



Governance, Security and Justice

Program Prospectus for 2011-2016

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List of Acronyms

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| CAD | Canadian Dollar |
| DFAIT | Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Canada) |
| DFID | Department for International Development |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| ESA | Eastern and Southern Africa |
| FLACSO | Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences |
| GSJ | Governance, Security and Justice |
| HSRC | Human Sciences Research Council (South Africa) |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technologies |
| ICT4D | Information and Communication Technologies for Development |
| LAC | Latin America and the Caribbean |
| LAU | Lebanese American University |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goals |
| MENA | Middle East and North Africa |
| NGOs | Nongovernmental Organizations |
| Norad | Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OECD-DAC | Development Assistance Committee |
| PCD | Peace, Conflict and Development |
| SEP | Social and Economic Policy |
| SSA | Social Scientists Association |
| START | Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (Canada) |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| WRC | Women's Rights and Citizenship |

1. Executive Summary

Global attention is increasingly concentrated on the challenges experienced by failed and fragile states, including their inability to meet the Millennium Development Goals. In addition to deaths, injuries, and destroyed infrastructure, armed violence and insecurity also increases the costs of doing business, scares investors, forces skilled labour overseas and reduces overall economic opportunity. For many poor people, the state itself is the perpetrator of insecurity, making it hard for ordinary citizens to obtain justice and demand accountability. Faced with weak, unresponsive, or repressive formal authorities, citizens may turn to alternative sources of governance, security and justice, including gangs, militias, and informal institutions of governance and law. These informal mechanisms can provide benefits in the absence of effective states; they can also undermine state legitimacy and reproduce violence and exclusion.

Past state-building interventions in fragile situations have had disappointing results, in large part because they have paid insufficient attention to the importance of both informal institutions and state-society dynamics in these contexts. Too often the results have been the strengthening of unaccountable institutions that lack broad-based legitimacy among populations. Even in otherwise democratic states, citizens and communities are marginalized from political processes and continue to face threats to security from multiple sources.

The goal of the GSJ program is to support the creation of policy-relevant knowledge on the conditions for increasing the legitimacy and accountability of public authorities in the areas of governance, security and justice. The program will focus on state-society dynamics, in particular the interactions between state and non-state actors, and between formal and informal institutions. This focus emphasizes the importance and complexity of local dynamics; both the challenges of fragility, and the strategies to overcome them, emanate from patterns of state-society relations. Engaged citizens and communities, and legitimate and accountable public authorities, are both necessary for positive development outcomes.

Employing the IDRC grants-plus model, the program will support context-specific research in complex and challenging environments. We will work with both high-capacity and new researchers to enhance evidence-based policy-making at multiple levels. While the program will devote the majority of its resources to supporting locally-grounded research on state-society interactions in governance, security and justice, it will do so in a way that facilitates our ability to derive analytical insights on issues of importance to both development policy and academic communities. The program will seek opportunities to integrate research recipients into appropriate issue-based networks and meetings to enhance knowledge transfer and cultivate effective collaboration with strategic policy and donor partners.

By the end of the program we expect that our portfolio of research projects will produce insights into the conditions for enhancing the legitimacy and accountability of public authorities, thus informing and advancing evidence-based state-building debates and policy development. We expect our recipients to be better able to identify and exploit research-to-policy linkages, and in certain cases to assume leadership roles in facilitating citizen and community engagement in policy formation.

2. Context and Background

a. Development Challenge and Situational Analysis

Global attention is increasingly concentrated on the challenges experienced by failed and fragile states. These countries, however, are just one end of a spectrum of states struggling to foster order and authority and of citizens seeking security and representation. Important challenges are also faced by otherwise strong and even democratic states in extending their authority into certain communities – whether in geographically isolated areas or inner city slums. These local enclaves can create their own enduring structures of violence, which can be very difficult to overcome. Experience has shown that most donor-supported approaches to state-building have had tremendously disappointing results, in large part because they ignored the importance of informal institutions and state-society interactions, particularly at the local level.

Development contexts where public institutions are weak are prone to violence and conflict, often in a vicious circle and with huge costs. The Geneva Declaration Secretariat estimates the annual global cost of armed violence in non-conflict settings is between 95 and 163 billion dollars, higher than that for conflict itself. Non-conflict armed violence - homicides, kidnappings, extortion, gang violence, trafficking - has significant economic costs. It increases the cost of doing business, scares investors, reduces productivity, forces skilled labour overseas, and reduces overall economic opportunity (Abrahamson 2009). High rates of crime, moreover, divert state resources to law enforcement even though they often fail to promote citizen security.

