Conflict, Security & Development

ISSN: 1467-8802 (Print) 1478-1174 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ccsd20

Business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building: the case of Kenya

Jonathan Luke Austin & Achim Wennmann

To cite this article: Jonathan Luke Austin & Achim Wennmann (2017) Business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building: the case of Kenya, Conflict, Security & Development, 17:6, 451-472, DOI: 10.1080/14678802.2017.1401840

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2017.1401840

CONFLICT, SECURITY & DEVELOPMENT, 2017
VOL. 17, NO. 6, 451–472
https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2017.1401840

Business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building: the case of Kenya

Jonathan Luke Austin and Achim Wennmann

Centre on Conflict, Development and Peace-building (CCDP), Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, Switzerland

ABSTRACT

Kenyan business was important in mitigating episodes of election violence in 2007–2008 and 2013. This article finds that this role was motivated by the ethical and moral commitments of key business leaders to further peace in times of violence; and by interests in preventing future economic loss. However, by adopting a lens that situates business roles in violence prevention and peace-building within Kenya's conflict systems and political economy, the article finds a paradox: this lens confirms the Kenyan 'success story' with respect to specific violent episodes; but it also reveals a much more limited role for business in transforming the underlying sources of conflict; especially when these are congruent with key business fundamentals connected to land ownership, property rights, export-oriented production or services, or a 'limited' access order. Overall, the article highlights that business should leverage its comparative advantages within broader multi-stakeholder coalitions, especially in terms of its ability to influence political leaders, entry-points for informal dialogue to diffuse crises and capital to support peace-building initiatives.

KEYWORDS

Private sector; conflict prevention; peace-building; election violence; Kenya

Introduction

Businesses are important players in conflict-affected and fragile states and there is a long tradition of scholarship that analyses their roles in conflict and peace.[1] The perspectives on this topic usually fall within a spectrum of two broad tendencies. On the one end of the spectrum are those contributions focusing on how business activities cause or exacerbate conflict; on the other end are those that emphasise business activity as a source of prosperity, development and economic growth. Whatever perspective is taken up, businesses are an undeniable constituent in fragile states and are there to stay – not just because there are 'rich picking in grim places'[2] but also because the markets of now fragile states are tomorrow's emerging economies.[3] Developing a better understanding of how businesses affect dynamics of conflict and peace is therefore an important part of the broader conversation about how countries can exit fragility and foster inclusive development.[4]

CONTACT Jonathan Luke Austin jonathan.austin@graduateinstitute.ch; Achim Wennmann achim.wennmann@graduateinstitute.ch

This article contributes to these discussions by exploring how and why the Kenyan private sector took an active role in violence prevention in Kenya between 2007 and 2013, and what their interventions tell us about the role of private actors in peace-building more generally.[5] Several case studies have highlighted the positive and successful leadership of Kenyan business actors in preventing violence.[6] This article contributes to this case study literature by embedding its analysis within two theoretical perspectives that nuance our understanding of business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building in Kenya. We first draw on literature from business management studies on the motivation for corporations to become involved in 'positive' social projects. Much of the theoretical work has previously been applied to work on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) schemes[7] but the article will use it more broadly to explore the roles of business in preventing violence in Kenya. Secondly, the article draws on conflict systems and political economy theory. These perspectives hark back to standard conflict analysis that emphasises the interplay of issues, relationships and systems as drivers of conflict.[8] Such perspectives also intend to go beyond an analysis of one or another particular 'episode' of violence in Kenya and the role of business in mitigating this violence.

By embedding its analysis within these two theoretical perspectives, the article also contributes to the business and peace literature more broadly.[9] First, by drawing on conflict systems and political economy theory, the article moves beyond a focus on 'the company' in shaping the dynamics of conflict events – negatively by causing or exacerbating conflict; or positively by mitigating or resolving conflict – towards an understanding of companies as one of many actors and factors that constitute conflict systems.[10] Second, the role of business in conflict or peace is situated within a more holistic understanding of a particular conflict that does not limit itself to proximate conflict drivers, or specific conflict episodes, but also the long-term historical, social and political drivers, and the consequences of business engagement in a particular conflict. Third, by adapting a framework on business motivation to business engagement on violence prevention and peace-building, the article tests a promising research avenue that disaggregates motivation into value-, performance- and stakeholder-driven motives, and thereby nuances the understanding of business behaviour in fragile states.

The article draws on a review of relevant literature, semi-structured interviews with 20 key informants and a collaborative workshop in Kenya, and forms part of a larger research project studying the business community as a peace-building actor.[11] Informants were recruited initially from the network of the Geneva Peace-building Platform.[12] Additional interviewees were then reached through chain-referral sampling methods. Interlocutors came from a broad spectrum of Kenya's civil society, its business community and local or international NGOs. These included, for example, members of business associations in Kenya, figures within youth movements in civil society and lawyers who worked on legal issues vis-à-vis Kenya's devolved constitution. Ultimately, this sample – while relatively small – was representative of a diverse spectrum of views on the role of business in preventing violence and peace-building in Kenya discussed throughout this article. Interviews were conducted remotely in semi-structured form.[13] Following these interviews, a majority of our interlocutors and several additional participants met in a workshop in Nairobi in March 2017. This workshop was structured around the same interview questions and provided the means to extend and deepen the conversations of the interviews through face-to-face and group discussions.

The article evolves over four sections. The first section introduces key issues for the analysis of this article related to conflict, violence and the private sector in Kenya. The second section outlines the role of the private sector in promoting peace in Kenya, both in terms of its efforts to 'make' peace during the 2007–2008 crisis, and vis-à-vis its longer-term strategy to 'build' peace going forward to the 2013 elections. The third section explores three types of motivations of the private sector to get involved in the prevention of violent conflict. The final section explores a conflict systems lens on the roles of the private sector in violence prevention and peace-building. It illustrates how such a lens may develop a more nuanced understanding of business engagement in conflict prevention and peace-building, both in Kenya and elsewhere.

Background

Between 2007 and 2008, 1,300 people were killed, and a further 600,000 displaced, in post-election violence that shook Kenya.[14] Paralysing the country for several months, it is estimated that Kenya lost 5 per cent of its per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) due to the violence. Economic growth declined 6.8 per cent between 2007 and 2008, and foreign direct investment from US$ 729 million to US$ 183 million in the same period – a stunning loss of 75 per cent in one year.[15] The key sectors of tourism and flower and tea production were significantly affected (see also the section 'Business and peace in Kenya' below). Shocked by this crisis, Kenyan business leaders mobilised with unprecedented speed and determination to help halt the violence in 2007–2008, and to prevent a relapse of conflict in 2013. But what was the landscape of violence that unfolded before them in 2007?

Election-related violence in Kenya

Election-related violence was nothing necessarily new in a country where ethnic politics and violence have often gone hand in hand at election time.[16] What was different in 2007 was the unprecedented scale and scope of violence. The crisis in 2007 unfolded after accusations of vote rigging led to mass demonstrations and cross-national violence attributed to domestic shifts in political alliances.[17] Although violence initially began in slums around Nairobi and the Rift Valley, it spread across the whole of Kenya.

