4. HOMICIDE, VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT

In countries with recent experience of conflict, it is often difficult to disentangle violence that is an after-effect of conflict, or a lower-intensity continuation of conflict, from violence related to other criminal activities. The formal end of an armed conflict does not necessarily translate into an immediate cessation of all hostilities, and attempts to distinguish between conflict and non-conflict violence need to account for the reality of situations in which various types of violence are often indistinguishable and overlapping.[1]

Understanding the nature of lethal violence and crime in post-conflict[2] countries or countries emerging from conflict is important for clarifying the actual challenges those countries face, as well as for bolstering their stability in the aftermath. Reducing violence in such settings goes beyond the need to address the roots of the conflict, to include the prevention of surges in violence resulting from organized crime and interpersonal violence, which can flourish in settings with weak institutions and weak rule of law.

Homicides in those settings can result from violence linked to other criminal activities, interpersonal conflict or socio-political agendas, the three typologies put forth in chapter 2 of this study. A significant share of homicides in post-conflict settings is related to other criminal activities, which can flourish when law enforcement institutions are

weak. In addition to conventional crime, the incidence of organized crime-related violence is increasingly plausible in several countries with recent experiences of conflict, but it is difficult to quantify. Research has started to explore the relationship between post-conflict recovery and the onset of transnational organized crime and related violence,[3] the perpetrators of which have proved adept at illicitly exploiting gaps in the rule of law. Examples of this include changes in drug trafficking routes to exploit post-conflict and vulnerable settings in West Africa in the mid-2000s,[4] as well as the exploitation of natural resources and associated violence in several post-conflict countries.[5] Criminal activities, including transnational organized crime, deplete the social and economic capital that could be used to develop the economy and improve social cohesion, and can contribute to violence that may trigger instability or a return to armed conflict.

Interpersonal violence in post-conflict settings, which often carries the legacy of a conflict, can easily escalate, particularly when an enduring sense of impunity pervades such situations. Violence may have become a way of life, a social norm, for people living in and through armed conflict. For instance, interpersonal disputes over land ownership and resources such as livestock can be particularly violent in States where non-violent conflict resolution mechanisms are weak or non-existent. In such contexts, both men and women can be victimized by violence of a physical and sexual nature, both within the family and the community

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1   See Geneva Declaration Secretariat (2011).

2   There are different interpretations of this term, but while "post-conflict" is, in effect, a process, for the purposes of this study, it refers to the aftermath of conflict, usually a post-war situation. It can, however, also apply to the aftermath of internal rebellions or other situations that do not fit as neatly into standard conceptions of war. This definition of a post-conflict State is from UNDP (2005). P. 178.

3   World Bank (2011). *World Development Report*, chapter 1.

4   See UNODC (2013b); and UNODC (2009).

5   See, for example, UNODC (2011b).

Violence and development

Despite the differing natures of conflict and crime, both are detrimental to security and development. A direct causal relationship is difficult to establish — in actuality, such a relationship runs both ways — but it has also been argued that violence is development in reverse[a] in many post-conflict settings. According to a World Bank study, poverty reduction in countries affected by major violence is an average of almost one percentage point slower per year than in countries not affected by violence,[b] which, after a few years, can be significant. This "development deficit" is particularly concentrated in vulnerable and conflict-affected States as, due to weak institutions, they are less likely to be able to absorb development inputs than States not affected by conflict.[c]

The effects of violence are enduring: some research literature has shown that for countries having experienced civil war since 1960, an average of 14 years of peace is required to return to the growth paths prior to the conflict.[d] There is something of a consensus among the academic and international communities that lethal violence is often rooted in contexts of poverty, deprivation, inequality and injustice, social marginalization and weak rule of law. This study's predecessor, the *Global Study on Homicide 2011*, demonstrated that lower levels of violent crime are generally related to higher levels of development, as well as to lower levels of income inequality.[e]

Addressing the root causes of violence and crime, fostering development of the rule of law, supporting institutions of justice and mechanisms for conflict resolution are ways to reduce violence and support development. In countries coping with the legacies of conflict and its related fragility, this is a critical step in preventing a return to armed conflict.

[a] Collier, P. (2004).

[b] World Bank (2011).

[c] UNDP (2010).

[d] Hoeffler, A., Billerbeck S. and S.S. Ijaz (2010), World Bank. P. 4.

[e] For more, see UNODC (2011a), chapter 2; and UNODC (2007).

at large. Violence is often nourished by the ready availability and abundance of firearms and other weapons, not to mention the willingness of a desperate, traumatized, displaced and unemployed young population to use them — many of whom may already be hardened by the violence of the former conflict.

Homicide of a socio-political nature, which is often linked to power-related agendas, may also be dominant in some States with recent experiences of conflict. This is particularly true in countries where the causes of armed conflict have not been fully resolved and the distinction between conflict-related deaths and intentional homicides is particularly blurred. For example, recorded deaths due to intentional homicide may overlap with recorded civilian casualties attributed to the conflict, making it difficult to determine the types of policies and prevention efforts that need to be implemented from a criminal justice perspective.

There are several challenges to conducting research on crime and violence in post-conflict situations. For example, there is little to no pre-conflict baseline data available for the countries discussed in this chapter, and there is a reduced capacity of law enforcement and justice institutions to fulfil their duties, such as the registration of criminal offences and their statistical reporting. The countries analysed in this chapter have been selected as the presence of United Nations peacekeeping operations or missions[6] has resulted in the availability of official statistics relating to their respective crime and violence situations.

Furthermore, perceptions of security have different benchmarks in countries emerging from conflict, as people may perceive high levels of crime and violence to be relatively low in comparison to during the conflict period, thus do not report being victimized by crime as such. However, information from survey data, including on perceptions of safety and security, can provide complementary insights. Also, due to the gradual strengthening of security and justice institutions in the countries analysed here, it is likely that better reporting and data collection processes over the years is resulting in reported increases in some crimes, or increased reporting and/or recording only in certain areas with access to services. As such, comparisons across countries and over time should therefore be made with caution. In spite of such challenges, this chapter attempts to provide insight into patterns and trends in homicidal violence and violent crime in countries that have recently experienced conflict.

