, including borders with neighbouring countries. Each will be examined longitudinally, tracing processes and patterns over the three years of the project, while taking account of historical patterns.

While pursuing this comparative study, we will also treat each location as its own rich research site. This will allow us to uncover insights into the forms of public authority that exist in each of these localities, their histories, and the logics by which they govern. We will seek to identify the resources and ideas they deploy to win voluntary compliance and whether these modes of governance are implicated in violence, and political marketplace/moral populist logics, or might display civic concern, civicness and commitments to peace.

Finally, we do not treat the areas as discrete geographical localities, given contestation over borders and historical patterns of displacement in South Sudan. Instead we integrate the elites who do not permanently live in these locations, and people who are displaced from or who move back and forth to them, into the case study.

Case Studies and International Interventions

The case studies have also been selected partly as they have been the focus of a range of different international interventions. At the same time, all of these case studies have experienced a plurality of these interventions in varying degrees over time. By studying the interventions in relation to this diversity of case studies we will be able to see what works in a specific site and how this relates to what works elsewhere. It will also help us understand the connections to

national interventions and political dynamics.

In each case study site, we will identify practitioners and policy experts that we can work alongside to shape the details of the research itself and the resulting policy impact. For example, in studying community level mediations we will work with pre-existing contacts in the church and faith-based organisations. This will allow us to study the role of these local public authorities and their relationship with the national SSCC's process as well as other peacemaking efforts. We offer more detail on our proposed partnerships and collaborations below.

4.2 Research Methods

The field research will principally be based on qualitative methods and driven by political ethnography (the use of ethnographic methods to study power relations and the study of political processes and practices). We are principally concerned with observing and examining change over time by working with the local research network member(s) in each site. Methods include:

1. Participant observation in public processes, including public meetings, court cases, ceremonies and rituals, aid distributions and community mediation activities.
2. Interviews gathering the life histories of individuals; the biographies of elites, businessmen, chiefs, church leaders and public authorities, which will be key to understanding their relationship with local communities, and local

and national government figures and institutions.
3. Qualitative surveys to map public authorities including their interaction with the economy.
4. Qualitative surveys to understand the dynamics of the local economy.
5. Gathering documentary evidence, including the collection of documents relating to conflict, dispute mediation or resolution, and governance arrangements such as minutes of meetings, photos, newspaper reports and local maps. For example, the research will make use of the World Peace Foundation Sudan Peace Archive which has extensive documentation of the negotiations that can shed light on a range of issues during and after the independence of South Sudan, including the north-south border, Abyei, citizenship, security arrangements, financial arrangements, the oil shut-down of January 2012 and the border war and its resolution later in 2012. This can be used to illustrate the dynamics of the logics of conflict, as they play out in peace negotiations, and draw conclusions and lessons about the efficacy and limitations of various kinds of conflict resolution engagement.
6. CRP will employ training sessions, interactive dialogues and other action research methodologies to share and elaborate insights and develop collective analyses (further developing approaches and

networks established by Justice and Security Research Programme (JSRP) researchers).

4.3 Policy development and engagement

The South Sudan Conflict Research Panel

The CRP will establish a small group of prominent South Sudanese academics and public intellectuals with the purposes of action research and policy analysis. So far David Deng, Jok Madut Jok, Leben Moro and Edmund Yakani have been consulted on the utility, viability of the initiative and have expressed interest in participation; other prominent scholars including Luka Biong Deng and Peter Adwok Nyaba will also be invited. The group is likely to number 8-10 in total, and there will be an emphasis on ensuring it includes individuals with diverse backgrounds and opinions. Further contacts will be explored during the inception phase and confirmed in the initial phase of the project.