Indirect deaths from conflicts and deaths from non-conflict violence are increasing, even as the numbers of direct deaths from conflicts are decreasing. Poor countries are disproportionately affected: more than one third of these countries have experienced conflict in the last 20 years, and homicide rates in these countries are three times higher than their middle-income and high income counterparts. Even in cases where states are strong, as in many emerging economies, pockets of violence threaten to undermine development progress. Some middle-income and otherwise stable democratic countries also are experiencing increases in violence due to increasing rates of criminality (Global Burden of Armed Violence Report 2008).

The MDG Gap Task Force identified armed violence as a barrier to MDG achievement, citing factors such as excessive military spending, destroyed health and educational infrastructure, and elite natural resource capture. Moreover, violence and insecurity erode social cohesion and can leave citizens living in perpetual fear of human rights abuses, property loss, and physical harm. For many poor people, the state itself is the perpetrator of insecurity, making it hard for ordinary citizens to obtain justice or demand accountability.

MDGs and Fragility

Situations of fragility are often characterized by ongoing violence and insecurity, a legacy of conflict, weak governance and the inability to deliver the efficient and equitable distribution of public goods. At the 2010 MDG Summit, Justin Lin, Chief Economist and Senior Vice-President of the World Bank, points out that 22 out of 34 countries furthest from achieving the MDGs are conflict-ridden or have recently emerged from turmoil. As a group, these countries lag 40 to 60% behind other low- and middle-income countries in MDG achievement (Ross, 2010).

States may use illegitimate force to protect their interests, or they may allow the use of illegitimate force by non-state actors. In many cases, tacit alliances between states and private armed groups perpetuate economic inequalities, elite resource capture, and a host of related ills. In both West Africa and Latin America, links between armed groups, criminal networks, and elements of the state have led some observers to declare the “criminalization of the state” in these contexts. Insecurity and impunity breed corruption and poor policies, exacerbating existing inequalities and promoting the narrow interests of particular groups (Collier 2009, p.11).

This has been particularly the case in low-income, resource-rich countries. Actors with economic and political influence often circumvent the law to benefit from resource rents and suppress local dissent. Local communities and citizens bear the brunt of the violence that often erupts between competing elites and associated militias. Private companies, both local and multinational, can directly or indirectly influence the nature of state-community conflict in such situations. This influence of private economic actors on local governance warrants further investigation.

When formal institutions are weak or unresponsive, communities may turn to alternative sources of governance, security and justice. As recent studies demonstrate, many people in fragile states rely on non-state forms of security and justice, including gangs, militias, and informal institutions of governance and law (OECD, 2007). Although these informal mechanisms do provide some benefits, they can also further undermine state legitimacy and reproduce violence and exclusion. Marginalized or excluded populations often experience higher levels of insecurity and fewer opportunities to engage meaningfully with public authorities.

Demographic changes, specifically the bulge in the youth population in most of the developing world, are of particular concern. Youth bulges tend to exacerbate situations of unemployment and urbanization, and the recent global economic crisis may be creating a ‘lost generation’ of workers. Such situations leave youth with a perceived and actual lack of future opportunities, which in turn leads to higher tendencies for engagement in violence, either through recruitment to militant groups, organized crime, or indirectly as observers of conflict. Estimates of gang enrollment in Central America, for example, range from 69,000 to as high as 200,000 (Jutersonke et al. 2009). Organized crime can provide a sense of belonging and purpose to groups who have been neglected by society.

Research to Policy

The policy recommendations for the prevention of youth violence developed under the project “Youth Violence and Organized Crime and Public Insecurity in Central America, Mexico and Haiti” were incorporated into the new National Youth Policy Program in Guatemala that was launched by President Álvaro Colom on August 12, 2010, National Youth Day. The IDRC-supported project thus helped to provide a solid foundation for future public investment and programming.