Fig. 4.1: **Homicide rates in selected countries emerging from conflict (2007-2013)**

Rate per 100,000 population

- 2007
- 2008
- 2009
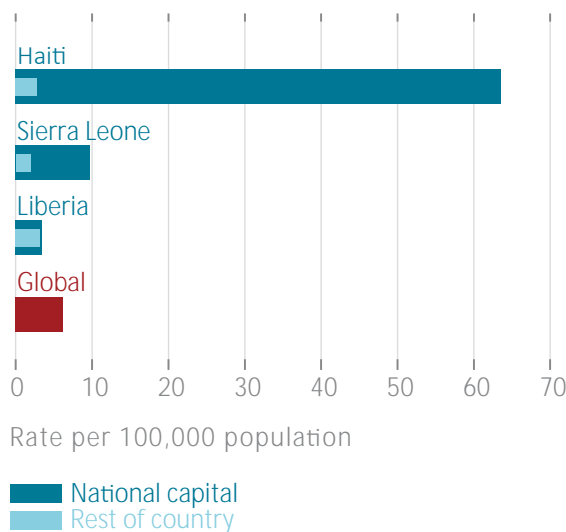- 2010
- 2011
- 2012
- 2013
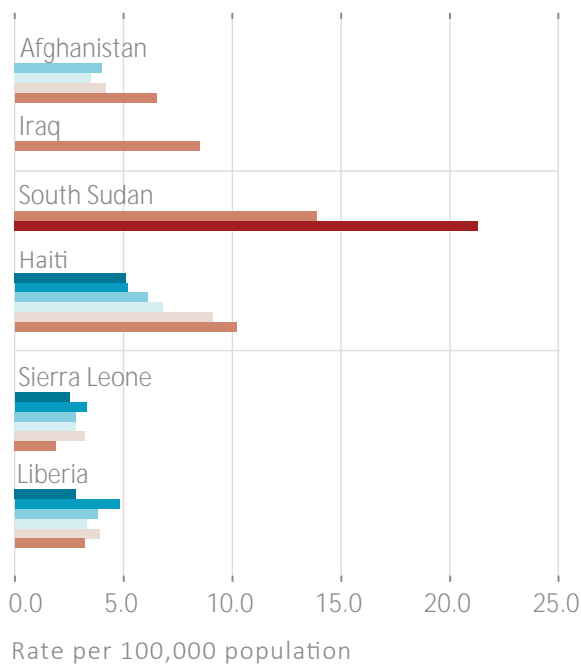
Source: Ministry of Interior Affairs, Afghanistan; WHO (2014); Ministry of Interior, South Sudan (2012a and 2012b); UND-PKO-UNMISS, JMAC; UNDPKO-MINUSTAH; Sierra Leone Police; UNDPKO-UNMIL.

The countries analysed in this chapter have had different experiences of conflict in the years following the "official" end of their respective conflicts, yet all struggle with crime and its enablers as elements of the post-conflict setting. In some, security challenges are not only related to the conflict but also to an increase in levels of crime; in others, there has been a positive trend towards a decrease in violence and an increase in security, as perceived by the population.

Nevertheless, they do show some similar trends. For example, because of their weak institutions, all the countries analysed face challenges in asserting the rule of law. As elsewhere in the world, interpersonal violence (such as that driven by access to resources like land) accounts for a significant share of homicide cases, and this type of violence may be made more acute by weak rule of law and the population's lack of trust in institutions. Also, as in non-conflict-affected countries, violence appears to be largely an urban phenomenon (see figure

Fig. 4.2: **Homicide rates in national capitals versus rest of country, selected countries emerging from conflict (2012 or latest year)**

Rate per 100,000 population

- National capital
- Rest of country

Source: UNDPKO-MINUSTAH; Sierra Leone Police; UND-PKO-UNMIL; Ministry of Interior, South Sudan (2012a and 2012b); UNDPKO-UNMISS, JMAC; UNODC Homicide Statistics (2013).

4.2), which may be due to the increased instability and inequality linked to the influx of people to the major cities, either in search of employment or services, or because they were forced out of their more rural communities during the conflict. But given the presence of international organizations (often in the capital city) and the challenges facing security and infrastructure outside the major urban centres, such patterns may also be due to better recording of data in cities.

Experiences of violence in certain countries with high levels of conflict-related violence: Afghanistan and Iraq

It is extremely difficult to differentiate types and contexts of deadly violence in countries with recent experiences of violence. However, available data on civilian casualties[7] in Afghanistan and Iraq show that civilians bear the brunt of violence emanating from still-warring parties: the population may be caught in the crossfire of armed operations between

7   As per the definition used in international humanitarian law (Geneva Conventions, Additional Protocol I (1977)), civilians are persons who are not members of military/paramilitary forces or members belonging to organized armed groups of a party to a conflict. Civilian casualties are the civilian victims of conflict, and they may be of two types: direct (resulting directly from armed conflict, including, for example, military operations, targeted killings, indiscriminate bombings, etc.) or indirect (casualties resulting from, for example, explosive remnants of war, deaths in cross-fire, etc.). For more, see the definition provided by UNAMA (2013).

government and anti-government forces; or may be victimized by violence perpetrated by governmental and non-governmental armed groups. But beyond deaths directly related to the conflict, there are also cases of intentional homicide that are contributing to the violent deaths in both those countries. Although data is scarce and it is not always possible to determine whether counts of civilian casualties and intentional homicides overlap, there is more to the story of lethal violence than purely conflict-related deaths in Afghanistan an Iraq, with criminal violence playing a role in that story.

Afghanistan

According to United Nations sources, between 2008 and 2013 the annual rate of civilian casualties in Afghanistan ranged between 8 and 10 per 100,000 population, with a peak in 2011. Over the same period, the responsibility for those deaths gradually switched, with anti-government elements[8] accounting for just over half of all civilian casualties in 2008, while they were responsible for nearly 80 per cent in 2012 and 2013 (see figure 4.3).

Almost half of the civilian casualties in Afghanistan are the result of indiscriminate attacks, such as with

Fig. 4.3: Rate of civilian casualties, by type of perpetrator, Afghanistan (2008-2013)

Rate per 100,000 population

■ Anti-government forces
■ Pro-government forces
■ Other/Unknown

Source: United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) (2013).

