

To cite this output:

Moser, C, Rodgers, D, (2013) Understanding the Tipping Point of Urban Conflict: Violence, Cities, and Poverty Reduction in the Developing World
ESRC End of Award Report, RES-167-25-0483. Swindon: ESRC.



ESRC End of Award Report

For awards ending on or after 1 November 2009

This End of Award Report should be completed and submitted using the **grant reference** as the email subject, to **reportsofficer@esrc.ac.uk** on or before the due date.

The final instalment of the grant will not be paid until an End of Award Report is completed in full and accepted by ESRC.

Grant holders whose End of Award Report is overdue or incomplete will not be eligible for further ESRC funding until the Report is accepted. We reserve the right to recover a sum of the expenditure incurred on the grant if the End of Award Report is overdue. (Please see Section 5 of the ESRC Research Funding Guide for details.)

Please refer to the Guidance notes when completing this End of Award Report.

Grant Reference	RES-167-25-0483		
Grant Title	Understanding the tipping point of urban conflict: violence, cities, and poverty reduction in the developing world		
Grant Start Date	01/09/2010	Total Amount	£ 459,194.41
Grant End Date	31/08/2012	Expended:	
Grant holding Institution	University of Manchester		
Grant Holder	Professor Caroline Moser		
Grant Holder's Contact Details	Address	Email	
	Professor Caroline Moser Director, Global Urban Research Centre School of Environment & Development University of Manchester Humanities Bridgeford Street Building, Oxford Road Manchester, M13 9PL UK (Until 31 st August 2012)	caroline.moser@manchester.ac.uk	
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Co-Investigators (as per project application):		Institution	
Dr Dennis Rodgers		University of Manchester	
		(until 31st August 2012)	

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1. Non-technical summary

Please provide below a project summary written in non-technical language. The summary may be used by us to publicise your work and should explain the aims and findings of the project. *[Max 250 words]*

With urban violence is an increasingly significant global phenomenon, conventional wisdom in both policy and research associates it with four key factors: (a) poverty, (b) youth bulges, (c) political exclusion and (d) gender-based insecurity. Equally important is the notion that while cities are inherently conflictual spaces, conflict is generally managed peacefully through a range of social, cultural and political mechanisms. However conflict can be disrupted by one or more of these four key factors, which lead it to spill over into chronic, generalised violence.

The “Urban Tipping Point” (UTP) project seeks to understand how and why urban conflict tips into violence. It explores how different forms of conflict become violent, and the way different types of violence generated by tipping point processes can interact with each other and can form “violence chains”. Results from qualitative research using either participatory and inductive methodologies in each of the four cities of Nairobi, Santiago, Patna and Dili show that the organisation of space, land, and the nature of urban governance are the three key drivers of urban violence – with both similarities and differences in the way these issues manifested themselves across cities. Policy recommendations from the project include the need to mainstream conflict and violence into development debates and policy; to recognise that urban violence is urban; to engage with the Police as a development actor; to experiment with innovative ideas to prevent conflict tipping into violence; and above all to address the political economy issues that ultimately underpin conflict and violence.

2. Project overview

a) Objectives

Please state the aims and objectives of your project as outlined in your proposal to the us. *[Max 200 words]*

The project aims to:

1. Document different types of daily violence as perceived by different social actors, exploring the logic and dynamics of different "tipping" factors identified by conventional wisdom in a range of contexts
2. Map causal linkages within and between different types of violence in terms of hierarchical violence chains
3. Identify the current and past responses of local communities, households and individuals to such tipping points
4. Analyse these against the four key conventional wisdoms concerning the nature of urban violence
5. To recommend violence-reduction strategies that identify entry points to break linkages in violence chains, introducing new codes of negotiation between community organizations, local violent actors and with local authorities

These objectives are summarised in 3 research questions

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1. Does the conventional wisdom concerning global urban violence provide robust causal interpretations for the "tipping" of urban conflict into overt violence in cities in the developing world?
2. Can the identification of "violence chains" help develop alternative violence reduction solutions for the poor?
3. How can poor communities best introduce new codes of negotiation with violent social actors and local authorities to ensure safer local environments that no longer erode the community and household assets of the poor?

b) Project Changes

Please describe any changes made to the original aims and objectives, and confirm that these were agreed with us. Please also detail any changes to the grant holder's institutional affiliation, project staffing or funding. *[Max 200 words]*

1. The focus on creating "a dataset of difficult to obtain data" proved not to be an optimum use of resources in any of the locations studied. It became clear very early that such an endeavour across four cities would be extremely resource-intensive and time consuming, and there furthermore existed significant disparities in quantitative data-gathering of the different research teams, which made constitute datasets in each location a problem.
2. It was also decided that rather than adopting a blueprint methodological approach across all four case studies, each team would build on their skill-sets and draw on different approaches and research methods to undertake research in their respective cities. While two cities used a comparable participatory research methodology, the other two used inductive approaches (see below).
3. At city level, the Kenyan team requested to focus on Nairobi rather than Mombasa, due to the former city being a more prominent site of violence than the latter. This did not imply any modifications to either the budget or research focus.