These various issues need to be situated in the context of the risks, benefits and opportunities of an information and networked society, which is becoming pervasive even in fragile states. New forms of violence can arise from the illegitimate uses of technology in areas such as cyber crime, management of personal data, and control over the flow of information or discriminatory social profiling. On the other hand, there are innovative opportunities for citizen mobilization. In an era where mobile devices are accessible to the vast majority, even in poor countries, the nature of citizens’

engagement has been radically modified. Some research shows how new ICT tools have the potential to trigger mobilization and empower people's participation, even in post-conflict contexts such as Liberia (Smyth, Etherton, and Best 2010).

Donors have been very active in programming in fragile and conflict situations, and have increasingly acknowledged key issues of legitimacy and accountability. In a 2009 address, World Bank president Robert Zoellick identified ten key principles of engagement in fragile and conflict-affected states, with (i) building the legitimacy of the state, (ii) providing security, and (iii) building rule of law and legal order, topping the list. Similarly, the OECD's International Network on Conflict and Fragility identifies democratic governance, security and justice as core elements of state legitimacy and accountability in fragile situations.

The state-building research priorities and activities of these major organizations all point to the need to know more about the political and social foundations of state-building; in other words, the negotiations between states and societies that underpin institutions. More specifically, these organizations identify the relationships between state and non-state actors (armed groups, warlords, economic elites) and between formal and informal institutions (shura councils, customary courts, local committees) as areas in need of further investigation and analysis.

Researchers have also increasingly focused on state-society relations as an integral element of state-building. Paul Collier, for example, argues that providing accountability is more difficult than providing security; unlike many other public goods, the state cannot simply provide accountability without citizen participation (Collier, *Development Outreach* 10). Elections are one well-known institution for promoting accountability, but there are many other formal and informal mechanisms. Recent research has indicated that positive citizen engagement outside of electoral processes can lead to broader systematic change, through the establishment of new laws, processes and cultures of accountability (Benequista, Gaventa and Barrett 2010). Over the last decade, efforts to develop ICT tools and systems to increase the level of accountability, transparency and openness of public services and authorities on the day-to-day administration of the state and the management of public goods is another example of social accountability, particularly in Latin American countries.

Legitimacy is another factor receiving attention from international peace and state-building experts as more and more observers acknowledge the importance of local buy-in. Although hard to measure, legitimacy refers to generalized, normative support for a particular political or social order, institution, or actor, one that is grounded in *consent* rather than in coercion (Maley 2008). Importantly, both informal and formal authorities can benefit from legitimacy, and the same is true of democratic and non-democratic institutions. Thus authoritarian warlords or community gangs may be considered legitimate by some, while democratic authorities are viewed by citizens as corrupt and illegitimate.

b. About the Program

The GSJ program will support the creation of policy-relevant knowledge on the conditions for increasing the legitimacy and accountability of public authorities in the areas of governance, security and justice. The program will build on the previous work of three program initiatives: PCD, WRC, and ICT4D.

The program will support policy-relevant research in fragile, democratizing or transition states that investigates the characteristics and impact of interactions between social forces - such as citizens, non-state institutions, civil society and faith-based organizations - and state actors, such as public institutions, security forces, and justice systems. It will also address how citizens make use of available resources, including emergent technologies, to strengthen their own organization and communication capabilities for interaction with both state and non-state actors.

Core programming themes

The program will focus on state-society interactions along three core programming dimensions: governance, security and justice. These have been prioritized based on past programming experience, regional consultations, and reviews of the relevant literature.

Governance arrangements, such as political settlements, elite bargains, and peace agreements establish the “rules of the game” by which power is exercised; security and justice are simultaneously survival functions for the state, and expected functions demanded by citizens. For example, a state needs to protect itself from both internal and external threats in order to survive, but it also has an obligation to protect its citizens, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized. Achieving equilibrium between strength and accountability in security provision is important in enhancing state legitimacy and garnering popular consent. Establishing the rule of law to foster order and authority within society needs to be balanced with the effective provision of access to justice, whereby the state is held accountable by citizens for its own compliance with the law (DFID Emerging Policy Paper June 2009).

These issues need to be explored within a context of co-existing formal and informal institutions. While there is no clear dividing line between them, this typology has often been used to differentiate between those institutions that have an explicit organizational structure based on a written foundation of codified rules and procedures and those that do not. ‘Informality’ should not be equated with only the traditional or customary; more broadly, it refers to “socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated and enforced outside official sanctioned channels” (Helmke and Levitsky 2004). In many situations, informal institutions, in the form of practices or rules, may permeate formal institutions (e.g. clientelism in Latin American politics). Informal institutions can complement and enhance the effectiveness of formal institutions, or they can compete when formal rules and procedures are not systematically enforced. When formal institutions are ineffective, due to weak capacity, informal institutions may act as substitutes and provide public goods and services where formal institutions fall short (ibid. p. 728-9).