Explanations for the scale of violence vary. It is argued that the role of ethnicity and patronage in Kenyan politics has incentivised incumbent politicians to appeal to ethnic identities among constituents and, so, 'to mobilise voters in exchange for promised access to land or public services'.[18] This underlines that 'much of the post-election violence was premeditated and mobilised by political and community leaders' as seen in the fact that the Kenyan Police was 'implicated in approximately 40% of civilian deaths'.[19] More specifically, Mueller argues that the centralisation of power in the Kenyan state means 'politics is viewed primarily as a winner takes all zero-sum ethnic game. The national economic cake is the prize. Various ethnic groups argue openly that it is their turn to "eat"'.[20]

After 2007, Kenya has remained a violent country. Key drivers have been associated with 'subnational political competition' in which 'violence itself has become political currency [involving] the persistent use of violence as a negotiation and competition strategy in a wider political environment'.[21] Such violence as an electioneering tool involved the mobilisation of militias and gangs for political purposes and interacted in a self-reinforcing chain.[22] The struggle between a strong centralised state under one national identity, and a *majimbo* federalist constitution recognising the tremendous wealth of identities in Kenya remains a sensitive political issue, even after provisions for devolution in the 2010 Constitution.[23]

Beyond the set of immediate conflict drivers, violence in Kenya also needs to be placed within its deeper historical legacies. Issues generating conflict – such as land rights, the distribution of economic benefits, ethnic identity or governance – find their roots in colonial policies and post-colonial authoritarianism. With respect to land and identity, the British colonial administration (1920–1963) expropriated approximately seven million acres of land – roughly the size of Ireland – much of it within the fertile Central and Rift Valley provinces of the country.[24] British colonial policy involved a divide and rule politics that substantively politicised ethnic identities, and it also imposed a strong central state administration at the expense of local power-holders.[25] It did so largely to reorder Kenya's economy around an export-orientated model based on agricultural production – a system that was further stratified after independence and the regime of President Daniel Arap Moi (1978–2002). This era also entrenched a legacy of corruption, patronage and rent-seeking, as well as 'informal violence' related to address conflicts over land, identity and governance.[26]

Business environment

Kenya's business environment, in a sense, is an additional historical legacy. Building on the colonial foundation of an export-oriented economy, the dominant sector today remains agriculture, which represents 25 per cent of Kenya's GDP and 50 per cent of revenue from exports, and which employs 75 per cent of the labour force.[27] Kenya also represents East Africa's major economic hub as the most industrially developed economy of this region.[28] It is expected to propel towards a 'newly industrialized and middle income country' by 2030, mainly through the expansion in the energy sector, especially in hydropower and oil.[29] Other key sectors include tourism, construction, financial services, media and telecommunication.

Kenya's business environment has also inherited multiple layers of complexity that *The Economist* described as 'infrastructure deficiencies and bottlenecks' that persist 'alongside other challenges such as skills shortages, and high levels of crime and corruption'.[30] Behind this assessment hides a business environment with strong informal regulation, especially through government-issued contracts or licenses for projects at the national or sub-national level to actors that are part of a broader system of mutual obligations. Obtaining such opportunities requires participation in tenders, which in turn rely on informal payments by those actors who wish to win them. Kenya's Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission estimated that that 70 per cent of all corruption in this country was related to public procurement contracts.[31] Such practices have created elites of 'tenderpreneurs' that span across business and politics.[32] Such business transactions reveal an overall context described as 'low-trust society' in which many people would not confide in anyone outside their immediate personal or clan network.[33]

An additional complexity is that partisan interests aligned behind 'tenderpreneurship' and those favouring an export economy do not always co-exist easily in Kenyan politics. This is a common phenomenon in many developing countries and is also described in terms of the tensions between 'limited' or 'open' access orders.[34] In 'limited' access orders, authorities limit access to valuable political and economic opportunities through barriers-to-entry such as patronage, tenders or licenses. It allows governments to create a credible commitment among elites not to fight each other because they are better off participating in a mutually beneficial network than by challenging the authorities. This is the story of 'tenderpreneurship' in Kenya. 'Open' access orders structure access to political and economic opportunities in competitive terms through markets, elections and merit. In Kenya, business takes place across the full spectrum of 'limited' and 'open' access orders. Within this spectrum, different camps have an interest in maintaining their position within a 'limited' access order, or in levelling the playing field to allow access to be defined by merit, quality and delivery of results.[35] In Kenya, it is business that is more commonly associated with the export sector that advocate for such values and which are also advocating for the Kenya Vision 2030 – a 'national long-term development policy that aims to transform Kenya into a newly industrialising, middle-income country'.[36]

This division between 'limited' and 'open' access orders is visible where 'tenderpreneurs' defend their 'limited' access to profitable economic opportunities and the export sectors press for a level playing field. This division underlines the significant diversity in Kenya's business sectors in which different actors and sectors have a different degree of entrenchment in informal orders that regulate access to – and exclusion from – power, profits and opportunity. Under a condition in which much of business and politics goes hand in hand, it is evidently difficult to draw a clear dividing line between public and private sectors.[37] As we will see below, the complexity of this business environment – including its historical and colonial legacies, its difficulties with corruption and the predominance of tenderpreneurship – is important for understanding the motivational drivers of business engagement in the prevention of violence and for situating the analysis of this article within a more holistic conflict analysis and within Kenya's political economy.

The vista of business engagement in violence prevention from 2007

When Kenya's business community was struck by the scale and scope of the violence in 2007, they faced a conflict system shaped by incompatibilities on issues (land rights, the distribution of economic benefits, ethnic identity or governance) and driven be dysfunctional relationships (between ethnic groups, between central and traditional power holders, between the government and the opposition). They had also before them a significant disruption of the economy, especially – as will be discussed in the section 'Business and peace in Kenya' below – in the tourism, flower and tea industries and with respect to reputational risk of Kenya as the economic powerhouse of East Africa, as well as broader regional economic damage. For example, the road blockages caused by the violence left 18,000 shipping containers stuck in the port city of Mombasa.[38]

Business and peace in Kenya

Within the context of Kenya's history of violence and heterogeneous business environment, we now investigate what actors associated with the private sector actually *did* to prevent violence and build peace between 2007 and 2013. We distinguish between three phases of action: (1) early forms of private-sector alliance building with other key stakeholders in Kenya which occurred *prior* to 2007, (2) forms of crisis-response work that occurred immediately *during* the 2007–2008 outbreak of election-related violence, and (3) peace-building work that occurred in preparation for the 2013 election.

Business activities on peace and conflict pre-2007–2008

The private sector's activities on peace and conflict issues began around 2002 and are connected to the creation of a 'Partnership for Peace'. This was largely an ad hoc, NGO-driven initiative motivated by the early small-scale violence that had occurred during and after every election since 1991. A loose and informal network, the partnership drew on financial support from the private sector. In 2004 business actors became more actively involved when a 2002 memorandum of understanding signed between major political parties, prior to the elections of that year, faced problems in its implementation. A group of eight key figures from civil society and the private sector, including the Kenyan Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), mediated these difficulties. KEPSA is an influential business group concerned with developing Kenya's business environment and private sector. Specifically, its original self-defined mandate focused on increasing the ease of doing business, the global competitiveness of Kenya and reducing bribery. However, KEPSA's role began to shift in 2002 when, despite the 2002 memorandum of understanding identifying religious leaders as the formal mediators, those religious leaders asked KEPSA to step in given the complexity of religious leadership in Kenyan society and their relative lack of leverage over political agendas. Ultimately, these efforts failed due to 'the obstinacy and hidden agendas of the politicians'.[39] However, business actors interviewed for this study identify 2004 as an important period of learning amongst themselves over how to engage with politicians.

Another precursor was the relationship building that occurred across a mixed group of individuals engaged in the development of the World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) for Kenya. As part of the PRS, the World Bank convened a number of leading thinkers and practitioners in a three-month long process to develop an economic recovery strategy for Kenya. Critically, these individuals managed to work together without associating labels with each other. The PRS and economic recovery strategy was ultimately undermined by political wrangling; nonetheless, the strong relationships of those who participated in it remained. These relationships facilitated some of the individuals to play the role of honest brokers in 2007–2008.[40] Thus, the period prior to 2007–2008 generated a set of strong relationships – based not least on friendship – that cut across sectors and partisan interests. These relationships enabled some individuals associated with the private sector – and others from NGOs – to play discrete roles in mitigating violence during the 2007–2008 crisis.

