

**Third MICROCON Workshop Report:  
Fieldwork Plans and Preliminary Results**

Workshop held in Kjustendil, Bulgaria  
19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> June, 2008



## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Session 1 – Concepts.....</b>	<b>3</b>
Frances Stewart: Why Group Inequalities Persist .....	3
Tilman Brück: Violence and Inequality .....	3
Patricia Justino: Poverty Traps and Conflict Traps .....	3
<b>Session 2 – Preliminary results on displacement .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Ana María Ibáñez: Do conflicts create poverty traps? Asset losses and recovery for displaced households in Colombia .....	4
Carlos Bozzoli: Leaving the Camps: The Effect of Conflict Reduction on Household Welfare and Labour Opportunities .....	4
Colette Harris: Masculinisation of poverty: gender and violence in internally displaced people’s camps .....	4
<b>Session 3 – Preliminary Results on Burundi .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Philip Verwimp: Designing the Burundi Priority Survey 2007: methodological issues .....	5
Philip Verwimp (for Tom Bundervoet): Violent Conflict and Welfare Dynamics in Rural Burundi: A Panel of Households During Burundi’s Civil War, 1998-2007.....	5
Eleonora Nillesen: Theft, violence and civil strife in Burundi.....	5
<b>Session 4: Fieldwork Plans and Preliminary Results on Violence.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Ingunn Bjørkhaug: Recruiting child soldiers: vulnerability, agency and reintegration.....	6
Jeremy Seekings: Experiences of violence in urban South Africa .....	7
<b>Session 5: Fieldwork Plans on Governance.....</b>	<b>7</b>
Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers: Work Package 10 – Governance and Institutions: Overview and progress.....	7
Lars Wirkus & Sophia Schmidl: Local Governance and Individuals in Water-related Conflicts: a reciprocal relationship? .....	8
<b>Session 6: Preliminary Findings on Groups .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Daniela Koleva and Teodora Karamelska: Tension and understanding between the main ethno-religious groups in Bulgaria: approaches and problems.....	9
Amel Boubekeur: Preliminary results of studies on violence, Islam and new models of multiculturalism .....	9
<b>Session 7: PA3 – Policy Linkages and Synthesis launch .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Nathalie Tocci: The EU, civil society and conflict transformation: a framework for analysis .....	10

## **Introduction**

The MICROCON consortium came together on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2008 to discuss plans for future fieldwork and preliminary results. The workshop also marked the launch of Programme Area 3: Policy linkages and synthesis, and gave an opportunity to discuss our engagements with policymakers.

## **Session 1 – Concepts**

In this session, papers were presented that were intended to feed into MICROCON's [Conceptual Framework](#).

### **Frances Stewart: Why Group Inequalities Persist**

Frances talked specifically about horizontal inequalities (HIs), which are inequalities between groups with salient identities. The group at the Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity (CRISE) has been looking at the relationship of these inequalities to conflict, and have found that they raise the risk of conflict, humiliate subordinated groups and make poverty reduction more difficult.

HIs tend to be very persistent, and whilst catch up has occurred in some countries, this is unusual and only tends to happen with active policies. 'Natural' catch-up does occur but is rarer. At its simplest, the reasons for this persistence are that relative income depends on access to different types of capital – human, physical and social capital – and on returns to that capital.

Given their multiple causes, a multiple approach to policy to tackle HIs is needed. For example, tackling education alone may be insufficient, and anti-discrimination policies may be needed, specific economic activities may need to be targeted, or redistribution of assets may be necessary. Such an approach can be very effective, as in Northern Ireland and Malaysia.

Frances is the leader of the Work Package on [Group Formation, Identities and Mobilisation](#).

### **Tilman Brück: Violence and Inequality**

This paper aimed to investigate if and how mass violent conflicts affect inequality in developing countries, using data from the UNU-WIDER World Income Inequality Database and the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset Codebook. Preliminary findings were that war itself does not have an effect on current inequality. Regressions suggest that short wars raise inequality in the post-war period, even though summary statistics suggested the opposite. Inequality seems to rise in the post-war period, before falling.

Tilman is Deputy Director of MICROCON, leader of the Work Package on [Evaluating Conflict Interventions](#), and leader of projects on [Determinants of individual participation in collective violence](#) and [Coping with conflict](#).

