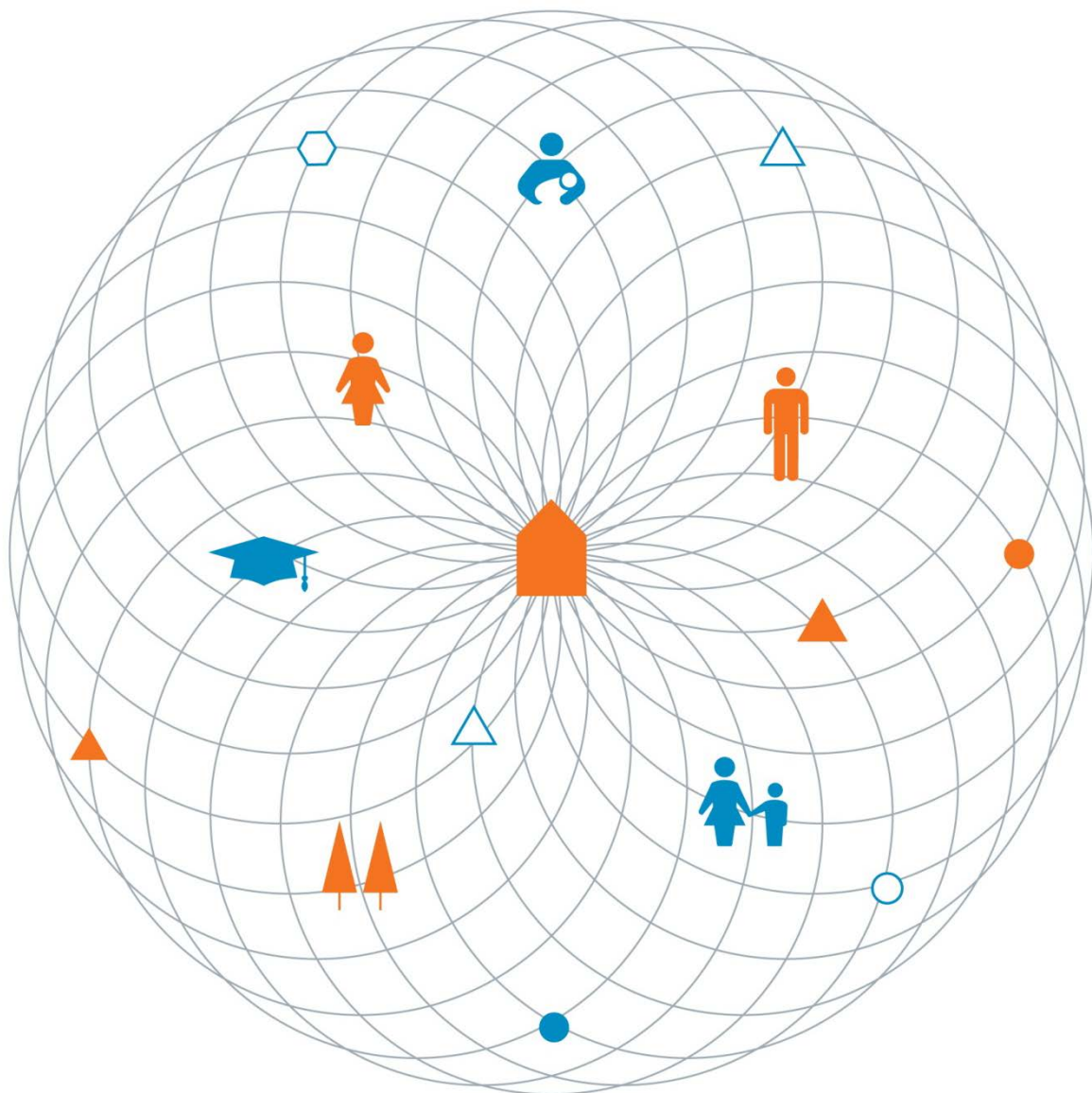




Governance, Social Development, Conflict and Humanitarian
PEAKS Consortium led by Coffey International Development

Final Report

Rapid Evidence Assessment for Conflict Prevention





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Final Report

Rapid Evidence Assessment for Conflict Prevention



Oxford Policy Management



DFID UK

Conflict Prevention Rapid Evidence Assessment

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Executive summary

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) commissioned this Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) to answer the following research question:

What interventions have been effective in preventing or mitigating armed violence in developing and middle-income countries?

This review of the evidence serves multiple goals. First, it addresses a **clear policy demand**. It was carried out rapidly in order to feed into ongoing and urgent policy debates about the effectiveness of policies and programmes that promote conflict prevention and mitigation. The research builds on previous work including the DFID-funded study 'What Price Peace' (2010) and other reviews of the earlier literature. Second, it provides a **foundation for future research**. The study identifies gaps that future research must address and emerging bodies of literature that must be encouraged in order to build a stronger evidence base for decision makers to draw on. Third, it represents an **opportunity for learning**. This is the first attempt that the authors are aware of to carry out a systematic stock-take of the evidence across a range of intervention types, disciplines, and regions. The review thus generates valuable methodological lessons for similar exercises going forward.

The review examines academic articles and evaluations published in English, Spanish and Portuguese between 2010 and 2015. It adopts a systematic approach to the literature search and quality assessment to maximise transparency, replicability and the potential to update.

The systematic search generated 19,335 English articles and an additional 1,069 Spanish and Portuguese publications, of which 125 met the inclusion criteria. Further snowballing and expert consultation generated another 24 articles. These 149 articles were assessed according to six principles of research quality. Studies were not excluded on the basis of quality. It is important to note that studies coded 'low quality' are not necessarily without merit, but have been categorised as such because they did not meet the principles of research quality set out for this specific study in relation to the research question above and on the basis of DFID's How To Note (2014).

Key findings

The review identified a very small number of high quality studies that show '**what worked**' in particular situations (2 per cent of articles) and a small number of articles that show 'what did not work' in particular situations (4 per cent of articles). However, these do not constitute a strong enough evidence base to say '**what works**' in general.

The 149 studies that meet the inclusion criteria of the search are spread across a wide range of types of intervention that are detailed below. Only a fifth (29/149) of the research that is directly relevant to the research question was deemed to be high quality. Just three of these high quality articles found that interventions were effective in contributing to preventing or mitigating armed violence. In contrast, six of these high quality articles found that interventions were ineffective, two of which allegedly contributed to the worsening of the very armed conflict they were designed to mitigate.

There is no consensus on the impacts of either **international peace operations** or **community level peacebuilding** on armed violence prevention or mitigation – positive and negative impacts on armed violence were found in both cases. Only two out of the fourteen articles examining the impact of local level multi-sectoral **peacebuilding programmes** found evidence that they have a cumulative impact on peacebuilding at the national level.

Studies of **peace mediation** reveal the primacy of domestic actors in addressing armed violence; whilst external third parties may have a role it is most commonly a supplementary one in the cases of successful mediation. Studies also highlighted how external mediators may become active players in conflict, rather than simply being neutral referees, which may have the effect of adding new layers of complexity to the conflict. The creation of **alternative dispute resolution (ADR)** mechanisms can reduce the incidence of violent conflict. However, there are significant risks as it appears easy to activate latent conflicts through external intervention.

The body of evidence on labour market interventions has begun to improve in terms of size and research design, though it has still struggled to keep pace with the emphasis given to employment generation by the international community. This small but growing body of literature suggests that **expanding wage employment opportunities** may be effective in contributing to reduced armed violence in certain conditions. However, articles highlighted that **economic development interventions** are likely to have different outcomes depending on their timing and how they relate to ongoing armed conflict or post-conflict societies. Findings for articles on economic interventions were mostly inconclusive or mixed, but it is clear that outcomes depend on the manner of aid delivery and programming and how it interacts with specific political contexts.

The search identified no high quality research that examines the impact of **governance interventions** funded by donors on conflict prevention and mitigation, in spite of the fact that the wider literature identifies this area as crucial to the dynamics of armed violence.

The review found a moderately sized, mostly low quality body of evidence on the impact of **security and policing** practices on urban violence, with mixed findings. The highest quality articles on this theme emphasise the importance of political leadership and 'localised' approaches – often by elected mayors/governors – in determining outcomes. Militarised responses to 'criminal' violence have often failed to contain violence and risk creating new patterns of marginalisation that drive further violence. Insufficient attention is paid to the interaction between state and non-state violent actors, and how practices seeking to prevent or mitigate armed violence may influence these relationships.

There was no high or moderate quality evidence that **justice and reconciliation** interventions were effective in preventing or mitigating armed violence. The evidence reviewed did highlight how local understandings of justice and traditional reconciliation mechanisms and rituals interact with transitional justice approaches in sometimes unforeseen ways. Yet the dominant transitional justice model is highly standardised and top-down and rarely takes the context sufficiently into account.

Compared to the other themes, the body of evidence on **media and communications** interventions was more promising. The findings suggest that radio, TV programming and digital media can positively affect people's attitudes towards 'others'. However, the link from attitudes to behaviour is left unexplored in this literature and it is unclear whether such changes are durable, or can be readily reversed if conflict returns.

Despite an upturn in the number of armed conflicts in the **Middle East and North Africa** since 2010, only a small proportion (4 per cent) of the articles focus on conflict prevention and mitigation interventions in this region. The majority of interventions took place in sub-Saharan Africa or Latin America and the Caribbean.

Overall, the evidence base for 'what works' identified in this REA is fragmented and weak. Only a small number of articles contribute towards a 'body of literature' on similar types of intervention, and only a small minority of this research is high quality.

Despite this rather bleak assessment, **the REA has identified some slight progress over the past five years in our understanding of conflict prevention and mitigation.** In some cases, new literature adds value by corroborating previous findings, for example on the importance of different political economies in explaining variation in the impact of similar interventions. In other cases, there are clusters of 'green shoots' where both the quality and quantity of research into the impact of certain types of interventions has increased over the past five years. Finally, 49 studies found the interventions they studied had a 'promising' effect, many of which were successful in achieving intermediate outcomes that may contribute to the reduction of armed violence. These constitute a more tentative body of work that provides pointers as to how interventions may 'work towards' violence reduction.

Future research

Some of the problems with the quality of the body of literature are inherent to the field of conflict prevention and mitigation. There are long causal chains from interventions to impacts and fundamental challenges given the lack of clear counterfactual knowledge, particularly for conflict prevention. However, there are areas where future research can improve.

Greater attention should be given to **strengthening research design**, in particular through adoption of conceptual frameworks that are grounded in proper theorization, ambitious use of data that goes beyond intermediate outcomes, and more considered, comparable case selection that would increase confidence in validity of findings. There is also a need for more longitudinal research, which captures shifts in the dynamics of interventions and armed violence over time.

Given concerns about the internal validity of much of the research, more effort should be made to **triangulate findings** by using multiple – and mixing qualitative and quantitative – methods to address the same research or evaluation question.

There is a tension between two trends. On the one hand, aid agencies increasingly fund and evaluate programmes with multiple components. As such there is an emerging consensus of the value in a system-level analysis to understand the interaction between multiple interventions and conflict drivers. On the other hand, there is a parallel incentive to focus on impact at the micro-level to address concerns about validity that increase with scale. This tension highlights the importance of a **conceptual framework that links micro and macro levels** and has important implications on the design of programme evaluation.

Finally, future research could also take both domestic *and* international **political economy** more seriously in accounting for variation in the impact of similar interventions. More attention should be paid to meso-level actors, mechanisms and processes that link international, national and local dynamics to understand how (de-)escalation of conflict takes place.

Overall, the evidence base on conflict prevention and mitigation has advanced only moderately since 2010. This finding presents a **major challenge for policymakers and resource allocation.** If decision makers wish to know more about 'what works' and to have clearer foundations for resource allocation, there is a need to invest in a collaborative research agenda involving the co-production of knowledge by practitioners and researchers that examines the impact of different types of interventions on armed violence.

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List of abbreviations

ACT	Action for Conflict Transformation
ADR	Alternative dispute resolution
CDD	Community-driven development
CERP	Commander's Emergency Response Programme
CS	Case study
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DFAT	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DS	Descriptive statistics
ETH	Ethnographic study
EXP	Experimental
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
INT	Interviews and focus group discussions
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MM	Mixed methods
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NREGA	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPM	Oxford Policy Management
PEA	Political Economy Analysis
QA	Quality assurance
QCA	Qualitative comparative analysis
QE	Quasi-experimental
REA	Rapid Evidence Assessment
SA	Statistical analysis
SDC	Swiss Development Corporation

SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SR	Systematic review
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commissions/Committees
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in the Sudan
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
↑	High-quality evidence
→	Moderate-quality evidence
↓	Low-quality evidence

1 Introduction

Conflict prevention and mitigation is increasingly regarded as a central policy objective for many international actors. At the global level, Sustainable Development Goal 16 signals an international commitment to “significantly reduce all forms of violence” and “prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime” that is reflected in the strategies of the United Nations (UN) agencies (UN 2015). Multilateral donors have published flagship reports on the challenges posed by conflict and developed policy frameworks to respond to fragility (World Bank 2011; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2015). Bilateral donors have also expressed a renewed interest in conflict prevention and mitigation, as evidenced by the UK’s Aid Strategy (HMG 2015) and Australia’s framework for working in fragile states (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2014).

There are a number of strong reasons to take conflict prevention and mitigation seriously. In addition to the intrinsic worth of reducing human suffering directly resulting from conflict, armed violence is an obstacle to the achievement of other dimensions of human and economic development. For example, conflict prevention and mitigation is a means to supporting the goal of poverty reduction as a larger proportion of the world’s extreme poor live in fragile and conflict-affected states (Chandy et al 2013). Further, conflict prevention and mitigation is defended from a ‘value for money’ perspective, as it is reasonably asserted – though not necessarily empirically validated – that avoiding the escalation of emerging conflicts is less costly than investing resources in resolving protracted conflict and addressing the consequences of ‘complex humanitarian emergencies’. However, there have been few systematic attempts to review the recent literature on conflict prevention and mitigation, especially since the increased attention given to this topic by decision makers in the late 2000s.

This Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) was commissioned by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to review the evidence of ‘what works’ to prevent and mitigate conflict. This exercise reflects DFID’s commitment both to ensuring that existing evidence is accessible and appropriately informs policy and programming and future research addresses evidence gaps identified based on a comprehensive assessment of the current body of literature. It answers the following research question:

What interventions have been effective at preventing or mitigating armed violence¹ in developing and middle income countries?

The review examines academic articles and evaluations published in English, Spanish and Portuguese between 2010 and 2015. It builds on previous review commissioned by DFID that examined the body of evidence on conflict prevention published up to 2010 (Cramer et al 2010). The decision to include Spanish and Portuguese language results in the search was made in order to capture a suspected literature that aligned with DFID’s interest in so-called ‘criminal violence’. The REA adopts a systematic approach to both the literature search and quality assessment to maximise transparency, replicability and potential for future additions.

¹ ‘Armed violence’ involves the intentional use of armed force by groups or organisations and their members against individuals, groups, communities, organizations or states. This includes only either:

- (a) those instances of violence that meet the criteria of Uppsala/DFID’s definition of ‘armed conflict’ (“a contested incompatibility which concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths [in one calendar year]”); OR
- (b) those instances of violence carried out by organised groups that represent a serious (non-individual) threat to the state’s monopoly of force.

This definition of ‘armed violence’ therefore excludes violent crime perpetrated by individuals and intimate partner violence.

Section 2 provides an overview of the methodology, including detail on the inclusion/exclusion criteria, keywords, search strings, data sources, quality assessment and quality assurance. Section 3 reports general findings of the search, whereas Section 4 sets out the body of evidence for each intervention 'theme'. Section 5 synthesises these findings and discusses implications for policy and future research.

2 Methodology

This section sets out the research protocol that this REA adopted. It outlines the systematic search design, additional search inputs, quality assessment procedure, and quality assurance mechanisms. It concludes with a discussion of the challenges involved in implementing this approach.

2.1 Search protocol

DFID commissioned the research team to carry out a systematic search of the literature. The systematic search is characterised by transparency in the search process through precise specification of the inclusion criteria, keywords, search strings, and data sources. By defining these clearly, future researchers can add to or update the evidence base without duplicating efforts.

Details of the inclusion criteria are presented in Table 1 below. It is important to emphasise that the search only covers literature published between 2010 and 2015. Further, the search protocol was originally designed to exclude articles that investigate only the effect of an intervention on intermediate outcomes that may *indirectly* affect the risk and incidence of armed violence, such as trust, social networks, or firearm possession.² The research team interpreted the term ‘intervention’ broadly to include not only aid projects, but also the policies and strategies pursued by both donor and recipient governments, as well as multilateral institutions.

Table 1: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Geographical location	Low or middle-income country (World Bank classification) OR regional	Upper OR high-income country (World Bank classification) OR not specific to particular geography
Language	English, Spanish or Portuguese	Not in English, Spanish or Portuguese
Title	Complete title	Title incomplete or missing
Publication date	2010-2015	Pre-2010
Publication format	Journal articles, working papers, other academic research, evaluations, discussion papers	Other (e.g. book, design manuals, operational documents, descriptions of programmes, process reviews)
Aim of study	Investigating impact of an intervention on armed violence ³	Not investigating impact of intervention on armed violence
Study design	Primary empirical research (quantitative OR qualitative) OR systematic reviews	EITHER lacking explanation of methodology OR secondary literature review OR theoretical

Quality of evidence did not feature as an inclusion criterion at any stage of the research. The decision to keep low quality evidence in the REA was made because the review was not only interested in *findings* of research but also *mapping* the research landscape (e.g. in terms of themes, geographies and methods) identified regardless of quality.

² This criterion was partially relaxed following the first phase of the search based on publication titles, given the extremely limited number of articles that were returned examining the impact on armed violence itself. Although the REA should therefore have identified all publications examining direct impact on armed violence that meet the inclusion criteria, it will only include some, but not all, of the broader literature examining impact on intermediate outcomes.