8   "Anti-government elements" encompass all individuals and armed groups involved in armed conflict with or armed opposition against the Government of Afghanistan and/or international military forces. See UNAMA (2013).

improvised explosive devices (IEDs), whereas around a quarter are the result of targeted killings of specific civilians on the basis of their employment or perceived support of the Government or international forces; a tactic aimed at asserting control over and terrorizing the population.[9] In non-conflict situations, targeted killings of that nature would be considered socio-political homicides.

Data from the Ministry of Interior Affairs of Afghanistan show a marked increase in the rate of intentional homicide since 2009, when data became available, from a rate of 4.0 to 6.5 per 100,000 population in 2012. In settings such as the non-international armed conflict in Afghanistan, the boundary between crime and conflict-related violence is particularly blurred. No information is available on the type of violent deaths included in the count of intentional homicide, and there is a possibility that a share of the homicide count includes some deaths counted among the civilian victims recorded by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). The statistical count of wilful killings of civilians by parties to the conflict, an illegal action in any circumstance,[10] is characterized by a number of operational and methodological challenges (see chapter 6).

Given the challenges of determining the nature of conflict versus non-conflict deaths in Afghanistan, no information is available on existing homicide typologies. That said, it appears that the feeling of insecurity amongst Afghans has increased slightly over the last few years, according to different population-based surveys. A recent UNODC survey noted that the percentage of the adult population that considered insecurity to be one of the most pressing challenges in the country increased from just over 50 per cent in 2009 to just under 60 per cent in 2012.[11]

In another survey, Afghans reported that their daily security is more affected by conventional forms of crime (such as assault or livestock theft) than by attacks by anti-government or pro-government forces.[12] Available survey data suggest that the percentage of the population that has fallen victim to crime and violence has remained stable
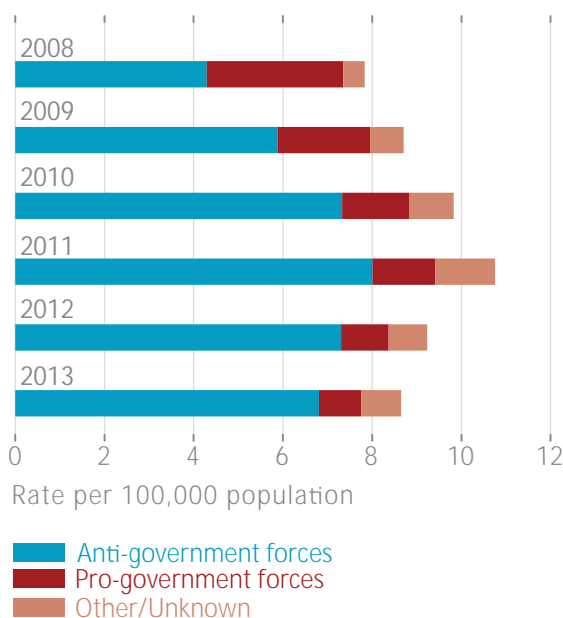
9   UNAMA (2013). P. 4.

10   As per Common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions, which prohibits the killing of civilians by Parties to the Conflict at anytime, anyplace, whatsoever. (See Geneva Conventions).

11   UNODC (2013a).

12   Asia Foundation (2012). Chapter 3.

over the last few years, though at a high level. According to data on offences reported to the police, the prevalence of other forms of crime has also risen over the last few years (for example, reported thefts have increased by 80 per cent and incidents of assault have more than doubled),[13] indicating that other types of crime and violence are also affecting the safety and security of Afghans. Increased reporting could also demonstrate the increased capacity of the criminal justice system to record such offences, increased territorial coverage of recording, or growing trust in the criminal justice system's ability to respond to crime.
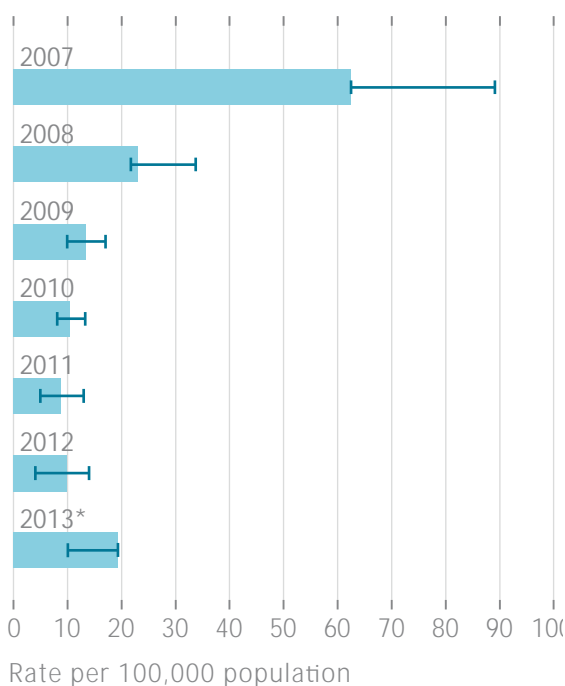
Iraq

As in Afghanistan, it is extremely challenging to determine the nature of violent deaths in Iraq. With terrorism, insurgency, ethnic and sectarian violence all interwoven, the violence in Iraq is complex and has led to an increase in instability. According to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), rising inter-sectarian tension is posing a major threat to stability and security in the country, much of it driven by armed opposition and terrorist groups.[14] In addition, the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic has also contributed to increased sectarian tensions, most notably in the border regions.[15] Such tensions may contribute to violence and, in extreme cases, lethal violence.

Iraq has been experiencing a surge in violence and terror attacks since early 2013, with most of the resulting deaths being of civilians. This increase in civilian casualties is a reversal of the overall declining trend since 2007, and the level is now higher than at any point since 2008 (see figure 4.4). Most of the killings are the result of coordinated bombings, which target civilian infrastructure such as markets and cafes, rather than government buildings.[16]

Casualties caused by the activities of armed groups and terrorism do not, however, provide the complete picture of violence experienced by the population of Iraq. In 2012, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated more than 2,600 intentional homicides in the country (a rate of 8.0

Fig. 4.4: **Rate of civilian casualties, Iraq (2007-2013)**

Rate per 100,000 population

Note: Bars refer to data from UNAMI, with high and low estimates based on additional sources of information about civilian casualties in Iraq (Iraq Body Count and the Saban Centre for Middle East Policy).

