

Approved research grants 2018

In alphabetical order



Aila M. Matanock

University of California

Project title

Attitude Formation during Peace Processes

Project description

When leaders seek to sign agreements, whether domestic or international, they have often spent tremendous time studying and negotiating these deals. The policies can be complex, and their implications may be somewhat removed from average citizens, at least initially. Citizens, however, are sometimes asked to weigh in directly on these agreements, including specific policies, either through referendums or through elections for these leaders. In Colombia, for example, voters narrowly rejected a 2016 plebiscite on a peace settlement with the FARC rebels, and then they are voting in 2018 on the leaders who negotiated a revised version passed through the legislature. Even when citizens are not asked to weigh in directly, their support still shapes success in implementation. Although citizens' attitudes are important, it is less clear how they are formed. In this project, we will examine how citizens form their attitudes toward the developing peace process in Colombia. Specifically, we will study what forms of messaging have the most positive effect on fostering support for its implementation. Many actors are messaging for and against the peace agreement currently being implemented between the government and FARC. This study will therefore help us understand the effect of different messaging on popular opinion, and thereby help policymakers build sustainable peace in post-conflict contexts.



Ana Arjona

Northwestern University

Project title

The Legacies of Wartime Governance on Local Politics: A Longitudinal Study of Communities During and After War in Colombia

Project description

Local communities living under the presence of armed actors during war face a critical juncture when such actors demobilize: they may embark on a positive path of democratization, good governance, and state building; or they may fall prey of local actors that use violence and corruption to undermine democracy, political accountability, and successful state building. Under what conditions do localities become more democratic and their local governments more accountable? When is the democratic process coopted, and when do local governments become corrupt and ineffective? Non-state armed groups often govern civilians living in areas under their control, regulating many aspects of their daily lives. This project looks at the effects of distinct forms of wartime governance on local politics in the post-conflict period by conducting

the first longitudinal study of local communities during and after war. Detailed evidence will be gathered on individual political behavior, the democratic process, local governance, and informal political practices in a random sample of localities in Colombia as they transition into peace. Understanding the challenges and opportunities for strengthening local democracy and good governance is essential for devising policies that support inclusive peacebuilding and state building processes.



Caroline A Hartzell

Gettysburg College

Project title

Citizens' Perspectives on the Legitimacy of Civil War Peace Processes: An Experimental Conjoint Analysis

Project description

Legitimate peace processes can be understood as those that garner “popular support both for the process itself – its specific initiatives and components – and for its outcomes, including a peace deal or political settlement”. The degree to which a civil war peace process is perceived as legitimate by a country’s citizens has been hypothesized to impact how sustainable the peace proves to be as well as whether or not the state subsequently is able to establish a just and durable political order. Unfortunately, little research exists that allows for the exploration of causal claims regarding the effects that different features of the peace process have on citizens’ perceptions of the legitimacy of such processes. This project proposes to address this issue by conducting a choice-based conjoint experiment. The conjoint experiment, which we will undertake in Nepal, calls for respondents to rate two (or more) hypothetical descriptions of peace processes that have multiple attributes with the objective of estimating the influence of each attribute on respondents’ ratings. By providing insight into the features of peace processes that citizens deem most important and which obtain the most support, this research may serve to help countries seeking to end civil wars to structure more legitimate peace processes.



Jana Krause

University of Amsterdam

Project title

Communal Conflicts in the Shadow of Civil War: Implications for Civilian Protection and Sustainable

Project description

South Sudan has been plagued by a civil war with strong ethnic polarization, horrendous atrocities and high fragmentation of armed groups, which have resulted in 1 in 3 South Sudanese being (repeatedly) displaced. Political analysts with UNMISS estimate that in the shadow of the civil war, *communal conflicts* have killed at least as many people per year as the war, if not more. Communal conflicts over cattle and local politics interlink with the civil war to various degrees. In Greater Jonglei, where Dinka, Nuer and Murle have fought each other, civilians faced both communal and civil war dynamics. By contrast, in the Greater Lakes region, which long remained under government control, armed civilian mobilization among Dinka clans with

no direct links to the war cleavage resulted in massive victim numbers. Among international actors, communal conflicts and local peacebuilding remain poorly understood. Naturally, the civil war has received primary attention from UNMISS, which protects civilians mainly within the Protection of Civilian (PoC) sites. However, in the context of the High Level Revitalization Forum, the country's National Dialogue, and potential future elections, a deeper understanding of communal conflict dynamics in South Sudan is vital for building a sustainable peace. This project seeks to analyse these conflict dynamics and assess local peacemaking in the shadow of the civil war.