c) Methodology

Please describe the methodology that you employed in the project. Please also note any ethical issues that arose during the course of the work, the effects of this and any action taken. *[Max 500 words]*

The UTP research project was based on comparative case study research. Each case study combined two components, namely a city profile and a sub-city study, integrating both quantitative and qualitative research. From the outset the project also included constant dialogue with various project stake-holders in order to maximise the potential impact of findings. This included consultative forums within the research communities and with city-level policy-makers, as well as local, national, and global-level policy dissemination meetings.

City profiles were based on secondary data sources, both qualitative and quantitative, while the sub-city studies were principally based on primary qualitative data collected by the city research

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teams. In all the cities, primary research focused on low-income areas, except in Santiago, which carried out research in low, medium, and high-income areas, and Dili, which also focused significantly on the particular broader institutional context of post-independence Timor Leste.

The four case studies were carried out in a twin-track manner. The Santiago and Nairobi studies were both undertaken using a common conceptual framework (*Moser 2012*). Fieldwork was implemented using the same participatory research methodology in a number of local communities in both cities, explicitly focusing on the type of violence preliminarily associated with these cities (*Moser and Horn 2011*). This provided a clear focus for the studies and was designed to ensure comparability. The studies were implemented by in-country Southern research teams with capacity-building, close guidance, and review by the PI.

In contrast, the studies in Patna and Dili were developed more inductively, adopting the initial project theoretical premise as a starting point, and then constructing a framework iteratively on the basis of primary research, and modifying the theoretical parameters of the studies in a grounded manner. The work in Dili was carried out by a team from the Geneva-based CCDP, supervised by the Co-I, while the work in Patna was conducted by a team made up of the Co-I and three Institute for Human Development researchers.

None of the research teams encountered any major ethical issues beyond the usual issues pertaining to the need to maintain anonymity and to avoid bringing different groups of research participants together that are standard in any investigation relating to violence. The teams were furthermore all chosen due to their intimate familiarity with and networks of contacts within the contexts studied, which meant that safety and security were ensured.

d) Project Findings

Please summarise the findings of the project, referring where appropriate to outputs recorded on the ESRC website. Any future research plans should also be identified. *[Max 500 words]*

The UTP project included (1) city-specific findings, and (2) more general findings. With regard to the first, each city study generated city-specific findings that are outlined in the individual city reports (*Working Papers 3, 4, 5 and 6*) and policy briefs. These challenge conventional understandings of the dynamics of violence in these cities, and detail how and why particular patterns of violence emerge, what their broader social, economic, political, and cultural consequences are, and how they are understood locally.

With regard to the second level of findings, although the UTP project was not designed as a conventional comparative investigation, a number of important cross-cutting themes nevertheless emerged that are synthesised in the Global Policy Report (*Working Paper 7*), and include the following insights:

1. A project objective was to explore the potential added value of the concepts of “tipping points” and “violence chains” for the study of urban violence. Both were found to be useful. The notion of a tipping point promoted awareness of broader structural issues and of the critical connections between macro and micro-level processes. It ensured an understanding of conflict and violence not as dynamics phenomena that need to be understood relationally, and

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also highlighted how urban violence could be reversed. The notion of a violence chain illustrated the interconnectedness between different forms of violence, thereby highlighting how focusing on just one type of violence inevitably offers an incomplete picture of reality. It also implicitly highlighted the importance of adopting a cross-sector approach to urban violence reduction. Finally, it was clear that certain chains of violence are potentially more consequential than others, which has important policy implications.

2. The starting point of the UTP project was dissatisfaction with certain mainstream assumptions relating to the causes of urban violence, including the consensus concerning violence causality relating to the four "conventional wisdoms" of poverty, youth, political exclusion, and the inadequate consideration of gender-based insecurity. Our research showed how these four factors are often only considered in a very one-sided manner by mainstream research and that moreover they are general contextual rather than causal factors in the tipping of urban conflict into violence.

3. Three issues emerged as key drivers of urban violence across the four cities, namely the organisation of space, land, and the nature of urban governance. Although there were differences in the way these issues manifested themselves in each city, there were also some remarkable similarities. Taken together, both the manner in which they were identified, as well as their particular importance within each city, points to their broad significance for both researchers and policy makers alike.