*Note: 2013 data are based on statistics for January-August 2013.

Source: United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) (2013).

per 100,000 population).[17] No information is available on the type of violent deaths included in the estimate of intentional homicides, and a share of the civilian victims of violent deaths may be included in both the estimate of intentional homicides and in those of civilian casualties. Data on other types of violence and crime, such as extortion, kidnapping, robbery and assault, are limited, although reporting has suggested that minorities continue to be targeted in such acts of violence.[18]

The violence in both Afghanistan and Iraq is arguably a symptom of transition as the two countries struggle to establish and solidify new national identities that bridge the many divides working to undermine them. Measuring civilian casualties and reported homicide cases is one way to quantify the levels of violence in Afghanistan and Iraq, but such measures are preliminary steps in addressing the public safety and security concerns of the population.

13 Ministry of Interior Affairs, Afghanistan (2013).

14 United Nations Security Council (2013a). S/2013/408.

15 Kobler, M. (2013). *Briefing of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq Martin Kobler to the United Nations Security Council.*

16 United Nations News Centre (2013).

17 WHO (2014).

18 United Nations Security Council. (2013a). S/2013/408. Para. 35

A snapshot of violence in a situation of entrenched conflict: Somalia

Afflicted by armed conflict for over 20 years, Somalia has seen the nature of violence change over time. There is no official data on crime and violence in Somalia, but some surveys[a] conducted throughout the country in 2010 provide valuable information on perceptions of public safety and security, as well as on the extent of killings, in a context of ongoing sectarian violence. The surveys were conducted during one of the final years of Somalia's Transitional Federal Government, prior to the establishment of the new constitution in 2012.

Map 4.1: **Cities surveyed, Somalia (2010)**

Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

In Mogadishu, most of the violence appeared to be related to the conflict, with firearms playing a key role in much of it. Some 4 per cent of survey respondents noted that a household member had been killed in the previous year; assaults were also common, with 1 in 10 respondents falling victim to at least one physical assault or attack in the previous year. Private dwellings did not provide shelter from violence, as most sexual violence was reported to have occurred in homes, with over half of reported cases being perpetrated by armed groups, a quarter by individual criminals and 10 per cent by government agents. The level of firearm-related assault in Mogadishu was also reported to be high: two-thirds of all assaults were committed with a firearm.

In other cities, the population experienced different levels and patterns of violence. In Las Anod, for example, most respondents perceived that their district had become safer in the past year and that most of the violence was interpersonal in nature. The survey respondents described homicides as being largely revenge killings and compensation-related disputes, and land-related conflict was deemed the primary source of violence in the district. Similarly, in Burao, there was an overwhelming perception of safety, and much of the violence appeared to be of the interpersonal type, with little of it triggered by crime or involving organized armed groups.

Higher levels of violence were experienced in Galkayo, a known investment and financing hub for piracy, where 6 per cent of respondents reported that a member of their households had been a victim of homicide in the previous year, rising to 12 per cent among internally displaced persons. Most of those killings were attributed to traditional revenge killing, which is often not considered a crime, but rather a legitimate form of achieving justice. The prevalence of firearms contributed to the intensity and lethality of the violence.

The dynamics of violence in a country that has experienced entrenched conflict for decades are different across the surveyed districts, but a few commonalities are evident, such as the use of firearms, the use of lethal violence for revenge and the elevated levels of interpersonal violence. Respondents in all cities also indicated a very low level of trust in criminal justice and security organizations, and, consequently, very low shares of crimes were reported to authorities for proper investigation and sanctioning. The lack of faith in formal authorities bodes ill for the establishment of the rule of law.

[a] The information presented in this box is based on crime and victimization surveys conducted by the Observatory of Conflict and Violence Prevention in Burao, Bossaso, Galkayo and Las Anod, as well as six districts in Mogadishu from 2009 to 2010. These regions include concentrations of population, and each face different security challenges, varying between conflict, post-conflict, and crime-related victimization. For more, see OCVP (2010).

Map 4.2:   Homicide rate, by State, South Sudan (2013)
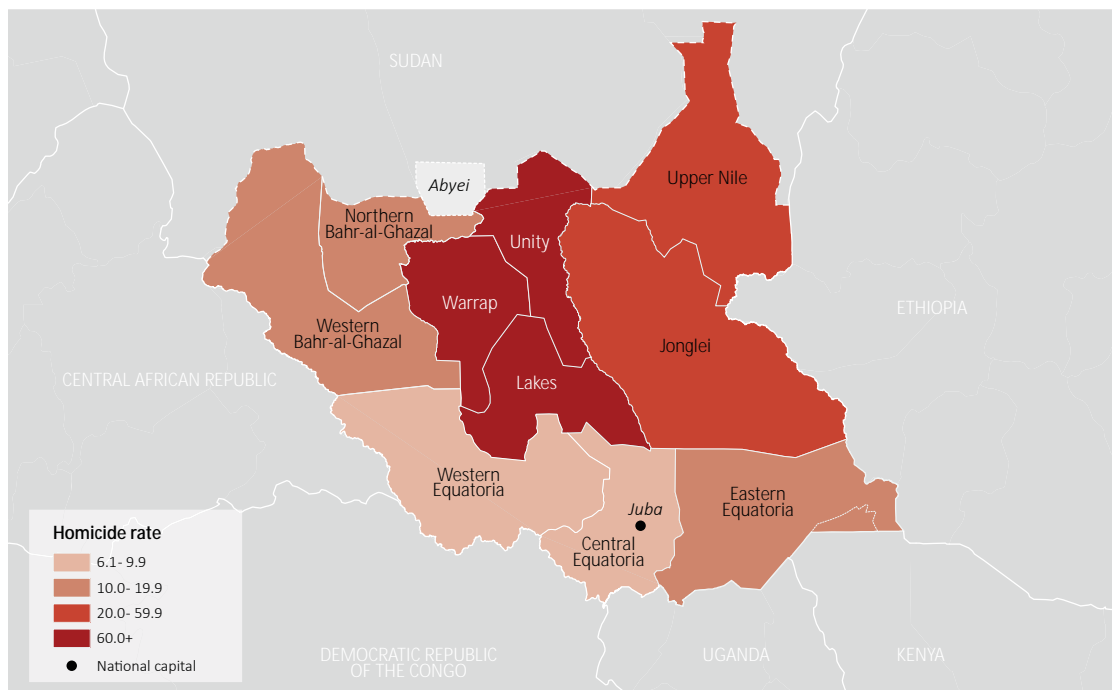
Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Dashed lines represent undetermined boundaries. The final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. The final status of the Abyei area is not yet determined.
Note: 2013 data are based on statistics for January-May 2013.