³ The decision was taken to define armed violence to exclude inter-personal violence and most forms of sexual violence, given that recent literature reviews have been carried out by the [‘What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls Programme’](#) funded by DFID.

2.1.1 Keywords and search strings

Table 2 provides a list of keywords for the systematic search of publication titles. This generates a total of 21 search strings for each data source. Translations into Spanish and Portuguese were based on the most commonly used equivalents in those languages, and are detailed in Annex A.

Table 2: Search string set 1

	Armed violence
Keyword(s) 1	Violen* [violence/violent]; conflict; war
Keyword(s) 2	Prevent* [prevent/prevention/preventing]; mitigat* [mitigate/mitigation/mitigating]; reduc* [reduce/reduction/reducing]; reconcil* [reconcile/reconciliation/reconciling]; recidiv* [redicivism/recidivist]; resol* [resolve/resolution/resolving]; mediat* [mediate/mediation/mediating]
Keyword(s) 3	NOT sexual domestic intimate dating bullying

An additional set of searches in English only was carried out using the keywords in Table 3. There were insufficient resources to repeat this second search in Spanish and Portuguese. The exercise would have also been complicated by the lack of a Spanish and Portuguese equivalent to the English term ‘peacebuilding’. This omission may have led to an underrepresentation of the Spanish and Portuguese literature on peacebuilding.

Table 3: Search string set 2

	Armed violence
Keyword(s) 1	Peace* [peace/peacebuilding/peace-building/peace building]
Keyword(s) 2	Evaluat* [evaluating/evaluate/evaluation]; impact; evidence; review; effective* [effective/effectiveness]
Keyword(s) 3	NOT sexual domestic intimate dating bullying

2.1.2 Data sources

The research team applied the search strings to the data sources listed in Table 4. Only publication titles were searched. The Spanish and Portuguese-language searches were limited to Google Académico and Google Acadêmico respectively.

Table 4: Data sources

Category	Data sources
Publisher platforms	JSTOR (African Studies; Anthropology; Area Studies; Criminology; Development Studies; Economics; International Relations; Peace and Conflict Studies; Political Science; Public Policy & Administration; Social Sciences; Social Work; Sociology)
	Wiley (All Development Studies; All Political Science; All Social Policy and Welfare)
	SAGE journals (Anthropology and Archaeology; Criminology and Criminal Justice; Economics & Development; Evaluation; Interpersonal Violence; Peace Studies & Conflict Resolution; Politics & International Relations; Public Administration; Regional Studies; Social Work & Social Policy)

	SCOPUS
(Meta) search engines	Google Scholar⁴ / Google Académico / Google Académico
Institutional websites⁵	DFID (Research for Development) / gov.uk; European Commission; OECD; UNDP; USAID; World Bank; DFAT; SDC; Norway; Denmark; Oxfam GB; Saferworld; International Alert; Conciliation Resources; Eldis; The Campbell Collaboration;

The above search generated 19,335 English articles and an additional 1,069 Spanish and Portuguese results. This number was reduced through removal of duplicates and removal of articles that clearly did not meet the inclusion criteria based on article title (and, where available, abstract). The resulting 320 articles were downloaded and assessed for relevance. Borderline cases were noted and discussed amongst the team to facilitate a coherent approach to inclusion. A total of 125 relevant articles remained for quality assessment following removal of borderline cases.

2.1.3 Snowball and expert input

Snowballing based on citations in articles identified through the systematic search produced an additional 15 relevant articles. This process was not undertaken systematically given scarce resources for further snowballing and discretion was used in selecting only the articles that appeared most promising in terms of relevance and quality. This likely introduced a slight bias towards identification of high-quality articles in the search.

Experts in the field of conflict prevention and mitigation were also consulted in an attempt to ensure we had captured as much of the relevant literature that met the inclusion criteria as possible.⁶ This led to the addition of 9 articles to the search results.

2.2 Quality assessment

A total of 149 articles⁷ (16 of them in Portuguese or Spanish) met the inclusion criteria outlined in Table 1 and were quality assessed using the DFID How To Note on 'Assessing the strength of evidence' (DFID 2014). There are some particular features of this REA that influenced the application of these guidelines.

Whilst experimental and quasi-experimental quantitative research methods are often regarded as providing the most rigorous testing of counterfactuals (the so-called gold standard), application of such methods to conflict prevention is only possible in a very limited number of cases. It would require developing a plausible answer to the question 'would the incidence or intensity of conflict have been different *were this intervention not to have taken place?*'

⁴ The research team encountered some technical problems when using Google Scholar. The search results interface would only display approximately the first 1000 results to searches, which meant that some search results could not be included in the REA. This may negatively affect replicability if the ordering of search results changes over time as search algorithms are updated. Google's technical support team were unable to resolve the issue.

⁵ Institutional websites were searched using an advanced Google Search. This is because many institutional websites (i) do not have an advanced search function that allows searches of website titles only and/or (ii) do not allow the use of Boolean operators for complex search strings. Use of Google Search means that results for searches of institutional websites were therefore not date-constrained, though few search functions on institutional websites allow this anyway. Pilot searches indicated that using Google Search did not exclude results that would otherwise be included in a direct search of institutional websites using their own search engine, however this is difficult to say with certainty given the limited functionality of these search engines.

⁶ These are listed in the Acknowledgements section above.

⁷ Of which 7 were in Spanish and 9 were in Portuguese.

The body of literature is comprised of a large number of qualitative studies. At best, such studies can only make claims that a specific intervention *contributed* towards conflict prevention. This has implications for the appropriate process for quality assessment and synthesis. It implies limits to external validity for individual studies and it suggests the need for a realistic quality benchmark, rather than appealing to an (at least in this case) unrealistic benchmark of experimental ‘gold standard’ methodologies.

Quality assessment was based on the extent to which the study abides by the principles of research quality outlined in the DFID How To Note (DFID 2014). We have selected six criteria for assessing the quality of research, which were adapted from the How To Note, as shown in Box 1. These principles can be applied flexibly to both quantitative and qualitative research methods and, although some methods may tend to score more highly on certain principles than other methods, there is no necessary ‘hierarchy’ of methods that emerges from this.

Box 1: Six principles for quality assessment

1. **Conceptual framing.** Does the study acknowledge existing research? Does the study pose a research question or outline a hypothesis?
2. **Transparency.** Is it clear what is the geography/context in which the study was conducted? Does the study present or link to the raw data it analyses? Does the study declare sources of support/funding? How clear is the study about the quality (and limitations on quality) of the primary data, how clear is it about sampling decisions and site selection, etc.?
3. **Appropriateness of method.** Does the study identify a research design and data-collection and analysis methods? Does the study demonstrate why the chosen design and method are well suited to the research question?
4. **Validity.** To what extent is the study internally valid (valid in terms of where the research was done)?
5. **Cultural/Context sensitivity.** Does the study explicitly consider any context-specific cultural factors that may bias the analysis/findings?
6. **Cogency.** To what extent does the author consider the study’s limitations and/or alternative interpretations of the analysis? Are the conclusions clearly based on the study’s results (rather than on theory, assumptions or policy priorities)?

Each article was assigned a score of 1-3 against each principle, according to how the questions are answered (the extent to which the criteria are met), where 3 stands for ‘no concerns’, 2 for ‘some concerns’ and 1 for ‘major concerns’. Each publication was then assigned an aggregate score assuming equal weighting for each principle. Each team member recorded notes on each publication they assessed in a separate Word file, to provide justification for the scores and to facilitate quality assurance.

This REA uses the descriptors (simply ↑, →, ↓ summary arrows) recommended in the DFID note and studies will be noted in the format ‘<research method>; <research quality>’ (e.g. (Jones 2005, EXP, →). By summing up the scores for each principle, the range of possible scores using the system described above is 6-18. Publications scoring between 6 and 10 are regarded as low quality (↓), those between 11 and 14 as moderate quality (→), and those between 15 and 18 as high quality (↑). Table 5 below outlines the abbreviations used to describe the research methods used. There is inevitably some overlap between these categories.

Table 5: Typology of methods

Type	Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed
Primary (P)	Experimental (EXP)	Interviews/FGD only (INT)	Mixed methods (MM)
	Quasi-experimental (QE)	Case study (CS)	Case studies (CS)
	Statistical analysis (SA) ⁸	Ethnography (ETH)	
	Descriptive statistics (DS)	Discourse analysis (DISC)	
Secondary (S)	Systematic Review (SR)		

It is important to note that studies coded ‘low quality’ are not necessarily without merit, but have been categorised as such because they did not meet the principles of research quality set out for this specific study in relation to the research question above and on the basis of DFID’s How To Note (2014).

Following the quality assessment, researchers undertook additional coding of articles according to region, country, type or ‘theme’ of intervention, type of armed violence it tried to prevent/mitigate, and the timing of the intervention in relation to the armed violence. This coding, which evolved iteratively on the basis of discussions amongst the team, was crucial in facilitating the synthesis.

Researchers attempted to identify ‘bodies of literature’ within each theme that focused on interventions with similar designs. In most instances where it was possible to discuss such a body of literature, the body was regarded as ‘small’ (i.e. comprising up to ten articles), though in a few cases ‘moderately sized’ bodies of literature were identified (i.e. comprising 11-25 articles). No bodies of literature larger than 30 articles were found in this REA. In each of the thematic analyses in Section 4, high quality evidence is discussed before moderate and low quality evidence within each body of literature.

2.3 Quality assurance

The process of quality assessment is the phase of the REA that is most vulnerable to researcher bias. This risk was minimised through the following leadership and quality assurance (QA) mechanisms:

- At the start of the quality assessment phase, a team call was held to clarify any doubts and develop a shared understanding of the DFID principles;
- Before the assessment began, the Team Leader provided researchers with examples of quality assessments and short explanations of why particular judgements were made in each instance;
- Shortly after the start of the process, the Team Leader moderated a sample of each Researchers’ quality assessments *without knowing the Researchers’ quality assessments* (i.e. blind).
- At the end of the process, the Team Leader and Team Co-Leader moderated a random sample of the total results *without knowing the Researchers’ quality assessments*. If there was noteworthy deviation in scoring, then a third quality assessor reviewed each researcher’s rationale for scoring and would then mediate the score.

⁸ Includes regression analysis and basic forms of hypothesis testing.

In total, 36/149 (24%) of articles were quality assured, of which only 4 had their scores adjusted by more than 2 points. This low revision rate is regarded as an affirmation that the researchers' shared a similar understanding of what constitutes high-quality evidence. Some minor changes to scoring and thematic coding were made during the synthesis process in order to improve consistency in approach.

Box 2: Interpreting the evidence tables in this report

The syntheses in Sections 3 and 4 include tables that summarise the quality of evidence and findings for each intervention theme. The following points should be noted before interpreting this information:

- Researchers regarded an intervention as '**effective**' if the article concluded that a positive impact on conflict prevention or mitigation could be *causally attributed* to the intervention in question, or that the intervention *contributed* causally to the outcome. Where articles only examined the impact of an intervention on intermediate outcomes (for example, plausible *drivers* of armed violence such as inter-group trust or the funding sources of a violent actor), researchers regarded an intervention as '**promising**' and *not* 'effective'. An intervention was also regarded as promising where the author(s) expressed doubt about their own claims about effectiveness (for example where they noted other plausible explanations of a change in armed violence that they failed to rule out).
- Section 4 in particular draws attention explicitly to whether cited studies find an **association** (with no claim to causal relations), a **contribution**, or an **attribution**. Where an article makes a claim – for example, that an impact is attributed to an intervention – we largely rely on the evidence quality summary arrows in parentheses (↑, →, or ↓) to underline whether the claim is based on strong research evidence or not.
- Articles grouped together in each table **do not represent a coherent body of evidence**. The articles reviewed ask different research questions, vary in their dependent variable, and examine a wide range of different types of intervention. Although the tables are useful insofar as they provide readers with an at-a-glance summary, it would be wrong to infer the strength of evidence or impact of individual groups of interventions within each theme from the findings associated with the theme as a whole. As noted in the discussion in each section, there are some encouraging and coherent bodies of evidence within each theme, even if findings for interventions under the theme as a whole are fragmented, of low-quality evidence, and have inconsistent findings.

There are a number of limitations of the method adopted. Although some of these have been touched on in the discussion above and are noted in Section 3.4 below, they are explored in greater depth in Annex A.

3 General findings

This REA has found no strong body of evidence, produced in 2010-15, on ‘what works’ or ‘what does not work’ by way of interventions to prevent or mitigate armed conflict.

The 149 studies that meet the inclusion criteria of the search are spread across a large number of topics. Moreover, a great deal of the research that is directly relevant to the research question of this study is not high quality: out of the 149 studies, 61 were assessed as low quality, 59 were moderate, and 29 high quality.

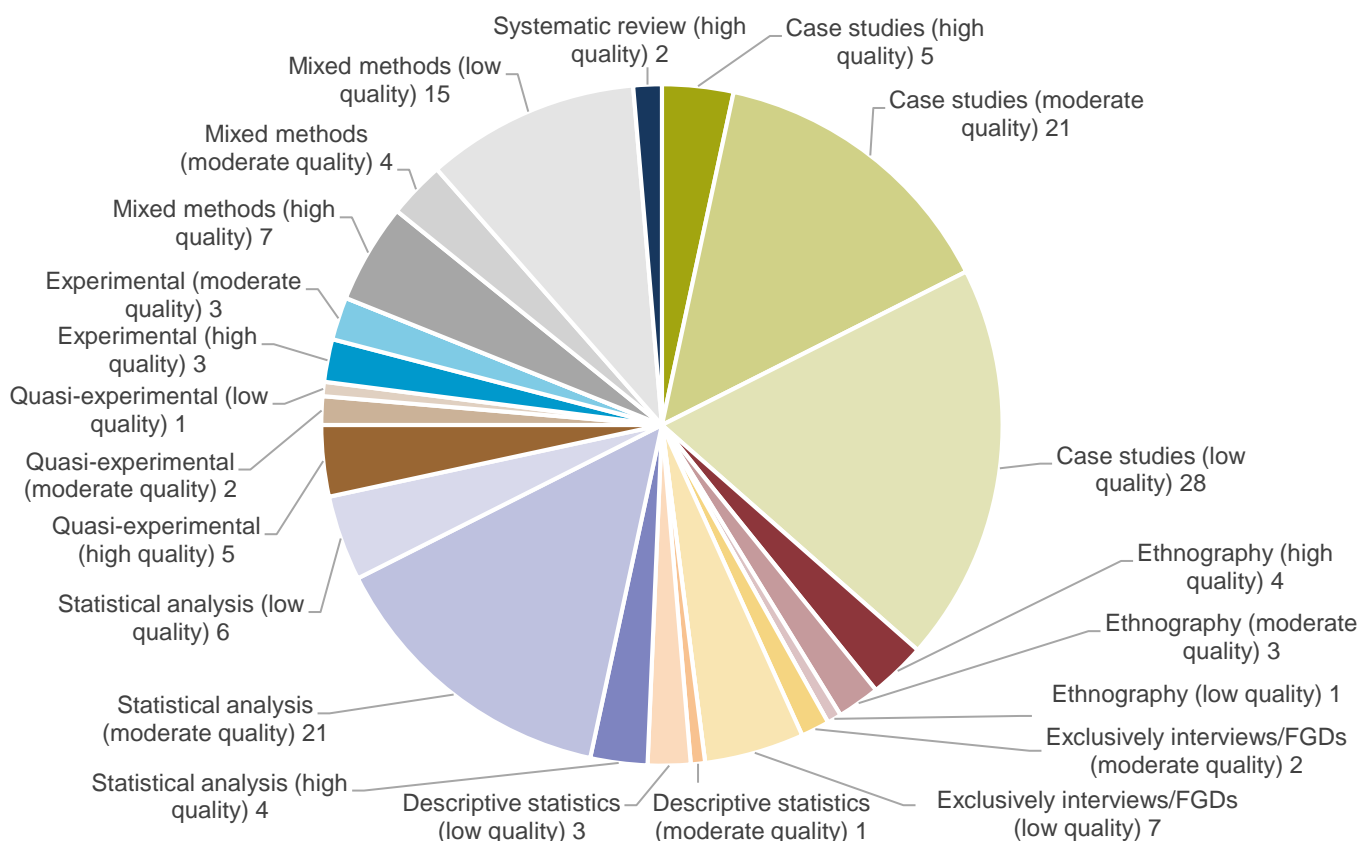
In total, 19 studies (three of them high quality) presented evidence that interventions were ‘effective’ and 27 studies (of which six were high quality) found evidence of ‘ineffective’ interventions. These 46 studies were themselves spread across a range of topics (see Section 5.1). 49 studies were coded as ‘promising’. In most cases this was because they may have had clear findings but were concerned only with intermediate outcomes (such as ‘trust’ or ‘social cohesion’) without any direct evidence that, for example, greater trust between groups actually reduced the incidence or statistical risk of armed conflict. In the remaining cases, interventions were described as ‘promising’ either because they failed to specify the impact on armed violence (e.g. referring to ‘reduced tension’ without specifying what this entailed) or because they sought to explain an impact that was otherwise assumed (i.e. their research questions took the form ‘why was x effective in preventing/mitigating armed violence?’ rather than ‘was x effective?’). A summary of the most prominent findings is presented in Section 5.

3.1 Research design and methodology

Figure 1 below shows how clearly case studies dominated the research design in the studies. Of these 54 case studies, relatively few were comparative case studies. A further nine articles were exclusively interview based and another eight were ethnographic studies. This brings the total number of purely ‘qualitative’ studies to 71. Combining statistical analyses with descriptive statistics, experimental and quasi-experimental studies, there were 49 obviously ‘quantitative’ studies. Additionally, there were 27 mixed methods studies: some of these combined a case study with a literature review, though the majority of mixed methods designs combined qualitative interview and focus group research methods with quantitative analysis of survey evidence.

