EPI Peacebuilding Review

Priscilla Torres

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1 Introduction

Scholarship on peacebuilding increased in recent years.[1] However, little is known about which kinds of peacebuilding activities are and are not effective in curbing violence. his review (1) summarizes peacebuilding scholarship in an effort to capture what is and is not effective in reducing violence and (2) develops broad categorizations of general peacebuilding activities for the purposes of classification and evaluation. It also highlights knowledge gaps in identifying which kinds of peacebuilding interventions have not been thoroughly evaluated by academics and it identifies knowledge gaps in which geographic areas of the world have gone understudied.

2 Context: A Breadth of Academic Debate

Academic scholarship is abound with critical debate, particularly with respect to hybrid, ver- sus local, versus top-down approaches to peacebuilding (Autesserre 2017; Campbell, Chan- dler and Sabaratnam 2011; Leonardsson and Rudd 2015; Mac Ginty 2013). Peacekeeping is the area of peacebuilding that has had its efficacy (with respect to violence reduction)

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[1]This includes studies that are development initiatives or other kinds of interventions that have peace-building components embedded in the intervention.

evaluated and summarized most by scholars. Particularly with respect to whether or not peacekeeping helps to (1) prevent a resurgence of conflict and (2) whether peacekeeping is effective at preventing violence against civilians. The general consensus is that peacekeeping is largely effective at addressing these two goals (Di Salvatore and Ruggeri 2017; Fortna and Howard 2008; Walter, Howard and Fortna 2021).

Historically, there have been widespread debates about what peace even is to begin with (Davenport, Melander and Regan 2018; Galtung 1969).[2] A large amount of work on peacebuilding, especially experimental work that is interested in influencing individuals and communities, has focused on secondary outcomes (i.e. job attainment, quality of life, attitudes) rather than behavior or a predilection toward engaging in violence (Ditlmann, Samii and Zeitzoff 2017). Scholars have not summarized, explored and highlighted the gaps in what is known and not known about *peacebuilding's* effect on *violence.*[3]

3   Key Categories of Peacebuilding

One challenge in identifying the kinds of peacebuilding interventions that are and are not effective is that peacebuilding is an especially broad (and vague) concept with many different activities that can plausibly constitute peacebuilding. For example, Barnett et al. (2007) identify approximately 29 different kinds of activities that can be considered peacebuilding. I identify approximately 15 different kinds of peacebuilding activities, noted below. In or- der to identify these categories, Barnett et al. (2007) and Mross, Fiedler and Gr¨avingholt (2022) were consulted to help develop a list of broad categories that peacebuilding activities

[2]Emerging from these debates have been innovative empirical advances such as the Everyday Peace Indicators (Firchow 2018)

[3]One notable exception is Aila Matanock's (2020) chapter on *Experiments in Post-Conflict Contexts* in *Advances in Experimental Political Science*, edited by James Druckman and Donald P. Green. However, her

chapter does not specifically focus on peacebuilding and, while it does focus on post-conflict contexts, it does not explicitly focus on violence as the outcome of interest.

generally fall into. Please note that these categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive. While they may be conceptually distinct, in practice, many peacebuilding interventions in- volve several different activities at once. Additionally, certain activities such as development initiatives and government reform might be embedded within the same intervention. Con- sequently, these categories should be treated as ideal types for use as an analytical tool. It is possible for a single intervention to be included in multiple categories. For example, Mvukiyehe and Samii (2021) explore the role of peacekeeping, as well as development, ed- ucation, rule of law and community dialogue on a series of peacebuilding related outcomes within the context of one intervention.

There are 15 broad categories of peacebuilding listed below:

3.1 Variation in Timing and Goal of Intervention

There are other forms of variation that are plausibly important in understanding what is and is not effective about peacebuilding interventions. Barnett et al. (2007) highlight the temporal aspect of the intervention. They state "some programs focus on the production of stability and security in the early days of a peace agreement's implementation, while others focus on building vibrant civil societies and furthering development" (Barnett et al. 2007)[pg.36]. Matanock's (2020) differentiation between peace consolidation and peace sta- bilization is central to understanding not only differences in the timing of peacebuilding activities, but also differences in the intent of peacebuilding. Where **peace stabilization** is concerned with the creation of conditions conducive to establishing a stable peace (i.e. the prevention of conflict recurrence/violation of the peace agreement or ceasefire), peace consolidation is concerned with the deeper transformation of society, from a conflict ridden society to a more peaceful one. Often, peace stabilization is focused on elites and parties to the conflict early in the peacebuilding process, whereas peace consolidation is often focused on broader society, including civil society, at a later time during the peace process.

For example, activities such as dialogue (mediation, negotiation) are often peace sta-

Peacebuilding Activities	
Peacebuilding Type	**Examples of Activities**
Peacekeeping	Activities to secure and maintain a ceasefire or peace agreement
Dialogue	Communication among actors, especially focused on elites; includes activities such as negotia- tion and mediation
Socioeconomic Develop-ment	Infrastructure, monetary assistance, repatriation and return
Governance Reform	Power-sharing, expansion of rights, quotas, re-writing constitution, technical/policy support, judicial reform, *local institution building[a]
Humanitarian Relief	Immediate material aid: food, medical assistance
Security Sector Reform (SSR)	Integration efforts, re-training, changes to the composition of security forces, community polic- ing initiatives
Disarmament, Demobi-lization and Reintegra-tion (DDR)	Interventions that target former combatants aimed at disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating ex-combatants into society: often include job training, cash for guns programs, etc.
Election Support	Monitoring, assistance, observation
Truth and Reconcilia-tion and Justice	
Peace Education	Specific to education initiatives that teach either communities, school children or groups of individuals about non-violent methods of dispute resolution and conflict management; these can involve initiatives within schools, such as school integration in Northern Ireland for example as well, but it can also involve peace workshops in communities; the central differentiating factor is that individuals are being educated about peace, or a reform occurs within a school setting aimed at enhancing peace
Post-Conflict Safety Measures	De-mining, small arms and light weapons removal, early warning systems
Civil-Society Building	Interventions that focus on strengthening civil society, especially civil society organizations and media outlets
Social Cohesion Build-ing	Efforts to improve social cohesion or inter-group relations; often focused on individuals and