Governance: Two aspects of governance are of particular interest for the program: the nature of political competition and participation, and checks and balances on state authority.

Political processes that include most major political forces and are open to broad participation often boost state legitimacy. During periods of transition from conflict to peace or from authoritarianism to democracy, increased space for political deliberation can often enhance the transitional process and reduce spoiler activity (Papagianni 2008, 2009; Samuels 2009). Better popular participation also helps legitimate the state in the eyes of its citizens (OECD 2008). Exclusionary politics, by contrast, are associated with more violence and poorer development outcomes (Stewart 2008).

Public opinion and security

IDRC has recently developed a project in the Occupied Palestinian Territories that will systematically consult with Palestinian citizens through surveys to measure public perceptions of successes and failures of ongoing security sector reform processes. Research findings will feed into the efforts of the Fayyad government to reform the Palestinian Security Forces.

Checks and balances create accountable governance procedures that enhance political stability. Citizens are able to scrutinize public authorities and influence the way in which states respond to their demands. They may also have greater capacity to influence public opinion, within countries and abroad, by having access to new formats of massive communication. When these checks and balances are absent or ineffective, however, authorities often resort to violence, corruption or criminality.

New research being launched by the WRC program will become an important part of the governance theme. The “Democratic Governance, Women’s Rights and Gender Equality Initiative” will support new research on the political participation of marginalized women (e.g. ethnic minority, indigenous and young women), the role of political parties in advancing women’s political participation, and the opportunities and challenges for gender equality in transitional and post-conflict situations.

Issues for exploration during the prospectus period:

- What are the implications of different kinds of political settlements for the legitimacy and accountability of public authorities? Informal governance institutions can be important political actors; under what conditions do they contribute to the sustainability of political settlements and when do they undermine them? What is the impact of the integration of non-state armed groups in political settlements? What is the influence of private sector actors on the legitimacy and accountability of public authorities?
- Under what conditions will greater citizen engagement lead to enhanced state responsiveness and accountability? How can ICT-enabled openness initiatives help those processes?

Security: Security from the threat and reality of violence is critical to people in developing countries; insecurity hinders economic, social, and political development. Experts increasingly acknowledge the complex relationships between state security forces, private militias, and citizens, and understand that security is not purely a state concern. Citizen security is broadly accepted as a critical field for investigation, and many analysts find causal links between public and private insecurities. Public

perceptions of security issues, particularly in situations of fragility, can provide important inputs for policy-makers facing both limited resources and capacity to address a host of public investment needs.

Although states provide public security in theory, many developing country institutions are unable or unwilling to do so. Moreover, state responses to violence may inadvertently increase public insecurity by strengthening unaccountable state and non-state forces. As a result, individuals often turn to private security providers such as gangs, extended families, tribes, or militias. Both state and non-state security forces should be held accountable to society, especially with respect to marginalized groups such as women, indigenous groups, and youth. These groups often bear the highest burden of violence and insecurity, and women and girls face particularly unique challenges. As a result, effective security policies should be designed to address the specific gender dimensions of insecurity.

Issues for exploration during the prospectus period:

- What influences the relationship between state and non-state actors in situations where a high level of criminality co-exists with democratic governance? How can incentives be framed to develop appropriate policies that promote citizen security and protect livelihoods?
- In the face of chronic violence and unresponsive state institutions, what formal and informal strategies do citizens and communities use to increase their security? What are the implications for violence reduction? How does the pluralization of security actors impact citizen efforts to hold them accountable, and how does it impact on building more effective and accountable police forces? What is the role of emerging technological security policies in reducing or reshaping this ability?
- How do different state responses to organized violence - linked to crime, drugs, and trafficking - impact the legitimacy and accountability of public authorities, and what are the policy implications? What impact are state responses such as new anti-gang legislation and rehabilitation programs having on youth violence reduction?