Source: UNDPKO-UNMISS.

Examples of countries with high and increasing levels of violence and instability not directly related to the conflict: South Sudan and Haiti

South Sudan

South Sudan[19] seceded from Sudan in July 2011 and is still consolidating its transition to independence. Much of the violence in the country is linked to resources such as land and livestock, as well as to crime and ongoing clashes between various armed groups, and to inter-clan disputes. In addition, ongoing inter-communal violence and residual armed group activity from the conflict often result in large-scale displacement, increasing the vulnerability of the population.[20] Other sources of insecurity include the proliferation of small arms, increasing urbanization and limited economic opportunities for the country's very young and very poor population.[21]

Reliable statistics for observing and analysing trends are not yet available, and the available data should be interpreted with caution in relation to its accuracy and coverage.[22] Until recently, there was no mechanism for collecting data on crime in South Sudan and it is likely that most crime is under-reported. However, it is possible to identify "hot spots" of crime and violence. Based on data from the Ministry of Interior and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the national homicide rate in 2012 was estimated to be 13.9 per 100,000 population, whereas the 2013 rate is estimated to be 21.3 per 100,000 population.[23] The increase in 2013 has been driven by violence in Jonglei State and in the Wunlit Triangle (Lakes, Warrap and Unity States), where homicide rates more than doubled in the first half of 2013 from those observed in 2012, from 25 to over 60 per 100,000 population, ten times the global average homicide rate (See map 4.2).

19 The data on which this analysis of South Sudan is based were finalized prior to the violence and civil unrest of December 2013.

20 g7+ (2013a).

21 National Bureau of Statistics, South Sudan (2012).

22 The United Nations Police of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) are cataloguing crime statistics, and have detailed monthly data available by State since December 2012.

23 These data are based and projected on six months of data from both December 2011-May 2012 and January-June 2013, as collected by the Ministry of Interior, South Sudan (2012a and 2012b) and the UNDPKO-UNMISS Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC) (2013).

The majority of this increase is associated with the escalation of cattle rustling/raiding, a region-specific form of crime that bridges two homicide typologies: those linked to crime and to interpersonal conflicts. Much of South Sudan is rural and cattle are considered indicators of wealth and social standing. As such, rustling can be a means to obtain a wife through accumulating money to pay a "bride price", and can also symbolize the mark of an adolescent's transition to maturity. Additionally, during the dry season, pastoralists move their cattle towards water resources, which may bring communities competing for scarce resources into closer contact with one another.[24] Cattle rustling and its associated reprisals has been a long-standing source of communal violence in the region, but has only recently begun to be considered as constituting a type of crime,[25] and one which often involves organized criminal groups as well as the increasing use of firearms. The country is awash in small arms following the years of conflict — an estimated 327,000 small arms[26] were in circulation in 2012 — and cattle raiders can be better armed than law enforcement officers. Attacks related to cattle raids can claim hundreds of lives,[27] destroy entire communities and exacerbate inter-communal tensions, particularly in the Wunlit Triangle where this form of violence is most prevalent.[28] Increasingly carried out also for commercial and political reasons, such raids may be facilitated by weak rule of law in this newly independent country.[29]

Outside the Wunlit Triangle, violence is driven by different factors. Jonglei State, where much of the violence linked to armed conflict is still occurring, also has a high rate of homicide, above 35 per 100,000 population in 2012 and 2013. Most of the killings in Jonglei are linked to occasional confrontations between the army and rebel groups,

but episodes of civil unrest and protest have also resulted in violence.[30] In Juba, the capital of South Sudan, high levels of unemployment and increasing urban migration have increased competition for scarce resources such as land, fuelling interpersonal and, at times, inter-communal rivalries.[31] Juba accounts for the vast majority of all violent crime occurring in Central Equatoria State, including over 90 per cent of the reported rapes and robberies.[32]

Haiti

Haiti's vulnerability to political instability has been noted for decades. The United Nations has been directly involved in the country since the first peacekeeping mission deployed in 1993, following a coup in 1991.[33] Despite experiencing political volatility and a concomitant lack of stability, in addition to several natural disasters, all of which have weakened the country's fragile institutions, Haiti routinely has one of the lowest reported homicide rates in the Caribbean (although it is still above the global average). All three homicide typologies occur to varying extents within the country, but concerns regarding gang-related homicides are most prominent.

The most recent wave of conflict-related violence erupted in February 2004, following months of deteriorating security, when armed conflict spread across the country as a coalition of rebel groups seized control over the north. Spikes in homicide and other violent crimes occurred from mid-2004 to late 2006 due to the actions of armed groups and gangs who frequently joined forces, notably in parts of the capital, Port-au-Prince.[34] Homicide rates and kidnappings increased in early 2008, partially due to a deterioration in economic conditions linked to the global economic crisis and political instability.[35] Already vulnerable to civil unrest and renewed gang activity,[36] Haitian institutions were further weakened by the devastating January 2010 earthquake, which hampered the country's ability to combat lawlessness.

24 UNEP (2009).

25 See the 2008 Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCOO) *Protocol on the Prevention, Combating and Eradication of Cattle Rustling in Eastern Africa*, which defines "cattle rustling" as the "stealing or planning, organizing, attempting, aiding or abetting the stealing of livestock by any person from one country or community to another, where the theft is accompanied by dangerous weapons and violence."

26 Small Arms Survey (2012).

27 For example, it is estimated that almost 70 per cent of homicides in Warrap in April 2013 were linked to cattle raids; in Lakes State it was over 80 per cent, and in Unity it was almost 90 per cent, according to data from UNDPKO-UNMISS. With such attacks, the annual rates of homicide in the Wunlit Triangle of South Sudan closely resembles homicide rates of countries with high levels of intentional killings.