	communities; can include activities like cross-community interactions
Naming and Shaming	Public efforts to expose human rights violations or violations of the terms of a peace agreement; often carried out by international non-governmental organizations
Sanctions	Punishments, often economic, for bad behavior or violation of a peace agreement

[a]This is the only item that exclusively falls outside of government parameters. In other words, this type of governance reform specifically occurs at the local level.

bilization activities, meant to help establish a peace agreement. Conversely, activities such as development initiatives that have the intent of strengthening inter-group relations, tend to take place once peace has been stabilized and are often focused on long term societal transformation, in an effort to prevent conflict from occurring in the future, both through the strengthening of infrastructure and inter-group relations. Many of these kinds of peace- building activities continue well after the peace agreement has been signed and well after rebel groups have been demobilized.

3.2   Variation in Lead Actor

In addition to the timing and overarching goal of interventions, there is also variation in the actors who conduct a peacebuilding activity. These include, but are not limited to: international actors (i.e. the United Nations, the World Bank), regional actors external to the region (i.e. NATO peacekeeping in Africa), regional actors local to the region (i.e. African Union peacekeeping in Africa), domestic state actors (i.e. a peacebuilding wing of the domestic government such as the Liberia Peacebuilding Office) and local actors (i.e. domestic non-governmental organizations, traditional leaders, religious leaders, informal actors (non- state, but not traditional leaders, civil society groups).

3.3   Variation in Constituency

There is also variation in who the peacebuilding initiative primarily targets. This can include, but is not limited to: women, men (especially men at risk of violent mobilization), youth (this can include school children), ethnic or religious minorities and ex-combatants (who are usually targeted through DDR interventions).

3.4   Other Forms of Variation

There are several forms of peacebuilding variation that are of importance to this review as well. In particular, the extent to which the government is or is not involved in a

particular

kind of intervention and the extent to which domestic civil society actors are involved in an intervention are crucial forms of variation. Additionally, whether conditions are placed on the government in exchange for the benefits of an intervention should also be considered. For example, whether a community council that is gender-balanced needs to be appointed to oversee the building of a school. Lastly, it should be taken into account whether vio- lence reduction is a primary or secondary goal of the intervention (and likelwise, if violence reduction is not a goal of the intervention, this should be noted as well).

4 Methodology and Data Collection

4.1 Methodology

This review prioritizes the review of studies that: (1) estimate peacebuilding's effect on *vio- lence*[4] and (2) pay particular attention to ruling out alternative explanations.[5] Throughout the review, critical approaches and approaches that do not explicitly address the effectiveness of peacebuilding with respect to violence reduction are mentioned, however they are not the primary focus on this particular review.[6]

The following methodology was used to determine which studies should be included in the review. First, "peacebuilding" or "peace" were searched for in Google Scholar in

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[4]If studies are included that capture attitudes, these attitudes must relate back to violence in some way. For example, the approval of the use of violence to solve local disputes, or attitudes toward out-groups relevant to the conflict.

[5]This generally refers to studies that attempt to control for alternative explanations, whether that is through the use of control variables, causal inference, careful case selection, etc.

[6]For an excellent review of critical peacebuilding scholarship, with a particular focus on the "local turn" in peacebuilding, please see Leonardsson and Rudd (2015). For a broad overview of peacebuilding scholarship see Mac Ginty (2013) and for an overview of peacebuilding's evolution from a practitioner and academic perspective see Chetail and Ju¨tersonke (2015). For a thorough review of peacebuilding interventions specific to the environment, see Johnson, Rodr´ıguez and Hoyos (2021).

conjunction with the following terms: "effectiveness," "violence," "peace," "data," "experi- ment," "randomized," "survey," "poll," "observation" and "variable." Second, the abstracts of the studies from the first 10 pages of Google Scholar results were consulted. Studies were include, based on their abstracts, if they met the criteria outlined above. Studies with larger citation counts and more recent studies were prioritized.

Third, in order to identify at least major source, hereafter referred to as a "linchpin" source, per type of peacebuilding intervention, the author's prior knowledge and citation counts were utilized. These linchpin sources were searched for using Connected Papers, which presents network graphs of related bodies of scholarship to key sources of interest. Additional relevant sources were pulled for each peacebuilding type from the relevant linchpin network graph.

4.2   Potential Bias in the Data

It must be noted that there are several sources of potential bias in the data. First, more recent studies as well as those studies with especially large numbers of citations are prioritized in this review. Second, because only published peer-reviewed studies are included in the review, there is a bias with respect to studies (and findings) that were able to get published in academic journals. This may induce a bias toward positive, or statistically significant, findings, and bias against null findings, as was the case with social science experiments examined for publication bias (Franco, Malhotra and Simonovits 2014). Despite potential bias toward evidence that peacebuilding initiatives do work, as detailed below, the picture that emerges is still fairly nuanced, with many caveats abound with respect to the conditions under which different kinds of peacebuilding interventions are or are not likely to work.