Justice: Universal access to the law is fundamental to broad social participation and, for marginalized groups, confers personhood in the eyes of society at large. More importantly, universal access to justice allows citizens - including the powerless and marginalized - to contest state impunity and violations of rights. Impunity is the exemption from accountability, penalty, punishment, or legal sanctions for perpetrators of illegal acts; it thrives in the absence of rule of law, and threatens democracy and accountability.

In the developing world, however, many citizens are subject to customary and informal laws, rather than the formal justice system. In some cases, these laws and practices do not grant citizens effective access to crucial rights and resources.

Transitional justice

Transitional justice is a response to systematic or widespread violations of human rights. It seeks recognition for victims and to promote possibilities for peace, reconciliation and democracy. Transitional justice is not a special form of justice but justice adapted to societies transforming themselves after a period of pervasive human rights abuse. In some cases, these transformations happen suddenly; in others, they may take place over many decades. (www.ictj.org)

In post-conflict contexts, transitional justice is increasingly seen as an important component of recovery and reconciliation. Yet the elite-dominated nature of transitional justice processes in many countries means that these mechanisms are often ineffective in delivering justice to grassroots communities. Similarly, gender-blind transitional justice mechanisms and processes are perceived as irrelevant or illegitimate by female victims of conflict and sexual violence.

Issues for exploration during the prospectus period:

- In what ways do citizens seek to challenge state and private impunity on issues such as discrimination and sexual violence? How can ICT-enabled access to justice initiatives improve conditions for marginalized groups? Under what conditions do accountability initiatives have positive or negative outcomes for citizens?
- What are the implications of competition/collaboration between formal and informal courts for access to justice and what are the implications for the rights of citizens?
- What impact does transitional justice have on state legitimacy and accountability? What are the implications for democratic citizenship?

3. Approach to Programming

a. Program Goal

The goal of the GSJ program is to support the creation of policy-relevant knowledge on the conditions for increasing the legitimacy and accountability of public authorities in the areas of governance, security and justice. The program aims to contribute to global debates on governance and strategic interventions in fragile and conflict affected situations. Given some of the risks inherent in the subject area, including both researcher safety and state and donor unresponsiveness to findings, the program will be selective in the themes pursued in particular countries and will seek multiple types of engagement for policy influence.

b. Program Outcomes

The program will seek to achieve outcomes in three areas: (i) generating knowledge on governance, security, and justice; (ii) strengthening the capacity of research recipients; and (iii) building opportunities for research policy influence. Identifying and implementing these will help us contribute to policy-relevant knowledge on the nature, quality, and impact of state-society interactions on developing-world problems of governance, security, and justice.

Our main interlocutors will be our recipients, including high and low capacity research institutions and networks. Sectoral experts and locally-based civil society organizations will improve the program's contextual analysis and regional baselines. To increase the policy relevance of our recipients' research, the GSJ team and recipients will engage with policy actors at all levels. Where appropriate, we may work with governments to promote policy uptake. Additionally, the program will focus on strategic opportunities for policy influence by engaging with international donors, regional organizations, and the

Canadian policy community. In some cases, GSJ collaboration with other IDRC initiatives will help disseminate research findings and expand our reach.

c. Program Strategy and Approach

Programming Contexts: The program will be examining issues in conflict-affected and fragile situations, and countries in transition. Regional baseline assessments will be compiled early in the program cycle to highlight region-specific priorities in the three core thematic areas, to track relevant research by donors and local researchers, and to identify potential windows of opportunity for policy influence (local, national and regional levels). These assessments will seek to identify both research champions and change champions with whom the program could establish partnerships.

Methodologies: GSJ's focus on state-society interactions and commitment to context-specific research means that the program will prioritize case studies and cross-case comparisons. Richly detailed studies are best suited to probing the local dynamics of general variables and processes. They are also the best tools for developing useful policy recommendations for specific local, national or regional contexts. When possible, our projects will be comparative in nature, yielding stronger inferences and more valid conclusions. The comparisons will be carried out at national, regional, and cross-regional levels. Controlled case comparisons, moreover, are the most appropriate way of developing strong causal inferences and developing a better sense of how similar variables can combine in different ways to produce divergent outcomes.

A focus on context-specific case studies does not imply an exclusive focus on qualitative research methods, however. Although many of our recipients may use key informant interviews, document analysis and ethnography, GSJ will also actively solicit the participation of researchers trained in conducting and analyzing large-sample surveys, statistical regression, and cross national econometrics. Some of our case studies will be situated within broader themes identified through cross-national analyses, while other case analysis will rely on statistically representative surveys within individual countries or sub-national regions.