Jóhanna K Birnir

University of Maryland

Project title

Gender Norms and Violent Behavior Across the Virtual and Real Worlds

Project description

Why does the gender gap for violent behavior differ across regions of the world? Isolating the effect of norm directed behavior from biologically directed behavior is challenging because normally sex and gender are conflated. We examine conduct in a multi-player computer game, a context where the ability of players to operate characters of varying genders enables us to hold biology constant. For the general population of gamers we find that character gender matters for violence related actions, with substantive differences in the gender gap across the sexes, and when those actions are visible or not to others. Our exploratory analysis shows that gender differentiation with respect to violence varies substantially across regions of the world. The behavior of female players in Asia is particularly noteworthy - they invest substantially more in skills related to combat effectiveness than do their counterparts elsewhere in the world, an action that is not readily observable by others. Moreover, Asian female players are far less likely to engage their characters in public violent behavior and the variance in their violent behavior is very low. We do not know what accounts for these differences across regions and whether they reflect a broader societal differentiation between men and women in gender norms related to violent behavior, or why the difference is so exaggerated amongst Asian females. To better understand how gender norms influence violent behavior and assess how well gaming data reflects real world attitudes we propose to survey players and non-players in Indonesia. That gendered behavioral differences are attributable to internalized norms, as opposed to biology or third party sanctioning, has important policy implications. By isolating through research and then incorporating in policy local world-views as shaped by gender, policies for sustainable peace likely stand a better chance of inculcating stakeholder ownership and support.



Katharina Coleman

University of British Columbia

Project title

The UN's Local Peacekeepers: UN National Staff at the Intersection of Local and Global Orders

Project description

UN peacekeeping is typically thought of – and researched as – an international activity, but almost 60% of civilian UN peacekeepers are locally recruited “national staff”. In 2017, 8,890 local civilians were employed in UN peacekeeping operations. Some hold little formal power but may have informal influence (e.g. drivers, secretaries). Others play vital operational roles: community liaison officers, for example, provide a key interface between the mission and local populations. Both the selection and the activities of national staff impact a mission’s performance, including its capacity for inclusive, gender-sensitive peacebuilding. This research highlights the operational importance of national staff, drawing on field research at UN headquarters and in three UN missions (DR Congo, Lebanon, Western Sahara). It also conceptualizes national staff as operating at a critical intersection of local and international orders. Local dynamics shape access to UN posts, but individuals in these posts also affect prevailing hierarchies and norms. Diversity among national staff is thus both inherently important and valuable in allowing the mission to reach broad sections of the local population.



Meghan Shannon

University of Colorado

Project title

The Politics of Authorizing and Financing UN Peacekeeping Missions

Project description

This project will compile a dataset of monthly financial contributions from individual countries to UN peacekeeping missions. It will also use already compiled data from the International Peace Institute on the assessed contributions to individual countries by the United Nations and the Secretary General. The difference between the assessed and actual contributions is considered a financial shortfall by a country. Shortfalls in finances mean that missions are less able to deploy peacekeepers to some of the world’s most violent situations. They are also less able to provide the necessary equipment for peacekeepers to carry out their tasks. Given that peacekeeping missions are increasingly demonstrated to be effective in mitigating violence, it is important to understand the conditions under which they have the necessary funding and resources to be effective. I am requesting funding to collect data on the actual contributions of countries to UN peacekeeping missions using UN budget reports. I will also utilize IPI’s data on assessed contributions to countries from 1990 to 2014. This will provide a measure of the financial shortfall of each contributor country. My proposal builds on my previous work supported by FBA, which gathered data on the overall financial shortfalls of UN missions. Once I have gathered the contributor-country shortfall data, I will analyze the conditions under which countries fail to meet their financial commitments to UN missions. I will also analyze the data I previously collected to understand what leads to overall financial shortfalls for missions. Finally, I will analyze how financial shortfalls within missions affect their ability to mitigate violence in civil wars. The analyses will inform the UN and the international community about the conditions under which missions are under-funded, and help us understand how we might change the incentives of contributor countries so that missions have better financial support. The analyses will also help us understand the consequences of under-funded missions.



Michelle Benson

University of Buffalo

Project title

United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Civil Conflict Resolution Data Set, 1946-2017

Project description

The United Nations (UN) is often the actor of last resort for states experiencing civil conflict. As a substantial literature shows, the UN can have a powerful effect on civil conflict through its peacekeeping operations. Yet the full scope of attention and actions the UN can take on civil conflicts goes beyond peacekeeping to include “naming and shaming,” sanctions, and the approval of regional IGO and multilateral force. Nevertheless, the literature has mostly left untouched these other potential actions, and we contend the reason lies in a lack of readily available United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution data. Building on a preliminary dataset of all post-1988 UNSC resolutions, the project thus proposes to build a comprehensive dataset of all UNSC resolutions on civil wars from 1946-2017. This dataset will code all resolutions for their level of action, various mandates, association with peacekeeping resolutions, and stated sentiment for conflict actors. These data will be the first of their kind in coding UNSC resolutions to conflicts and will allow researchers and policy makers to examine the full variation of UN attention to civil wars over time at the monthly, yearly, peacekeeping, and conflict units of analysis. A primary goal of the project will be to make a reliable, user-friendly dataset that is easily combined with existing civil conflict, peacekeeping and peacemaking data.