4.3   Key ("Linchpin") Sources

- Based on the methodology described above, the following studies are included as

the primary studies for the review/"linchpin" sources

- **Peacekeeping**: Doyle and Sambanis (2006), Fortna (2008), Hultman, Kathman and Shannon (2014)

- **Dialogue**: Smidt (2020), Malhotra and Liyanage (2005)

- **Socioeconomic Development**: Paluck (2009)

- **Governance Reform**: Matanock (2017), Blattman, Hartman and Blair (2014), Blair (2019), Blair, Karim and Morse (2019)

- **Humanitarian Relief** : Wood and Molfino (2016)

- **Security Sector Reform (SSR)**: Jackson (2011), Schroeder and Chappuis (2014), Karim and Gorman (2016)

- **Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)**: Gilligan, Mvukiyehe and Samii (2013)

- **Election Support**: Daxecker (2012), Hyde and Marinov (2014)

- **Truth and Reconciliation and Justice**: Samii (2013), Druckman and Wagner (2019)

- **Peace Education**: Finkel, Horowitz and Rojo-Mendoza (2012)

- **Post-Conflict Safety Measures**: Mvukiyehe and Samii (2017)

- **Civil-Society Building**: Pouligny (2005)

- **Social Cohesion Building**: Gilligan, Pasquale and Samii (2014)

- **Naming and Shaming**: Hafner-Burton (2008)

- **Sanctions**: Matanock and Lichtenheld (2022)

5   Results

5.1   Overall Results

There are currently 117 studies that have been collected in the review. Of the 117 studies collected, the majority (45.3%) demonstrate that peacebuilding exposure contributes to a reduction in violence. 21.4% of the studies collected indicate that peacebuilding exposure either had a null effect on violence, or that the intervention of interest is associated with an uptick in violence. 33.3% of the studies included in the review demonstrate mixed results.

Among studies where peacebuilding was largely associated with a reduction of violence, peacekeeping appears to have the most studies that demonstrate a reduction in violence due to peacekeeping exposure (approximately 23 studies). Dialogue, particularly different peace agreement provisions, is the second largest category that demonstrates a reduction in violence (approximately 9 studies). In particular, power-sharing and agreements among warring actors are associated with a lower likelihood of conflict resurgence (Badran 2014; Hartzell 2009; Joshi and Quinn 2017; Mattes and Savun 2009).

Among the studies that demonstrated null or adverse effects several themes emerge. The majority of the studies include election support (especially election observation), socioeconomic development, social cohesion building, peacekeeping and humanitarian relief (approximately 4 to 6 studies per category). Of note is the particular concern with respect to the distribution of resources and how that may complicate local violence dynamics. In particular, humanitarian relief has been found to be associated with an increase in the length of civil wars (Narang 2014, 2015), an increase military fatalities (Findley et al. 2023) and an increase in rebel violence (Wood and Sullivan 2015). Relatedly, Narang and Stanton (2017) find that aid workers are often deliberately targeted by rebel groups. Their study highlights one of the possible mechanisms by

which aid can be associated with increased violence: attacks on aid workers and the beneficiaries of aid can be strategic efforts of intimidation or forms of retaliation, especially when the aid is thought to help the government (and its

supporters).

Local political realities also appear to be critical to understanding the conditions under which election assistance is likely to contribute to adverse effects. Election observation has been found to be associated with an increase in incidents of election violence (Daxecker 2014), particularly in situations where there is election fraud (Daxecker 2012).

Among studies with mixed results, peacekeeping has the most studies (approximately 16 studies) and dialogue interventions have the second most studies (approximately 9 studies). In particular, peacekeeping studies that explore local levels of violence tend to yield mixed results, in comparison to their cross-national counterparts. The ability of UN peacekeeping exposure to local curb violence against civilians has been found to be associated with the extent to which there are local power asymmetries (Di Salvatore 2020). Likewise, local peacekeeping exposure does not necessarily protect civilians from all forms of violence, as it has been found to curb rebel violence, but not necessarily government perpetrated violence against civilians (Fjelde, Hultman and Nilsson 2019). Perhaps most puzzling, across a series of studies, UN peacekeeping troop presence has been found to be associated with a decrease in violence (Kathman and Benson 2019), whereas police (Haass and Ansorg 2018) and observer exposure (Hultman, Kathman and Shannon 2013, 2014; Kathman and Wood 2016) have been found to be associated with upticks in violence. Mixed results for dialogue interventions, point to the specific type of power-sharing as a critical determinant of conflict recurrence. In particular, political power sharing has been found to be associated with an increase in conflict recurrence, whereas military, economic and territorial power sharing have been found to be associated with a decrease in conflict recurrence (Ottmann and Vu¨llers 2015). Personalized power sharing, as opposed to structural power sharing has been found to be associated with a reduction in battle deaths (Ottmann 2020).

5.2 Results by Type of Peacebuilding

Peacekeeping: Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the vast literature on peacekeeping, particu- larly UN peacekeeping, the majority of studies included in the review cover UN peacekeeping and largely find a conflict reducing effect, particularly for violence against civilians. Two complications to this overwhelmingly positive trend however: (1) if we expand the kinds of violence that are examined and (2) whether peacekeeping is a cost-effective form of inter- vention. Costalli (2014) explores whether once peacekeepers are deployed to areas where violence occurred, whether they are able to help curb subsequent violence. He does not find any association between peacekeeping exposure and a reduction in subsequent violence. Likewise, Di Salvatore (2019) finds that the presence of peacekeeping troops are associated with increased levels of homicides in South Sudan, whereas the presence of UN police curb homicides. This is in direct contrast to findings that indicate that the presence of UN troops helps to mitigate violence against civilians. While exposure to one form of peacekeeping may reduce one kind of violence, it may have unintended effects on other kinds of violence.