Business engagement during the 2007–2008 crisis

In the midst of the 2007–2008 crisis, prominent figures from Kenya's civil society established Concerned Citizen for Peace (CCP), which was conceived as a 'meeting place for members of the peace-building community, leaders of civil society groups, representatives of the private sector, reporters from the media, social analysts, politicians and professionals from a variety of disciplines, all expressing their concerns and all seeking to be helpful'.[41] Generally speaking, the CCP acted as an advocacy group uniting concerned citizens from various sectors of the country and relying on the specific influence each of its membership groups could exert. Indeed, while the CCP itself became an important actor urging an end to violence and conducting discrete negotiations with members of the government and opposition, KEPSA became an especially important vehicle within the CCP's negotiation efforts. Specifically, KEPSA spearheaded discrete interactions based on 'concern about the turn of events, coming, as it did, at a time when optimism regarding Kenya's business environment – after years of stagnation – had been upbeat'.[42] Because of strong relationships forged prior to 2007–2008, key business figures were able to exert leverage over political actors both through directly influencing events and strengthening the hands of religious leaders and civil society groups.[43] Business figures engaged in discrete mediation and leveraged their influence to convince key stakeholders to end violence. This work included identifying 'the good people' – as one key informant put it – within government and allying with them to 'strengthen them, to support them, to link them up, to give them scripts that they can use, to coach them, to council them'.[44] This involved sessions with both Kenyan ministers and private secretaries, where specific strategies and talking-points were suggested by KEPSA members. Ultimately, these figures directly thanked business for their peace lobbying.[45]

Overall, business leaders were important for the mitigation of the 2007–2008 crisis because they had the influence at the political level that religious leaders, women's associations, trade unions and others did not have. Their intervention worked because they prioritised discrete over public means of engagement, as well as an attitude that was described by key informants as 'low-ego patriotism'. The business people engaged in these mediation roles were also perceived as credible and independent by politicians because they did not come with a shopping list for political favours; a behaviour associated with tenderpreneurship. In the final analysis, private sector engagement in prevention in 2007–2008 is a story of individual leadership that acted outside the trappings of tenderpreneurship: several business leaders had the necessary quality of relationships to mediate and were supported institutionally by KEPSA, which brought together Kenyan business leaders who cared not only for their businesses, but also for Kenya itself. In other words, the story of business in peace 'making' in 2007–2008 is one about business leaders using their leverage to mitigate violence; it is *not* a story of powerful firms telling their CEOs to go and make peace.

Business and peace-building 2008–2013

Following 2008, KEPSA and the CCP shifted gears and took up peace-building roles in order to prevent a relapse of violence.[46] The most visible activity here was a public communication campaign, *Mkenya Daima* [My Kenya Forever], which communicated the importance of peaceful elections to the public, trained representatives from partner groups as peace ambassadors, and disseminated its message via media and events. The private sector also became involved in tackling root causes of poverty, as well as corruption and public sector patronage, while continuing to lobby politicians. KEPSA also worked to organise presidential debates for the 2013 elections, increasing democratic legitimacy and transparency in a way that Kenya had not witnessed before.[47]

Meanwhile, great attention was placed on influencing the media in order to prevent the instigation of violence through incitement. Training and sensitisation programmes for media owners and journalists were launched and the Media Owners Association provided one free commercial of the *Mkenya Daima* campaign for every commercial purchased.[48] Similar efforts were targeted at mobile phone companies whose services had been used to incite violence in 2008.[49] Particularly notable are the efforts by Kenya's largest telecoms operator Safaricom, which when threatened with a shutdown of the SMS system, convinced the government to instead allow providers to disseminate messages of peace and calm, which the company sent to 9 million customers.[50] In addition, Safaricom blocked inciting text messages, and donated 50 million text messages to the NGO '*Sisi Ni Amani*' ['We are peace'], which in turn used these to target specific groups in conflict-prone areas.[51]

These efforts have been considered one of several[52] important factors in preventing a relapse of electoral violence in 2013.[53] However, informants suggested that these high-profile public activities were also paralleled by discrete mediation and lobbying with political figures. Assessing the importance of one approach over the other is difficult. However, many informants stressed the importance of impartiality and independence of individuals involved in discrete engagements, and of strong relationships across the political spectrum as a general precondition for credible business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building.

Motivations for business engagement

This section investigates *why* businesses engaged in violence prevention or peace-building in Kenya by highlighting three types of motivations: 'value-driven', 'performance-driven' and 'stakeholder-driven' motives.[54] Value-driven motives refer to the ways in which the core identity of a business or consortium of businesses compels it to act, while performance-driven motives focus on the economic benefits of peace for businesses. Finally, stakeholder-driven motives refer to demands for intervention from actors with influence over businesses or whom businesses have interests in assisting. This typology of motivational drivers is drawn from the theoretical literature within business management studies. Typically, it is applied at the firm level and deals with the (non-)adherence of specific businesses to CSR and related schemes.[55] Here, however, we extend the conceptual tools of this literature to the Kenyan case in order to better disaggregate the specific drivers behind business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building.

Value-driven motives

Value-driven motives suggest that the ethical or moral commitments of a company might compel its leaders to engage in conflict mitigation or peace-buidling.[56] This is based on the notion that corporations are not merely legal entities but also moral communities.[57] Arguably, the growing influence of the private sector as a decision-maker and source of influence in the globalised world increases this moral responsibility to engage in violence prevention and peace-building. Many business people share the conviction that human suffering should be prevented and so these ethical standards also pervade their personal thinking.[58]

Within the Kenyan context, there is evidence that values did motivate business leaders to intervene. Key informants for this study confirmed that – above all else – it was the shock of the scale of the violence that erupted in 2007, and the human suffering it caused, that prompted some business leaders to become actively involved in conflict mitigation. There was a strong focus on preserving Kenyan national unity, as reflected in campaigns like KESPA's *Mkenya Daima* which sought to unite conflicting ethnic groups and reawaken a sense of national unity.

On a personal level, value-driven motives were associated with 'extraordinary patriots' who invested time into groups like KEPSA out of a general desire to see Kenya progress, economically and socially. One leading business figure describes this 'low ego patriotism' with these words:

> *Quietly, behind the scenes, through KEPSA or elsewhere, [we] were able to calm things down. We do live in this Kenya of high energy, low trust, very ambitious, very materialistic, quite corrupt, and there's always a lot of wasted energy and hence a great need for people to be available to reduce at least some of that waste and to get on with that extraordinary potential perpetually unfulfilled.*[59]

Value-driven motives like these must, however, also be qualified. As noted above, Kenya has a violent history and has seen multiple episodes of election-related violence. Yet, such violence did not *immediately* trigger value-driven motives among the business community. The question therefore arises whether sustained business engagement in peace-building requires a certain *threshold* of violence, conflict or instability – such as the one seen in 2007–2008 – for value-driven motives to translate into proactive roles for business in conflict mitigation and peace-building. In Kenya, this includes especially proactive engagement by companies hit hardest by the violence associated with important export sectors – the tourism industry and the flower and tea producers. Proactive engagement from these by no means represented the majority of business sectors in Kenya. It was just that in 2007–2008 and 2013, they were sufficiently influential to be a 'force for good' but large segments of Kenya's business community did not engage in peace-building, especially Asian and other international investors, and actors defending partisan interests in a 'limited' access economy.

Overall, it is important to understand the underlying *specifics* of value-driven motives, beyond a broad commitment to patriotism or progress. Kenya's business environment is marked by the contest between 'limited' and 'open' access orders with different sectors lining up in support of their respective preference, and which remains a contentious issue in Kenya's party politics. Several informants for this study suggested that most of those driven to engage in violence prevention and peace-building appear committed to a vision of 'levelling the playing field' and standing against a 'limited' access economy. The business actors engaged in violence prevention and peace-building unite with respect to their value-driven motives to ensure a prosperous Kenya, but also with respect to a shared belief in transforming Kenya in the direction of an 'open' access economy as enshrined in the Kenya Vision 2030 'development blue-print'[60] for a liberal export-oriented market economy. Yet this outlook also affects conflict dynamics, as we will see further below, as key fundamentals of the export economy rest on the contentious issues of land rights, centralised governance and associated identity politics.

Performance-driven motives

Business interests in preventing economic losses are the essence of perfomance-driven motives for business engagmeent in violence prevention and peace-building. Guibert and Perez-Quiros estimate the economic costs of the 2007–2008 crisis in Kenya resulted in an average reduction of US$ 70 in per capita GDP between 2007 and 2011, equivalent to 5 per cent of the 2007 baseline level.[61] According to the World Bank, GDP growth plummeted from 7 per cent in 2007 to 0.2 per cent in 2008.[62] What is more, violence affected key sectors, contributing to a 24 per cent reduction in flower exports and at least a 40 per cent decline in tourism in the year after the 2007 election. The tourism industry alone lost revenue of at least US$ 270 million in addition to 140,000 jobs. Tea industry losses amounted to US$ 2 million a day. Tea estates also became a deliberate target of violence.[63] Thus, when looking at performance-driven motives, it is clear that the severity of economic costs of violence *demanded* action.