### **Patricia Justino: Poverty Traps and Conflict Traps**

Patricia's presentation focussed on the relationship between poverty traps and conflict traps. Violence can impact on poverty through its direct effects (killings, injuries, displacements); indirect effects (on local institutions and the national economy) and instrumental effects (failure of common coping strategies).

These effects can lead to poverty traps, and poverty can lead to conflict traps. The effects of conflict on household poverty can lead to a symbiotic relationship between armed groups and civilians: civilians use armed groups to protect their economic status, whilst armed groups use population control to advance their strategic objectives. Increased support will strengthen the armed group and can prolong the conflict.

## **Session 2 – Preliminary results on displacement**

### **Ana María Ibáñez: Do conflicts create poverty traps? Asset losses and recovery for displaced households in Colombia**

Ana María presented the preliminary results of project 11: [Displaced populations in Colombia](#). The objectives of this study were to assess the impacts of civil conflicts on households' asset holdings, more particularly, (i) examining the process of asset losses and how conflict dynamics determine these losses; (ii) investigating the process and determinants of asset accumulation after such a shock; and (iii) discussing whether losses produced by conflict may produce poverty traps.

It was found that conflict and forced displacement can create poverty traps through erosion of the asset base, reductions in income and disruption of risk sharing mechanisms. These factors obstruct recovery from asset shocks and accumulation of new assets. People often resort to costly strategies to compensate income drops and guarantee a minimum bundle of consumption, for example through school interruption and child labour. Households are locked into low income trajectories, where asset recovery is unlikely.

### **Carlos Bozzoli: Leaving the Camps: The Effect of Conflict Reduction on Household Welfare and Labour Opportunities**

Carlos presented work in progress for [project 17: Coping with conflict](#). The motivation for the paper was to look at post-conflict behaviour and welfare, focussing on IDPs in Uganda returning home, how people choose economic activities subject to constraints, and individual welfare outcomes. There is a problem of identifying cause and effect, because displacement is forced, but return is voluntary, as is the selection of coping strategies. The data situation is also challenging, as there is only simple survey data available. The solution and methodological contribution of this paper is to merge and analyse conflict event data and simple survey data.

According to preliminary findings, it appears that IDP status has no significant effect on activity choices, and it may be that the effect of violence on 'outside' choices is most important in driving these choices.

### **Colette Harris: Masculinisation of poverty: gender and violence in internally displaced people's camps**

Colette presented the work of preliminary fieldwork in Uganda undertaken in 2007 for [project 8: Gender identities and violent conflicts](#). Colette has been working with three MICROCON researchers from Makerere University (Deborah Mulumba, Fredrick Immanuel Kindi and Eria Olowo Onyango) in Gulu and Lira provinces. The study was purely ethnographic, and last year they went to IDP camps and carried out interviews and focus groups. Masculinities were not mentioned by the researchers, but

respondents were separated into groups of men and women, and asked what the most important issues were for them in the camps. The men straight away mentioned issues of masculinity, saying that they were 'unable to be men' in the camps. Women were more interested in practical issues, such as sending their children to school, and the dangers of rape and HIV.

There are serious questions related to the return that are gender-specific, especially around land rights and inheritance. Future research will focus on the questions of what men can be expected to do in the return, without suppressing women. What are the spaces that men could have 'to be men', if women are to be allowed to retain the independence they have experienced in IDP camps?

### **Session 3 – Preliminary Results on Burundi**

In this session some results of preliminary analysis of data gathered under [project 15: Civil war and activity choice](#) were presented.

#### **Philip Verwimp: Designing the Burundi Priority Survey 2007: methodological issues**

Philip talked about the implementation of the second stage of a household panel survey carried out in Burundi in 2007. Panel surveys have, in general, been carried out by observing a set of households, and then surveying the same location again a number of years later. However, in the meantime, a son or daughter can move out and start their own household. These households are often left out of the study, leading to an underestimation of the development of poverty. The panel study undertaken by the MICROCON team in Burundi last year is the first panel study to look at split-off households in Burundi, and one of very few to have been done in Africa.

The survey was building on the results of the 1998 Priority Survey undertaken by the World Bank and ISTEERU, the Burundian national office of statistics. This survey covered 6,600 households, 2700 urban and 3,900 rural. This nationally representative survey was implemented during the civil war, and covered 390 clusters of 10 rural households. The new questionnaire was modelled after the 1998 one, and the team managed to re-interview 872 of the original households, and 536 split-off households; and to carry out 100 community-level surveys..