This is not to say anything of violence that peacekeepers themselves may perpetrate. In particular, UN peacekeeping has come under drastic fire for peacekeeper involvement in sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). The degree to which UN peacekeepers have engaged in SEA is with Beber et al. (2017) finding from a random sample of households in Mon- rovia, Liberia, more than half of the women surveyed claimed that they had engaged in transactional sex, approximately 75% of which engaged with a peacekeeper.

Increased SEA allegations have been found to be associated with larger operations and more recent operations (Nord˚as and Rustad 2013) and breakdowns in the low-level/rank and file discipline within militaries (as measured by the amount of non-SEA misconduct among military personnel) (Moncrief 2017).[7] Promisingly, however, Karim and Beardsley (2016)

[7]Interestingly, Moncrief (2017) does not find any association between the proportion of UN troops

from sexually violent militaries and peacekeeper-perpatrated SEA.

find that the larger the proportion of female peacekeepers and the more individuals from states with more progressive gender norms, the lower SEA allegations appear to be.

Additionally, it is not entirely certain that peacekeeping is an especially cost effective form of peacebuilding. While Carnegie and Mikulaschek (2020) find that every additional 100 peacekeepers that are deployed monthly help to reduce death in the area by approximately

3. Likewise, Hegre et al. (2019) find "if the UN had invested $ 200 billion in PKOs with strong mandates (between 2001-2013)... 150,000 lives would have been saved" (pg. 215). This amounts to approximately 1.3 million dollars per life saved.Benjamin Valentino raised this apt point. At over one million dollars per head, peacekeeping might not be the most cost-effective path forward in preventing death.

Dialogue: Dialogue is the category with the second largest number of studies included in the review (25 studies). A peace agreement among warring factions contributes to a longer-lasting peace (Hartzell 2009),[8] even if all armed actors are not directly included in the agreement (Nilsson 2008). Greater inclusion of civil society actors in the peace negotiation process is also associated with a longer-lasting peace (Nilsson 2012). In particular, the stronger the agreement and the greater the extent of its implementation, the longer peace is likely to last as well (Badran 2014; Joshi and Quinn 2015; Mac Ginty, Joshi and Lee 2019). In particular, increased power-sharing provisions are largely associated with a lower likelihood of conflict resurgence (Bormann et al. 2019; Hartzell and Hoddie 2003; Johnson 2021; Keels 2018; Matanock 2018; Mattes and Savun 2009; Ottmann 2020; Ottmann and Vu¨llers 2015). Likewise, the role of third parties[9] in both acting as mediators (Beardsley 2013; Gurses, Rost and McLeod 2008; Reid 2017).[10] Notably, Caplan and Hoeffler (2017) find that negotiated settlements are more likely to break down than wars that end from direct

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[8]This effect is stronger than that of the complete destruction of factions (Hartzell 2009).

[9]This is less true of super powers who engage in mediation (Gurses, Rost and McLeod 2008).

[10]One important caveat however is that negotiated settlements that are pushed for by third parties and do not organically arise from the warring actors are not likely to succeed (Werner and Yuen 2005).

military victories. However, this effect dissipates if peacekeepers are deployed in support of a negotiated settlement. Notably, however, this body of scholarship does not appear to include studies of actual negotiations, the length of negotiates or the extent to which individuals and groups engage in discussion with one another and their subsequent influence on conflict recurrence (or rather peace duration).

Socioeconomic Development: Socioeconomic development can encompass a wide variety of activities. Consequently, there are not broad themes across studies, as many do not cover the same kind of intervention. Most of the studies in this category however, do not directly have violence reduction listed as a primary goal of the intervention. Instead, most are focused on improving social cohesion. Future studies of socioeconomic development as a peacebuilding tool would do well to capture downstream effects of interventions on levels of violence.

There are several notable exceptions however. Blattman et al. (2017) find that crime and violence among criminally engaged men in Monrovia, Liberia were reduced after exposure to cognitive behavioral therapy and access to cash. These results largely held in a follow- up study a decade later (Blattman et al. 2023), with cognitive behavioral therapy alone contributing to a drop by 0.2 standard deviations in anti-social behavior among participants. Similar to some of the adverse effects of humanitarian aid on conflict that were high- lighted previously, AlGhatrif et al. (2022) argue that cooptation by the state of healthcare initiatives is fairly likely and can compromise the effectiveness of healthcare initiatives on reducing violence. The authors find that community-based healthcare initiatives (as op- posed to state-based initiatives) are associated with both a minimization of cooptation and a reduction of communal conflict in treated communities. This suggests that one way to ad- dress the adverse effects of assistance, whether that be socioeconomic or humanitarian aid, might be to work through community-based organizations as opposed to the state, however, additional research is needed to reach such a conclusion.

Weintraub (2016) finds that areas of Colombia that were exposed to a cash transfer

program were also exposed to more insurgent violence. He argues that the distribution of cash incentivizes individuals share information with the government, which contributes to a loss of territory for insurgents. In order to deter information sharing and in an effort to try to reclaim lost territory, rebels then engage in increased in violence.