Figure 1 below illustrates the breakdown of quality assessment by research method. The case studies did not fare well in terms of quality assessment. Only five were judged high quality, 21 were moderate quality and the remainder were low quality. Meanwhile, only four of the statistical analyses were assessed as high quality, and 21 of them were moderate. A slightly higher proportion of the mixed methods studies (6/26) were high quality. Five of the eight quasi-experimental and three of the six experimental studies were high quality. It should also be pointed out that nearly all of the publications on Latin America that were in Spanish or Portuguese were low quality. A discussion of the findings on research methods is presented in Section 5.

Figure 1: Number of articles for each research method



3.2 Geographical distribution

A high proportion (36%) of the academic literature identified focuses on sub-Saharan Africa. This is perhaps unsurprising given the large volume of aid channelled through this region and the large number of cases of armed violence. However, the relatively limited attention paid both to the Middle East and South Asia is surprising given the large investment of external resources in armed violence management in these regions, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq. This bias in the geographical distribution of literature raises concerns about extrapolating emerging findings on what works from the contexts we see in the current literature to the Middle East and South Asia, especially given that the forms of international engagement in these contexts differ significantly from those in sub-Saharan Africa.

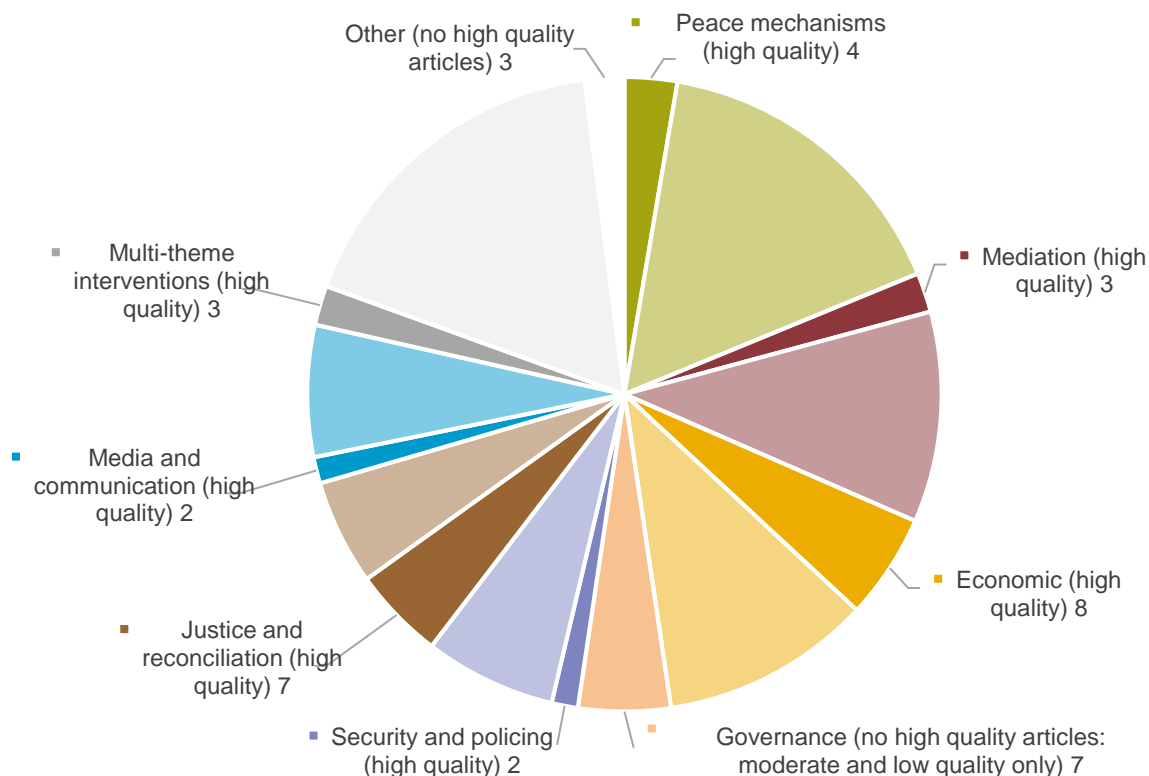
Table 6: Articles disaggregated by geography

Region	Number of studies
International	29
Sub-Saharan Africa	54
Latin America and the Caribbean	29 (of which 16 in Spanish/Portuguese)
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	9
South Asia (incl. Afghanistan)	10
East, South East Asia and Pacific	12
Middle East and North Africa	6

3.3 Intervention themes

Figure 2 shows the distribution of studies by type of intervention, highlighting the number of high quality studies for each type of intervention (note that this does not mean that they show an intervention that worked). A summary of these types of 'themes' is given in Table 7. Figure 2 shows that high quality studies were concentrated among those studies focusing on economic interventions and on justice and reconciliation, relative to other types of intervention.

Figure 2: Number of articles identified as high quality for each theme



3.4 Limitations

As set out in earlier sections, this REA developed agreed search strings and inclusion/exclusion criteria. After the systematic search of publishing platforms and institutional websites, the REA team then took three steps to refine the search: first, they snowballed, delving into the references in studies included in the search to find some relevant studies that met the inclusion criteria but that had not turned up in the search; second, they did hand searches, looking for relevant publications meeting the inclusion criteria that team members either knew of or were sure could be found on specific topics; third, the team leaders contacted a small number of experts in the field to seek out additional relevant studies.⁹ These efforts all produced relevant studies that were added to the analysis to increase coverage, but simultaneously diminish replicability.

However, it is still likely that there are studies produced in 2010-15 that are relevant to the research but that have not been found in the search or in the additional snowballing, hand searches, or expert contacts. This is most likely a product of the constraints of search terms (additional search strings might be designed to include further relevant publications) and of the limited snowballing and hand searches that were done. These in turn are a function of the resource constraints on the REA. For the same reason the team was unable to invest time in including an assessment of books. Therefore, it is important to emphasise that this REA has limitations in what it has been able to cover and analyse. Annex A discusses the limitations of the method adopted in further depth.

⁹ These included researchers and staff at SIPRI, Conciliation Resources, the University of Uppsala, and former staff members of International Alert and the Overseas Development Institute.

4 Thematic synthesis

The 149 articles identified through the search protocol were grouped into seven ‘themes’ according to the type of intervention being assessed. These themes were identified based on emerging analysis of the 149 articles that met the inclusion criteria. Where possible the team sought to align the terminology with that used by DFID in its programming. For each theme this section highlights the key findings, provides an overview of the body of evidence, discusses notable findings and tentatively identifies gaps reflect promising topics for future research.

Table 7: Typology of intervention themes

Intervention ‘themes’	Number of studies ¹⁰	Average quality (out of 18)
Peace mechanisms Intervention (e.g. peace support operations, peacekeeping operations, inclusivity of peace agreements, use of road maps, United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions) Prevention (e.g. early warning mechanisms, coordination and governance institutions, civil society platforms, dialogue processes, peace education)	28 (47)	11.6 (11.3)
Mediation International mediation in civil war, sub-national and community-level mediation, alternative dispute resolution	19 (28)	11.9 (12)
Economic Macro (e.g. economic policy, trade, investment) Micro (e.g. post-war reconstruction, infrastructure projects, employment generation, cash transfers)	24 (34)	12.2 (11.6)
Governance e.g. participatory decision-making, electoral support, power-sharing, transparency, good governance, membership of international organisations, treaties [excluding security sector and economic governance]	7 (16)	12 (11.3)
Security and policing e.g. public security, policing, Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), security sector reform	12 (25)	10.6 (10.4)
Justice and reconciliation e.g. access to formal justice, truth and reconciliation commissions, planned contact, ‘indigenous’ reconciliation mechanisms, International Criminal Court (ICC)	15 (31)	12.9 (13)
Media and communication e.g. peace messaging, radio programmes, discursive framing, statements, language policy	12 (12)	11.8 (11.8)
Other Analytical lenses	3 (3)	10.7 (10.7)

¹⁰ The numbers in brackets include studies that examine a package of interventions, where at least one of the interventions falls within this theme. This was often the case, for example, with multi-sector donor peacebuilding funds. The numbers in brackets do not therefore represent unique studies, so the total of this column is more than 149.

4.1 Peace mechanisms

This section looks at peace mechanisms, which included 47 articles that covered a wide range of interventions addressing different stages, forms and of levels of armed violence. Broadly the studies within this theme cluster around four areas: UN peacekeeping/peace operations in post war contexts (9); urban violence and crime reduction (5); local infrastructure for peace - including community level dialogue, peace education and civil society organisations in contexts affected by war or political violence (18); evaluations of regional, country or local level multi-sectoral peacebuilding programmes (14). One additional study looked at UNSC sanctions.

4.1.1 Key findings on peace mechanisms

- There are no conclusive findings about the effectiveness of peace mechanisms on preventing or mitigating armed violence.
- There are mixed findings about the impacts of international peace operations (i.e. peacekeeping); some moderate-quality case studies find that they are not effective at reducing levels of armed violence and frequently may have unintended and/or perverse effects on statebuilding processes. Others provide some moderate-quality evidence of positive effects of peacekeeping deployment on social norms and reducing violence.
- The findings on interventions directed at community level peacebuilding are equally mixed. A number of studies found that interventions such as peace education and intra-community dialogue can be effective in terms of developing shared norms and trust, but unless they engaged with the wider institutional and political context, their effects could be ephemeral or even perverse.
- Although there were several multi-sectoral peacebuilding programmes, very few of them were found to have cumulative impacts on peacebuilding at the national level. Even for those cases where some potentially important impacts on conflict prevention/mitigation were claimed, the studies/evaluations assessing these impacts are not methodologically robust. Paradoxically, some large-scale multi-sectoral interventions may have achieved relevant long term goals in terms of conflict prevention; but the impact evaluations that should have captured their effects were methodologically unsuited to adequately measuring impact and therefore could not establish attribution.
- There is some evidence that cohesive and networked community organisations, when linked to wider governmental structures, can play a supportive role in mitigating/reducing urban violence at the local level.

4.1.2 What does the body of evidence on peace mechanisms look like?

The REA search found 47 relevant articles on this theme. Of these 28 focused exclusively on peace mechanisms and 19 focused on peace mechanisms as one part of a wider package of interventions. As Table 8 shows there were relatively few high quality studies (6/47) and of these 2 found interventions to be promising, 4 found mixed effects and 1 found interventions to be ineffective. Half of the studies (24) were found to be low quality. Of the 18 studies which found interventions to be effective (4) or promising (14), 12 were low quality. 22 studies concluded that interventions were mixed (13) or ineffective (9).

Table 8: Summary of findings on impact of peace mechanisms¹¹

		Quality of evidence			Total
		High	Moderate	Low	
Impact of intervention	Effective	0 (0)	0 (1)	1 (3)	1 (4)
	Promising	2 (2)	3 (3)	5 (9)	10 (14)
	Mixed	2 (3)	3 (6)	3 (4)	8 (13)
	Ineffective	0 (0)	6 (6)	1 (3)	7 (9)
	Inconclusive	0 (1)	0 (1)	2 (5)	2 (7)
Total		4 (6)	12 (17)	12 (24)	28 (47)

In terms of the types of conflict contexts, 15 focused on civil wars, 15 on post-civil war violence, five on criminal violence and organised crime, five on political/electoral violence, and five on minor armed conflict.

There was a high geographical concentration on sub-Saharan Africa (20), followed by East and South-East Asia (7), multiple regions (9), Latin America (6), Eastern Europe and Central Asia (4) and South Asia (1). No articles examined solely peace mechanisms in the Middle East and North Africa.

4.1.3 What types of peace intervention are covered and are they effective?

This theme covers a wide assortment of interventions, but what tends to unite them is a focus on the peacebuilding context, rather than the direct manifestations of, or actors in, armed violence. In other words they are interested in how interventions address the assumed enablers or disablers of peace. This explains the large number of articles coded as ‘promising’ rather than ‘effective’.

Peacekeeping. Seven studies of moderate quality explored the roles and effects of international peacekeeping, but the findings are mixed. These studies illustrate the difficulty in defining and measuring success, with each looking at different dimensions of peace operations and deploying different methods. Ahmad (2012, CS, →) found that the international peace operation in Somalia contributed to state weakness and the war economy, thereby sustaining the civil war. Whalan (2012, CS, ↓), argues that the Cambodian peace operation failed in relation to the goal of a sustainable peace settlement, but did succeed in containing conflict, and identifies specific policies and structures that contributed to these outcomes. Costalli (2013, SA, →) uses a spatially disaggregated analysis of peacekeeping in Bosnia and finds that the presence of peacekeepers is not associated with a reduction in violence once other factors are taken into account. Braithwaite’s (2012, CS, →) study of the Timor Leste peace operation found that the mission contributed to both successes and failures of the peace process: this included finding that the UN transitional administration’s sidelining of civil society networks in Timor-Leste contributed to a “network of tyranny” in which resistance leaders became overly powerful state leaders. At a societal level, many things ‘worked’ despite, rather than because of, the peace operation. Cunningham (2010, SA, →) found an association between external states that intervened in civil wars with ‘independent agendas’ (i.e. other than ending the civil war) and significantly longer lasting civil wars using regression analysis. Nakov (2012, CS, →) argues that the failure of peace accords to

¹¹ Numbers in brackets include articles that look at peace mechanisms as one component of a set of interventions spanning multiple themes.

address social policy issues undermined alternative livelihoods and helped guide former combatants into organised crime.

Against these accounts of mixed to negative effects, there were two studies that found evidence of positive effects; Mironova and Whitt (2015, MM, →) attribute greater trust towards ethnic others in Kosovo to peacekeeping strategies. Areas in which peacekeepers actively enforced the rule of law exhibited higher levels of trust towards ethnic others than those in which peacekeepers took a more hands-off, monitoring approach. Hultman et al's (2014, SA, →) quantitative study on peacekeeping operations in Africa found that lower numbers of battlefield deaths are associated with the deployment of greater numbers of peacekeeping troops. They found no such effect with regard to the deployment of police and/or observers.

Societal peacebuilding. A second and very diverse group of studies, covered interventions that focus on societal peacebuilding. These studies are of varied quality and provide inconclusive evidence on different forms of community-focused peacebuilding. Two studies examined the impacts of peace education and found mixed or inconclusive results. One, randomised control trial in Liberia (Blattman et al 2011, EXP, →), attributes increased rates of dispute resolution between communities to training in conflict mediation and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. However, their data also show that at least in this case, entrenched attitudes could not be influenced through information and education alone. The authors conclude that without fundamental change in incentives or institutions, these campaigns have marginal effects. A second, ethnographic study of two youth programmes in northern Uganda, argues that they make limited contributions to changing attitudes, behaviours and relationships suggesting that programmes foster a “culture of complacency,” rather than a “culture of peace” (Webster 2013, ETH, ↓).

Other studies under this theme covered a range of specific cases: Naga intra-community dialogue in India was found to have a promising effect on conflict dynamics. Although the study did not examine the impact on armed violence *per se*, it does argue that intra-community dialogue contributed towards improved cohesion of the Naga movement in a way that increases the likelihood of successful peace talks between them and the Government of India (Goswami 2010, CT, →). A study of faith based organisations and religious mediation in Nigeria, argued that such organisations contribute in promising ways to reducing conflict between religious groups (Omotosho 2014, CT, ↓). A study of the intersection between national level peacebuilding and local-level customary and informal systems in Liberia, attributes crises in customary systems to the norms and practices of national top-down peacebuilding, arguing that such interventions, therefore, had counterproductive effects (Neumann 2011, ETH, →). Finally, a study argued that global policy networks made a mixed contribution to peacebuilding processes, for when such networks are weak, they are susceptible to capture by donors or local elites exacerbating the state-society schisms that PB efforts seek to overcome, whereas if they are institutionalised and built into the administrative structures of the state they can play a positive role (Ohanyan 2010, CT, →).

In many of these studies, theories of change are assumed rather than clearly specified, and the linkages between knowledge, attitudes, behavioural change and armed violence prevention/reduction is frequently asserted rather than demonstrated. These studies build up a picture of positive, micro-level impacts, but it is by no means a robust body of work. Generalisations are even harder to make when talking about societal aspects of peacebuilding: context sensitivity is one of the most important factors here.

A cluster of evaluations of donor interventions, which included significant local peacebuilding components, represents an additional source of evidence on societal peacebuilding.¹² Evaluations were generally of low to middling quality, including, for example, evaluations of Norwegian Church Aid peace support activities in Burundi (P-FIM 2012, INT, ↓); a USAID evaluation of conflict mitigation in Kenya (Grossman-Vermaas and Reisman 2013, MM, →); an evaluation of the Darfur community stability fund (Coffey 2012, INT, ↓); and a UNDP conflict prevention and peacebuilding programmes in the Philippines (Guevara de la Paz 2012, MM, ↓). Two high quality evaluations, an evaluation of donor aid to South Sudan (Bennett et al 2010, MM, ↑), and the terminal evaluation of an Action for Conflict Transformation (ACT) peacebuilding programme in the Philippines (ACT 2012, MM, ↑), were far more transparent in terms of their methodology and underlying assumptions and more ambitious in terms of data collection. In general, the evaluations suggest that the local-level peacebuilding interventions they assess did not contribute to peace: they were of mixed impact or ineffective. However, the ACT study concluded that the intervention it assessed, which involved programming focusing on local institutions, community resilience, basic services and local constituencies for peace in Mindanao in the Philippines, made a 'promising' contribution to peace. Beyond bearing out the impact of issues such as how well different interventions were implemented, the fact that the only 'promising' intervention took place in the Philippines, which has a relatively strong state oriented towards service delivery, suggests that this may be an important factor in determining whether strengthening local institutions 'works.'