#### **Philip Verwimp (for Tom Bundervoet): Violent Conflict and Welfare Dynamics in Rural Burundi: A Panel of Households During Burundi's Civil War, 1998-2007**

Philip then presented some preliminary research into one of the questions that this project is seeking to answer: (How) does violence affect individuals' and households' welfare levels? Research to date suggests that variables which increase the probability of escaping poverty are the number of split-off households and exceptionally good harvests. Variables which decrease this probability are destruction of the house due to climatic events and violence in the village. The risk of falling into poverty is relatively high when the village is marked by violence between 1998 and 2007; this risk falls with good harvests.

#### **Eleonora Nillesen: Theft, violence and civil strife in Burundi**

Eleonora presented the results of preliminary analysis on another research question the team is tackling: whether violence was exogenous during the conflict in Burundi.

It is important to shed light on who is vulnerable to violent shocks, but also to identify the causality from exposure to violence, to poverty and other socio-economic phenomena such as collective action and inequality. If violence is not exogenous, then the study will seek to identify who is “selected into” violence at the individual level, the household level and the “colline” (village) level.

The tentative conclusions drawn from an analysis of victimisation are that theft and physical attacks measured at the household level show different patterns. Outcomes from theft give the most intuitive results. Being in a coffee-growing area seems to be important in selection into violence at the community level, although coffee may be proxying other community variables not yet taken into account. The next step in the analysis is to connect the results of the victimisation analysis to household-level socioeconomic outcomes including changes in poverty, crop/portfolio investment, health, collective action and inequality.

#### **Session 4: Fieldwork Plans and Preliminary Results on Violence**

In this session, papers from different Work Packages were presented that focus on violence.

##### **Ingunn Bjørkhaug: Recruiting child soldiers: vulnerability, agency and reintegration**

Ingunn presented the research plans of [project 4: Recruiting child soldiers: vulnerability, agency and reintegration](#). This project seeks to investigate patterns, processes and mechanisms of recruitment of children to armed groups in Colombia. It will look at why children join groups in their own reckoning looking at the role of force and other factors including motivation/ desire; coping strategies; familial pressures, demands, or breakdown; marginalisation; poverty; promise of material gain; and lack of education or other opportunities. It will also look at why armies recruit children as soldiers.

The project will carry out a qualitative study with in-depth interviews and semi-structured questionnaires. Fieldwork is in the planning stage and will involve one researcher from the Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies, and one local fieldworker and translator.

##### **Yvan Guichaoua: Armed rebellion in Northern Niger**

Yvan presented preliminary results of [project 2: Motives for fighting and group mobilisation](#). The main research question in this research project is why fighters participate in risky armed rebellions, with a focus on West Africa. The Niger part of the research focuses on the current rebellion under the “Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice” (MNJ).

Provisional conclusions are that the time dimension is decisive in motives for participation, and that conceiving rebellions as fully planned organisations is misleading. Also, there is a “global” dimension to the rebellion: the political platform of the rebellion was developed with the help of NGOs based in Paris. The transnational dimension is also important because Libya, Algeria, France and the US all play important roles. An important methodological conclusion is that a micro-historical approach is useful in capturing strategic turns and organisational rearrangements as mobilisation is channelled through clientelistic ties.

### **Jeremy Seekings: Experiences of violence in urban South Africa**

Jeremy presented the results of preliminary fieldwork for [project 21: Poverty, exclusion and violence in South Africa](#). The team's research in progress takes the form of 50 in-depth, semi-structured interviews, in low-income, Xhosa-speaking neighbourhoods in Cape Town. To their knowledge this is the first qualitative study of its kind in South Africa. The interviews will focus on how people experience and perceive everyday violence; how they respond to violence, individually and collectively; how people assess the efficacy of sanctions against violence; what people think about the capacity and experience of households, kin, parents, friends, people in the 'community', and vigilantes, as well as the state's agencies of social work and criminal justice, in constraining different forms of violence.

According to preliminary responses, respondents suggest a range of possible causes for violence that are similar to those suggested by social scientists, for example: poverty; youth violence because of, for example, consumerism and drugs; adult male violence because of unemployment and drunkenness; domestic violence; and jealousy. People mentioned a range of possible individual and collective responses to violence, which the team want to investigate further. Continuing research will focus on the mechanisms through which poverty, inequality and social exclusion are related to violence. Jeremy and his team will be continuing the interviews; analysing existing survey data; organising focus group discussions and perhaps some participant observation. There will also be a survey carried out in 2009.