Schwartz's (2019) case study of refugee return in Burundi further highlights the ways in which local realities can complicate socioeconomic development. She finds that the return of refugees is associated with an increase in local violence, largely because individuals in conflict affected settings tend to form a new cleavage between those who left during the conflict and those who remained. Especially in situations in which returnees are granted economic and development resources to encourage repatriation, locals who stayed may become aggrieved and this division will become deeper, thus contributing to an incitement of violence.

Governance Reform: Governance reform is especially sparse, with only three studies included in the review for this category, making it one of the areas that is in dire need of additional work. Among the few studies found, there seems to be promise in governance reform. For example, Integrated Rural Reform in Colombia (land reform along with resources to communities to conduct such reform) has been found to increase local physical security (Graser et al. 2020). The promise of governance reform seems to be especially true of rule of law reform. Walter (2015) finds that rule of law reform (a written constitution) is associated with a reduction in civil war recurrence. Likewise, rule of law reform along with an increase in political rights is associated with a reduction in the odds of civil war recurrence. Likewise, Blair (2021) finds that peacekeeping exposure, particularly due to the rule of law reform that came with peacekeeping in Liberia (i.e. rebuilding of courts, strengthening of the police), is associated with a greater reliance by locals on the police and non-violent methods of dispute resolution, as opposed to reliance on traditional, violent methods of dispute resolution.

Humanitarian Relief: Humanitarian relief is especially sparse as well, with approximately five studies reviewed. The humanitarian relief results are largely summarized above in the negative/null findings section. Additional work is needed in this area, particularly

on peacebuilding related humanitarian assistance and humanitarian assistance in conflict- affected settings.

Security Sector Reform (SSR): Security sector reform, especially studies of different kinds of police reform, has become a burgeoning line of scholarship. Despite this, however, additional work is needed, especially on military reform and its influence on violence, as none of the studies collected cover this topic in particular. All studies collected dealt with police reform.

Most notably, Graeme Blair and co-authors (2021) test in a randomized control trial whether community policing, a form of police reform that relies on community engagement for policing (i.e. holding town halls, developing solutions with locals to address issues, implementing additional communication avenues such as hotlines, and increased foot patrols) improves trust in the police and reduces crime across six different countries: Colombia, Brazil, Liberia, Uganda, Pakistan and the Philippines. They did not find that community policing leads to increased trust among citizens in the police and they did not find that community policing is associated with reductions in crime across any of the field cites. They attribute these null results not to a lack of interest on the part of the police leadership, but a lack of and inconsistent implementation on the part of police themselves. Conversely, Robert Blair and colleagues find that "confidence patrols" in Liberia are associated with reductions in crime (simple assault and domestic violence) 2019. In contrast to the prior study however, the confidence patrols were carried out in partnership with the United Nations under the mission in Liberia (UNMIL). UN officers trained Liberia National Police (LNP) in community policing, the LNP were given additional resources and they implemented a major shift in policing practice- they actively looked for signs of violence and crime in rural communities that they patrolled as opposed to only waiting for individuals to find them to report crime. It is possible that the violence reduction effects in this study can be attributed to the presence of a presumably neutral third party actor who assists in police reform, the reinforcement of forces with additional resources and

the shift in a proactive approach toward policing, as

opposed to a more passive approach.

These null results that Blair, Weinstein, Christia, Arias, Badran, Blair, Cheema, Farooqui, Fetzer, Grossman et al. (2021) find extend to military policing as well. In an RCT in Cali, Colombia, Blair and Weintraub find that military policing that targets areas particu- larly conducive to crime did not enhance perceptions of safety, nor did it reduce crime (Blair and Weintraub 2023). After the policing intervention was complete, it appears as if crime increased. They conclude that the costs associated with local-level policing reform may not be worth the lack of results.

There are studies as well that aim to capture the extent to which reforms influence the competence and skills of officers, particularly with respect to their ability to address gendered crime. In particular, Karim and Gorman (2016) focus on the Liberian National Police, an institution that has been the subject of many gendered security sector reforms at the urging of the peacekeeping mission (UNMIL). The authors explore whether gendered reforms of the LNP and whether they have influenced the extent to which officers are able to identify gendered crimes (rape and domestic violence). They find that 44% of participants are able to accurately identify rape and domestic violence, suggesting that at the very least, there is some gendered awareness that is associated with the gendered reform. It is difficult to determine however, the extent to which there was a shift in the identification of gendered crimes, as there is not baseline data available to compare with, as the former police in Liberia were completely disbanded at the end of the war.

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR): Studies concerning DDR are especially sparse, with only two studies included in the review, Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) and Gilligan, Mvukiyehe and Samii (2013). Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) find that the largest determinant of difficulty among former combatants in Sierra Leone in reintegrating into civilian life is past participation in an especially abusive military faction. Additionally, those that are wealthier and better educated also tend to find difficulty with reintegration. Gilligan et al. (2013) find that

DDR exposure in Burundi is associated

with people claiming that civilian life is more favorable than rebel life. They do also note in their study that DDR studies often include individuals who self select into programs. While there certainly are many studies of DDR, very few academic studies fall under the specific criteria laid out in the methodology for this review. Consequently, more studies concerned with measuring the effect of DDR on violence should occur.

Election Support: There are a multitude of different kinds of election support studies included in the review. First, are studies that include a civic education component. Mvukiyehe and Samii (2021) do not find any evidence that their RCT that included civics education and security education to communities in Liberia had any influence on the level of security experienced by locals. Likewise, Pruett et al. (2024) also do not find any influ- ence of a civil engagement treatment in their field experiment in Liberia on attitudes toward violence, or attitudes of each other between youth and the police. While these studies in tandem provide a sobering view of the promise of civic education, they are only from one case. Subsequent studies would do well to explore this kind of an intervention outside of Liberia.

