Conflict: Violent Agendas and Inclusion

How is violence and coercion used as tool for pressing claims for inclusion or ensuring exclusion of others? Political settlement analysis tends to understand violence / conflict as a tool used to coerce those outside the settlement to adhere to the rules of the game, or as a means by which those outside the settlement try to disrupt or re-organise the political settlement. However, our research suggests that conflict and the threat of violence is an ongoing part of the bargaining of the political settlement, rather than a pre-settlement condition or symptom. We examine how state and non-state actors use violent conflict to attain credibility, legitimacy and exercise public authority, and we examine how armed actors move in and out of violence.

In peace processes, some actors move out of conflict, some move into conflict, and forms and meaning of conflict change and mutate. In this theme we look at how these patterns have played out in particular conflicts. We also examine the ways in which gender-based violence – often assumed not to be part of the 'main conflict', is affected through peace processes. We attempt to draw out the consequences for the inclusion of women. Throughout our research aims to inform practices and strategies relating to DDR, Security Sector Reform, and inclusion of women.

Research Questions:

- What is the relationship between violent armed conflict and political bargaining processes?
- How do peace processes aimed at inclusion of armed actors change the terms of the political settlement?
- How do armed groups function, maintain loyalties, and use violence as a tool of political bargaining?
- How do forms of violence against women change over time, with what consequences for their inclusion in public life?

Projects:

- [Northern Ireland](#)
- [Ethiopia-Ogaden](#)
- [Afghanistan](#)
- [Gender and Violence](#)
- [Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)](#)

Suggested Key Publications:

Doyle, J., & McWilliams, M. (2018). *Intimate Partner Violence in Conflict and Post-Conflict Societies: Insights and Lessons from Northern Ireland* (PSRP Report). Edinburgh: Global Justice Academy, University of Edinburgh.

McConnachie, K. (2017). *Dealing with displacement in Myanmar's peace process* (PSRP Working Paper). Edinburgh: Global Justice Academy, University of Edinburgh.

Verweijen, J. (2016). *Stable Instability: Political Settlements and Armed Groups in the Congo*. London: Rift Valley Institute.