28 United Nations Security Council (2013b). S/2013/140.

29 Yual, D. (2012); and Mbugua, J.K. (2012).

30 For example, see UN OCHA (2013).
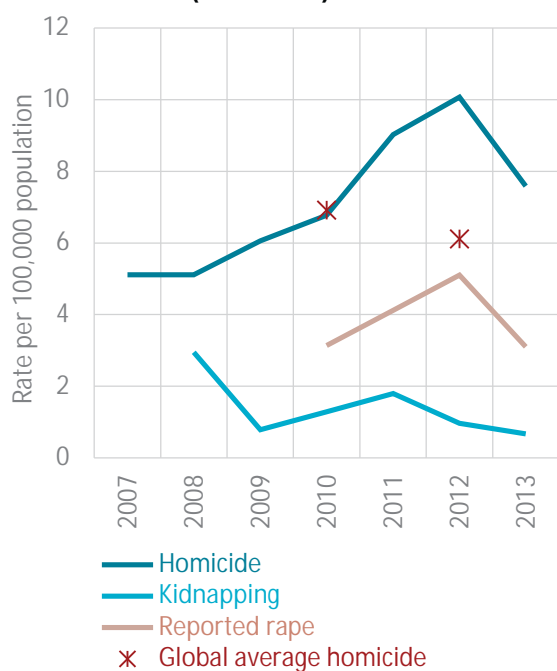
31 UNDPKO-UNMISS, Radio Miraya (2013).

32 Data provided by UNDPKO-UNMISS, JMAC (2013).

33 UNDPKO. *MINUSTAH background*.

34 United Nations Security Council (2004). S/2004/300.

35 United Nations Security Council (2008). S/2008/586. Coinciding with the global economic crisis, Haiti saw rising prices for oil, food, and also experienced a decrease in remittances from Haitians living abroad. Haiti is the 20th most aid-dependent country in the world (see OECD (2012)).

36 United Nations Security Council (2009). S/2009/129.

Fig. 4.5: **Rates of selected violent crimes, Haiti (2007-2013)**

Source: UNDPKO-MINUSTAH and UNODC Homicide Statistics (2013).

Fig. 4.6: **Homicide rates, Port-au-Prince and rest of Haiti (2011-2013)**
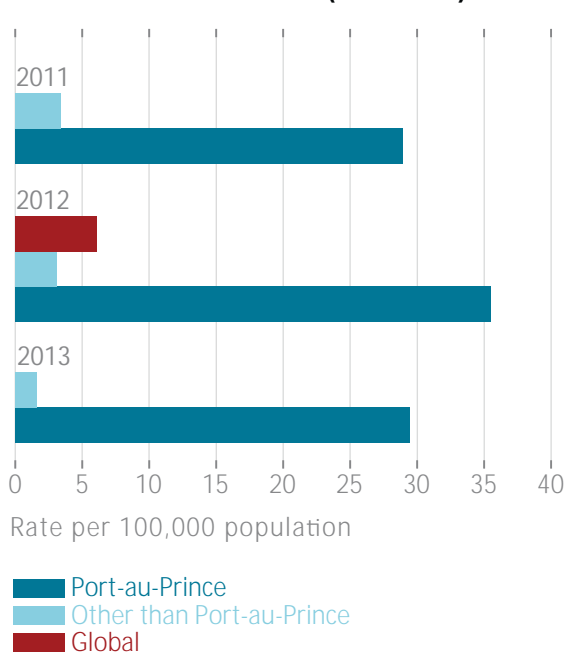

Note: Data for 2013 are based on January-June 2013.

Source: UNDPKO-MINUSTAH and UNODC Homicide Statistics (2013).

Haiti's homicide rate has doubled in recent years (from 5.1 per 100,000 in 2007 to 10.2 per 100,000 in 2012), but it decreased slightly in the first half of 2013.[37] The 2012 rate was half the homicide rate in the neighbouring Dominican Republic (22.1 per 100,000 in 2012) and only a quarter that in Jamaica (39.3 per 100,000 in 2012), but the increase remains notable. Other types of violent crime, such as reported rapes and kidnappings, increased in the aftermath of the earthquake, but the same decreasing pattern as for homicide can be seen as of 2013 (figure 4.5). The difference in homicide rates in comparison to other crimes may be due to better reporting and recording of lethal violence.

Moreover, Haiti's relatively low national homicide rate disguises nuances within the country, with most of the violence and gang activity concentrated in the country's urban centres, particularly Port-au-Prince and its surrounding metropolitan communes (see figure 4.6). In 2012, 75 per cent of the murders in Haiti took place in Port-au-Prince and firearms accounted for 87 per cent of them.[38] A recurrence of clashes between gangs, whose involvement in criminal and political vio-

lence in Haiti is deeply rooted, may explain such patterns.[39] Other than homicide, most other crime was also concentrated in Port au Prince. For example, 76 per cent of all recorded kidnappings during 2012 and the first half of 2013 took place in the capital.[40]

Examples of homicide and violence in post-conflict countries with incremental gains in security and institution-building: Sierra Leone and Liberia

Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone was embroiled in conflict from 1991-2002, which resulted in an estimated 70,000 casualties and 2.6 million people displaced, out of a population of just over 5 million.[41] The war also affected the operations of the criminal justice institutions in the country, particularly through infrastructure destruction and the killing of personnel.[42]

Sierra Leone is now demonstrating progress in fostering inclusive politics and conflict resolution,[43]