Second, studies related to election support also focus on the timing of elections and their influence on violence. Two notable studies in this space include Flores and Nooruddin (2012) and Brancati and Snyder (2013). Brancati and Snyder (2013) find that holding elections too soon after conflict ends can have deleterious effects for the prospect of conflict recurrence. Flores and Nooruddin (2012) have similar findings, but also add the caveat that if elections do not occur for at least two years after conflict, which allows for domestic institution building to occur (thereby further consolidating peace), then the risk of conflict recurrence significantly decreases. Brancati and Snyder (2013) also find that the risk of conflict recurrence, in the face of post-conflict elections, can also be mitigated if a peacekeeping force is also deployed, a power-sharing agreement is negotiated among the warring actors or if the conflict ended in a decisive military victory. Likewise, Smidt (2021) finds that peacekeeping presence, particularly when peacekeepers oversee elections, is associated with lower election-related

violence.

Third, election monitoring and observation and its subsequent effects on conflict is another category of interest. Daxecker (2014) in particular finds that the presence of inter- national election observers in African states is associated with an increase in incidents of election violence. However, she does not find a relationship between election observer pres- ence and election-day violence specifically. Daxecker's 2012 study however, adds additional nuance to this finding. In particular, she finds that the presence of election observers, partic- ularly in cases where election fraud occurred, is associated with an increase in post-election conflict events.

Lastly, Savun and Tirone (2011) find that, among states that are in the process of democratizing, that an increase in democratization aid is associated with a decrease in conflict. Counter to some of the results from the humanitarian aid literature, this result suggests that assistance in enhancing elections and the democratic process, among states where there is an organic interest it doing just that, can actually curb conflict.

Truth and Reconciliation and Justice: There are approximately four studies that fall under the truth and reconciliation and justice category. They are all fairly different in their scope and focus. The most comprehensive, with respect to comparing and contrasting the effect of different kinds of justice provisions is Loyle and Appel (2017) which tests different justice mechanisms cross-nationally and their effect on conflict recurrence. In particular, reparations, amnesty, comprehensive trials, opposition trials, exile and purges are explored. The authors find that justice processes that address underlying grievances (i.e. those that attempt to reduce incentives for mobilization and recruitment), particularly reparations, comprehensive trials and amnesty are associated with a lower likelihood of conflict recurrence. Conversely, they find no support for mechanisms that try to prevent future mobilization. Meernik (2003) stands out as an earlier iteration of this kind of work, scholarship that compares different methods of justice and explores its effects on conflict. In particular, Meernik (2003) finds that arrests, judgments and indictments through the International

Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, are associated with an increase in conflict between the primary ethnic groups.

More recently, Druckman and Wagner (2019) explore procedural versus distributive justice provisions within the peace agreement and their effects on durable peace. They find that procedural justice is associated with more durable peace. Additionally, when procedural justice is included in a peace agreement, along with distributive justice provisions, this effect holds. However, if distributive justice is included on its own, without procedural justice, there is no statistically significant effect on conflict recurrence/durable peace.

In a creative use of a survey experiment, Agneman, Str¨ombom and Rettberg (2024) explore whether public apologies from individuals associated with armed groups in Colombia contribute to greater approval of ex-combatant reintegration. They do not find that public apologies lead to greater approval, even when these public apologies are endorsed by third parties. This is especially true among those who did not approve of the peace agreement to begin with.

Peace Education: Among the studies included in this review, there are several types of peace education studies that emerge. The first are studies that teach communities about non- violent methods of dispute resolution and conflict management, what is otherwise referred to as alternative dispute resolution (ADR). There are not many studies that assess the effectiveness of ADR, however an intervention in Liberia has proven to be effective in reducing the number of violent land disputes in treated communities (Blattman, Hartman and Blair 2014; Hartman, Blair and Blattman 2021).

A second type of peace education study refers to interventions that teach individuals about non-violent dispute resolution, as opposed to communities. Malhotra and Liyanage (2005) found that a peace workshop in Sri Lanka, which entailed the selection of students that had especially strong leadership skills, to participate in peace workshops in which they attended mini lectures, engaged in a cultural show, toured

multiethnic villages and had the ability to socialized with other ethnic groups, different from their own. They found

that, among those students who were exposed to the workshop, their empathy for outgroup members increased. While this study is promising, and the authors take special care to address issues of confounding variables, the nomination of students to participate in the program who already exhibit strong leadership skills establishes a sample of students who are already incredibly likely to be especially receptive to such an intervention. In a similar study in Turkey, Sagkal, Turnuklu and Totan (2012) find that a peace education program among students which included discussions about the nature of peace and violence, discus- sions about how to prevent violence, lessons regarding skills for peaceful individuals and taught participants negotiation as a form of conflict resolution, contributed to an increase in empathy among sixth graders. However, again the treatment was not randomized, although the authors did take steps to establish a pure control as a point of comparison.

A third type of peace education program, includes reforms within schools in conflict-affected or post-conflict settings. In their case study, Donnelly and Hughes (2006) explore school integration in Northern Ireland and Israel. They find that school culture conditions the extent to which strong inter-group relations can be formed among students. In particular, the extent to which schools facilitate an environment of open-communication, in which the goals of integration are discussed, with students, parents and staff alike, condition the extent to which students form meaningful inter-group relations across lines of division. Like the two prior studies however, there is no randomization in this study. If the opportunity arises, studies related to school integration policy would do well to establish a causal identification strategy in an effort to help disentangle the effect of integration on relations among students.