In addition to direct economic costs, there were also performance costs associated with employee safety: the ethnic conflict threatening to paralyse the public sector also risked affecting the workforce of major businesses.[64] From a corporate perspective, conflict risked affecting the unity and co-existence of different ethnicities within the workforce and by extension also production stability. Coupled with these concerns about direct costs and operational stability, were fears that violence would affect Kenya's global competitiveness. International business partners might look elsewhere for more stable suppliers in the event that violence in Kenya continued or periodically relapsed.[65] In this regard, and as noted by Rettberg, ongoing perceptions of threats to stability are an important explanatory factor for business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building. While a single 'event' of violence might not risk a country's global competitiveness, a periodical relapse of violence certainly might.[66]

Performance-driven motives also relate to advancing partisan interests in structural economic reforms or changing the business environment. As noted above, Kenya's economy is characterised by 'limited' and 'open' access economies and by taking discrete roles in violence prevention, business actors can gain entry points for leveraging influence in the political sphere. Business influence in 2007–2008 and associated lobbying for peace went as far as drafting speeches and serving in advisory or counselling roles for political leaders.[67] Such influence suggests that those who seek to 'level the playing field' can use the entry points and confidence with key politicians at a later stage, both in terms of advancing policy reforms of specific business deals.[68] These real or perceived opportunities can become problematic for business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building when they affect independence or impartiality, as further elaborated below.

Stakeholder-driven motives

Stakeholder-driven motives are illustrated by the earlier cited concern over ethnic conflict *among* employees of a firm. The employees of a firm are not mere 'resources' for exploitation but hold leverage over its very capacity to operate. Employees have a 'stake' in feeling safe and secure in their workplace and, hence, their wishes or interests may tacitly compel a firm to take action. Indeed, to ensure their safety, employees were often granted paid leave during election time in 2013.[69] During the violence, employees were also provided with accommodation at their workplaces to ensure they could work in safety, and were provided with protected privately-hired transport to and from work, which increased the safety of their commute to and from work.[70]

Aside from the employees of firms, however, it is important to also consider the role of international investors. Given Kenya's export-oriented economy, many businesses are at least partially foreign owned. At least in principle, one could imagine external influence pushing Kenya's private sector to engage in violence prevention and peace-building, not the least to create a stable business environment. However, the research underlying this article did not find any such *direct* involvement of foreign actors. Nonetheless, Kenya's businesses were well aware of foreign concern about Kenya's competitiveness in case violence and conflict persisted in the long term, as discussed above.[71]

Understanding the 'success story'

This article suggests that value-driven motives for business engagement were particularly important during 2007–2008, triggered by the widespread 'shock' at the scale of violence. In the run-up to 2013, a more diverse set of motives came into play, particularly as economic costs accumulated. Business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building thereafter involved individual leadership, collective action, legitimacy, impartiality and self-reflection on the range of activities being carried out. Naturally, each type of motivation – be it value-driven, performance-driven, or stakeholder-driven – was intertwined with another and has been present in varying degrees between 2007 and 2013.[72] In sum, then, this article confirms the depiction of Kenya as a 'success story' of business and peace when focusing on the prevention of violent episodes and on business leaders as levers for change.

Violence prevention and peace-building through a systems lens

This section extends the investigation of business roles in violence prevention and peace-building beyond a focus on specific violent events or episodes towards system-level drivers of conflict. This broader perspective helps local and international observers see business not in isolation but as one element of a conflict system.[73] Such an understanding builds from systems approaches in development policy[74] that foreground 'the diversity of risk and vulnerabilities that generate fragility in so many forms'.[75] Increasingly, it is understood that no company exists 'in a vacuum but in the wider community in which it operates'.[76] Indeed, the theories this article draws on expand the earlier focus on motivations. Building on literature from business management studies, this work predominantly isolates companies from the 'push' and 'pull' factors affecting their motivations to be involved in particular societal endeavours. While very useful for getting at the specific internal motivations of companies, the conflict systems perspective stresses that companies are part of a complex environment, so that local or international companies become actors in local conflict dynamics, whatever their intentions and whatever the externally-imposed norms by which they are guided. At the same time, they are only one of the many mitigating or amplifying factors of conflict in a given system: just one part of a far bigger picture.[77]

Looking at violence in Kenya through the lens of conflict systems moves beyond a conceptualisation of violence prevention as episodic 'firefighting' that responds to immediate violence or employs strategies that work as 'pre-cautions' hoping to persuade people to refrain from violence wherever and whenever possible. The preoccupation in those approaches is with treating the immediate violence and amount of death and destruction that result from it. It is the violence and deaths that generate immediate incentives to act because they make headlines, sully reputations and can bear political consequences as authorities risk losing – or are perceived to lose – control over the provision of public safety. Due to these incentives to act in response to violence, prevention approaches tend to address the *symptoms* of conflict over the *system* level dynamics that are underlying such conflict. In other words, they work at the 'palliative' level where the symptoms of a disease are treated, rather than engaging in 'curative' strategies that address the cause of the disease in the first place.[78] When this rationale is extended to conflict systems, an additional layer of entry points for violence prevention and peace-building can be identified that go beyond the immediate crisis response – or 'firefighting' – and emphasise the need to work on the issues, relationships and systems that drive conflict. Such an approach connects to peace-building practice that emphasises the transformation of conflict.[79]

Equipped with this new pair of glasses that is able to discern conflict systems, the following section aims to explore how this lens shapes our understanding of the role of the business community in conflict prevention and peace-building in Kenya.

Business as one of many actors in the conflict system

Kenya faces many systemic risks that include, for instance, environmental pressures associated with drought and other climate-related effects, resource-based conflicts over land and extractive resources, a youth bulge and regional risk factors such as military escalation in Somalia.[80] When considering the confluence of these factors, conflict dynamics take on the characteristics of so-called 'slow onset emergencies' that do not 'emerge from a single, distinct event but one that emerges gradually over time, often based on a confluence of different events'.[81]

Conflict dynamics have also become ever more localised as a result of devolution, which confirms the importance of micro-dynamics of conflict as an over-arching approach to identifying entry-points for violence prevention and peace-building.[82] Localised conflict dynamics often play out as competition over power and resources and are frequently polarised along ethnic or clan lines. These local dynamics combine with little confidence in electoral management bodies at the national level to produce free and fair elections. This means that – whatever the results are – elections may not produce outcomes that the people will believe in, or that will prevent closure of electioneering. Instead, elections are perpetual political contests that fan ethnic politics.[83]

While this brief sketch of Kenya's conflict systems can only give a glimpse into its complexity, it does underline the scale of conflict risk, and the fact that no actor – including business – will be able to provide a magic solution for peace in Kenya. The role of business in conflict prevention and peace-building lies therefore within a multi-stakeholder coalition and the comparative advantage it can bring to the table. The research and stakeholder consultation for this article suggests that this value-added can be both direct and indirect. Business leaders can play a *direct* role in violence prevention and peace-building because specific business leaders maintain strong relationships with politicians and can leverage their influence for the purpose of prevention, especially at the national level. Business can also play an *indirect* role in preventing or mitigating violence because of its access to capital – which is often missing at the level of civil society initiatives – and its potential to finance activities of other actors who possess entry-points for localised prevention work.[84]

The delicate balance between business and politics

Many Kenyan businesses position themselves within the spectrum of 'limited' or 'open' access economic orders. This positioning has defined the respective political lobbying strategies of many private actors. Those supporting a 'limited' access economy may more often be perceived to be part of the exclusionary and patronage-based economic system that is an important factor in shaping conflict and violence in Kenya. By way of contrast, the business leaders that could play a role in prevention in 2007–2008 were perceived not to be part of this game and therefore had a sense of legitimacy with many politicians and constituencies to act as intermediaries in a tense political crisis.[85]