Urban violence and crime. A fourth cluster of studies look at urban violence and crime, focusing on the role of community cohesion and community-level organisation in reducing urban crime in Honduras (Berg and Carranza 2015, MM, →); and the role of crime and other 'risk factors' in galvanising or impeding communities' propensity to organise in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico (Vilalta 2013, SA, ↓). A third study evaluated a UNDP programme designed to strengthen government capacities to counter violence in Jamaica (Morgan 2011, MM, ↓). Two of these three studies are of low quality and have largely inconclusive findings. The Honduras study, which was of medium quality and combines quantitative and qualitative methods, attributes reductions in urban crime to community cohesion and organisation and encourages donors to support interventions at this level, including to reduce risk factors that appear to make community organisation more difficult.

Other. Finally, one outlier was Beardsley et al's (2015, SA, ↑) study on the conflict prevention effect of UNSC Resolutions in self-determination disputes. The study found that resolutions with diplomatic actions (including, good offices, mediation, monitoring missions, launch of Investigations, special courts, and peacebuilding activities) that directly address self-determination disputes are strongly associated with a reduction in the likelihood of conflict in such disputes. In contrast resolutions authorising sanctions are associated with an increased likelihood of self-determination disputes turning into war. However, the latter finding is based on only five cases, four of which are from the former Yugoslavia.

4.1.4 What is missing in the body of evidence on peace mechanisms?

The literature, and particularly the evaluations of donor interventions examined here, pays insufficient attention to the effectiveness and impact of peace mechanisms as a distinct type of intervention. Evaluations generally cover multiple thematic components, addressing both formative and summative evaluation questions, with the result that findings regarding impact, especially of individual components, are often crowded out or insufficiently evidenced. Although an adaptive 'portfolio' approach to funding interventions across multiple themes has been increasingly regarded as 'better practice' over recent years (DFID 2013; Booth and Unsworth 2014), there is a risk that this diverts resources away from effective monitoring and high quality evaluation of both individual

¹² Because many of these evaluations concern multi-sectoral and sometimes multi-donor and multi-country programmes, their findings are included in multiple thematic sections.

components within these portfolios as well as the collective contribution of such programmes as a whole.

There is a growing body of research on the micro dynamics of war, much of which effectively mixes quantitative and qualitative methods, but there is too limited body of analogous research on ‘the micro-dynamics of peace’. Relatedly very few, if any, of the studies on societal peacebuilding gave a convincing account of how the ‘bottom up’ connects to the ‘top down’ and wider political and economic processes. Hardly any studies incorporated recent insights from political economy research on political settlements, limited access orders, or the political marketplace. The meso-level remains a blind spot in the studies of local and national peacebuilding. This point is discussed in greater depth in Section 5.4.

Several studies touched upon the importance and role of local leadership, but only in a fleeting and under-theorized manner. This is a gap in the state of knowledge about what works, and is a surprising finding given the emphasis placed, in the political economy literature, on the significance of national and local elites in shaping conflict and peacebuilding dynamics. Two high quality studies posit an important role of local ownership and suggest ways in which it connects to the broader context. Berg and Carranza (2015, MM, ↑) highlight the importance of community organisation for contributing to reductions in violence, while linking the conditions for its success to the broader political economy. ACT (2012, MM ↑) evaluated a programme that targeted multiple levels, and integrated the training of individual leaders in conflict management with the strengthening of community organisations and the development of linkages with government agencies at the local and national levels. It found that this intervention made a promising contribution to reducing armed violence

4.2 Mediation

The mediation theme covers a range of interventions that constitute a conscious effort by a third party to facilitate a brokered end to or change to the terms on which conflict is conducted. The interventions identified here include mediation at a range of scales, from international mediation to end civil war to more modest alternative dispute resolution (ADR) at a local level.

4.2.1 Key findings on mediation

- The search uncovered a fragmented body of literature published between 2010-2015 on the impact of mediation on conflict prevention and mitigation, with few comparable findings. The articles examine interventions by different types of actors with varying approaches and mandates, trying to resolve a broad range of types of conflict.
- The search identified a small, mixed quality body of evidence, published between 2010-2015, that mostly finds ADR mechanisms contribute to the reduction of local conflicts, such as land disputes. However, if poorly designed and lacking sensitivity to conflict dynamics and specific histories of conflict resolution, they may have perverse consequences, for example by activating or renewing latent conflicts.
- The search found a small, mixed quality body of evidence published between 2010-2015 that finds a mixed impact of international mediation on various dimensions of conflict. These articles highlight the primacy of domestic actors in addressing armed violence. Whilst external third parties may have a role, its effectiveness is highly dependent on the attitudes and behaviours of domestic actors.

- Mediation is overwhelmingly a response triggered by the existence/escalation of armed violence – none of the articles provide high quality evidence of mediation that has forestalled or prevented armed violence. There is some evidence that mediation has been useful at managing crises in the short-term, but not so much at resolving conflicts in complex and long-term crises.
- Some of the highest quality studies emphasised ways in which external mediators become active players in conflict, rather than simply being neutral referees, which may have the effect of adding new layers of complexity to the conflict. This finding is supported by a recent body of political economy literature on the perverse effects of international intervention in armed conflict (not included in this study). This research finds that international mediation, when linked to a range of other interventions, and driven by external interests rather domestic concerns, may intensify and sustain armed violence.¹³

4.2.2 What does the body of evidence on mediation look like?

This section looks at peace mediation and the search protocol identified a total of 28 articles of which 19 solely looked at mediation and nine articles that examined a bundle of activities of which mediation was a significant component. The number of studies identified by the research protocol is surprisingly small relative to the very rapid growth of research on conflict mediation in recent years identified in other reviews of the literature.¹⁴

The articles were of mixed quality, with nine low, 14 moderate and five high quality. Most were qualitative individual or comparative case studies, with only five using statistical analysis and one systematic review. There was no correlation between article quality and the methodology deployed – of the six high quality articles three were qualitative case studies, two deployed statistical analysis, and one was the systematic review. Again of the five high quality articles, two found interventions to be promising, two ineffective and one was inconclusive. Overall findings on the impact of interventions of armed violence prevention and mitigation were varied, with 13 articles finding promising or effective and 15 finding ineffective, mixed or inconclusive results.

Table 9: Summary of findings on impact of mediation¹⁵

		Quality of evidence			Total
		High	Moderate	Low	
Impact of intervention	Effective	0 (0)	4 (4)	0 (0)	4 (4)
	Promising	2 (2)	2 (3)	2 (4)	6 (9)
	Mixed	0 (0)	3 (5)	1 (3)	4 (8)
	Ineffective	1 (2)	0 (0)	1 (1)	2 (3)
	Inconclusive	0 (1)	2 (2)	1 (1)	3 (4)
Total		3 (5)	11 (14)	5 (9)	19 (28)

Nearly half (13) of the articles focused on civil wars, four on land conflict, two on inter-state war, two on election violence, and one on organised criminal violence. Most focused on conflict

¹³ See Suhrke, A (2011) and De Waal, A (2016)

¹⁴ See Wallensteen, P. and Svensson, I (2014)

¹⁵ Numbers in brackets include articles that look at mediation interventions as one component of a set of interventions spanning multiple themes.

dynamics or critical junctures, with only eight having an explicit focus on underlying structures or attributes.

In terms of the geographical distribution, eight articles had a global focus or assessed countries in multiple regions, 11 focused on Sub-Saharan Africa, two on Eastern Europe and Central Asia, two on East and South-East Asia, two on the Middle East and North Africa, two on Latin America and the Caribbean, and one on South Asia. This distribution is not reflective of either the global demand or supply sides of mediation (i.e. the geographical spread of armed violence or the spatial concentration of mediation efforts), which have become increasingly located in Europe, the Middle East and South Asia (Wallensteen and Svensson, 2014).

4.2.3 What types of mediation interventions are covered and are they effective?

The types of mediators covered a spectrum from official third party international agencies (UNs, European Union, African Union), to individual countries, leaders and contact groups (Norway, South Africa, Russia), to domestic governments (Indonesia, Turkey) to civil society groups (RECOFTC in Indonesia). A common and perhaps unsurprising finding that linked almost all of the case study articles, was the primacy of domestic – mostly but not exclusively state actors - in addressing armed conflict. Studies of civil wars in Sri Lanka, Burundi, Indonesia, Turkey and Zimbabwe all stressed the centrality of domestic leaders in addressing or aggravating conflict dynamics.

International mediation. Another insight, mainly derived from two of the higher quality case study articles (Piombo 2010, CS, ↑; Sørbo et al 2011. CS, ↑), was that external mediators are active players in conflict rather than neutral referees. The articles show how, over time, mediation can add new layers of complexity to armed conflict and the tensions between the management, termination and resolution of armed conflict. These nuances can perhaps only be revealed through longitudinal studies that involve complex process tracing of conflict dynamics.

Box 3: Norwegian peace mediation in Sri Lanka's civil war

The study by Sørbo et al (2011, CS, ↑) provides a cautionary note on the unintended impacts of mediation in a protracted armed conflict. The research was funded by NORAD, in order to generate policy lessons that would inform Norway's global work in the area of peace promotion. The research focused on the time period leading up to the initiation of the peace process in 2002, until Norway's official withdrawal as facilitator of the process in 2008. The peace process had broken down well before 2008 with the resumption of hostilities. The peace process came to an end in 2009 with a military victory for the Sri Lankan government over The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The study is qualitative and draws upon data from key informant interviews with many of the main protagonists in the peace process, supplemented by a systematic review of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs archives, in addition to the relevant secondary literature.

The study found that although Norwegians saw themselves as neutral facilitators, they were viewed by the parties to the conflict as political players who increasingly became instrumentalised by the government and the LTTE in order to pursue incompatible goals (a unitary but weakly decentralised state versus an autonomous homeland). Norway's role as a weak facilitator – with a strong interest in maintaining its role as official mediator, yet without laying down clear conditions on the terms of its engagement – accentuated the potential to get sucked into the politics of the conflict. Furthermore, efforts to deploy aid to generate a peace dividend and create a supportive infrastructure for the peace talks had the effect of intensifying

competition for resources. These efforts were also seen as an undesired form of conditionality amongst nationalist groups, and over time the mediation process became a lightning rod for other sets of conflict within Sri Lankan society, creating a backlash in the south and a fracturing of the LTTE in the northeast. These dynamics in turn helped create a political platform for the emergence of a nationalist coalition to come to power promising a military solution to the conflict.

Whilst the failure of the peace process and the brutal end to the war cannot be attributed to Norwegian intervention, the study demonstrated that a stronger Political Economy Analysis (PEA) would have alerted the mediators to the likely adverse political dynamics surrounding mediation and the delivery of aid. For example, a PEA could have predicted the strong intra-elite rivalry within the mainstream political parties in the south of the country, which the peace process intensified. It would also have highlighted the potential for aid to become a point of contention, rather than a shared resource between the government and the LTTE. Finally it was argued that if Norway had developed clearer precautionary principles and stronger analytical capacities, it would have withdrawn from its role as peace facilitator at an earlier stage. Instead Norway hung onto its role and became a 'peace alibi' whilst both parties prepared for war.

One moderate quality study (Quinn et al 2013, SA, →) distinguishes between international mediation aiming at crisis management and mediation aiming at more encompassing conflict resolution goals. The evidence highlights that mediated crises (notwithstanding the approach taken) are more likely to end in formal negotiated agreements than unmediated crises. However, mediation (notwithstanding the approach taken) has no statistically significant effect on post-crisis tensions between parties.

Alternative dispute resolution. The REA uncovered a small (5), mixed quality body of evidence published 2010-2015 that finds a generally positive effect of ADR mechanisms on local conflict, such as land disputes. These articles contained both qualified notes of promise as well as some important cautionary messages. The strongest evidence comes from a high quality study (Blattman, Hartman, and Blair, 2014, MM, ↑), which found that the more frequent and less violent resolution of land disputes was attributable to ADR training in Liberia, when comparing the 'exposed' and 'control' or 'non-treatment' locations. However, no association was found between the intervention and other forms of (non-land) conflict.

Three other studies also provide weaker evidence of the positive impact on ADR on conflict dynamics. A moderate quality study of an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) intervention in relation to land conflicts in Sumatera (Indonesia) between companies and communities found that the NGO's mediating role had played an important role in contributing to conflict transformation and in particular the reduction in conflict intensity. The combination of commitment, trust and the skills of the negotiator were crucial in accounting for this success. However, the study also noted that failure to implement actions agreed through mediation suggests that a hybrid approach combining mediation with formal justice could have made a more significant contribution to the reduction of conflict intensity (Dhialhaq 2014, CT →). One low quality study found that mediation training to local peace councils in Sudan may have contributed towards an observed reduction in violent conflict over water, land, and pasture (Coffey, 2012, INT, ↓), but the method used is ultimately unable to substantiate this claim. Another low quality study of ADR in the Alavanyo-Nkonya conflict in the Volta region of Ghana found promising results when comparing ADR with formal arbitration methods in relation to land conflicts, but the nature of the ADR process is not explored or analysed with reference to outcomes. It then infers from this one case study of success, that ADR should be applied to Ghana and Africa more widely (Midodzi 2011, CT ↓).

However, an exception to these positive findings is a moderate quality study (Blattman et al 2011, RCT, →) that found that ADR training had activated latent conflicts and had actually increased the

prevalence of certain forms of conflict. While ADR can be effective, there is a risk that activating latent conflicts through external intervention is easier than providing new frameworks for their peaceful resolution. Poorly designed interventions have the potential to do harm.

4.2.4 What is missing in the body of evidence on mediation?

There are very few studies that focus on the transnational or sub-national dimensions of conflict and mediation; they are either global studies that aggregate national level data, or national studies that focus primarily on conflict within the boundaries of the nation state. There may be scope to combine geo-spatial data sets on conflict with the study of incidents of mediation.¹⁶

It is impossible to identify a common narrative about what works from this body of evidence because they study different things (types of conflict and mediators), draw on different methods and data, and define different measures of success (conflict management, armed violence termination or reduction, settlement stability, conflict resolution). The paired case studies were complicated by the fact that they tended to look at very different cases (Kenya vs. Kyrgyzstan, or Indonesia vs. Turkey). The two high quality case studies on international mediation – on Burundi (Piombo 2010, CT, ↑) and Sri Lanka (Sørbo et al 2011, CT, ↑) – were able to capture within-case variation by showing shifts in mediation and conflict dynamics over time. However, neither lend themselves to generalisable policy lessons on what works, though they do yield useful insights about the challenges and opportunities of mediation – for example the need to shift mediation strategies according to the changing dynamics of conflict, the primacy of domestic political actors and the potential negative externalities of mediation. The problem of what works is also compounded by the well-known selection effect – the most inherently ‘difficult’ cases are the most likely to attract external mediation, when local efforts at prevention/management have failed. The preponderance of studies in this body of evidence that focus on high intensity civil wars supports the idea of a selection bias.

Very few studies pay attention to different styles, types of mediation or mediator credibility and capability, although this issue has been extensively explored in earlier research.¹⁷ Exceptions to this included: a comparison of structural versus relational mediation approaches, which found the latter to be more effective in terms of contributing to the reduction of post war political tensions in Bosnia (Zenelaj et al 2015, CT, →); a quantitative study which found that equality of rank of representatives in mediation processes and the initiation of mediation by the parties themselves were significant factors in contributing to successful mediation outcomes (Bercovitch and Chalfin 2010, SA, →). Notwithstanding these two studies, there are many un-answered questions in the field of mediation and there is scope for further work that attempts to develop typologies of mediation in relation to typologies of armed violence.

The articles did not give a sense of which kinds of actors are more or less effective in relation to which kinds of armed violence; the overview articles were too generic and aggregated to give insights about specific kinds of mediation. Several suffered from deficiencies similar to those found in the conflict onset literature i.e. few controls, weak proxies, ‘testing’ different hypotheses at once, with little reflection on data quality or the appropriate unit of analysis. On the other hand, the case studies tended to be too focused on a particular mediator or type of mediation to provide wider insights.

None of the studies combine quantitative and qualitative methods in a robust way. Yet this approach seems to offer the most scope for understanding ‘what works’; quantitative analysis can

¹⁶ See for example the ACLED data base: <http://www.acleddata.com/geopv/>

¹⁷ For example, see: Darby J. and Mac Ginty R. (eds.) (2008); Martin, H. (2006); Toft, M. (2009); Werner, S. and A. Yuen (2005); and Zartmann, W. (1996).

identify incidences of success/failure, whereas qualitative analysis, focusing on instances of positive deviance can help explain *how* process influenced outcomes/impact. This may in turn form the basis for new hypotheses for future quantitative analysis.

There is scope – linking to the section on peace mechanisms – to explore further the institutional foundations of peace mediation. The studies hint at, but not in a systematic way, the significance of an enabling environment for mediation, at the international, national and local levels. This would suggest that there can be opportunities to contribute to mediation, through institutional strengthening, without getting involved in the mediation itself.

Lastly, the fastest growing kinds of conflict are internationalized civil wars, which present a profound challenge to mediation and yet these are largely missing from this body of evidence.

4.3 Economic

This section addresses discrete interventions designed to prevent or mitigate armed violence through leveraging economic activities; and it addresses the ‘economic’ components of multi-dimensional interventions in which the economic was one part. Interventions focusing on economic mechanisms that may prevent or mitigate armed violence include employment creation schemes, local development spending programmes, sectoral initiatives, fiscal policies, trade policy, and systemic approaches to expanding ‘economic freedom’.