Post-Conflict Safety Measures:

Civil-Society Building: The majority of studies focused on strengthening civil soci- ety and its effect on violence or violence related attitudes focuses on reforms or interventions related to media. This body of scholarship, which spans Psychology and Political Science, was largely inspired by Paluck's (2009) and Paluck and Green's

((Paluck and Green 2009)) seminal work. Paluck (2009) conducts an experiment in Rwanda in which she randomizes

exposure to a radio soap opera whose message includes reducing inter-group prejudice and violence. She finds that while the radio soap opera exposure had little to no effect on per- sonal beliefs, the radio program contributed to more acceptance of different social norms: i.e. approval of inter-group marriage, willingness to engage in open dissent, trust, empathy and cooperation. Similarly, Paluck and Green (2009) conduct a field experiment that random- izes exposure to a radio show in Rwanda the discourages blind following of authority and promotes collective action. They find that exposure to such a radio show had little influence on related attitudes, however, it contributed to an increase in the willingness of individuals to express dissenting views.

Media interventions, particularly radio interventions, such as these are incredibly com- mon in this line of scholarship and in fact are the majority of the interventions that are studied among the papers collected (Bilali 2022; Bilali and Vollhardt 2013; Bilali, Vollhardt and Rarick 2016; Blair, Littman, Nugent, Wolfe, Bukar, Crisman, Etim, Hazlett and Kim 2021; Grossman, Nomikos and Siddiqui 2023; Paluck 2010). Bilali and Vollhardt (2013), similar to Paluck (2009) and Paluck and Green (2009) before them, find that a conflict pre- vention radio drama in Rwanda also contributed to an increase in outgroup trust. With the exception of Bilali et al. (2016), it appears as if this kind of messaging can have un- intended consequences such as leading to an increase in negative inter-group attitudes and lower tolerance for outgroups (Bilali, Vollhardt and Rarick 2017; Grossman, Nomikos and Siddiqui 2023; Paluck 2010). In contrast to these positive findings, Hameiri et al. (2014) find that exposure to a paradoxical thinking intervention in the form of video advertisements in Israel, in which respondents were exposed to false information about a relevant outgroup, is associated with an increase in a willingness to compromise with the outgroup. These effects lasted one year out from initial exposure to the treatment, suggesting that the content of the message is incredibly important. In a radio drama study in Burundi, Bilali et al. (2016) conclude that many of the results of media related interventions are likely conditioned by individual experiences.

It must be noted, however, that the majority of these studies focus on radio interventions in sub-Saharan Africa, a context in which many individuals tend to listen to the radio and listen to radio dramas (soap operas). It is not likely that these kinds of interventions are effective in other settings, where radio listenership is lower. However, similar messages in the form of entertainment, through social media or television, may be effective.

There are five studies included in the review that focus on interventions that are meant to strengthen civil society actors and demonstrate their usefulness in helping to curb violence (Blair, Littman, Nugent, Wolfe, Bukar, Crisman, Etim, Hazlett and Kim 2021; Blattman, Hartman and Blair 2014; Hartman, Blair and Blattman 2021; Nilsson 2012; Smidt 2020). Blattman et al. (2014) find that strengthening the dispute resolution capacities of local com- munities, through a reliance on non-violent forms of dispute resolution (alternative dispute resolution- ADR), contributes to a decrease in violent land disputes. In a follow up study, Hartman et al. (2021) largely find that these results hold three years after the intervention. One particularly salient approach to incorporating civil society, specifically local infor- mal leaders at the neighborhood or village level, into international programs is the Commu- nity Driven Development (CDD) approach pioneered through the World Bank (Mansuri and Rao 2004). In this approach, local communities form councils to oversee the implementation of a development project. While the influence of these programs on influencing positive attitudes and greater inclusion of marginalized groups in community governance is mixed (Casey 2018), the influence of the strengthening of these civil society actors and the literal creation of local institutions on violence outcomes (between and within communities) has not been thoroughly assessed yet, as most CDD assessments do not directly capture the pro- gram's effect on violence. This might be a fruitful endeavor both as an approach to explicit peacebuilding programming that incorporates civil society, and as an avenue of additional work, i.e. measuring the effect of CDD on violent outcomes. To date, the closest work that we have that explores

the creation of local-level community institutions and its effect on violence are Blattman, Hartman and Blair (2014) and the follow up study, Hartman, Blair

and Blattman (2021).

The communication strength of civil society actors is a consistent theme in studies of civil society and peacebuilding. Smidt (2020) explores the effect of a UN peacekeeping-based program that helps to facilitate inter-community dialogue in Cote d'Ivoire. She finds that, communities exposed to the inter-community dialogue intervention experienced lower levels of communal violence. Here, however, it is difficult to disentangle whether the assistance of a neutral third party is in this program is what led to the conflict-reducing effect, or whether it was the inter-community dialogue on its own that led to this effect. Likewise, Nilsson (2012) finds that peace negotiations that included civil society actors were more likely to lead to a lasting, durable peace. Blair, Littman, Nugent, Wolfe, Bukar, Crisman, Etim, Hazlett and Kim (2021) highlight a potential mechanism by which civil society might be especially strong in facilitating lower levels of violence: strong civil society leaders can act as key messengers of non-violence, which in turn induces non-violent behavior among the masses. In their study of radio messaging, they vary *who* the messenger of a forgiveness-oriented message is, particularly whether the messenger is a religious leader in Nigeria. Those who received the forgiveness message from a religious leader, on average, expressed a greater willingness to forgive members of Boko Haram for their prior violent transgressions.