4. The UTP project identified a number of general policy recommendations which included the need to:

- Mainstream conflict and violence into development debates and policy
- Recognise that urban violence is urban
- Engage with the Police as a development actor
- Experiment with innovative ideas to prevent conflict tipping into violence
- Address the political economy issues that ultimately underpin conflict and violence

e) Contributions to wider ESRC initiatives (eg Research Programmes or Networks)

If your project was part of a wider ESRC initiative, please describe your contributions to the initiative's objectives and activities and note any effect on your project resulting from participation. *[Max. 200 words]*

n/a

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3. Early and anticipated impacts

a) Summary of Impacts to date

Please summarise any impacts of the project to date, referring where appropriate to associated outputs recorded on the Research Outcomes System (ROS). This should include both scientific impacts (relevant to the academic community) and economic and societal impacts (relevant to broader society). The impact can be relevant to any organisation, community or individual. *[Max. 400 words]*

From the outset all output was disseminated using the UTP logo and visual identity that was designed in the earliest stages. The aim of this was to create a “brand” and strengthen impact by making output instantly recognisable as linked to the Urban Tipping Point project. For example, all working papers were formatted and published using the same layout template, and can be downloaded from the [research output](#) section of the website.

The working papers and policy briefs have enjoyed good uptake from the website, especially considering that they were only put online recently. The website also has a well developed [multimedia section](#). A UTP [You Tube channel](#) was set up from the beginning, and holds films of interviews with the project partners in English and Spanish. Wherever possible, organised public events were also filmed so as to allow audiences to view panel discussions and presentations from anywhere at anytime. These filmed events were uploaded to the University of Manchester’s video library service with links listed in the multimedia section of the website - these will remain online indefinitely.

Far from being restricted to a local Manchester audience, potential impact is spread across the four Southern research locations and beyond. During its life cycle, and particularly in the latter phases, the project attracted media attention from a range of agencies in India, Chile and Switzerland; via newspaper articles, radio and television interviews. All of the media impact is archived in the [multimedia section](#) of the UTP website. Most recently, Duncan Green (Head of Research, Oxfam GB) attended the Geneva end of project dissemination workshop, and wrote very positive blog entries about the project on the World Bank’s blog [People, Spaces, Deliberation](#), and on his Oxfam blog [From Poverty to Power](#). These both reach a broad audience and generated significant discussion.

The city-specific outputs have all had identifiable impact on municipal-level governance through local dissemination events that are described in detail in the UTP [dissemination](#) pages. The Global Policy Report was widely distributed both electronically and as a mailed hard copy to carefully targeted policy-makers. Further outputs – particularly academic books and articles – are still in production and will continue to be developed after the project end date, and are likely to be distributed in a similarly targeted manner.

All of the above is recorded on the ESRC Research Outcomes Systems along with any corresponding attachments and links.

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b) Anticipated/Potential Future Impacts

Please outline any anticipated or potential impacts (scientific or economic and societal) that you believe your project might have in future. *[Max. 200 words]*

The nature of project life cycles means that outputs are produced at the end of the project, with much of the impact still to occur. For instance, recently translated versions of the city policy briefs and global policy report will likely further extend impact to broader audiences across at least three continents. All of the project outputs are held on the [UTP website](#) which will remain active/live until at least 1 October 2014.

The June 2012 Geneva global policy event facilitated dialogues between research partners and potential collaborators, donors and new audiences, with a range of potential follow-on projects are currently under discussion. The project PI and Co-I have furthermore had, or will be having, meetings with DFID staff in India and the UK to discuss the project findings. They also intend to publish further academic articles based on the research findings.

Some research team members have indicated their intention to use UTP output in new research directions. This includes Alfred Omenya as Head of the School of Architecture and the Built Environment, University of Nairobi; Dennis Rodgers as Professor of Urban Social and Political Research, University of Glasgow; and Olga Segovia, SUR Santiago currently elaborating an IDRC bid proposal with Latin American research colleagues.

You will be asked to complete an ESRC Impact Report 12 months after the end date of your award. The Impact Report will ask for details of any impacts that have arisen since the completion of the End of Award Report.

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4. Declarations

Please ensure that sections A, B and C below are completed and signed by the appropriate individuals. The End of Award Report will not be accepted unless all sections are signed. Please note hard copies are **not** required; electronic signatures are accepted and should be used.

A: To be completed by Grant Holder

Please read the following statements. Tick **one** statement under ii) and iii), then sign with an electronic signature at the end of the section (this should be an image of your actual signature).

i) The Project

This Report is an accurate overview of the project, its findings and impacts. All co-investigators named in the proposal to ESRC or appointed subsequently have seen and approved the Report.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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ii) Submissions to the Research Outcomes System (ROS)

Output and impact information has been submitted to the Research Outcomes System. Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted as soon as they become available.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
or	
This grant has not yet produced any outputs or impacts. Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted to the Research Outcomes System as soon as they become available.	<input type="checkbox"/>

iii) Submission of Datasets

Datasets arising from this grant have been offered for deposit with the Economic and Social Data Service.	<input type="checkbox"/>
or	
Datasets that were anticipated in the grant proposal have not been produced and the Economic and Social Data Service has been notified.	<input type="checkbox"/>
or	
No datasets were proposed or produced from this grant.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>