4.3.1 Key findings on economic interventions

- The search found a hugely varied body of evidence in terms of quality. Despite the serious limitations of this body of evidence, the search did find a concentration of studies of connected types of intervention that was substantial relative to interventions under other themes covered in this REA: employment and self-employment programmes and entrepreneurship.
- External peacebuilding interventions in Sri Lanka, designed to help bring civil war to an end and to support peacebuilding transformations after the end of that war, were ineffective at best and at worst counter-productive, in the economy-oriented and wider components. These interventions appear to have been unsuccessful thanks to a lack of attention, in the design of interventions, to specific political economy dynamics (including the political settlement) in the contexts where interventions took place. This lack of attention is a common theme running through much of the evidence, and is also apparent in the design of much research and evaluation.
- There is inconclusive evidence that interventions that expand wage employment opportunities or other sources of income are effective in reducing levels of violence. Some high and moderate quality evidence does suggest these interventions may be effective in highly specific contexts. But the finding in one systematic review (Holmes et al 2013, SR, ↑), that there is no evidence on whether employment creation programmes help increase stability, chimes with other reviews of evidence that finds no clear consistent association between employment creation and the reduction of violence (Cramer, 2010, 2015).¹⁸

¹⁸ Meanwhile, ongoing work by the World Bank and the UN Peacebuilding Fund also acknowledges this knowledge gap. A review of UN Peacebuilding Fund projects found a very limited commitment to employment programmes and an extremely weak evidence base for the effectiveness of these programmes. For more information, see UNPBF (2014).

- What the existing recent evidence base does suggest is that more limited, local and flexible interventions with fairly limited goals of violence mitigation during or in the wake of armed conflict are likely to be lower risk for their funders.

4.3.2 The body of evidence on economic interventions

The search found 34 publications that addressed ‘economic’ interventions relevant (to varying degrees) to conflict prevention and violence mitigation (see Table 10). A significant majority (24/34) of the articles examined the impact of exclusively economic interventions (policies, programmes, and projects), while the rest (10/34) involved multiple interventions with an economic dimension.

This represents a substantial number of publications on this type of intervention relative to interventions under other themes in this REA (such as governance or security and policing). Yet there is still a limited number of recent publications providing evidence on the conflict prevention impact of economic measures and these are spread across quite a wide variety of economic measures.

Table 10: Summary of findings on impact of economic interventions¹⁹

		Quality of evidence			Total
		High	Moderate	Low	
Impact of intervention	Effective	2 (2)	2 (3)	1 (3)	5 (8)
	Promising	3 (3)	2 (2)	3 (4)	8 (9)
	Mixed	0 (0)	4 (4)	0 (2)	4 (6)
	Ineffective	2 (3)	1 (2)	2 (3)	5 (8)
	Inconclusive	1 (1)	1 (2 ²⁰)	0 (0)	2 (3)
Total		8 (9)	10 (13)	6 (12)	24 (34)

As Table 10 shows, about a quarter of these publications (9/34) were scored ‘high quality’ in our assessment. For the most part, we rated publications ‘moderate quality’ (13/34), leaving 12 ‘low quality’ publications.

Nine on these studies focused on Latin America; eight on Sub-Saharan Africa; seven on South Asia; two on the Middle East (both on Iraq); and two on East and South-East Asia (both on the Philippines). Six of the studies were international cross-country studies.

Notably, the highest quality studies were all carried out either during or in the wake of violent conflicts, as opposed to attempting to study conflict prevention *before* potential outbreaks of violence. Further, there is no obvious pattern in terms of the methodology most likely to score highly – high quality research in this area could emerge from case study design just as much as from econometric analysis of an experimental/quasi-experimental research design. Similarly, weaker studies also emerged from a range of research methodologies.

¹⁹ Numbers in brackets include articles that look at economic interventions as one component of a set of interventions spanning multiple themes.

²⁰ One of these articles finds the intervention had a harmful impact: Høglund et al (2011, ETH, →) concludes that ‘post-war’ activities, which included economic reconstruction aid, exacerbated drivers of conflict and undermined parallel conflict-prevention measures.

4.3.3 What types of economic intervention are covered and are they effective?

Economic approaches to conflict prevention/violence mitigation studied in these publications varied from the broad – whether or not promoting ‘economic freedom’ affects the risk of violent conflict or how trade policy or public expenditure patterns affect conflict risk – to much more specific, micro-economic interventions, often involving employment generation. Below we expand on this variation.

Reconstruction aid. As described in the key findings section, the single clearest finding from the assessed body of evidence is that external peacebuilding interventions in Sri Lanka, designed to help bring civil war to an end and to support peacebuilding transformations after the end of that war, were ineffective at best and at worst counter-productive. These were broad interventions that in a number of cases included economic and social measures; they are discussed in greater detail in Box 3. Reconstruction aid in the mid-2000s intended to provide a ‘peace dividend’ actually became a new arena for contestation between groups and thereby contributed to a violent outcome (Sørbo et al 2011, CS, ↑). Samantha (2011, CS, ↓) found that despite delivering some local benefits, assessed interventions in Sri Lanka did not change the interests and objectives of the main parties to the conflict, their declared aim. Both Sørbo et al and Samantha argue that one explanation for their findings is the lack, not just of ‘conflict sensitivity’ but also of sensitivity to local political economy, in the sense of the prevailing coalitions of interest, institutions, and ideas.

Employment creation. Beyond the cluster of research around interventions specific to the Sri Lanka case, the majority of the assessed studies focused on micro-economic interventions, such as employment schemes or public works/infrastructure spending. The single most common type of intervention among them was employment-oriented. The evidence identified in the REA suggests that employment creation may reduce the incidence of violent conflict, but under very specific conditions, while the evidence overall remains inconclusive. Employment-centred studies are explored in more detail in Box 4.

Box 4: Employment-creation and conflict prevention

At least ten of the studies identified in the search addressed interventions either exclusively focused on employment schemes or containing employment-generating components, with most focusing on programmes during or after violent conflicts. This makes broadly conceived employment-focused interventions one of the most researched specific types of intervention in the REA and makes exploring specific findings in more detail worthwhile. These studies span both wage employment and various forms of self-employment promoting schemes. They vary from weak case studies with little attempt to provide clear evidence on causal links, through case study evaluations, to econometric analyses.

The evidence included in the REA suggests that employment schemes can reduce the incidence of violence. Dasgupta et al (2011, SA, ↑) found that employment guarantee legislation in India reduced the incidence of armed violence by 80 per cent in the states affected by Naxalite insurgency where the programme was rolled out: a clear claim of causal attribution.²¹ Iyengar et al (2014, SA, →) also argue that a general decline in violence in specific locations (combined with a rise in violence directly against US armed forces) is attributable to an increase in spending on employment generation by the US military in Iraq.²² On the other hand, an evaluation by

²¹ Dasgupta et al (2011) find a statistical (difference-in-difference) association and also argue that their evidence confirms a causal (opportunity cost) channel. Others might want further direct evidence (through mixed methods, e.g. including process tracing) to confirm this was the causal mechanism operating.

²² Iyengar et al (2014, SA, →) speculate that the increase in direct attacks on coalition forces may be the product of one or more of a number of reasons, including: project oversight exposes coalition forces more to insurgent activity; a greater presence of coalition forces in communities might antagonize insurgents further and provoke new attacks; and insurgents might strategically redistribute their violence away from that which causes civilian casualties, in a bid to counter coalition ‘hearts and minds’ strategies.

Larrabure and Vaz (2011, MM, →) found no evidence that labour-oriented interventions were effective in causing or contributing to reduced violence in Guinea-Bissau; and a systematic review (Holmes et al, 2013), found that there is mixed evidence on whether employment creation programmes help increase stability.

More evidence on the causal links between intervention and impact and the scope conditions for successful interventions is needed. Research identified in the REA suggests some intriguing points. Blattman et al (2014, EXP, →), in an experimental study of a self-employment generating intervention in Uganda, studied the impact on social cohesion, positing a further link between social cohesion and violence without exploring it further. The paper found that the programme being studied was ineffective in that, while it did help raise incomes, it made no measurable contribution to perceptions of social cohesion. To some extent, this contrasts with Blattman and Annan (2015, EXP, ↑), which found that provision of capital and agricultural training led ‘high risk’ individuals in post-conflict Liberia to reallocate (some) time away from illicit activities (illegal rubber tapping and mining) to farming and led to less self-reported interest in finding work as a mercenary when conflict broke out in neighbouring Cote d’Ivoire. Their findings amount to a claim that certain interventions may contribute to less violent outcomes in a specific context.

A slightly different causal link was posited in a study that focused on ‘ordinary’ entrepreneurship in Rwandan specialty coffee growing regions. Tobias et al (2013, MM, ↑) found a ‘promising’ effect of entrepreneurship, but likewise only assessed intermediate outcomes (perceptions of welfare and intergroup trust) without any direct evidence on levels of violence. The theory underpinning this study posits that two of the mechanisms through which entrepreneurship might reduce conflict are, first, greater contact between potentially conflicting groups (which in turn reduces suspicion and mistrust) and, second, diversion (the very old idea that economic activities may re-route individuals away from ‘passionate’, including violent, behaviour towards more peaceable ‘interests’). The study is hedged with cautious caveats and thus claims only a possible contribution to an intermediate outcome (higher income and a better quality of life may improve inter-ethnic trust).

The body of evidence on this topic has definitely advanced in recent years, yet there are still enormous gaps in knowledge. Helping identify what has worked—and what might work in the future—requires clearer identification of which (if any) of the different causal mechanisms above link successful interventions in this area and levels of violence. Research needs a clearer distinction between, but also further work on, both wage and self-employment and their possibly different dynamics with respect to reducing violence. The exact nature of work being encouraged, the amount by which interventions increase incomes, the social standing of the work and the conditions of employment, whether the patterns of distribution of and access to employment enhance or reduce horizontal inequalities, and the broader context in which the intervention takes place may all affect the effectiveness of an intervention.

Community-driven development. Other types of micro-level economic interventions fared less well than employment centred ones and there is some evidence that local economic development interventions can encourage violence. Crost et al (2014b, QE, ↑) assess levels of violence in two kinds of village in the Philippines that differed only slightly in levels of poverty and, hence, eligibility for Community Driven Development (CDD) projects. They attribute the increased incidence of casualties from armed conflict in some districts to the presence of CDD projects in these areas. They suggest that this is due to the interest of armed anti-state groups in preventing development programmes that might increase state legitimacy and local welfare.

Cash transfers. By contrast, Crost et al’s (2014a, EXP, ↑) experimental-design study attributes a decline in violent conflict incidents in villages in the Philippines to ‘treatment’ with a conditional

cash transfer programme and also claims a causal effect of the programme on insurgent influence in these same villages. A related study was Pena et al (2015, QE, ↑), which examined the correlation between the gradual roll out of a conditional cash transfer programme in Colombia and voluntary demobilisation, especially of children. The study found that increased demobilisation (of paramilitary combatants) was attributable to the programme, but that the programme made less difference to guerrilla (FARC) combatant demobilisation or in areas where the FARC recruited strongly. This suggested to the authors that paramilitary recruits were quite strongly motivated by direct material incentives while FARC recruits had more complex motivations. This is no surprise to students of the wider literature on Colombia.

Other. The remaining studies took a more macro-economic (trade), meso-economic (sectoral spending, fiscal policy), or systemic ('economic freedoms') approach. The search found no coherent body of research in these areas, but rather a scattered set of studies with different methodologies and addressing different research questions, with mixed results (and varying quality): whether trade reduces inter-state conflict; how patterns of public expenditure affect civil war onset among oil-rich and non-oil rich countries; whether policies that promote 'economic freedom' reduce the propensity for violent conflict.

4.3.4 Context matters

The articles on economic interventions clearly highlight that context matters a great deal. There are two contrasting ways in which it matters. On the one hand, some studies explored the way in which variations in elements of local context affected the efficacy of interventions. A good example was the work on the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) in Iraq, where Berman et al (2011, SA, ↑) found that in some conditions, US commanders used emergency funds effectively (reduced violence against civilians could be attributed to CERP spending) chiefly by insisting on conditions for disbursement. On the other hand, there were regression analyses – very good in many ways – that failed to account for variation by exploring the local context. An example is Dasgupta et al's (2014, SA, →) analysis of the correlation between rollout of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in Maoist insurgency-affected Indian states and levels of violence. This might have been a much stronger piece of work had it acknowledged variation in outcomes around the statistical average and had it combined regressions with other forms of evidence and analysis exploring highly localised Naxalite dynamics and behaviour. A final example of where context mattered immensely but where it was not sufficiently appreciated by external actors was the conflict in Sri Lanka. One possible implication from the research on Sri Lanka, but also from the wider research on counter-insurgency in Afghanistan and Iraq, is that aid donors have too readily regarded aid as an alternative to political or diplomatic effort: economic instruments/interventions may be used to try to do things that they can have too little real leverage over.

4.3.5 What is missing in the body of evidence on economic interventions?

There is a huge literature on the economics and political economy of violent conflict. There are strong assumptions in this literature – e.g. about the role of individual opportunity cost in signalling the risk of civil war – and there are equally strong critical challenges to these assumptions. What is very striking is how little the search turned up by way of a body of evidence recently produced that improves what we really know, empirically, about what works by way of 'economic' interventions. First, there is not a great deal published on this in recent years. Second, what there is covers a wide range of issues and projects/interventions – research is spread thin. Third, research designs and the quality of research in this area is mixed. This means that the body of evidence is too weak, despite there being some useful contributions in this area. Unquestioned assumptions often drown out and substitute for careful empirical research. Careful research has – in these studies – limited external validity. The situation is not helped by evaluations that fail to specify clearly enough what they are assessing and what underlying theory might be relevant.

4.4 Governance

This section reviews the articles on governance interventions or strategies. Its focus is on democracy and elections, general principles of good governance such as transparency, and conduct of international relations during peacetime. It excludes interventions aiming to improve governance under other themes, such as security sector governance, economic governance, and conflict-resolution institutions.²³

4.4.1 Key findings on governance

- The search identified no body of literature published 2010-15 on the impact of governance interventions on conflict prevention and mitigation. The articles identified discuss such a range of different interventions that it would be misleading to infer that these constitute a ‘body of literature’.
- There is some emerging evidence on the impact of formal institutional design on conflict prevention and mitigation. However, this evidence is mixed in its findings. There is disagreement whether more decentralised and/or more competitive political systems mitigate or exacerbate violent conflict in ethnically divided societies.
- Most of the studies of governance intervention were multi-national regression analyses, whose unit of analysis is the country-year. Such studies at the macro-level necessarily ‘flatten’ important sources of contextual variation. The search identified no high or moderate quality research that examines the impact of sub-national governance interventions funded by donors on conflict prevention and mitigation.
- A number of final evaluations of large multi-year peacebuilding programmes included governance components in combination with other types of interventions. Most such evaluations were of low quality and findings with mixed or inconclusive findings. Unfortunately, this renders them largely unable to improve our understanding of what has worked and why.

4.4.2 What does the body of evidence on governance look like?

The search protocol identified 7 relevant articles that examine solely the impact of governance – excluding peacebuilding – on armed violence, and an additional 9 articles that examine the impact of a bundle of interventions of which governance interventions were a significant component. Table 11 below summarises the results. The quality of evidence of the articles identified was generally lower than in other themes, with only one article regarded as high quality. The majority (9/16) of articles find either a mixed impact of governance interventions (5) or that they are ineffective (4).

Half of the articles (8/16) address interventions across multiple regions, four of which adopt large-N cross-country regression analysis as their research design. Five articles focus on interventions solely in Sub-Saharan Africa, with a further two solely on East and South-East Asia. Only one article examines the impact of governance interventions on conflict prevention in the Middle East and North Africa (Ciepley 2013, MM, →) and one in East and South-East Asia (CSPS 2012, MM, ↓).

²³ These aspects of governance were covered under the ‘security and policing’, ‘economic’ and ‘peace mechanisms’ themes.

Table 11: Summary of findings on impact of governance interventions²⁴

		Quality of evidence			Total
		High	Moderate	Low	
Impact of intervention	Effective	0 (0)	1 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)
	Promising	0 (0)	4 (4)	0 (0)	4 (4)
	Mixed	0 (0)	1 (2)	0 (3)	1 (5)
	Ineffective	0 (1)	0 (1 ²⁵)	0 (2 ²⁶)	0 (4)
	Inconclusive	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (2)	1 (2)
Total		0 (1)	6 (8)	1 (7)	7 (16)

The interventions discussed in these articles vary so much in design, scale, and level of intervention that it would be misleading to infer that these constitute a ‘body of literature’. This variety is explored in section 4.4.3 below. It is therefore inappropriate to comment on the size or consistency of findings, except to note that the search protocol did not identify a body of literature.

4.4.3 What types of governance intervention are covered and are they effective?

Governance-centred approaches to the prevention and mitigation of armed violence identified in the search vary significantly in their level of intervention (sub-national, national, regional, international) and implicit logic.

Institutional design. Two studies examined the role of institutional design in preventing armed violence in ethnically divided societies. One article responds to the widely-cited problems of ethnic federalism and proportional representation by proposing a new electoral formula the author labels as ‘dispersed constituency democracy’ (Ciepley 2013, CT, →). Although the article has a good conceptual framework and uses case studies of Iraq and Lebanon to explore the likely effects of its adoption, the lack of empirical data on the effects of the proposed formula means it ultimately does not provide evidence of ‘what works’ and can at most present a promising option to be explored. The second article adopts a multi-country regression analysis that questions common arguments in the political science literature that advocate consociationalist institutional arrangements as a way of preventing ethnic violence. Instead, the authors find that consociationalist institutions are associated with higher incidence of riots and deaths resulting from political violence in countries with high levels of ethnic diversity (Selway and Templeman 2012, SA, →). Despite both articles having strong conceptual frameworks, they highlight the lack of scholarly consensus among those studying the impact of institutional design on preventing armed conflict, and neither empirically examine the different causal mechanisms by which institutions may have an impact.²⁷ Both articles also fail to engage with recent literature that moves away from the study of formal institutions

²⁴ Numbers in brackets include articles that look at governance practices as one component of a set of interventions.

²⁵ One of these articles finds the intervention had a harmful impact: Høglund et al (2011, ETH, →) concludes that ‘post-war’ activities, which included power-sharing arrangements, exacerbated drivers of conflict and undermined parallel conflict-prevention measures.

²⁶ One of these articles finds the intervention had a harmful impact: Barma (2012, MM, ↓) concludes that UN transitional governance in Cambodia, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan, reproduced the conditions for conflict by fuelling narrow political settlements with exclusive patronage networks.