1. The panel will contribute to the research through a participatory action research approach involving dialogue and deliberation on theories and issues at the core of the CRP agenda. For instance, the group will reflect upon and contribute to the elaboration of concepts deployed in the CRP analytical framework, adapting and testing the political marketplace and civicness concepts against vernacular concepts and understandings.
2. The group will serve to contribute to the development of policy recommendations related to

peacemaking, humanitarian response and security sector reform, drawing upon the field research. As South Sudanese elites, with diverse ethnic and kinship backgrounds and political allegiances, the group will contribute a deep understanding of the realities of South Sudan's internal politics and the best approaches to communicating agendas for change.
3. The group will serve as a vehicle for the dissemination of knowledge gathered by the CRP, encouraging the development of an epistemic community and potential advocates for appropriate reforms.
4. The group will meet annually for three days in Kenya including closed sessions for the action research and development of policy briefings and one open session to provide a resource for immediate feedback for DfID staff and other relevant humanitarian actors based in Nairobi.

Collaborating with Policy Makers

As well as working closely with HMG staff in the UK and South Sudan, CRP will draw on a range of other collaborative relationships to ensure the research has a significant policy impact.

In South Sudan, the UK-funded Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility (CSRF) supports the use of conflict sensitivity in donor strategies and programming in South Sudan. Since it started in 2016, CSRF has been developing various ways to communicate research and to influence

donors and partners in South Sudan. CRP will collaborate with CSRF to influence this Juba-based community and to make policy recommendations based on the research findings from CRP.

CRP will also brief and exchange ideas with other similar programmes in South Sudan that are funded by other donors. We will regularly seek the advice of HMG in South Sudan about appropriate contacts in other programmes.

In addition, CRP proposes to develop a collaborative relationship with Girls' Education in South Sudan (GESS). We will work together to refine research around questions concerning interventions' impact on the capacity and legitimacy of South Sudanese institutions and authorities. As GESS operates at a national level but across the country at a sub-national level, it will be possible to develop comparative research in our case study sites. We are hoping that this work alongside GESS will help us develop our understanding of 'civicness' in South Sudan and interventions that can push for change and accountability.

In addition, across all the case study sites, we will work alongside faith-based organisations and churches that we already have established contacts with and that we know are engaged in community mediation work. We are interested in their relationship with the national church and the South Sudan Council of Churches, as well as with other national political and economic dynamics. We will then work with these organisations when appropriate to make policy recommendations.

Local Research Network

Central to the research will be working alongside a network of local researchers who are immersed in the settings of each case study site. This network of researchers includes people that have previously researched on the JSRP or other research projects. Many of these researchers are also activists for 'civicness' in their own rights.

4.5 CRP Data

Across CRP various datasets will be built and analysed. This will include data relating to South Sudan and will have policy recommendations that are relevant for South Sudan. CRP will work alongside CSRF and other implementing organisations discussed in this paper (including GESS, the church and the SSLS) to make sure the findings from this quantitative research influences policy and its implementation.

Conclusion

This synthesis of debates and literature confirms the need for further research into the evolution of conflict in South Sudan and interventions that have tried to reduce conflict. It is apparent that interventions will have a better hope of success if they start from a deeper understanding of the contemporary logics of the political marketplace and the networks and roles of prominent political entrepreneurs. There is also a need to understand international interventions in relation to these logics of moral populism and civicness. Do interventions entrench exclusive identities that are easily instrumentalised by political entrepreneurs? Or do they protect space for civicness, freedom of choice and opportunities to push for positive social change? We already have detailed insights into various forms of public authority, such as chiefs and militia groups, but we need to investigate the connections between authorities at different levels. Overall, there is a need to bridge the gap between the study of national actors and institutions and rich local analyses, and to instead focus the lens on the relations between them, considering the politics of the 'sub-national' and its connections to the national, regional and international. The CRP agenda is designed to fill this gap by undertaking field research at key politically strategic case study sites and employing political ethnography over time and innovative participatory action research approaches. Alongside this, the CRP will provide insights into the cross-cutting issues of gender and regional conflict dynamics that also impact the evolution of conflict in South Sudan.

CRP aims to provide deep insights into the long-term evolution of violent conflict and to learn lessons from interventions that have and have not worked in order to inform policy makers. We will ensure the policy relevance of our research by working alongside specific implementing organisations, as well as by working closely with HMG throughout the research and the presentation of its findings.

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