### **Session 5: Fieldwork Plans on Governance**

In this session, fieldwork plans for the Work Package on [Governance and Institutions](#) were presented.

#### **Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers: Work Package 10 – Governance and Institutions: Overview and progress**

This Work Package looks at the institutional dimension of violent conflict, and how conflicts can induce institutional change. Koen and Timothy presented the preliminary work and plans of three of the projects.

[Project 27: Citizenship and land rights](#) is conducted in Cote d'Ivoire. It looks at the relationship between citizenship and conflict on the one hand, and the structural nature of institutions and governance on the other. A lot of work has already been done on this project, with fieldwork co-funded by the Norwegian Research Council being carried out between January and March this year. A survey of 340 households was carried out, along with qualitative work in the same area, comprising ethnographic focus groups and life history interviewing. The purpose was to establish the basis for households' rights to land, or lack of such, and how people perceive established practices concerning different groups and different rights to land, and how they perceive new compromises about rights to land.

[Project 28: The political economy of entitlement to resources in rural Tanzania – An institutional perspective](#) was also presented. It starts from the proposition that conflicts over local resources for agricultural use, ranging from disputes to violent clashes, are not just scarcity-induced, but arise from how water and land is governed. Local institutions are used to claim and enforce rights to land and resources, but they

largely remain a black box and not much work has been done on them at the local level, and how they (dis-)organise access to resources. The central hypothesis of this project is that power determines the institutional setting, and so also security of access to local resources.

Els Lecoutere is the main researcher for this project, and she is currently in the field in Tanzania preparing and conducting the first phase of the fieldwork. This fieldwork is an empirical analysis of appropriation and enforcement of entitlement to resources in traditional irrigation schemes in order to draw conclusions about the local micro-institutional setting. In addition to this empirical analysis there will be an experimental analysis simulating the allocation of water.

Project 25: Governance without government looks at the relationship between institutions and conflict in three African conflict and post-conflict settings. It uses the perspective of individual and collective risk management on the one hand, and social, economic, cultural and discursive mobility on the other hand. The emphasis of this project is on how conflicts can induce social change rather than the other way around – it is looking at consequences rather than causes. The case studies are in southern Sudan, the eastern DRC and in Abidjan in the Cote d'Ivoire. Fieldwork will start this year, although some preliminary visits have been made to the research areas. It will be purely qualitative work, using participatory observation, life histories, etc, combined with focus group discussions.

The questions will focus on mobility, and the ability of different constituencies to move within different governable spaces. The presence of 'hyper-mobile' rural youth is seen to fuel insurgencies in the West African region. The hypothesis is that conflict can generate opportunities and constraints for mobility that contrast with processes of peacebuilding and state-building.

### **Lars Wirkus & Sophia Schmidl: Local Governance and Individuals in Water-related Conflicts: a reciprocal relationship?**

Lars and Sophia spoke about project 26: Water management and violent conflicts. The project will analyse water conflicts between different groups of water users, and between water users and state and private actors, focussing on arid and semi-arid regions of Sub-Saharan Africa. The objective of the project is to analyse the structural causes and the motivations of actors that lead to the (non-)violent conduct of water-related conflicts in the local water point context. This will involve identifying specific sets of conditions that make violent escalation probable, and analysing in detail the perceptions, world views, motivations and norms of the local actors who are using (or willing to use) violence. The project will develop proposals for conflict prevention, or non-violent conduct of such conflicts

The research will begin with desk research and consulting experts, which will result in stakeholder mapping and conflict mapping. This will feed into field research with community members (through household surveys, questionnaires and semi-structured interviews); local leaders (through story telling and semi-structured interviews); and experts in government authorities and NGOs (through semi-structured interviews). The case study sites are: Lake Eyazi, Tanzania; Southern Kunene region, Namibia; Okavango Delta, Botswana; and the Lesotho Highland Water Project.



## **Session 6: Preliminary Findings on Groups**

This session presented findings of preliminary work from [Work Package 4: Contemporary Conflicts and Ethnic-religious Tensions](#).