²⁷ Researchers working in the field of political science have long debated the effect of electoral system design on the probability of coups, electoral violence, and the onset of armed violence. For example, see Basedau 2011 reviewing the literature on institutional engineering and managing ethnic conflict; Cheibub 2007 on the collapse of presidential/parliamentary democracies; and Brancati and Snyder 2012 on electoral timing and relapse into civil war.

towards the examination of how political settlements influence how institutions (fail to) manage conflict in a society.²⁸

Other. The remaining articles included only under the governance theme conclude that: the publication of census data on ethnicity is associated with higher levels of violent conflict in countries with weak political institutions (Strand and Urdal 2014, SA, →); states' membership of 'highly structured international governmental organisations'²⁹ are associated with a lower likelihood of escalation of domestic conflict into civil war (Karreth and Tir 2013, SA, →); highly institutionalised international river agreements are associated with lower incidence of the onset of militarised inter-state disputes over water (Tir and Stinnett 2014, SA, →). These are findings of individual articles that do not constitute a body of evidence.

Multi-theme interventions. Nine articles, most of which are evaluations, touch on governance interventions delivered as one component of a broader programme. These include electoral support (Campbell et al 2014, MM, ↓; Fiedler 2015, CS, →; Larrabure and Vaz 2011, MM, ↓), capacity building for natural resource management (Coffey 2012, INT, ↓), decentralisation to local government (Bennett et al 2010, MM, ↑), participatory planning (CSPS 2012, MM, ↓) and UN transitional administrations (Barma 2012, MM, ↓). However, these evaluations rarely described interventions in much depth and tended not to isolate the contribution of governance interventions to the broader programmes' impact. Evaluations sometimes proved inconclusive (2), or where they did make judgements tended to be critical of the results achieved under the governance component of larger programmes, relative to other components (4). None of these nine articles found that the governance components of programmes were effective in preventing or mitigating armed violence.

4.4.4 What is missing in the body of evidence on governance?

Despite a growing emphasis on the importance of context in the literature on international aid, there does not appear to have been much attention to this in the literature examining the relationship between governance and conflict. The majority (4) of the seven articles focusing purely on governance were highly aggregated regression analyses operating at the level of country-year.³⁰ Although the quantitative literature in other areas has made improvements over the past twenty years in incorporating context-specific features into its analysis (for example through control variables, a greater interest in sub-national data, and the development of new measures and more direct proxies that help to reduce reliance on ambiguous or weakly-linked indicators and 'one-size-fits-all' assumptions), this progress does not appear to have been replicated in the articles identified in this REA. The resulting lack of context sensitivity remains a major concern. Perhaps surprisingly, this does not appear to have been addressed through qualitative research.

The search also failed to identify any medium or high-quality empirical research into governance at the sub-national level, with the exception of the literature discussed elsewhere in this report on local peacebuilding institutions (Section 4.1) and security and policing governance (Section 4.5) This constitutes a major gap in the literature that should concern aid agencies in particular due to

²⁸ For example, see Di John and Putzel 2009 on political settlements and state fragility; and North, Wallis and Weingast 2007 on the different logics of 'limited' and 'open' access orders. Both of these emerging literatures address the question of why similar sets of formal institutions often have such divergent outcomes.

²⁹ The author defines 'highly structured international organisations' (HSIGOs) as those that "possess provisions to coerce state compliance with IGO policies, tools for enforcing organizational decisions and norms, and independent administrative and monitoring bodies". Examples given include the IMF, SACU, IADB, IAEA,

³⁰ This means that they treat a given country during a given year as the smallest unit of analysis. Variation between different areas of a country or in the course of a year are therefore necessarily ignored.

the prominence of interventions promoting citizens' participation in local government, civil service capacity and service delivery, and anti-corruption.

Corruption is sometimes alleged as providing grievances that fuel armed violence (Rotberg 2009; Chayes 2015). However, this review identified no research that addresses the impact of anti-corruption initiatives on armed violence, or even on possible proximate factors such as attitudes towards violence. The relative scarcity of research on the governance theme compared to other themes included in this review is likely the result of a combination of timing of governance interventions and methodological challenges.³¹ A significant proportion of articles in other themes focus more on *mitigation* rather than *prevention* due to the greater prominence of the attribution problem in the latter. However, governance interventions tend to be deprioritised (or actively prohibited) by donors once armed violence is underway, so end up focusing on prevention rather than mitigation. The resulting mismatch between researchers' demand for researchable cases and the supply of governance interventions may act as an obstacle to the development of a body of literature around a similar set of interventions within the governance theme. The politically-sensitive nature of governance interventions may also limit researchers' access to data and funders' willingness to commission research into impact.

4.5 Security and policing

This section examines the evidence identified on security and policing interventions on the prevention and mitigation of armed violence. It covers interventions aiming to build police capacity³², security sector reform (SSR), and elements of DDR programmes.

4.5.1 Key findings on security and policing

- The review identified a moderately-sized, low-quality body of evidence published 2010-15 on the impact of security and policing practices on urban violence, with mixed findings.
- The body of evidence tends to be critical of 'technical' approaches to security and policing focused on skills training or technical advice. It emphasises the importance of political leadership and 'localised' approaches – often by elected mayors/governors – in determining outcomes.
- Militarised responses to 'criminal' violence have often failed to contain violence and risk creating new patterns of marginalisation that drive further violence. This realisation has contributed to the rise in multi-sectoral interventions that seek to address structural causes of violence through community engagement, economic rejuvenation and improvements in local government capacity.
- Insufficient attention is paid to the interaction between state and non-state violent actors, and how practices seeking to prevent or mitigate armed violence may influence or be influenced by these relationships. The lack of attention paid to organisational dynamics presents difficulties in assessing the external validity of findings.

³¹ The search did not identify articles that built on the large literature published in the late 1990s and early 2000s on the link between good governance/democracy/democratisation and the onset of (civil) war. This literature, which often employed quantitative governance indicators such as Polity/IV or WGI, appears to have declined in recent years.

³² Except where training was delivered to police assigned to peacekeeping missions, which is addressed under the 'peace mechanisms' theme.

4.5.2 What does the body of evidence on security and policing look like?

The search identified 12 relevant articles that examine solely the impact of security and policing practices on armed violence, and an additional 13 articles that examine the impact of a bundle of interventions of which security and policing practices were a significant component. Table 12 below summarises the results. The majority (17/25) of articles were low quality, and there was a fairly even spread of findings of positive, mixed and no impact amongst both the articles as a whole and after excluding low-quality articles.

Table 12: Summary of findings on impact of security and policing interventions³³

		Quality of evidence			Total
		High	Moderate	Low	
Impact of intervention	Effective	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (3)	3 (5)
	Promising	0 (0)	1 (2)	1 (2)	2 (4)
	Mixed	1 (2)	1 (1)	1 (5)	3 (8)
	Ineffective	0 (0)	0 (1)	4 ³⁴ (5)	4 (6)
	Inconclusive	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (2)	0 (2)
Total		2 (3)	3 (5)	7 (17)	12 (25)

The majority of articles examined urban violence in Latin America (14), with the remainder focusing on Sub-Saharan Africa (7), South Asia (2), Eastern Europe and Central Asia (2). The REA found no evidence of the impact of security and policing interventions in the Middle East and North Africa or East and South-East Asia.

A significant proportion (9/25) of the articles were in Spanish or Portuguese, though all of these scored low on the quality assessment. This suggests that the Latin American research community is covering issues that appear to be neglected by the English-speaking literature.

4.5.3 What types of security and policing interventions are covered and are they effective?

The identified articles tend to focus on two sets of issues. A moderately-sized (14), mostly low-quality body of literature explores the effectiveness of various security and policing policies to counter urban violence, mostly from Colombia and Brazil. A second, also small (9) and more mixed-quality body of literature consists of evaluations of external support for security and policing institutions in post-conflict contexts. Even where these articles ask similar research questions, they do not yield consistent findings regarding impact.

Public security campaigns. The first body of literature on urban violence and organised crime covers a wide range of interventions mostly initiated at the sub-national level. Three articles of high and medium quality conclude that public security platforms of newly-elected mayors and governors in Colombia and Brazil were effective in their contribution towards reducing urban violence (Gutierrez et al 2013, CT, ↑; Hoelscher and Nussio 2015, CT, ↑; Ratton et al 2014, CS, →). These packages included changes to policing strategies, public information campaigns, results-based

³³ Numbers in brackets include articles that look at security and policing interventions as one component of a set of interventions spanning multiple themes.

³⁴ One of these articles noted that the intervention in question had been counter-productive (Ruteere et al 2013, CS, ↓).

management of police, increased coordination between and integration of police forces, and dialogue with effected communities. These are discussed in more depth below.

Police presence. Another three articles examine the impact of increased police presence in Brazil, though they are of poor quality and inconsistent in their conclusions about effectiveness (Andrada 2013, INT & DS, ↓; da Nóbrega Júnior 2015, SA, ↓; Maia 2014, CS, ↓). The remainder of articles assess aggressive policing tactics in poor neighbourhoods in Nairobi (Ruteere 2013, CS, ↓), a disarmament statute in Brazil (Nascimento Filho and Morais 2014, DS, ↓) and changes in the age of criminal liability in Brazil (Cerquiera and Coelho 2015, SA, ↓).

Policing tactics. These articles, all of which were of low quality, found none of these measures to be effective in reducing the influence of armed gangs or the urban homicide rate. One common theme running throughout this body of literature is that **heavy-handed (*mano dura*) policing** approaches to reducing urban violence have had mixed success and entail a number of trade-offs. In particular, militarised pacification of favelas in Brazil have in some cases contributed to a reduction of violence in the short term but contributed to increasing marginalisation that risk reproducing rather than reducing drivers of armed conflict in the longer term e.g. pricing the poorest out of the favela (Vieira da Cunha and Mello 2011, CS, ↓; Fleury 2012, CS, ↓). In El Salvador, the failure of *mano dura* policies encouraged the pursuit of a political solution through a government-mediated truce between rival gangs in 2012. Although this contributed to a sharp reduction in the homicide rate, it also facilitated the extension of gang influence and a ‘criminalised’ peace (Whitfield 2013, CS, ↓). These trade-offs present significant ethical dilemmas for decision makers.

DDR/SSR. The second body of literature within the security and policing theme covers a broad range of support to post-conflict countries in Eastern Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Three of these evaluated DDR programmes from different perspectives. One moderate quality study found a promising contribution of arranging football matches between ex-combatants inside DDR camps and members of the local community in Sierra Leone towards the reduction in incidences of violence among male youth (Dyck 2011, INT, →). Another moderate quality article found that donor support to DDR and SSR in DRC adopted an overly ‘technical’ approach that ignored political drivers of conflict and involved poor coordination between implementing units (Channel Research 2011, MM, →). These strategic and design weaknesses ultimately limited the programme’s contribution towards reintegration of (ex-) combatants and SSR, although the method adopted in the study is not designed to assess the impact of the programme in a statistically robust fashion. Likewise, a study of multi-donor support in southern Sudan found that security interventions were designed without considering their coherence with the broader context and parallel donor-funded initiatives. For example, a major finding is that reforming and downsizing the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) building an effective police force contributed to a security vacuum that neither the police nor the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) has been able to fill (Bennett et al 2010, MM, ↑).

A number of studies highlight the importance of political factors in accounting for variation in the effectiveness of similar practices. The two high-quality case studies mentioned above compare the varying effectiveness of city or state public security campaigns in reducing urban violence in Colombia and Brazil (Gutierrez et al 2013, CT, ↑; Hoelscher and Nussio 2015, CT, ↑). Although the simultaneous change in a number of policies prevents attribution of changes in results to specific interventions, these studies are useful insofar as they emphasise the importance of ‘outsider’ political coalitions in insulating policy entrepreneurs from entrenched interests within the police and other power centres and of public communication campaigns in generating public support for otherwise controversial policies. Finally, a study of DDR in Nepal demonstrates that a focus on ‘local ownership’ is naive where key political actors lack a shared vision of what constitutes a ‘good

outcome' and turn programme implementation into arena for competition (Subedi 2014, ETH, →). Collectively, these studies qualify some conventional wisdoms concerning inclusivity and local ownership: while change without sufficient buy-in will fail, the broadest inclusivity often results in no change at all. Pro-reform coalitions — in this case between political leaders, a section of the police leadership and communities — may be the most effective agents for change.

4.5.4 What is missing in the body of evidence on security and policing?

Some of the most promising research under this theme focuses on the local rather than national level. The increasing 'localisation' of interventions presents important opportunities for research designs that compare armed violence between sites in a way that is rarely possible with the larger-scale phenomenon of civil war. This is often — though not always — supported by greater availability of data on urban violence/homicide rates, since the phenomenon can coexist with otherwise resilient states³⁵ and is perhaps not as politically sensitive to the same extent as conflict between political actors.

The security and policing articles highlight the importance of political leadership in reducing urban violence. For example, in the articles reviewed here, local political leadership influenced conflict dynamics through effects on social norms, brokering coalitions and confronting special interests. This is an important finding, since the study of local political settlements, political leadership, and contingency runs counter to the 'generalising' tendencies of political science. Further research into how political leadership shapes conflict dynamics is both necessary and methodologically challenging. Future research on this topic should seek to adopt conceptual frameworks that facilitate comparison between cases, and identify the various strategies used by political entrepreneurs to mobilise support within otherwise limiting political economies.

Finally, with the partial exception of the article on policing Nairobi's slums³⁶, the literature on urban violence tends to focus on individuals as the unit of analysis and ignore organisational dynamics and local political economies. This emphasis entails a number of weaknesses in the literature. For example, there are major qualitative differences in how non-state groups coexist with, collaborate with or contest state authority. There are strong theoretical reasons to believe that these differences are likely to influence the effectiveness of different interventions (for example, training the police may be ineffective where police regularly collaborate with armed criminal organisations). This poses a major challenge for assessing the external validity of findings. Further, the differences may have implications on policymakers' prioritisation of a problem (for example, decision makers may seek to prioritise countering urban violence that threatens future state authority over countering violent crime which can coexist with the state). Future research should seek to address both how interventions' effectiveness vary depending on organisational dynamics and political economy factors, and how interventions can themselves alter relations between state and non-state violent actors.

³⁵ Data collection — including official statistics agencies — are also more likely to continue functioning in more peaceful states. However, significant challenges with crime data remain. For example, better relations with the police may lead to previously unreported crime being reported to police, leading to a superficial 'inflation' in crime statistics. Such concerns about data quality are rarely addressed head-on in this literature.

³⁶ Ruteere 2013, CS, ↓

4.6 Justice and reconciliation

This section assesses the body of evidence on justice and reconciliation interventions, discussing the 20 relevant studies in the database. It includes interventions at the local (and ‘traditional’) level as well as national and international interventions. It includes discussion of truth commissions and the ICC. This review considered ADR as a form of mediation and articles examining ADR are therefore discussed under Section 4.2.

4.6.1 Key findings on justice and reconciliation interventions

- With nearly half of the 20 studies being judged high quality, there is a stronger body of evidence in this field than for other types of intervention assessed in other sections.
- However, the findings of this body of evidence were largely mixed or ineffective, suggesting no clear evidence that these interventions are effective in reducing or preventing future violent conflict.
- Interventions to set up or support Truth Commissions cannot be guaranteed to contribute positively to sustained peace. The evidence suggests the importance of embedding truth commissions in a wider, integrated and sustained package of measures to support reconciliation.
- Most studies looked at individual mechanisms over a relatively short period of time. There is very little research recently studying broader transitional justice programmes (as opposed to specific interventions). Nor do the studies in the REA database carry out research on the longer term dynamics or cumulative effects of transitional justice mechanisms.
- Local understandings of justice and traditional dispute resolution mechanisms and rituals interact with transitional justice approaches in sometimes unforeseen ways. Yet the dominant transitional justice model is highly standardised and top-down and rarely takes the context sufficiently into account.

4.6.2 The body of evidence on justice and reconciliation interventions

The REA search found 20 relevant publications (2010- 2015) on this theme. Eight of the studies, i.e. almost half, were rated high quality; six were medium, and six low quality. The eight high quality studies make for a stronger body of evidence on this type of intervention than for most other types covered by this REA.

However, as Table 13 demonstrates, the most common conclusion of evidence covered by the REA in this area was ‘mixed’ (mixed or inconclusive findings in 9/20 publications). Seven studies found that interventions were ineffective or even counter-productive; a further four found that the interventions studied were ‘promising’. Thus, while there is an emerging body of evidence, cumulatively its findings in the period 2010-2015 do not suggest that justice and reconciliation programming in its present form is effective at reducing violent conflict.

Almost half of the studies (9) were about interventions in sub-Saharan Africa. Four of them focused on Latin America. The rest were spread across Eastern Europe and Central Asia (2), South Asia (2), the Middle East and North Africa (1), East and Southeast Asia (1), and one was an international study.

Table 13: Summary of findings on impact of justice and reconciliation interventions³⁷

		Quality of evidence			Total
		High	Moderate	Low	
Impact of intervention	Effective	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Promising	1 (1)	0 (0)	3 (3)	4 (4)
	Mixed	3 (3)	1 (1)	0 (1)	4 (5)
	Ineffective	2 (3)	1 (3)	1 (1)	4 (7)
	Inconclusive	1 (1)	1 (2)	1 (1)	3 (4)
Total		7 (8)	3 (6)	5 (6)	15 (20)

4.6.3 What types of justice and reconciliation interventions are covered and are they effective?

Studies cover interventions ranging from local ('traditional') conflict resolution mechanisms to national truth commissions and the ICC.