Yet, maintaining the balance between business and politics is a delicate endeavour. It is delicate because any business in Kenya – whether associated with 'limited' or 'open' economic orders – is in some way connected to politics. The role of KEPSA may illustrate this dilemma. One of the longstanding grievances that surrounded the violence in 2007–2008 was the issue of whether or not Kenya should be divided into federal units that would return power to local ethnic groups. The intensity of violence in 2007–2008, preceded by many years of ethnic and societal polarisation, pushed this issue to the forefront of the political agenda, and led to the introduction of a new devolved constitution in 2010. Several business associations – including KEPSA – were supportive of this new constitution. However, when street protests erupted in 2011 seeking further reforms and amendments to the new 2010 constitution that would go even further in devolving power, many corporate actors condemned the protestors and supported the government.[86] For many observers, this overt support – including from KEPSA – for the government compromised the role of business as a 'neutral' broker. By siding with the government, it placed a premium on preserving a certain 'status quo' that would assure a stable operating environment while missing the opportunity to address some of the underlying conflict drivers in Kenya. This case is illustrative because it shows that the private sector did not oppose devolution per se, but rather wished to minimise the market and operational uncertainty created by political and institutional change.[87] It is such systemic forces that might be – without any conscious intention – pushing the Kenyan business community towards particular types of activities – those that are built on the premise of a centralised state and export-oriented economy, and the protection of private property and land rights. But in so doing, they risked becoming – or being perceived as becoming – partisan and undermining their position as a neutral broker, while at the same time feeding the very conflict dynamics they wished to prevent.

This example illustrates the dilemma when speaking of the Kenya case as a 'success' of business' role in violence prevention and peace-building. Corporations can have multiple faces in delicate moments of political turmoil and they can produce seemingly contradictory effects on conflict dynamics. While there are no easy solutions for doing business in times of crisis, the multiple faces of business must at least be recognised and taken to underline the importance of nuance for a better understanding of business engagements in violence prevention and peace-building generally. In Kenya, this means that there have been several outstanding business leaders – described above as 'low ego patriots' – but there were also many other business leaders with more defensive attitudes towards protecting their partisan political or economic interests.

Historical legacies as conflict drivers

A conflict system lens also introduces an important temporal dimension that underlines the continued relevance of Kenya's historical legacy for the structure of its current political economy. The first section of this paper highlighted the influence of historical legacies of British rule and post-independence authoritarianism on Kenya's political economy. Legacy issues remain strong in contemporary political narratives about conflict and peace; yet some give them more importance in explaining conflict dynamics, while others emphasise more proximate and contemporary drivers.[88]

The research for this paper suggests an influence of Kenya's historical legacy and conflict dynamics at several levels. First, the distribution of land rights among particular ethnic communities and resulting conflict drivers can be traced back to colonial times. They relate to the spatial strategies employed by the British colonial administration to govern populations and which were designed to create and support the stability of a strong centralised national state and an export-oriented economy.[89] While these legacies cannot explain any specific decision for Kenya's private sector to engage in peace-building, they may indicate why particular strategies were employed by businesses. For example, the focus of the private sector on disseminating a homogenous national Kenyan identity as part of its peace-building work prior to the 2013 elections (see 'Value-driven motives', above) seems to reveal a preference for a unified, politically centralised and economically liberal Kenya, over further political and economic devolution.[90]

Highlighting the importance of historical legacies is not intended to judge the wisdom of Kenya's economic orientation – be they related to 'limited' or 'open' access economic orders. These orientations are neither necessarily negative (or positive), nor 'unusual' orders of developing markets. However, what they indicate is a paradox for violence prevention and peace-building more broadly. Several issues behind conflict dynamics in Kenya have been shaped by the very pillars holding up Kenya's economy and framing the overall operating environment of business in Kenya today. On the one end of the spectrum, businesses associated with Kenya's export sector inherit some of the legacies from colonial times described above; on the other end, 'limited' access orders and 'tenderpreneurship' have fostered exclusion and centralised governance which in themselves are conflict drivers. Thus, despite some business leaders developing a strong interest in violence prevention post-2007, business in both the export sector or associated with patronage economies inadvertently perpetuate conflict dynamics because their respective economic fundamentals are shaping conflict dynamics.

This paradox underlines the value of a broader perspective on business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building. While a narrow view would

> *describe the post-election violence in Kenya merely as sporadic events attributable only to the 2007 electoral process [a broader] view would describe the violence as a climax of cumulative historical factors or […] as a volcano that had long been waiting to erupt.*[91]

Business engagment in violence prevention and peace-building rests on the understanding of the interplay of issues, relationships and systems as drivers of conflict, and therefore requires more nuanced analysis about how business behaviour or fundamentals shape conflict risks.

Conclusion

The analysis of this article about the role of Kenya's business community in violence prevention between 2007 and 2013 concludes with several overarching findings. First, Kenya is a powerful story about how business can play a positive role in violence prevention when adopting a lens that focuses on the prevention of *episodes* of violence and on business leaders as a lever for change. However, this role was highly personalised and depended on strong relationships of business leaders across sectors. These relationships enabled a handful of individuals to play discrete facilitation roles and exert political leverage for the prevention of violence. The case study therefore confirms Kenya's 'success story' within the broader business and peace literature; but it also adds to the existing understanding by emphasising key elements enabling such positive roles:

(1) The shock generated by the 2007–2008 violence, which prompted some business leaders to engage in facilitation roles and subsequent peace-building roles, motivated by ethical and moral commitments to further peace in times of violence;

(2) Hard-nosed business interests to prevent future economic losses, especially prior to the 2013 elections; and
(3) The nature of business and politics to work hand in hand in Kenya, which enabled some business leaders to influence political factions holding the levers of violence based on the factions' interest in maintaining good relations with the business sector.

A second overarching finding is that the application of conflict systems and political economy theory produced a more nuanced view on business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building in Kenya. The article contrasts the enthusiasm in the business and peace literature about proactive and positive roles of business leaders in violence prevention and peace-building with a greater awareness about the limits of such enthusiasm. The analysis illustrated the systemic obstacles and limits for the agency of particular individuals or actors to fully unfold their support of violence prevention and peace-building. The article described these obstacles and limits along three lines of inquiry.

- In the face of Kenya's many conflict risks and vulnerabilities, considering business leaders as the 'preventer of last resort' when all other local or international actors have failed places unrealistic expectation on one particular set of actors. Given the scale of Kenya's conflict systems, no actor on its own can prevent violence or build peace. A more constructive engagement of business in violence prevention and peace-building may therefore focus on the comparative advantage of business in terms of its ability to influence political leaders, entry-points for informal dialogue to diffuse crises, and capital to support peace-building initiatives. Such roles become even more relevant when business leaders are part of a broader coalition of actors aligned to prevent violence and build peace.
- Business leaders need to navigate between their partisan business interest in 'limited' or 'open' access economic orders, and the degree of entrenchment in existing political orders they consider necessary to achieve their objectives to remain in business, or to have access to new opportunities. This balance between business and politics defines the potential and limits of proactive roles of business in violence prevention and peace-building. On the one hand, this balance defines the ability and legitimacy of business actors to act as honest brokers (because they are perceived not to be too deeply entrenched in politics); and on the other hand, it defines the degree and depth of relationships with political factions (because these relationships are at the heart of exerting leverage to prevent violence and build peace). The inherent political sensitivities involved in managing this balance may explain why businesses tend to favour discrete ways of engaging in violence prevention and peace-building.
- Historical legacies have shaped business fundamentals associated with the export-oriented structure of Kenya's economy, including interests in a centralised state and the protection of private property and land rights. But these factors are also at the heart of conflict dynamics, yet they have not been part of the portfolio of violence prevention or peace-building efforts of Kenya's business community. This point may highlight the limits of business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building that have so far received little attention in the business and peace literature. The article has emphasised how the costs of violence in Kenya *demanded* action from the private sector to engage in peace-building after the 2007–2008 crisis because core bottom-line interests were at stake. Yet the same rationale may also

apply in the other direction: if peace-building was to entail more consequentially addressing issues of land rights, the distribution of economic benefits and corruption, it would affect core business fundamentals and may trigger responses *against* peace-building because core partisan interests are at stake. Hence, when looking at business engagement in conflict prevention and peace-building from a conflict systems and political economy perspective, the following question may stand out: what is the *threshold* that must be crossed in terms of cost/benefit or risk/opportunity calculations for businesses to engage *in* – or in fact *against* – violence prevention and peace-building. This point harks back to the notion that successful conflict prevention and peace-building initiatives 'begin by engaging parties on the basis of their partisan interests'.[92]

The findings of this case study illustrate how a focus on conflict systems, political economy and different types of motivation offers novel ways to assess the opportunities and limits of business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building. Such a focus helps to identify the potential niches of, and moments when, business leaders *can* make a difference, but also points to the circumstances when the expectations placed on business or specific corporate leaders may simply be unrealistic. A more holistic approach may therefore act like a heuristic device that adds much needed pragmatism to the assessment of business engagement in violence prevention and peace-building. In the case of Kenya, this article showed the important 'success story' of business in violence prevention and peace-building with respect to the prevention of violent *episodes*; but it also showed that such engagement has limits, especially if it were to involve transforming some of the fundamentals underlying to Kenya's conflict systems and political economy.