37 UNODC Homicide Statistics (2013).

38 UNDPKO-MINUSTAH (2013).

39 United Nations Security Council (2013c). S/2013/139.

40 UNDPKO-MINUSTAH (2013).

41 UNDP (2006).

42 For more on the criminal justice system in Sierra Leone, see African Human Security Initiative (2009).

43 For more, see g7+ (2013b).

Fig. 4.7: **Rates of selected violent crimes, Sierra Leone (2004-2012)**

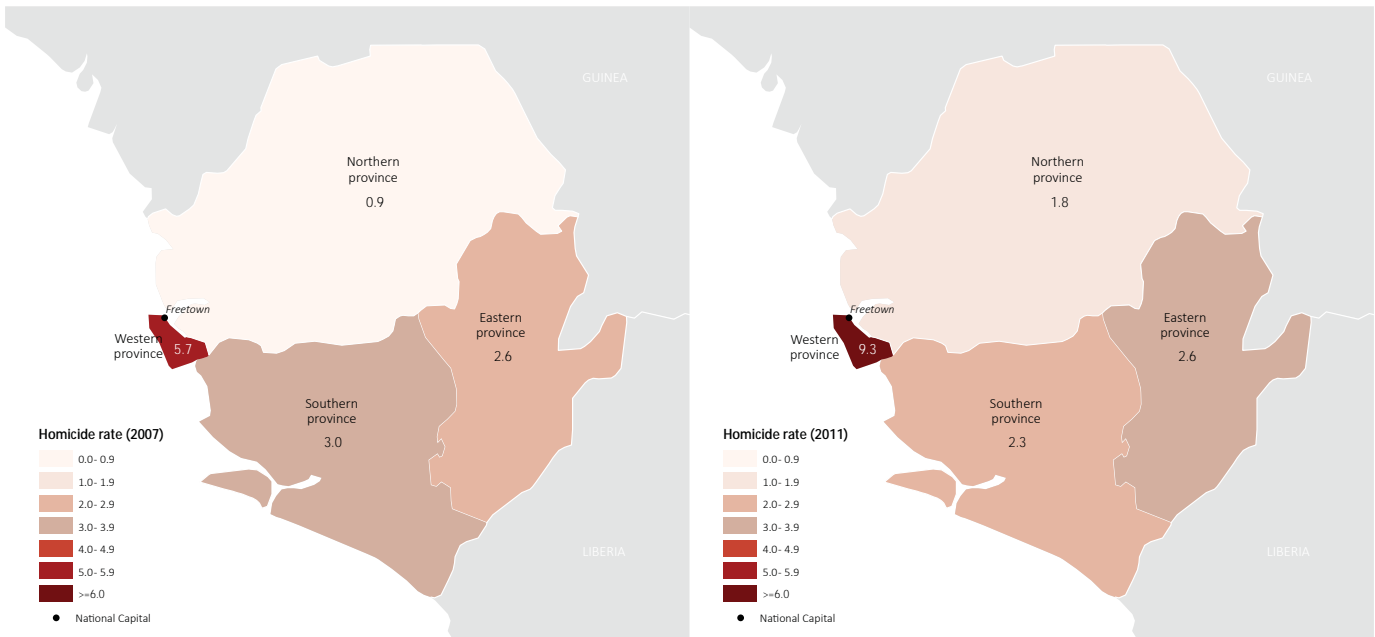Source: Sierra Leone Police (2011).

but it is still experiencing violence, particularly in its capital city, Freetown. The recorded homicide rate in Freetown increased from 5.7 per 100,000 in 2007 to 9.3 per 100,000 in 2011; the homicide rate also doubled in the north and increased in the east (see map 4.3), but official figures indicate that

the average homicide rate is relatively low at the national level. The elevated rate in the capital may, of course, indicate more reporting and better recording practices, given the greater concentration of criminal justice services in the city than elsewhere.

As in other developing countries, there is lack of data on social and economic conditions, but the Sierra Leone Police attribute much of the violence to unemployment and poverty, in addition to high population density, the number of single parent families, and high rates of drug use.[44] Many of the reasons for violence in Sierra Leone are thus legacies of the previous armed conflict, due to resettlement and issues related to the high levels of conflict-related deaths, such as population demographics and unstable family situations. The violence today may not be directly linked to the conflict, but the interpersonal causes of homicide are often rooted in the experiences of conflict.

The gradual improvement in the crime and security situation in Sierra Leone is confirmed by country-wide victimization survey data.[45] In 2008, property and livestock theft were the dominant crimes cited by respondents, whereas over 50 per cent of the population had experienced assault, armed robbery, housebreaking, property, crop or livestock theft in the previous year. Despite the

Map 4.3: **Homicide rate, by sub-national region, Sierra Leone (2007 and 2011)**

Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Source: Sierra Leone Police (2011).

44 Sierra Leone Police (2011).

45 Chikwanha, A.B. (2008), African Human Security Initiative.

high level of survey respondents who had experienced such crimes, the same survey reported that half of the respondents believed that the level of violent crime in their area had actually decreased in the last three years, and while the level of recorded homicide was relatively low, it was the most feared crime in the country. The challenges of policing the more rural areas resulted in some survey respondents turning to alternative forms of justice when they were victimized by crime.

Disarmament and demobilization of former combatants is an issue common to many post-conflict countries. For example, in Sierra Leone, a programme was implemented from 2003 to 2008 in order to reduce firearm availability,[46] which continued to be an enabling factor for violent crime. According to reported crime figures, there was a spate of armed robberies in the capital region in 2009-2010, which eventually declined due to improved measures to tackle crime by the police.[47]

Liberia

Linked to neighbouring Sierra Leone by both geography and its role in that country's armed conflict, Liberia is emerging from civil wars that lasted from 1989-1996 and 1999-2003, and which included extreme acts of violence against civilians, including torture, rape, indiscriminate killings, beatings and abductions, as well as the use of child soldiers. The Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission estimated that 250,000 people were killed and a million displaced during the conflicts.[48] Liberia's infrastructure and economy were devastated by the conflicts, and while the latter is now slowly recovering, the country remains one of the poorest and least developed in the world, ranking 174th out of 186 on the 2013 Human Development Index.[49]

Due to the increased capacity of national authorities, some data on violent crime have become available in Liberia, but they should still be interpreted

Fig. 4.8: **Rates of selected violent crimes, Liberia (2007-2012)**
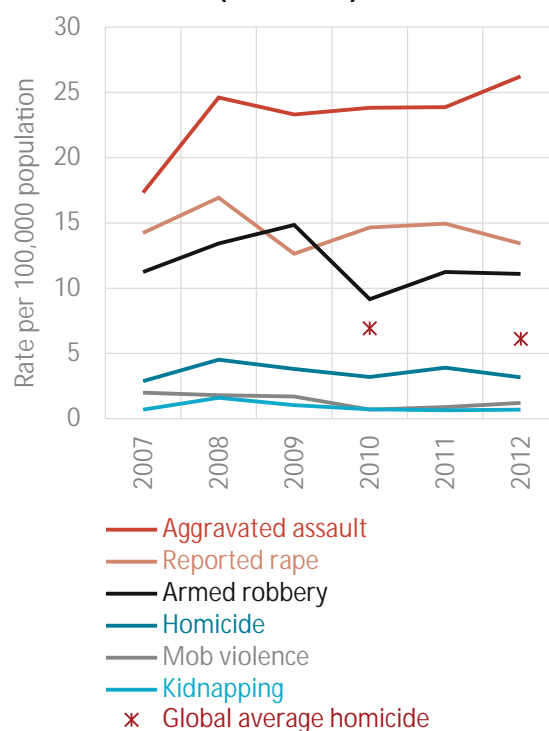
Source: UNDPKO-UNMIL and UNODC Homicide Statistics (2013).