### **Daniela Koleva and Teodora Karamelska: Tension and understanding between the main ethno-religious groups in Bulgaria: approaches and problems**

Daniela and Teodora presented the fieldwork plans and preliminary results of [project 6: Muslim integration in Bulgaria and Serbia](#). This project looks at how ethnic and religious identities might be instrumentalised in potential conflicts. There is a consensus that the ethnic model in Bulgaria has guaranteed a stable, peaceful co-existence between ethnic/religious communities, by laying basic common values at the foundation of mutual recognition. The project aims to offer a typology and interpretation of these common values and the forms of their mediation; and to study those values and attitudes which can be a source of differentiations, mutual exclusion, opposition and conflict between communities.

The study will carry out over 150 biographical interviews with Turks and Bulgarians in mixed-population regions. The methodology will follow that set up by Gabriele Rosenthal and Fritz Schütze. The interviews will cover the topics of work, family, informal networks, social roles, free time and interactions with the other ethnic group. These interviews will have two stages. The first will consist of free life history narratives, and the other will focus on the future. During the analysis of the results, distinctions will be made between objective meanings on the one hand, and the intentional meanings whereby the respondents explain their social interactions on the other. The project will look at aspects of social normativity, under the assumption that people's values become operative in social normativity. Important aspects of this are informal publicity (public festivals and so on); and informal networks. These are very important for individuals to find their way in life.

### **Amel Boubekur: Preliminary results of studies on violence, Islam and new models of multiculturalism**

Amel presented the preliminary results of Project 5: From violence and conflict to models of integration of Muslims in Europe. The team will look at how societal tensions are reshaping European society and Muslims' place in it. The project will carry out studies in Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Holland, Russia, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

There are three assumptions the project particularly aims to interrogate:

1. That violence is linked to Islam, that this has signed the death of multiculturalism, and that we should hence invent a new way of living together.
2. That violence challenges the idea of national identity.
3. That violence has a non-European character and is the result of foreign influences and discourses produced outside Europe.

Preliminary results of the project underline the need to distinguish between different types of radicalisation. They also criticise normative definitions of radicalisation. For example, should salafists be called radical for rejecting European society? Is their self-exclusion necessarily related to their religious views?

### **Session 7: PA3 – Policy Linkages and Synthesis launch**

The workshop marked the launch of the third section of MICROCON's work programme. This part of our work comprises two Work Packages that take conflict policy as an object of research. One of these Work Packages is called [Conflict in the European Neighbourhood](#) (see below), and the other is called [Evaluating Conflict Interventions](#).

#### **Nathalie Tocci: The EU, civil society and conflict transformation: a framework for analysis**

Nathalie presented the conceptual framework for the Work Package on Conflict in the European Neighbourhood. This research will focus on the EU's work with civil society organisations in conflict-affected countries in the European Neighbourhood. They will be especially focussing on the European Neighbourhood Policy.

The team will carry out research in five conflicts in the European Neighbourhood: Georgia and Abkhazia, Moldova and Transnistria, Nagorno Karabakh, Morocco and Western Sahara and Israel-Palestine. It will select, study and interview one organization at mid or grassroots levels, for each side of the conflict, and bi-communal groups where relevant, eight different types of actors.

For more information on this conceptual framework, see our third Policy Briefing: [The EU, Civil Society and Conflict Transformation](#). We will also shortly publish a Policy Working Paper on the same topic, which will be available from the [publications page of the MICROCON website](#).

#### **Tilman Brück: Translating research into policy**

This session moved the discussion from policy as an object of research, to how to integrate policy questions into our research. Policy linkages cannot simply be added on at the end of the research process, but need to be integrated early on. Participants discussed a number of questions, including: Who are the policymakers we want to engage with and for what reasons? How will you reach local audiences with the results of your research? How do local stakeholders use your research findings? How do you know?

Discussions touched on a number of issues, including the need to convince policy actors that our research is relevant to the problems they are working on. For our research to be relevant to policy, policy itself needs to be researched in order to determine which policy prescriptions have already been advanced, and which have and have not worked. The purpose of much of our research in the first place is to inform policymakers, and many of our researchers are already working with policymakers in the implementation of their fieldwork. It was conceded that in some cases policy may be moving strongly in a particular direction, which it is only possible to feed, and not to alter. In these cases it may make sense to engage with policy actors who are not policymakers, such as lobbying groups.

The recommendations coming out of these discussions will be integrated into MICROCON's research and communication plans going forward, as we now enter the main stage of our field research.