The research we support will be methodologically and theoretically interdisciplinary. It will include theories, perspectives and tools borrowed from political science, economics, feminist studies, legal studies, sociology, and anthropology. Research will typically include in-depth analyses of the topic's gendered dimensions, and will disaggregate its policy recommendations by gender whenever appropriate. The context-specific nature of the program's area of inquiry may also entail participatory action research methods.

The program will develop a balanced portfolio of projects that will comprise both unsolicited and solicited proposals, experienced and new researchers, and established and new research partnerships. While the majority of the portfolio will focus on governance, security and justice issues through the lens of state-society interactions, the program will set aside 10% of each yearly budget to a "flex fund" that will allow it to respond to emerging issues and unanticipated crises, opportunities for collaboration with key strategic partners such as the Canadian government, and to explore new avenues of inquiry.

Capacity Development: By supporting case-based, locally-grounded and context-specific research in complex and challenging environments, the program will contribute primarily to individual capacity development, and secondarily to the capacity development of institutions. The program will support both high-capacity and new researchers to enhance evidence-based policy-making at multiple levels.

In order to contribute to the cultivation of a new generation of researchers, the program will actively encourage intergenerational mentoring in project design, implementation, and dissemination of project findings, including co-authored publications between senior and junior researchers where appropriate. These capacity development strategies will also be implemented to encourage the development of substantive gender dimensions in research design, implementation and dissemination, as well as gender balance in project team composition. Additionally, training on research to policy links for program staff and recipients will contribute to the achievement of anticipated outcomes.

Communication for Influence: Through a combination of its support to local research recipients and strategic relationships with policy actors (local, regional and international), the program will be well-placed to assume a more substantive role as a *knowledge broker*. While the program will devote the majority of its resources to supporting locally-grounded research on governance, security and justice, it will do so in a way that facilitates our ability to derive program-level analytical insights on issues of importance to both academic and development policy communities. This will entail adapting project monitoring and evaluation tools to gather program-level data throughout the program cycle, and to devoting human resources on the team to synthesis activities that build a bridge between researchers and strategic partners. It will also entail identifying emerging policy issues/windows of opportunities that program-supported research could help to address. Regional baseline assessments will contribute to this knowledge brokering function.

In support of the program's intention to support locally-grounded and policy-relevant research, we will encourage the production of research outputs in local languages, and devote resources to their translation into other languages (English and French), to facilitate their dissemination internationally and in Canada. We will also ensure resources in project budgets are devoted to facilitating participation of research recipients in regional and international conferences.

The program will seek opportunities to integrate research recipients into appropriate issue-based networks. It will utilize the grants-plus model to work with recipients to develop effective communication plans, and will develop a series of synthesis tools tailored for specific audiences and purposes (e.g. ethical challenges of doing research in violent contexts, the utility of locally-grounded research for policy influence, etc.).

We will identify opportunities to convene strategic, issue-based workshops or expert group meetings to enhance dialogue and knowledge transfer. A particularly important aspect will be our ability to inform and be part of the dialogue on Canadian foreign policy. We will also cultivate effective collaboration with strategic partners to advance the importance of locally-grounded and evidence-based research in decision-making.

d. Regional and Thematic Priorities

The GSJ program will promote a comprehensive approach to state-society interactions, derived from local realities. The interrelationship between governance, security, and justice resonates across the regions in which IDRC works, although with degrees of variation. Potential entry points for research in each region are presented in the following sections.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Violence, in its multiple forms is skyrocketing in many countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Increasing levels of organized crime is of particular concern, since it rapidly corrupts societies and the state, and undermines democracy. Militaristic approaches to insecurity are ineffective. Strengthening the rule of law and democratic state institutions are crucial to counteract high levels of impunity and reduce violence. Strategies need to comprehensively address the root causes of violence, including gender violence, and the intricate dimensions of insecurity, such as the economic aspects of public insecurity and organized crime. Alternative understandings of security are required to capture emerging dimensions such as socio-environmental security and build upon progress of research issues, such as citizen security. More research is needed that promotes an inclusive and inter-related understanding of security and justice, particularly of their cultural and community based dimensions.