Notes

1. For an overview see Ganson and Wennmann, *Business and Conflict in Fragile States* (Chapters 1 and 2); Miklian, *Mapping Business-Peace Interactions*; Ganson, 'Business and Peace'; Tripathi and Gunduz, *A Role for the Private Sector in Peace Processes*; Nelson, *The Business of Peace*; Porter Peschka, *The Role of the Private Sector in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States;* Ruggie, *Just Business*; Fort, *Diplomat in the Corner Office*.
2. *The Economist*, 'Risky Returns'.
3. Ganson and Wennmann, *Business and Conflict in Fragile States*, 22, 120–121.
4. OECD, *States of Fragility*; see United Nations and World Bank, *Pathways for Peace*.
5. For a review of broader trends in peace-building see Chetail and Jütersonke, 'Peace-building'. This paper recognises the multiplicity of understandings of what peace-building is and means to different constituencies. The paper is guided in its understanding of peace-building by the conceptualisation of the *White Paper on Peace-building:* 'The use of dialogue, trust-building, and consensus-seeking processes to resolve or manage conflict through non-violent means' and the premise that the mitigation and prevention of conflict and violence occurs as close as possible to the sources of conflict and violence. See Geneva Peace-building Platform, *White Paper on Peace-building*, 3.
6. Wachira, *Citizens in Action*.
7. See for instance Graafland and Mazereeuw-van der Duijn Schouten, 'Motives for Corporate Social Responsibility'.
8. Lederach, *Building Peace*.
9. For reviews and the main trends in business and peace literature see Miklian, *Mapping Business-Peace Interactions*; Ganson, 'Business and Peace'; Porter Peschka, *The Role of the Private Sector in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States*.

10. Ganson and Wenmann, *Buiness and Conflict in Fragile States*, 206–207.
11. For information about the project 'The Business Community as a Peace-building Actor', see http://tinyurl.com/mou5dgh [Accessed 3 November 2017]. Due to the sensitive nature associated with the study of conflict and violence in Kenya, we do not identify our informants by name in this article. However, we offer a description of their professional positions to give the reader a sense of their respective roles in prevention.
12. The Geneva Peace-building Platform is a network and knowledge hub that connects the critical mass of peace-building actors, resources and expertise in Geneva and worldwide. It has over 4,000 network members and is led by one of the co-authors, Achim Wennmann. See http://www.gpplatform.ch [Accessed 3 November 2017].
13. Specifically, these interviews were based on a set of three 'lead' questions. Interviewees were asked to (a) account for the variety of roles business actors were playing in conflict and peace at the time of the 2007 and 2013 elections, both positive and negative; (b) document the successes but also limitations of business as a peace-building actor; and (c) examine lessons that can be drawn from developments post-2013 about the perceptions, motivations and incentives that help explain the roles businesses do and do not assume in current conflict and peace dynamics in Kenya. After posing these 'lead' questions, more specific prompts were then offered to expand on the information provided.
14. Kenya Red Cross, *Annual Report 2008*, 18.
15. Kitabi, 'The Impact of Election (2007/2008)'.
16. See for instance, the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Tribal Clashes in Kenya related to government driven violence during the elections of 1992 and 1997. Source available at: https://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/5080176 [Accessed 3 November 2017].
17. Kagwanga, 'Courting Genocide', 332–334; International Crisis Group, *Kenya in Crisis*, 4.
18. Gutiérrez-Romero, 'To What Extent Did Ethnicity', 1.
19. OECD, *States of Fragility*, 45.
20. Mueller, 'Government and Opposition in Kenya', 200.
21. OECD, *States of Fragility*, 46.
22. Omenya and Lubaale, *Understanding the Tipping Point of Urban Conflict*; Sahle, 'Fanon and Geographies'; Institute for Security Studies, *Polticial Violence in Kenya*, 2.
23. Human Rights Watch, *Ballots to Bullets*; Sihanya, 'Constitutional Implementation in Kenya, 2010–2015'.
24. Kanogo, *Dedan Kimathi*, 8.
25. Materu, *The Post-Election Violence in Kenya*, 17; see also Füredi, *Colonial Wars and the Politics*, 119–121; Holtzman, *In a Cup of Tea*; and Jedwah et al. 'History, Path Dependence and Development'.
26. Mueller, 'Government and Opposition in Kenya'; Maxon and Ofcansky, *Historical Dictionary of Kenya*; Kagwanga, 'Courting Genocide', 384.
27. Deloitte & Touche, *Kenya Econmic Outlook 2016*, 15.
28. World Bank, *Kenya Economic Update*, 6–7.
29. Ibid., 14–16.
30. *The Economist*, 'Rankings Overview', 4 June 2016. Available at https://tinyurl.com/k8fbkwl [Accessed 3 November 2017]; see also Bigsten and Moene, 'Growth and Rent Dissipation'; D'Arcy and Cornell, 'Devolution and Corruption in Kenya'.
31. Nsehe, 'Corruption and "Tenderpreneurs"'.
32. Ibid.
33. For an explanation about how no trust societies and clannism emerged, see Ekeh, 'Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa'.
34. North et al., 'Limited Access Orders in the Developing World'.
35. Wennmann, 'Chair's Summary'.
36. See http://www.vision2030.go.ke/about-vision-2030 [Accessed 3 November 2017].
37. For the historical origin of the entwined nature of business and politics in Africa, see Ekeh, 'Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa'.
38. See Kimani, 'East Africa Feels Blows of KENYA CRISIS'; and/or Fratta, 'Post-Electoral Violence in Kenya'.

39. Interview with Kenyan business figure, 27 February 2017.
40. Interview with Kenyan business figure, 27 February 2017, civil society representative, 15 February 2017, and member of an international organisation working in Kenya, 6 March 2017.
41. Wachira, *Citizens in Action*, 12.
42. Ibid., 18.
43. This interpretation of the role of business in prevention has been corroborated by several key informants with first first-hand experience in the mitigation of the 2007–2008 crisis.
44. Interview with Kenyan business figure, 27 February 2017.
45. Ibid.
46. Owuor and Wisor, *The Role of Kenya's Private Sector.*
47. Ibid.
48. Gakunju, *Effect of Media on Peace-building in Kenya.*
49. Goldstein and Rotich, *Digitally Networked Technology*; Owuor and Wisor, *The Role of Kenya's Private Sector.*
50. Goldstein and Rotich, *Digitally Networked Technology*.
51. Owuor and Wisor, *The Role of Kenya's Private Sector.*
52. This article does not suggest that private sector efforts here were the only factor at play. Indeed, one key development prior to the 2013 elections was the formation of an alliance between key political figures in Kenya (specifically Deputy Prime Minister Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta and former Cabinet Minister William Samoei Ruto) who aligned largely in reaction to the filing of charges by the International Criminal Court against those involved on *both sides* of the earlier electoral violence. This alliance worked to reduce tensions notably in 2013. However, the interviews conducted for this research affirmed that private sector efforts were important in preventing violence in key areas of the country.
53. Wennmann, 'Chair's Summary'.
54. Maignan and Ralston, 'Corporate Social Responsibility'.
55. Ibid.
56. Zahra, 'A Typology of Social Entreprenurs'; Kolk and Lenfant, 'Hybrid Business Models for Peace and Reconciliation'.
57. Smurthwait, 'The Purpose of the Corporation'.
58. Allebas, *The Responsibility to Protect*; Trevino, 'Ethical Decision Making in Organizations'.
59. Interview with Kenyan business figure, 27 February 2017.
60. See http://www.vision2030.go.ke [Accessed 3 November 2017].
61. Guibert and Perez-Quiros, 'Measuring the Economic Cost'.
62. World Bank, *Kenya Economic Update.*
63. de Vidovgrad, 'What Role of the Private Sector'.
64. Wachira, *Citizens in Action.*
65. Interviews with civil society representative and member of an international organisation working in Kenya during the time of the electoral violence, 13 March 2017 and 8 March 2017.
66. Rettberg, 'Business-led Peace-building in Colombia'.
67. Interview with Kenyan business figure, 27 February 2017.
68. Interviews with Kenyan business figure and civil society representative, 27 February 2017 and 6 March 2017.
69. Owuor and Wisor, *The Role of Kenya's Private Sector.*
70. Ibid.
71. Interviews with members of international organisations, 8 March 2017 and 12 March 2017.
72. Owuor and Wisor, *The Role of Kenya's Private Sector.*
73. Ganson and Wennmann, *Business and Conflict in Fragile States*, 207.
74. De Coning, 'Understanding Peace-building as Essentially Local'; OECD, *Applications of Complexity Science for Public Policy*; Anderson and Woodrow, *Rising from the Ashes.*
75. OECD, *States of Fragility*.
76. Smurthwait, 'The Purpose of the Corporation'.
77. Ganson and Wennmann, *Business and Conflict in Fragile States*, 206–207.