Truth and Reconciliation Committees. The search identified a small, mixed-quality cluster of research that was generally sceptical of the impact of Truth and Reconciliation Committees (TRC) on violent conflict. One study on Sierra Leone argued that although the TRC had been promising as a tool of conflict management in an emerging democracy, the lack of engagement with marginalised groups risked endangering the prevailing peace (Svärd 2010, CS, ↓). Another publication studied the TRC in Chile and found a positive association between approval of the TRC's work, favourable perceptions of the socio-emotional climate, and trust in institutions. However, the authors caution that the TRC could not be relied upon to generate lasting reconciliation since victims strongly objected to 'forgetting' as an approach to dealing with the past, and opinions of the TRC's work and the socio-emotional climate were less positive overall amongst younger age groups (Cárdenas et al 2013, RA, ↑).

Tribunals and trials. Research into other types of transitional justice mechanisms largely reinforces the sceptical tone of the literature on TRCs. For example, one article finds that international tribunals and domestic trials do not contribute to reducing the recurrence of civil war or improving human rights practices (Meernik et al 2010, SA, ↑). Another (Greig and Meernik 2014, SA, →) found that although the initiation of an ICC investigation is associated with a negative impact on mediation efforts, an ICC arrest warrant or indictment is associated with a positive impact on mediation efforts. A study on Sierra Leone likewise finds that the Special Court for Sierra Leone did not address citizens' demands for justice, not least because of a persistent justice gap in other areas (especially corruption) and the failure of the post-war settlement to address persistent poverty and exclusion as an enduring form of injustice (Mieth 2013, ETH, →).

Trauma healing and reconciliation. At a more micro-level of transitional justice and reconciliation interventions, Grossman-Vermaas and Reisman (2013, MM, →) evaluated a trauma healing and social reconciliation training component of the Peace II USAID programme in East and Central

³⁷ Numbers in brackets include articles that look at justice and reconciliation interventions as one component of a set of interventions spanning multiple themes.

Africa.³⁸ They found a clear improvement in self-reported perceptions of security, but were not able to determine whether and to what extent the intervention contributed to this outcome. This was due primarily to inadequate evidence, the absence of a control group or with-without analysis, and the fact that many potential beneficiaries were unaware of the intervention. An evaluation of the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund in Sudan, also raises questions about the sustainability of support to informal justice mechanisms, particularly where management of interventions is expected to pass to government, which, the authors argue, face a different set of incentives and challenges in providing support (Coffey 2012, INT, ↓). Similarly, an evaluation (Blattman et al, 2011, RCT, →) argued that focusing merely on training or creating new organisations without taking account of prevailing power structures is unlikely to have a lasting positive impact. Meanwhile, one article found that donor interventions in Sri Lanka had a harmful impact: Höglund and Orjuela (2011, CS, →) conclude that ‘post-war’ activities, which included local reconciliation, contributed to exacerbating drivers of conflict and undermined parallel conflict-prevention measures.

Traditional dispute resolution and rituals. A third small cluster of findings relates to the way local understandings of justice and traditional dispute resolution mechanisms and rituals interact with transitional justice approaches in sometimes unforeseen ways. One ethnographic study analysed the way in which women's NGOs, despite receiving funding for reconciliation and women's empowerment, reproduced exclusive and essentialist ethnic identities and patriarchal gender norms in Bosnia (Helms 2010, ETH, ↑). Another found a deep disconnect between transitional justice and Q'eqchi' survivors of violence in Guatemala (Viaene 2010, ETH, ↑). Though not constituting a body of evidence, these studies suggest that the dominant transitional justice model may be too standardised and top-down. It rarely appears to take the context sufficiently into account. This resonates with other evidence suggesting, for example, that when supporting constitutional change or dispute resolution institutional reform, it is important not to ignore local institutional or jurisprudence history (see, e.g., Borchgrevink and Suhrke 2008, on Afghanistan).

Other. One study (Soares et al 2010, DS, →) found a clear association between availability of justice services and their use in Peru, suggesting that widespread use of ADR mechanisms may reflect an unmet demand for state-led justice services, rather than an inherent preference. One high quality study draws on social identity theory to attribute a reduction in inter-group barriers to strategically-designed inter-community sports events in Sri Lanka, arguing that they provided a starting point for the creation of inclusive social identities and positive social change (Schulenkorf 2010, CS, ↑). A study of the public affairs committee in Malawi found that its representation of a wide range of religious constituencies contributed to its ability to play an effective mediating role between political parties (Hussein 2011, CS, ↓). Finally, a study found that constitutional court decisions in Indonesia contributed to mediating and preventing inter-group armed conflicts (but this was highly context dependent) (Mietzner 2010, CS, ↓).

4.6.4 What is missing in the body of evidence on justice and reconciliation interventions?

This body of evidence suggests that investing in support for truth commissions may be a promising way to contribute to short-term transitional goals such as stabilising peace. But the overall impact is difficult to assess for two reasons: first, truth commissions are only one part of the complex set of challenges involved in such transitions; second, what evidence there is suggests that truth commissions are not sufficient to generate longer term stability and peace. Evidence suggests that

³⁸ “PEACE II trauma activities focuses on increasing individuals’ understanding of cycles of violence and trauma, including giving them a context and language for articulating their grief and anger, with the aim of creating empathy among both perpetrators and victims; SR activities provided a process, through negotiation and implementation of local agreements, for reconciliation between community groups.”

these interventions may be more effective where they pay adequate attention to other, related areas of justice and injustice. Finally, some of the reviewed studies even suggested TRCs could backfire, undermining prospects for sustained peace by aggravating ‘identity’ cleavages Millar (2012, ETH, ↑), for example, raises the possibility that TRCs might generate antagonistic identity relations where they did not exist before. This is suggested as an area for further research in the article and further research does appear to be warranted in this area.

The literature examined here also suggests additional attention should be paid to the possible unintended side effects of justice and reconciliation mechanisms. This may be through the creation of new opposing social identities (such as between ‘perpetrator’ and ‘victim’, ‘fighter’ and ‘civilian’) or the reinforcement of existing identities (such as patriarchal norms). In addition, there is a risk that such programming activates latent conflicts without providing an effective framework to manage them. Interventions that deal exclusively in training or the creation of new bodies without sufficient regard to the local political economy underpinning the status quo can do harm.

As with the literature identified under the communications and media theme (see Section 4.7), future research should seek to understand whether changes in attitudes or perceptions resulting from justice and reconciliation interventions actually translate into changes in behaviours, and in particular reductions in violent behaviour. What, for example, is the relationship between transitional justice interventions and civil war recidivism?

Finally, there is little understanding of the durability of changes in social psychological outcomes (including attitudes) resulting from justice and reconciliation interventions. Similarly, some studies raised questions about the sustainability of support to informal justice mechanisms. Further longitudinal research would add value by addressing these concerns. Moreover, a useful avenue of research would compare, for example, the ‘stickiness’ of changes prompted by communications and media interventions compared to those prompted by justice and reconciliation interventions, and whether changes resulting from parallel sets of interventions are additive. Such information could have important resourcing implications. The evidence also points to the importance of longitudinal research on the impact of transitional justice interventions and the need for greater resource allocation towards such research.

4.7 Media and communication

This section addresses the twelve studies in the REA on media and communications interventions across the phases of the ‘conflict cycle’. In particular, it focuses on the potential impact of radio and TV programming on peace-sustaining inter-group attitudes and relations; but it also examines studies of the role of mobile telephony and interactive Information and Communications Technology (ICT) initiatives. Most of the studies examined are about interventions in Sub-Saharan Africa.

4.7.1 Key findings on media and communication

- The search found no overall consistent body of evidence on media and communication, but there was a small set of studies on broadcast interventions of particular relevance to the research question.
- The most substantial body of evidence in this group of studies addressed the impact of radio (and TV) programming on peace-sustaining inter-group attitudes. The findings suggest that radio, TV programming and digital media can positively affect people’s attitudes towards ‘others’.

- However, the link from attitudes to (violent or peaceable) behaviour is left unexplored in this literature and it is unclear how meaningful changes in attitudes are for the mitigation and prevention of conflict and whether such changes are durable, or can be readily reversed if conflict returns.

4.7.2 The body of evidence on media and communication

The evidence base as it has developed in recent years (2010 - 2015) is suggestive but not convincing. It is fairly small and of varying quality. It has mostly mixed (3) or promising (7) findings and some of the research fails adequately to engage with the contexts in which it is set. Much of the research was marked by methodological shortcomings: over-ambition without any concern for specificities of context and reliance on assertion more than fact.

As shown in Table 14, twelve studies tackled the role of media and communications in prevention/mitigation across phases of the 'conflict cycle'. Two of these we scored 'high', five moderate, and five low. The strongest body of evidence within this group of publications addressed radio (and in one case TV) programming, with five studies on this, two of which we scored high and three low quality.

These studies almost all (9) addressed interventions in Sub-Saharan Africa. Two had a broad international comparative focus and one was an Eastern Europe and Central Asia study (on Azerbaijan).

Table 14: Summary of findings on impact of media and communications interventions³⁹

		Quality of evidence			Total
		High	Moderate	Low	
Impact of intervention	Effective	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1)	1 (1)
	Promising	1 (1)	4 (4)	2 (2)	7 (7)
	Mixed	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (1)	3 (3)
	Ineffective	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Inconclusive	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1)	1 (1)
Total		2 (2)	5 (5)	5 (5)	12 (12)

4.7.3 What types of media and communication interventions are covered and are they effective?

The media and communication interventions identified in the search share more in common than interventions among other themes covered in the REA, with an emerging body of literature of mixed quality examining the impact of radio and TV programming on intermediate outcomes, though not violence itself. A smaller number of articles examines the use of 'peace messaging', often in relation to electoral violence.

Radio and TV dramas. The only set of interventions for which the REA uncovered a body of evidence concerned radio (and TV) broadcasts and their potential role in preventing, curbing, or mitigating post-war violence. One study probed the role of radio soap operas in inculcating attitudinal shifts (such as greater trust between identity groups) among populations in Burundi (Bilali et al 2015, QE, ↑). This study found that radio dramas could influence perceptions about

³⁹ Numbers in brackets include articles that look at media and communications interventions as one component of a set of interventions spanning multiple themes.

people from different ethnic backgrounds, but the results were mixed. Greater inter-group trust and tolerance was attributed to the radio drama, but the drama left some attitudes (such as obedience to leaders and active bystander reflexes) unchanged. The radio programming itself was influenced by previous psycho-social research and the research study was linked to earlier work in Rwanda (Bilali et al 2013, EXP, ↑), which attributed greater trust of 'others' and a greater capacity to take a long-term, historical perspective on recent events (compared to a sample of 'non-listeners') to a carefully scripted radio drama designed to support post-genocide reconciliation..

TV talk shows. Similarly, Tully (2014, MM, ↓) explored whether a TV talk show in Kenya could improve inter-tribal communication and relations, arguing (rather than showing convincingly) that when combined with workshops the talk show could have positive social effects. A comparative study (Finkel et al 2015, SA, ↓) of radio programming in Chad and Niger – aiming to assess the impact of USAID sponsored programming on attitudes towards violent extremism – found very mixed outcomes that were ultimately not very conclusive. The widely differing effects they found across treatment and control groups in Niger as opposed to Chad may highlight the importance of the (differing) programme content and presenters, as well as the local context that such programmes aim to influence. Finally, one study (Jacob 2014, MM, ↓) attributed unintended consequences to a radio programme that was part of the UN MONUC peacekeeping operation in South Kivu in the DRC. While the programme was designed to promote peace by encouraging people of Rwandan Hutu origin to return to Rwanda, it arguably reinforced a negative 'othering' stereotype, 'problematizing' Rwandan Hutus living in the DRC and ramming home an association between all of them and the militant Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) operating in Kivu. The paper lays claim to an experimental design but is flawed in its methodology and evidence base.

ICT-enabled peace messaging. Related research addressed ICT and interactive digital media projects in post-conflict Liberia (Best 2011, QE, →) and in the prevention of further electoral violence in Kenya (Trujillo 2014, CS, →). Both found that media interventions were 'promising' – they could contribute to desired effects, especially if combined with other interventions. The field of study could be expanded to include research on the effects of mobile phone telephony on behaviour, attitudes, and armed conflict. Martin-Shields (2013, CS, ↓) argued that the Ushahidi mobile phone application in Kenya (an application that enabled an unbounded 'crowd' to map incidents of violence) had played an important role in preventing electoral violence, but relied on specific scope conditions, most notably a preference in the population for non-violence. However, the empirical content of the paper was minimal and it was not clear whether it was based on any primary research; it was not transparent about its evidence and it resorted to assertion more than building an empirical case.

Box 5: Broadcasting peace

Two high quality publications were linked studies of the peacebuilding contribution of radio drama programming in Rwanda and Burundi. Bilali et al (2013, EXP, ↑) developed a field experiment in Rwanda to assess the impact of a radio drama scripted to encourage 'perspective taking' with regard to intergroup conflict. A fictional radio drama has been broadcast in Rwanda since 2004 with the express aim of conflict prevention and the promotion of post-genocide reconciliation. Assigning people to a 'treatment' and a 'control' group was not possible given the popularity of the show. So the researchers adopted a 'priming' technique applied to an audio-questionnaire, based on the idea that 'the voice of a character from the show should activate the program's messages and test the causal impact of the program' (p.146). The study set up its theoretical framework clearly, explained its innovative methodology well, was transparent in dealing with the data collected, and came to clear findings discussed cogently.

However, for all its virtues and despite its claims that the radio programme had clear positive results, the study highlights at the same time how little is really known about ‘what works’ for conflict prevention in this thematic area. The study is explicit about its own limitations: not least that the positive effects attributed to the intervention may only work for a short time and there is no guarantee they are strong enough to ‘counteract contradicting societal norms’ (p.149). So a very well designed, empirically careful study can come to clear findings that actually tell us very little, especially about actual impact on the potential for armed conflict.

Bilali et al (2015, EXP, ↑) addressed related questions in a study in Burundi that drew directly on this earlier Rwandan research, in an explicit effort to test the wider validity of some of the Rwanda study’s findings and approach. There were differences: for example, the main ‘perspective taking’ message of the Rwanda intervention had not yet been introduced in the Burundian radio show; the Burundi study addressed the role of individual behaviour in larger scale conflict through testing for propensities to ‘active bystander’ behaviour (standing up to and speaking out against aggression towards out-groups); and methodologically the Burundi study used propensity score matching rather than a treatment and control group. The study found that listeners to the radio drama did reveal more trust in out-group members and less social distance, as well as less propensity to consider their own group members as inherently superior. However, the study found that listeners were no less likely than others simply to obey leaders.⁴⁰

Taken together, these studies show what can be done to advance knowledge by their combination of a clear theoretical framework, a discrete focus on an intervention, and a well explained, carefully conducted research design and methodology. They show clear positive findings but they also show the limits of these findings. The actual history and political economy of the sample population’s locations and socio-economic characteristics are pretty much absent from the study. And while it is possible to say that the interventions to some extent ‘worked’, that is not the same as saying they worked to prevent future violence, though this was the aim of the interventions.

Other. The remaining publications addressed: the negative impact on conflict prevention of the decline of permanent foreign correspondents present in country (Otto and Meyer 2012, INT, →); the promising potential of community based language initiatives promoting bilingual programming (Ioratim-Uba 2014, MM, →); the framing of historical narratives in Azerbaijan (Radnitz 2015, EXP, →); and statements by the US President (McManus 2014, SA, ↓).

4.7.4 What is missing in the body of evidence on media and communications?

There has been a great deal of interest in more traditional media such as radio and TV and also in newer digital media forms, including mobile telephone applications, and their potential contribution to dampening conflict reflexes among and between populations. The research reviewed in this REA suggests that there is some high quality evidence for the promising contribution that such media can make. Further research needs to be carefully designed to study comparatively, and over time, the contribution of media interventions in order to try to show more about the extent to which effects are genuine and the conditions under which interventions ‘work’ and trump countervailing variables. It is also interesting that none of these studies found radio or TV programme design and broadcast to be ineffective. It would be useful to explore whether this is a function of a bias in the interests of research funded on the topic or not.

In addition, the emphasis on programming quality in a number of studies—and widely differing results between locations when two different programmes were assessed (Finkel et al, 2015, ↓) – points towards the importance of the specific content of radio and TV programming and its

⁴⁰ The methodology ensures an association that may provide an estimation of a causal attribution.

interaction with the specific context. The devil of media-programming effectiveness is likely to be in the detail of content, presenters, and presentation, and their relationship to highly specific contextual conflict dynamics. It is also notable that the REA search turned up a number of studies of the effectiveness of radio, TV, and digital media interventions in Africa but very few from elsewhere. There is a clear need, given the signals from this limited body of evidence, for more, and more comparative, research.

A major gap in this body of evidence arises from its focus on intermediate outcomes rather than impact on conflict, and as a result it remains impossible to say with confidence whether media and communications interventions are ultimately 'effective'.⁴¹ There is little knowledge thus far on the 'resilience' factors that may intervene to prevent individuals from being swayed by larger scale dynamics of armed violence. And the link between individual behaviour and collective violence is a difficult one to probe empirically. This is another example where more longitudinal research may help generate a body of evidence relevant to the research question.

⁴¹ There is a body of older evidence that suggests material factors and conflict dynamics may rapidly trump individual attitudes under conditions of violent conflict: e.g. Stathis Kalyvas (2006), *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, Cambridge: CUP.

5 Discussion

This section begins by highlighting the evidence on what is ‘effective’ or ‘ineffective’ in armed conflict prevention/mitigation interventions: i.e. the clearest claims about ‘what works’ and ‘what does not work’. The rest of the section discusses the features of the search results in terms of methodology and findings.

5.1 What works?

The REA found no strong body of evidence published between 2010-2015 that particular types of intervention ‘work’ consistently in different contexts: there is not a large enough body of literature and the literature is not overall of high enough quality. Therefore, the body of work does not show **what works**.