Middle East and North Africa

The Middle East and North Africa region continues to suffer from a democratic deficit, characterized by governance processes that are largely closed and exclusionary. Middle Eastern regimes rely on coercive and violent measures, and this repressive political setting has led to unaccountable public institutions and poor relationship between citizens and states institutions. Continued armed violence and inter-state conflicts have also led to increased public insecurity. A plurality of local and national factors, in addition to the repressive nature of the state, hinders the general access of citizens to judicial institutions. In some cases, national judicial processes and institutions lack legitimacy and are being replaced with a revival (or an ongoing existence) of traditional institutions. For MENA, research is required to explore the processes of political reform, and investigate specific strategies that will allow the opposition to advocate for reforms and extract concessions from the ruling regimes. In addition, political participation and representation, particularly of women, remains low in MENA, and investigation is needed to explore key issues and challenges for participation in political decision-making, the judiciary, and the public sector.

West and Central Africa

Food insecurity, poverty and economic inequalities, organized crime, effects of migration, insecurity, and citizen exclusion in decision making are amongst key concerns in the region. In many cases, there is a lack of political will or lack of capacities for public authorities to respond to citizens' needs. This leads to the marginalization of groups such as women and youth, who continue to face challenges to accessing justice, security, resources, and public services. Research is needed to

examine and understand strategies for strengthening formal and alternative practices of inclusion, participation, accountability, and justice. A focus on state-building, emerging democracies and improved state-citizen relationships is relevant to the majority of the countries in West Africa. The end of armed conflict and successfully organized elections in the region has helped restore legitimacy to democratic processes in countries; however, emerging democracies face immense problems: low citizen engagement in state-led reforms; emergence of military coups; and contested, non-inclusive elections. State institutions are often unaccountable and lack public confidence. A strategy to address this is through citizen engagement, as citizens can play an active role in monitoring public expenditures and reporting on public policies. For West Africa, research on state-building within the region would be useful in proposing mechanisms for consultation and the inclusion of citizens in public debates. Research is required that focuses on improving the relationship between research centres and institutions, as well as research on the role of regional organizations in post-conflict situations. Critical research is also needed to understand the role and effects of customary institutions on state legitimacy and building processes.

Eastern and Southern Africa

Within several Eastern and Southern Africa countries, enduring inter-state and internal conflicts, and the instability or complete breakdown of governance structures are significant hurdles towards achieving security and justice for citizens. Despite democratic processes and reforms, several states struggle to implement institutional reforms that are reflective of the needs of all citizen groups. Persistent inequalities create further opportunities for conflict. Elections are rarely fair, democratic, and inclusive. Ruling parties are often unwilling to open political space. In addition, political parties in general are not effective or inclusive within their own structures. There is a need to improve security governance at sub-national and regional levels, as national systems have tended to serve the interests of ruling parties, contributing to persistent authoritarianism. Research on citizen perceptions of the legitimacy of state institutions, including the security apparatus, will contribute to continuing security transformation processes.

South and Southeast Asia

In the past few decades South and Southeast Asia have seen impressive economic growth and a proliferation in democratic institutions and processes. Yet, violence and insecurity persist. Widespread impunity and deeply rooted communal and sectarian antagonisms fuel ethno-political conflicts, terrorism, and the systematic marginalization of particular groups, including women and ethnic and religious minorities. This is augmented by economic inequalities and massive movements of people in search of economic and human security. It is also one of the most conflict prone regions in the world. Citizens, especially women and religious and ethnic minorities continue to face serious barriers to accessing justice and security. In many cases, public authorities in the region are neither willing nor able to respond to the needs of their diverse citizenries, nor do they necessarily deliver on agreements set out to achieve peace. Impunity, which is the exemption from accountability, and hence is a threat to democracy and accountability, is rampant in the region. Critical research is needed to examine strategies for strengthening practices of democratic participation and cultures

of accountability and justice in the region. This will require greater investigation into how individuals, particularly those of marginalized groups, experience citizenship, security and justice. At the same time, South and Southeast Asia present fertile ground for exploring the conditions under which citizen engagement produces responsive and accountable public authorities, inclusive societies, and ultimately a reduction in violence and insecurity. Some recent examples include citizen mobilization around Right to Information in India; citizen action and judicial activism in Pakistan and India and deeply entrenched movement for ending monarchy and restoring democracy in Nepal.

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