78. See Slutkin, 'Violence is a Contagious Disease'; Austin and Jütersonke, 'Understanding the Grammar of the City'.
79. Lederach and Maiese, 'Conflict Transformation'; Miall, 'Conflict Transformation'.
80. See for example the risk assessments provided by Euler Hermes, 'Kenya'; and United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 'Overseas Business Risk'.
81. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *OCHA and Slow-Onset Emergencies*, 3.
82. Justino et al., 'Micro-Level Dynamics of Conflict'.
83. Wennmann, 'Chair's Summary'.
84. Ibid.
85. Ibid.
86. Interview with youth civil society leader, 6 March 2017.
87. Interview with legal figure in Kenya, 13 March 2017.
88. Interviews with Kenyan business figure and a civil society representative, 27 February 2017 and 6 March 2017.
89. Sahle, 'Fanon and Geographies', 54.
90. This relationship between the nature of states and economies is well developed in the academic literature. See Rasler and Thompson, *War and State Making*; Tilly, 'War Making and State Making'.
91. Materu, *The Post-Election Violence in Kenya*, 16.
92. Ganson and Wennmann, *Business and Conflict in Fragile States*, 184.

Acknowledgements

Research for this article was supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York under grant B 9064 on the role of business in peace-building. The statements made and views expressed are solely the responsibility of the authors.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes on contributors

Jonathan Luke Austin is lead researcher for the Violence Prevention Initiative, Geneva, and Postdoctoral Fellow at the Centre on Conflict, Development and Peace-building, Graduate Institute, Geneva. His work has been published in the *European Journal of International Relations*, *International Political Sociology*, *Review of International Studies*, *Security Dialogue*, and beyond.

Achim Wennmann is senior researcher at the Centre on Conflict, Development and Peace-building of the Graduate Institute in Geneva, and Executive Coordinator of the Geneva Peace-building Platform. His recent books are *Business and Conflict in Fragile States: The Case for Pragmatic Solutions* (IISS/Routledge, 2016, with Brian Ganson) and *The Political Economy of Peacemaking* (Routledge, 2011).

References

Allebas, Tessa, 2015. *The Responsibility to Protect and the Private Sector*. The Hague Institute for Global Justice, The Hague.
Anderson, Mary B. and Peter Woodrow, 1998. *Rising from the Ashes*. Lynne Rienner, Boulder, CO.
Apkpedonu, Trixie, Ben Lumsdaine and Aminata Sow, 2013. 'Keeping the Peace: Lessons Learned from Preventive Action Towards Kenya's 2013 Elections'. Paper, no. 10. Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, Geneva.

Austin, Jonathan L. and Oliver Jütersonke, 2016. 'Understanding the Grammar of the City: Urban Safety and Peacebuilding Practice through a Semiotic Lens'. Paper, no. 14. Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, Geneva.
Berman, Bruce and John Lonsadle, 1992. *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa*. Ohio University Press, Athens.
Bigsten, Arne and Karl O. Moene, 1996. 'Growth and Rent Dissipation: The Case of Kenya'. *Journal of African Affairs* 5(2), 177–198.
Chetail, Vincent and Oliver Jütersonke, 2015. 'Peacebuilding: A Review of the Academic Literature'. White Paper Series, no. 13. Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, Geneva.
D'Arcy, Michelle and Agnes Cornell, 2016. 'Devolution and Corruption in Kenya: Everyone's Turn to Eat?'. *African Affairs* 115(459), 246–273.
De Coning, Cedric, 2013. 'Understanding Peacebuilding as Essentially Local'. *Stability* 2(1), 1–6.
de Vidovgrad, Pilar R., 2015. 'What Role of the Private Sector in the Prevention of Election Violence? The Case of Kenya'. Paper, no. 13. Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, Geneva.
Deloitte & Touche, 2016. *Kenya Econmic Outlook 2016: The Story Behind the Numbers*. Deloitte & Touche, Nairobi.
The Economist, 2000. 'Risky Returns: Business in Difficult Places', 20 May.
Ekeh, Peter P., 1975. 'Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement'. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 17(1), 91–112.
Euler Hermes Economic Research, 2017. 'Kenya: Large Twin Deficits but Strong GDP Growth Trajectory'. Avaialble at: http://www.eulerhermes.com/economic-research/country-reports/Pages/Kenya.aspx [Accessed 3 November 2017].
Fort, Timothy L., 2007. *Business, Integrity, and Peace*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Fort, Timothy L., 2015. *Diplomat in the Corner Office*. Stanford University Press, Palo Alto, CA.
Fratta, Moira, 2010. 'Post-electoral Violence in Kenya: More than 1000 People Killed and 300,000 Displaced'. Instituto de Estudios sobre Conflictos y Accion Humanitaria, 11 May. Available at: https://goo.gl/kFGQs4 [Accessed 3 November 2017].
Füredi, Frank, 1994. *Colonial Wars and the Politics of Third World Nationalism*. IB Tauris, London.
Gakunju, Lulu M., 2017. *Effect of Media on Peacebuilding in Kenya: A Case of the 2007/8 PEV*. Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Oslo.
Ganson, Brian, 2011. 'Business and Conflict Prevention: Towards a Framework for Action'. Paper, no. 2. Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, Geneva.
Ganson, Brian, 2017. 'Business and Peace: A Need for New Questions and Systems Perspectives'. Africa Centre for Dispute Settlement Working Paper, no. 2017/1. University of Stellenbosch, Cape Town.
Ganson, Brian and Achim Wennmann, 2016. *Business and Conflict in Fragile States: The Case for Pragmatic Solutions*. Routledge for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London.
Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, 2015. *White Paper on Peacebuilding*. Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, Geneva.
Goldstein, Joshua and Juliana Rotich, 2008. *Digitally Networked Technology in Kenya's 2007–2008 Post-Election Crisis*. The Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Cambridge.
Graafland, Johan J. and Corie Mazereeuw-van der Duijn Schouten, 2012. 'Motives for Corporate Social Responsibility'. *De Economist* 160, 377–396.
Guibert, Laura and Gabriel Perez-Quiros, 2012. 'Measuring the Economic Cost of the 2007/08 Post-Election Violence in Kenya'. Available at: https://editorialexpress.com/cgi-bin/conference/download.cgi?db_name=CSAE2013&paper_id=75 [Accessed 3 November 2017].
Gutiérrez-Romero, Roxana, 2013. 'To What Extent Did Ethnicity and Economic Issues Matter in the 2007 Disputed Kenyan Elections?'. *Development Policy Review* 31(3), 291–320.
Holtzman, Jon D., 2003. 'In a Cup of Tea: Commodities and History Among Samburu Pastoralists in Northern Kenya'. *American Ethnologist* 30(1), 136–155.
Human Rights Watch, 2008. *Ballots to Bullets: Organized Political Violence and Kenya's Crisis of Governance*. Human Rights Watch, London.
International Crisis Group, 2008. 'Kenya in Crisis'. Africa Report N°137. International Crisis Group, London.
Institute for Security Studies, 2009. *Polticial Violence in Kenya*. Institute for Security Studies, Nairobi.