with caution. These figures suggest that levels of reported crime in Liberia have been relatively constant over the last few years and, though the homicide rate has been routinely less than 5 per 100,000 population, other reported offences such as aggravated assault, rape and armed robbery have been at consistently higher levels (see figure 4.8).

According to a population survey undertaken in 2011,[50] most people felt safe and reported improvements in security during the previous year, with the majority stating that the Government was successful in reducing crime. The survey also found that in more than a third of criminal cases, the perpetrator was known to the victim, suggesting higher levels of interpersonal violence than homicide linked to other typologies.

Following the civil wars, firearms were widely available in Liberia, yet homicide by firearm occurred in less than 20 per cent of reported cases (see figure 4.9). By contrast, over 25 per cent of all homicides were committed with sharp objects,[51] suggesting that the availability of sophisticated weaponry is not necessarily a characteristic of homicide in Liberia. Limited information is available

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46 The "Arms for Development" programme, implemented in Sierra Leone from 2003-2008, was a community-based DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) programme that focused on youth-oriented policies, support for elections and access to education. One of its key aims was to control illicit arms trafficking and develop community-based approaches to weapons collections. Communities were offered incentives if they were declared "weapon-free". For more, see UNDP. *Arms for Development programme*, Sierra Leone.
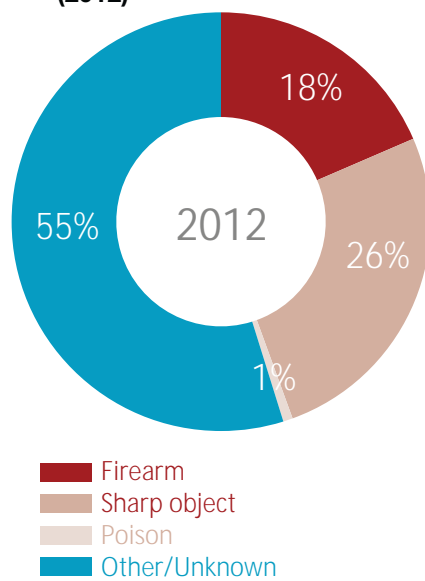
47 Sierra Leone Police (2011).

48 Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Republic of Liberia (2009).

49 UNDP. *Human Development Indicators: Liberia*.

50 Vinck, P, Pham, P. and T. Kreutzer (2011). Pp. 40-43.

51 UNDPKO-UNMIL (2013).

Fig. 4.9: Homicide mechanisms, Liberia (2012)

2012

- Firearm
- Sharp object
- Poison
- Other/Unknown

Source: UNDPKO-UNMIL.

on the motives behind homicides in Liberia, but mob justice was identified as the motivation in approximately 15 per cent of homicides recorded in 2012,[52] which implies a lack of trust in the institutions tasked with implementing the rule of law.

Legacies of conflict can impact homicide and other violent crime

The data presented in this chapter show that in countries emerging from conflict, the path to peace is not necessarily a straight one,[53] nor is there always a clear distinction between crime-related and conflict-related violence. In many countries with recent experiences of conflict, a great deal of people still fear for their safety as a result of ongoing violence, in its many forms, and in some cases homicide levels are comparable to levels of civilian casualties. Instability and the legacies of conflict — the availability of weapons, broken social ties, displacement, trauma, large youth populations

The g7+ and the New Deal for engagement in fragile States

A recent initiative has focused on the links between security, justice and development, and the importance of measuring progress in these areas in the framework of conflict-affected countries. The *New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States* is an initiative of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, which brings together a group of conflict-affected States (the "g7+"[a]), development partners and international organizations. At its core, the *New Deal* is built around five Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs), which are:

- Legitimate Politics — Foster inclusive political settlements and conflict resolution
- Security — Establish and strengthen people's security
- Justice — Address injustices and increase people's access to justice
- Economic Foundations — Generate employment and improve livelihoods
- Revenues and Services — Manage revenue and build capacity for accountable and fair service delivery

The *New Deal* identifies the priority areas to be addressed in post-conflict settings and it outlines an agenda for more effective aid to fragile States based on the five PSGs: stronger alignment, mutual

accountability, more transparency and investments in country systems, and a shared approach to risk management. The combination of political, security, justice and development dimensions in one framework and the emphasis on monitoring progress against these five PSGs is unique and critically important in the *New Deal*.

As part of the monitoring and support system to assist countries in achieving the five PSGs, an interim list of indicators has been developed to measure progress. Some of the proposed indicators include, for example, "violent deaths per 100,000 population (conflict-related deaths and intentional homicides)" as an indicator to measure security, and the "extent of pre-trial detention" to measure justice. The use of such indicators in the countries of the *New Deal* can provide an important input into the discussions at the United Nations on the post-2015 development agenda. Issues such as peace, security, rule of law, justice and governance are not only relevant in the g7+ members, but are universal and relevant for all Member States of the United Nations.

[a] The g7+ has 18 members (Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Timor-Leste and Togo). Its main objective is to share experiences, learn from one another and advocate for reforms to the way the international community engages in conflict-affected States.

Note: UNODC gratefully acknowledges the contribution of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) in the drafting of this text.

52 UNDPKO-UNMIL(2013).

53 For more, see World Bank (2011).

and influxes into urban areas — are risk factors for crime in all the countries studied in this chapter, as well as for all types of homicide. Such risk factors and the violence they may facilitate can undermine efforts towards peace-building and establishing the rule of law, which is fundamental for preventing organized crime from taking root and perpetuating the sense of insecurity and cycle of violence engendered by weak institutions.