Molly M. Melin

Loyola University, Chicago

Project title

The Politics of Authorizing and Financing UN Peacekeeping Missions

Project description

What role do businesses play in creating peaceful societies? When are we likely to see the private sector engaging in communities beyond “business as usual” and proactively acting to build peace? The role of corporate firms in peacebuilding and conflict prevention is a topic that is largely absent in the peace and conflict literature, despite the fact that international organizations are increasingly calling on corporations to proactively advance peace, such as with the United Nations (UN) Global Compact’s “Business for Peace” program and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) *Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises*. If we are to create an accurate understanding of conflict processes, we must account for these actors. I draw from business research to develop a theoretical argument and hypotheses about when corporate actors engage in conflict prevention, the types of actions they take, and the outcomes of these efforts. I test these arguments on original cross-national data, and further explore the causal mechanisms in the cases of Colombia, Tunisia and Sri Lanka.



Oliver Kaplan

University of Denver

Project title

Cross-national Data Collection and Analysis of DDR Programs

Project description

This project seeks to produce a country-level quantitative analysis of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programs that are designed to transition ex-combatants from civil conflict back into mainstream society. DDR programs have been implemented in over 60 countries since the late 1980s and are viewed as a key process for promoting the inclusion of ex-combatants in civil society and preventing conflict recurrence. DDR also represents an approach to “counter/ prevent violent extremism”. However, policymakers and analysts have been hamstrung in understanding what lessons are transferable from one DDR setting to another. Existing cross-national studies of DDR are largely qualitative and anecdotal, with little comparative information on the similarities and differences of program features across countries. Our project first involves creating a cross-national dataset on the characteristics of different historical DDR programs and a source document library. We will then seek to answer policy-relevant research questions about the reintegration of ex-combatants, by merging existing data on armed conflicts and their modes of termination.



Robert Blair

Brown University

Project title

Disaggregating Peacekeeping: Expanding the Scope and Temporal Coverage of the Disaggregated Dataset on Peacekeeping Activities and Types of Engagement in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1989-1999

Project description

Existing quantitative research on UN peacekeeping operations (PKOs) mostly focuses on the coercive side of peacekeeping. But as our ongoing data collection project (funded by a 2016 FBA grant) reveals, PKOs have dramatically expanded their repertoire of activities since the turn of the millennium. Peacekeepers regularly retrain police officers, organize elections, promote gender equality, support the rights of children, remove land mines, and control the spread of small arms, among many other tasks. Our dataset represents the most ambitious effort to date to code these activities in a systematic way. Support from FBA, Brown University, and GIGA Hamburg has allowed us to code all such activities in Africa from 2000 to present. The proposed project would extend the dataset back to 1989 and would cover the initial development of multidimensional peacekeeping; enable analysis of long peacekeeping trajectories; complete the lifecycles of PKOs that are ongoing in 2000; and help overcome the small-N problem in peacekeeping research.



Sabrina Karim

Cornell University

Project title

The Causes and Consequences of International Security Assistance

Project description

Since the end of World War II, multilateral international actors and individual nation states have been heavily involved in re-building the security forces of other countries. Yet, little is known about how different actors engage in security sector reform. Are there differences in how the UN, EU, NATO, African Union the U.S., UK, China, Russia, Great Britain, France, and Sweden engage in security sector reform? This project proposes to add on to an existing dataset that the project leader has started on security assistance programs from 1989-2017. The project leader has been collecting data on UN security assistance programs (through the coding of mandates), as well as U.S. security assistance programs (through the coding of Congressional budget documents). The coding includes not only the existence of a program in a particular country-year, but also details about the program. The funds from FBA will allow the project leader to include regional security assistance programs and bilateral programs from the P-5 as well as Sweden. The data will enable the project leader (and other researchers/policymakers) to better understand which countries are providing security assistance to where and what this security assistance looks like. Such an understanding will then inform what types of security assistance programs are successful in re-building security forces so that they are effective and respectful of human rights.



Susanna P. Campbell

School of International Service American University

Project title

Ontology of Peace: Measuring Peace in War

Project description

What causes peace in the midst or aftermath of civil war? In spite of the breadth of research on conflict-affected countries, we still do not have answers to this fundamental question. In fact, most research on peacekeeping and peace processes measures peace as the absence of violence, rather than the presence of peaceful cooperation. As a result, it identifies the factors that lead to the absence of violence, not those that sustain peace. Building on their previous work in this area, this project team will develop a theory and measure of peace in the midst and aftermath of civil war. The project will result in a final paper and blog post that will outline how researchers and evaluators can more effectively assess the causes of “peace”. The team will use the case of Colombia to develop this measure of peace, harmonizing existing data sources. Colombia provides unique analytical opportunities to investigate the relationship between violent conflict and peaceful cooperation. The Colombian civil war has been ongoing for over half a century, with a great deal of variation in episodes of violent conflict and peaceful cooperation. As a middle-income country that has made significant investment in its own statistics infrastructure

and national research institutions, Colombia has significantly better sub-national data than most countries affected by ongoing civil war.