Jedwah, Remi, Edward Kerby and Alexander Moradi, 2017. 'History, Path Dependence and Development: Evidence from Colonial Railways, Settlers and Cities in Kenya'. *The Economic Journal* 127(603), 1467–1494.

Justino, Patricia, Tilman Bruck and Philip Verwimp, 2013. 'Micro-Level Dynamics of Conflict, Violence, and Development: A New Analytical Framework'. In *A Micro-Level Perspective on the Dynamics of Conflict, Violence and Development*, eds. P. Justino, T. Bruck and P. Verwimp. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 3–29.

Kagwanga, Peter, 2009. 'Courting Genocide: Populism, Ethno-nationalism and the Informalisation of Violence in Kenya's 2008 Post-election Crisis'. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 27(3), 365–387.

Kanogo, Thabita N., 1992. *Dedan Kimathi: A Biography* [Makers of Kenya's History]. East African Educational Publishers, Nairobi.

Kenya Red Cross, 2008. *Annual Report 2008*. Kenya Red Cross, Nairobi.

Kimani, Mary, 2018. 'East Africa feels blows of Kenyan crisis'. *Africa Renewal*, April. Available at: http://www.un.org/africarenewal/node/171 [Accessed 3 November 2017].

Kitabi, Kiti R.M.K., 2012. 'The Impact of Election (2007/2008) Violence on Kenya's Economy: Lessons Learned?'. Available at: https://profiles.uonbi.ac.ke/regina_kitiabi/publications/impact-election-20072008-violence-kenyas-economylessons-learned [Accessed 3 November 2017].

Kobrin, S.J., 2004. 'Oil and Politics: Talisman Energis and Sudan'. *NYU Journal of Law and Politics* 36(2–3), 425–456.

Kolk, Ans and François Lenfant, 2016. 'Hybrid Business Models for Peace and Reconciliation'. *Business Horizons* 59, 503–524.

Lederach, John P., 1997. *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. United States Institute of Peace, Washington, DC.

Lederach, John P. and M. Maiese, 2009. 'Conflict Transformation: A Circular Journey with a Purpose'. *New Routes* 14, 7–10.

Maignan, Isabel and David A. Ralston, 2002. 'Corporate Social Responsibility in Europe and the US: Insights from Businesses'. *Self-Presentations*'. *Journal of International Business Studies* 33(3), 497–514.

Materu, Sosteness F., 2015. *The Post-Election Violence in Kenya*. Springer, London.

Maxon, Robert M. and Thomas P. Ofcansky, 2000. *Historical Dictionary of Kenya*. Scarecrow Press, New York.

Miall, Hugh, 2001. 'Conflict Transformation: A Multi-Dimensional Task'. In *Transforming Ethnopolitical Conflict: The Berghof Handbook*, eds. Alex Austin, Martina Fischer and Norbert Ropers. VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Berlin, 67–90.

Miklian, Jason, 2016. *Mapping Business-Peace Interactions: Five Assertions for How Businesses Create Peace*. Peace Research Institute, Oslo.

Mueller, Susanne D., 1984. 'Government and Opposition in Kenya, 1966–9'. *Journal of Modern African Studies* 22(3), 399–427.

Nelson, Jane, 2001. *The Business of Peace: The Private Sector as a Partner in Conflict Prevention and Resolution*. The Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum, International Alert and the Council on Economic Priorities, London.

North, Douglas C., John J. Wallis, Steven B. Webb and Barry R. Weingast, 2007. 'Limited Access Orders in the Developing World: A New Approach to the Problem of Development'. Policy Research Working Paper, no. 4359. World Bank, Washington, DC.

Nsehe, Mfonobong, 2016. 'Corruption and "Tenderpreneurs" Bring Kenya's Economy to its Knees'. *Forbes*, 1 December. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/mfonobongnsehe/2015/12/01/corruption-and-tenderpreneurs-bring-kenyas-economy-to-its-knees/#eea2e5abead1 [Accessed 3 November 2017].

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 2011. *OCHA and Slow-Onset Emergencies*. OCHA, New York.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2008. *Applications of Complexity Science for Public Policy*. OECD, Paris.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2015. *States of Fragility: Meeting Post-2015 Ambitions*. OECD, Paris.

Omenya, Alfred and Grace Lubaale, 2012. *Understanding the Tipping Point of Urban Conflict: Violence, Cities and Poverty Reduction in the Developing World*. University of Manchester Press, Manchester, NH.

Ormsby-Gore, William G.A., 1925. *Report of the East Africa Commission*. His Majesty's Stationery Office, London.

Owuor, Victor O. and S. Wisor, 2014. *The Role of Kenya's Private Sector in Peacebuilding: The Case of the 2013 Election Cycle*. One Earth Future Foundation, Broomfield.

Porter Peschka, Mary, 2011. *The Role of the Private Sector in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States*. World Bank, Washington, DC.

Rasler, Karen A., William R. Thompson, 1989. *War and State Making: The Shaping of the Global Powers*. Unwin Hyman, Boston, MA.

Rettberg, Angelika, 2004. 'Business-led Peacebuilding in Colombia: Fad or Future of a Country in Crisis?.' Crisis States Working Papers, no. 56. London School of Economics, London.

Ruggie, John G., 2013. *Just Business: Multinational Corporations and Human Rights*. W.W. Norton, New York.

Sahle, Eunice N., 2012. 'Fanon and Geographies of Political Violence in the Context of Democracy in Kenya'. *The Black Scholar* 42(3–4), 45–57.

Sihanya, Ben, 2011. 'Constitutional Implementation in Kenya, 2010–2015: Challenges and Prospects'. Occasional Paper, no. 5. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Kenya, Nairobi.

Slutkin, Gary, 2012. 'Violence is a Contagious Disease'. In *Contagion of Violence: Workshop Summary, Part II*, Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. The National Academies Press, Washington, DC, 94–111.

Smurthwait, Marilise, 2008. 'The Purpose of the Corporation'. In *Peace Through Commerce*, ed. Oliver F. Williams. Notre Dame University Press, Notre Dame, 119–132.

Tilly, Charles, 1985. 'War Making and State Making as Organized Crime'. In *Bringing the State Back In*, eds. Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemever and Theda Skocpol. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 169–191.

Trevino, Linda K., 1986. 'Ethical Decision Making in Organizations: A Person-Situation Interactionist Model'. *Academy of Management Review* 11(3), 601–617.

Tripathi, Salil and Canan Gunduz, 2008. *A Role for the Private Sector in Peace Processes? Examples and Implications for Third-party Mediation*. Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Geneva.

United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2017. 'Overseas Business Risk – Kenya'. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/overseas-business-risk-kenya/overseas-business-risk-kenya [Accessed 3 November 2017].

United Nations and World Bank, 2017. *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict – Main Messages and Emerging Policy Directions*. World Bank, Washington, DC.

Wachira, George, 2010. *Citizens in Action: Making Peace in the Post-Election Crisis in Kenya*. NPI-Africa, Nairobi.

Wennmann, Achim, 2017. 'Chair's Summary: Business Engagement to Prevent Election Violence in Kenya'. Nairobi, 6 March. Available at: http://graduateinstitute.ch/files/live/sites/iheid/files/sites/ccdp/shared/Docs/Projects/Chair's%20summary.pdf [Accessed 3 November 2017].

World Bank, 2016. *Kenya Economic Update: kazi ni kazi – Informal Should Not Be*. World Bank, Nairobi.

Zahra, Shaker A., 2009. 'A Typology of Social Entreprenurs: Motives, Search Processes and Ethical Challenges'. *Journal of Business Venturing* 24, 519–532.