Future studies would do well to further explore the strengthening of already existing civil society groups, civil society institution building and the incorporation of civil society actors into peace efforts, and their subsequent effects on violence.

Social Cohesion Building: Social cohesion building is an especially large literature. Additionally, many interventions that aim to increase social cohesion within the domestic population occur within post-conflict or conflict-affected settings. However, very few studies measure the effect of social cohesion building interventions on violence or violence related at- titudes. Many of these studies operate off of the premise that increased contact, i.e. contact intervention, will improve relations across groups (Maoz

2011). There are approximately two studies that are included in the review that are relevant to this category. Guffler and Wag-

ner (2017) in particular, study contact intervention that included inter-group discussions and activities among Jewish Israeli and Arab Israeli school children. Counter to what contact theory would suggest, they found that exposure to the inter-group contact treatment is asso- ciated with a decrease in positive inter-group relations. Basedau and Koos (2015) find that, among religious leaders in South Sudan, exposure to interreligious activities is not associated with a reduction in support for violence. However, exposure to interreligious activities does induce greater support for non-violent protest among religious leaders. While the scholar- ship on social cohesion building is vast, very few studies measure the effect of social cohesion programming on violence outright and attitudes that relate to violence. Consequently, this body of scholarship is fairly nascent and could use additional research in order to aid the field in coming to concrete conclusions about social cohesion building.

Naming and Shaming: As of yet, there are not any naming and shaming studies that are included in the review. Studies of naming and shaming, particularly in conflict settings, post-conflict settings and conflict-affected settings more broadly need to be conducted in an effort to understand if naming and shaming is a mechanism that curbs violence.

Sanctions: Two studies in particular discussed sanctions. Matanock and Lichtenheld (2022) find that when conditional incentives (i.e. sanctions) are placed on warring actors in the presence of a United Nations peacekeeping operation, the length of the post-conflict peace period increases. Military coercion (i.e. giving peacekeepers the authority to use violence) is not associated with a shorter length of post-conflict peace. The authors argue that parties to the conflict might not change their behavior, i.e. not use violence, if they do not believe that the international actor will actually engage in some kind of sanction against them. The promise of military coercion, if they do not abide by the terms of peace, to many armed actors, seems unlikely as it is especially costly for institutions like the United Nations to engage in such activity. However, conditional incentives, i.e. the withdrawal of aid or assistance if the terms of the

agreement are violated, is a more plausible threat/sanction to armed actors for not abiding by the terms of the agreement. Consequently, they uphold the

peace. Beardsley (2013) also finds that sanctions are an especially effective tool that the UN can use to continue to quell violence. However, he finds that the promise of sanctions really only apply in the short term. Additional research is needed in this area, both from a practical perspective and from a theoretical perspective, as additional work needs to be done in order to explore whether the possibility of sanction works to curb violence and by which mechanisms specifically armed actors can be induced to uphold the terms of peace agreements.

5.3   Additional Results: Variation Across Studies

5.4   Broad Themes

There are several broad themes that emerged from this review. First, as discussed briefly in the peacekeeping results, the cost of interventions of different kinds is unclear. If peace- keeping is any indication, it is possible that the cost of intervention, with respect to saving an individual life, is exorbitant. Additional research should be done to calculate the relative costs of different kinds of interventions especially to explore if there are more cost effective measures that yield similar, if not more promising results to that of peacekeeping.

Second, as alluded to previously, there are very few economic interventions that try to measure violence-related outcomes directly, despite the fact that many interventions occur in post-conflict and conflict affected settings. Two notable exceptions are Blattman, Hartman and Blair (2014) and Blattman and Annan (2016).

Third, a fruitful avenue of exploration appears to be the extent to which sequencing of different kinds of interventions, led by different actors at different times during the post- conflict period, contributes to a longer-lasting peace. For example, Reid (2017) finds that states that especially economically powerful states are strong mediators, particularly for helping to secure an initial agreement. Conversely, skilled mediators, those that have long- standing negotiation skills for example, are better suited at helping

to maintain a peace that endures (after an initial agreement has been determined). Consequently, Reid (2017) raises

the question of whether there should be a "hand off" among different actors at different points in the peace process. Beardsley (2013) also finds that the UN has the potential to succeed in establishing peace in the short term, particularly through diplomacy. However, if this initial effort is not reinforced by a robust peacekeeping effort, then there is a high likelihood that long-term peace will be compromised. This further raises the question of sequencing with respect to peacebuilding initiatives, especially during the negotiation and mediation stages in the peace process.

Lastly, several studies across different kinds of peacebuilding interventions raised the question of whether multiple interventions are necessary at the same time. For example, there is a long-standing theoretical and empirical debate about whether holding elections and conducing democratization efforts at the same time will contribute to long-lasting peace. However, Brancati and Snyder (2013) suggest that the possible adverse effects of elections on conflict recurrence can be overcome by additional peacebuilding measures: peacekeeping, powersharing and a robust DDR effort that are implemented at the same time as elections. Likewise, Caplan and Hoeffler (2017) find that only when peacekeepers are deployed explicitly in support of a negotiated settlement, then do the pacifying effects of peacekeeping hold. Absent a negotiated settlement, the effect of peacekeeping is null. Similarly, DeRouen Jr and Chowdhury (2018) find that the implementation of UN peacekeeping and UN mediation at the same time have pacifying effects. Taking these kinds of observations one step further, Wood and Sullivan (2015) explicitly call for increased coordination across peacebuilding organizations to try to help reduce the negative externalities of aid/peacebuilding delivery.

6 Conclusion

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