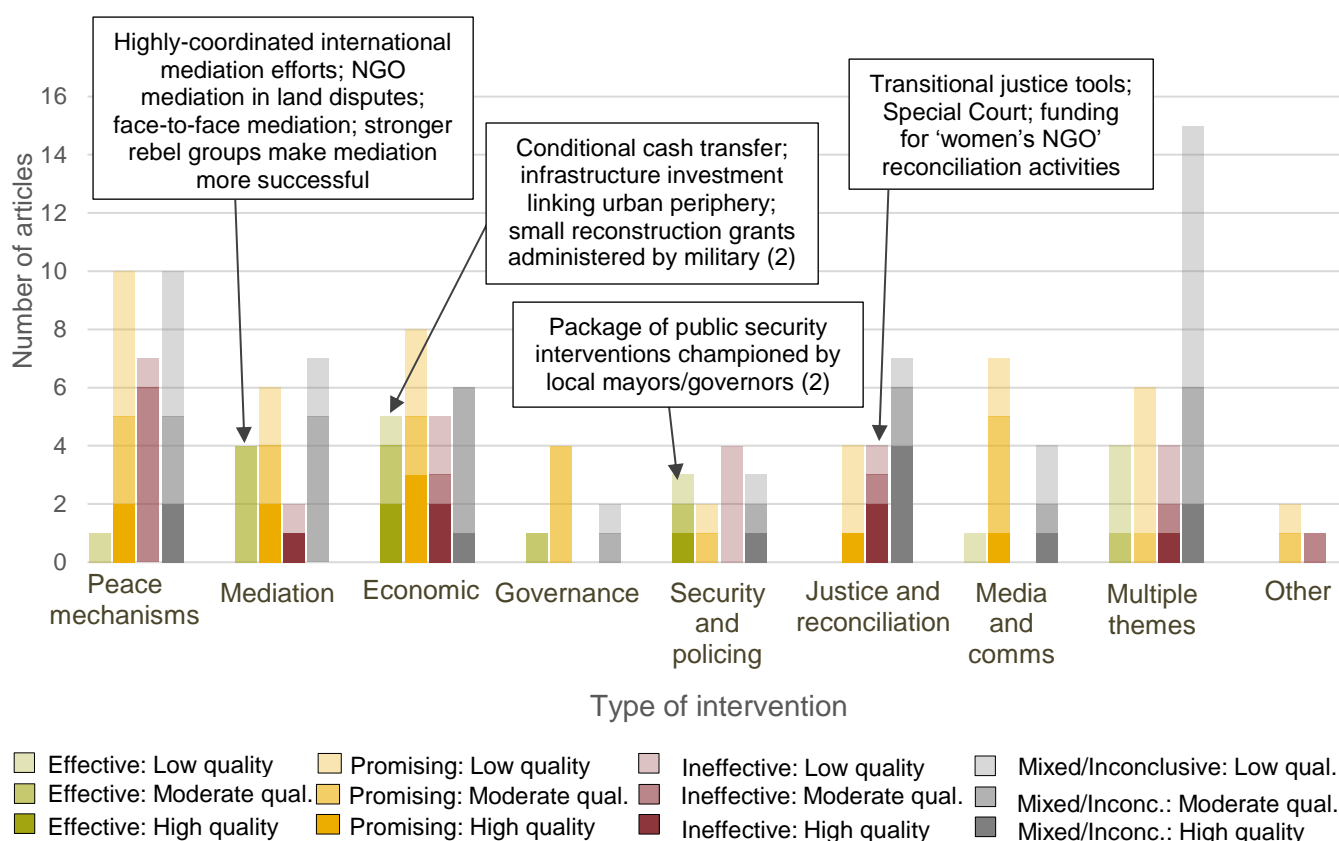
Nonetheless, there is some evidence of **what worked** in particular contexts. The REA identified 19 studies published between 2010-2015 that found that interventions directly contributed to the prevention or mitigation of armed violence. However, only three of these were deemed high quality:

- a substantial reduction in the number of conflict-related incidents in the Philippines was attributable to a conditional cash transfer (Croft et al 2014a, EXP, ↑);
- elected ‘outsider’ city mayors in Colombia and Brazil were able to champion public security platforms that contributed to a reduction in the intensity of gang-related urban violence (Hoelscher and Nussio 2015, CS, ↑; see also Gutierrez et al 2013, CS, ↑);
- A reduction in violence against non-combatants in parts of Iraq could be attributed to CERP spending on modest sized employment creation in reconstruction projects (Berman et al 2011, SA, ↑);

Figure 3 below provides a breakdown of the high and moderate quality findings by theme. It shows that the REA identified no high or moderate quality evidence that peace mechanisms or justice and reconciliation interventions were effective. Other studies addressed combined and multiple interventions that in most cases tended to weaken the validity of findings.

These findings do not necessarily indicate that high or moderate quality evidence on ‘what works’ does not exist. First, the REA search did not include findings of research published before 2010. Second, it is likely that the REA did not identify all relevant research published between 2010-2015, especially given its reliance on publication titles in searches and assessment of relevance. Third, the search identified a large number of articles that found an impact on intermediate outcomes that represent ‘promising’ results. However, there is no strong reason to suspect that the findings of this REA in terms of the characteristics of the body of research – geographical focus, themes, and quality – would not also apply to reviews of research published before 2010 and between 2010-2015. In fact, advances in methodology (for example, in mixed methods research design and small-n impact evaluation) and more nuanced understandings of conflict dynamics (beyond a ‘greed and grievance’ dichotomy) provide some reason to believe that the findings of the literature identified in this REA should be of higher quality than preceding research.

Figure 3: Number of articles finding impact of intervention on armed violence disaggregated by type of intervention and quality of evidence



5.2 What doesn't work?

What doesn't work in certain contexts comes out more clearly from the 27 publications that projects and programmes were 'ineffective' in preventing or mitigating armed violence. Most of these did focus clearly on interventions *designed* to prevent or mitigate armed conflict. Moreover, six of these studies were rated high quality.

At worst, interventions aggravate the very violence/armed conflict they are designed to mitigate:

- An evaluation of Norwegian peace efforts in Sri Lanka (Sørbo et al 2011, CS, ↑; backed up by Samantha 2011, CS, ↓) found that these simply contributed towards a reproduction (rather than transformation) of structural obstacles to conflict resolution;
- An increase in the number and casualties arising from insurgent attacks was attributed to the presence of a CDD public works programme in those districts in the Philippines (Crost et al 2014b, QE, ↑);
- and Ahmad's (2012, CS, →) case study of Somalia found that international intervention contributed towards aggravation of the armed conflict rather than dampening it, through its distortionary effects on the local economy and incentives for statebuilding.

Although these articles by themselves do not imply that international actors ought to eschew mediated peace efforts, international intervention and CDD, they do provide cautionary tales that can guide decision-makers. They highlight the dangers of ignoring political drivers of conflict, the

need to consider the distortionary effects of different aid modalities, and the specific design features of CDD that may render it vulnerable to attack. These dangers represent the failure to include adequately informed ‘conflict sensitivity’ in the design of interventions.

Other studies simply found that interventions had no effect:

- Meernik et al (2010, SA, ↑) found no correlation between international tribunals and national trials, on the one hand and, on the other, post-conflict incidence of peace or human rights violations;
- Peres et al (2015, QE, ↑) found no association between a youth violence prevention programme (chiefly consisting of public education and vocational training courses for vulnerable youth) and the incidence of armed conflict in Sao Paulo Brazil;
- And complex peacekeeping interventions in Bosnia Herzegovina are not associated with a reduction in violence once other factors are taken into account (Costalli 2012, SA, →).

5.3 Promising interventions?

In total, 49 of the studies were ‘promising’ in their findings. Sometimes studies were coded this way because the authors themselves considered there to be too little empirical content for a claim about impact to be convincing. However, the bulk of studies were coded ‘promising’ because they understood impact in terms of effect on intermediate outcomes rather than directly assessing the impact of an intervention on conflict prevention or violence mitigation. Thus, for example, many of these found an effect of an intervention (e.g. digital media services, community-based education projects, institutionalised dialogue, sports events, a truth and reconciliation commission, police training) on outcomes that may or may not have a clear influence on the level or likelihood of armed conflict: outcomes like ‘social cohesion’, perceptions of ‘others’, ‘trust’, or tolerance of diversity. Some of this research is high quality and may be used to support the case for further research to try to understand the next step in a causal chain, for example, whether and under what conditions greater inter-group trust actually influences the risk of armed conflict.⁴² Some of the stronger findings indicate that:

- Radio and TV programming may influence people’s trust in and respect for other people from different ‘identity groups’ in conflict affected contexts. It is far less clear that this in turn genuinely reduces the risk of armed violence breaking out. Testing this link – from greater trust (and other attitudinal changes) to reduced armed violence incidence – may be difficult but would be required for this kind of research to generate reliable findings on conflict prevention. This is one example where resources may be invested productively in longitudinal research. See Box 5 for further information;
- ADR initiatives may reduce the incidence of localised disputes (for example, over land ownership or use). However, the body of evidence is small and of varied quality, and it is not clear how strongly the incidence of local disputes over land (and other resources) is connected to the dynamics of larger-scale armed violence. Further, the research on ADR mechanisms is a clear instance of the prevailing counterfactual problem afflicting all conflict

⁴² It is important to note that the REA findings on promising effects of interventions on intermediate outcomes may not be as replicable as the findings on ‘what works’ and ‘what doesn’t work’. This is because in the early systematic phase of the REA search, the team excluded studies that explicitly addressed intermediate outcomes (because these would not directly address the research question). However, it became apparent that there were still publications that were in the search database but that, on closer reading, chiefly concerned intermediate outcomes.

prevention research: we do not really know if the conflicts resolved through ADR would actually have turned violent without ADR.

- Evidence on employment creation schemes (usually after violent conflicts) suggests that they may be effective in generating employment and some of them may reduce the incidence of violence against civilians, though not necessarily against combatants. However, we still do not know if these employment schemes effectively change the overall dynamics of conflict and reduce the risk of a renewed outbreak of large-scale armed conflict. Some of this research is very well designed and suggestive. It would be well worth investing resources in further research: research that seeks to understand better the causal mechanisms engaged; and more longitudinal research confirming or rejecting the strength of the contribution of employment schemes to the larger dynamics of peace and conflict.
- Research in Latin America suggest that public security campaigns championed by political ‘outsiders’ can have a positive effect in reducing urban violence. However, the articles emphasised that the impact of these campaigns was highly contingent on local political dynamics, and there is still not enough known about how the ‘identity’ of these political leaders actually affects the prospects for success. Further research could also probe the behaviour of non-state violent actors in such contexts, to deepen understanding of their response to such campaigns and what factors influence this.

5.4 Reasons for weakness of the body of evidence

Why is the overall body of evidence produced in recent years on this subject so weak? Much of the answer has to do with research design and methodology. Some of the problems are inherent to the subject. There are long and complex causal chains from interventions to impacts; especially in assessing conflict prevention there are fundamental challenges in addressing the attribution problem because of the lack of clear counter-factual knowledge; there are often security risks to carrying out high quality field research and where there are not then there are still problems with access to evidence and with the quality of available data; and evidence is often especially politicised in contexts affected by armed conflict.

5.4.1 Weak research design

Beyond these prevailing challenges, many studies were simply poor in their construction: untested assumptions often drowned out and substituted for proper theorization, coherent research design and careful collection of evidence. Too many studies say little or nothing about how they assembled evidence, what their sampling strategy was, how the veracity of evidence may be assured. And these research weaknesses were equally characteristic of many regression analyses and of individual qualitative case studies. Quite a number of programme reviews/evaluations and of single case studies were simply unable to generate convincing causal insights, so poor were their conceptual frameworks, research design and methodology. Further, many of the studies uncovered by the search did not directly address the impact on armed conflict of an intervention. Rather, they studied intermediate effects that may, or may not, be linked to armed conflict events over time. For example, a study might find evidence of changed attitudes towards ‘others’ or of stronger local community organisation; but the leap from there to an outcome in terms of violence trends and armed conflict is conjecture. Evidence of improved perceptions of security or of greater social cohesion do not themselves ensure resilience against changing dynamics of armed conflict.

Some of the studies assessed in this REA were impact evaluations. Very little of the literature in this field has adopted, within the timeframe covered by the REA, the advances in small-N impact evaluation methods. These include process tracing, contribution analysis, ‘realist evaluation’ and

Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA).⁴³ Although this is in some ways still an emerging field, it would be useful for future research to be encouraged to adopt such techniques.

One factor that frustrates greater understanding of what may work is the lack of longitudinal research. Much research, including high quality research, focuses on fairly short impact timespans. Yet the effects of interventions, both intended and unintended, may be protracted. There are plenty of institutional, practical, and financial reasons for this. But we recommend greater investment in longitudinal research on violence mitigation and conflict prevention. The processes involved in overcoming deep-rooted propensities to violent conflict are often slow and cumulative rather than quick fix mechanisms.

5.4.2 Integrating methods, stretching the timeframe of research, and paying attention to local variations

There were of course also some robust studies, whose conceptual framework was set out clearly and then linked to a research design, and whose methodology was plain and careful. Many of the best of these studied the effects of an intervention over time and were sensitive to local variations. A few studies stood out for combining quantitative and qualitative research. Some of the best of these addressed urban violence in Latin America. These identified a clear research question and adopted a comparative approach that integrated analysis of political economy with ‘technical’ aspects of policy design. These longitudinal, comparative studies of local dynamics present a promising direction for future research.

5.4.3 Both domestic and international context matters

The studies confirm what we know already about the primacy of context: the same interventions may ‘work’ in one context and have perverse impacts in another – for example, studies on the relationship between aid and armed conflict and between peacekeeping and levels of armed violence show great variation between and within countries.

A few studies identify key variables that help account for this difference – and these all point to various aspects of domestic political economy, including the nature of political settlements⁴⁴, and the conditions within which outstanding domestic leadership is able to make a difference.

Interestingly very few studies highlight or study the effects of international political economy (or of the political economy of specific ‘intervening’ countries) on what works. This tends to be a blind spot in the research – what are the incentives/disincentives within aid agencies and diplomatic communities? What kinds of learning processes need to be in place for external actors to intervene in more conflict sensitive ways? What kinds of international political settlements or leadership are required to create a ‘good policy environment’?

5.4.4 Political economy and quality research

The body of evidence uncovered by the REA search appears not to reflect the expansion of political economy research that has in recent years influenced donor thinking and policies.⁴⁵ Political economy is here understood in terms of the distribution of power and resources, the balance of interests, incentives, and institutions that shape and constrain change, and the

⁴³ See White and Phillips (2012).

⁴⁴ Political settlements are understood here as the outcome of bargaining and negotiation between elites. Although very few of the studies operationalized the concept in an explicit or convincing way, many alluded to the ways in which interventions were affected by, or affected form of contestation or collaboration between political elites.,

⁴⁵ See, for example, DFID’s ‘Political Economy Analysis How To Note’ (July 2009).

questions of who owns what and who does what with what they own. Possible reasons for this lack of political economy analysis in the body of evidence on conflict prevention or violence mitigation interventions may include the time lags between research and policy and the fact that political economy research tends to be geared more towards the questions of ‘what doesn’t work’ than ‘what does work’. Although there are valuable opportunities to integrate political economy analysis into evaluations of aid programmes, they are often considered sensitive by funders and therefore not published to contribute to a body of evidence.

Many studies referred to the crucial role of institutions, which are an important part of political economy. Although there are varying explicit and implicit understandings of institutions in the body of evidence we take this to mean both formal and informal ‘rules of the game’ shaping social, political and economic activities and relations and often sustained by organisations (government, non-government, local community). But there was little insight into what kinds of institution or institutional design are most effective in preventing or mitigating armed conflict or into how to disentangle the impact of an institution per se from individual leadership or from the dynamics of a (local, national, international) political settlement.⁴⁶ Given that one way of understanding institutions is precisely as the rules and practices that ‘institutionalise’ a conflict settlement, it is particularly important to promote research on which institutions ‘stick’ in terms of ensuring violent conflicts do not recur. Understanding this interaction between formal and informal institutions and individual agency is crucial to generating policy-relevant findings on *how* to bring about institutions that more effectively prevent armed conflict.

There is also a surprising dearth of research on the role of governance interventions in conflict prevention/violence mitigation – a limited number of studies and low quality evidence. Again, this is striking given the growing level of donor interest in statebuilding and political economy approaches in conflict affected contexts. There was also barely any work on corruption and anti-corruption initiatives. Possibly the research on corruption is not normally framed in terms of conflict prevention and violence mitigation.⁴⁷

5.4.5 Multi-sectoral vs. discrete project interventions

There is a trend towards more expansive and multi-sectoral approaches – in policing, peace infrastructure etc. The rationale for integrated programme portfolios is that they can address diverse conflict risk factors, are more sustainable as they are meant to build a supportive infrastructure for peace, and can in theory adapt to new windows of opportunity presented by changing conflict dynamics and political economies. However, few of the studies were able to provide a convincing account of whether these interventions added up and had cumulative effects. This is partly a methodological issue; it is easier to demonstrate ‘what works’ in relation to a specific intervention, such as land conflict in Indonesia. But also evaluations of country programmes revealed their piecemeal nature and the lack of an overarching theory of change and strategy for addressing armed violence.

⁴⁶ OECD (2010) refers to the political settlement, ‘which reflects the balance of power that exists and the bargains that have been struck between contending elites and social forces’.

⁴⁷ It is also possible that a shift towards greater adherence to principles of good evidence (as, for example, reflected in the DfID How To Note) and the shift towards a greater interest in political economy have not proceeded in step. Some of the best studies do exactly this: they combine careful research design and methodology with fine grained political economy in convincing ways, but doing this, at least in this specific field, appears to be quite a daunting challenge. Some evaluations and research are very good at one (e.g. political economy in Sudan) but less good in terms of research design and evidence collection. Some studies are based on very carefully set out methodology but are not embedded in political economy.

5.4.6 Scale and level of research

Finally, there is a problem of scale and levels of analysis and research. First, there is a missing ‘meso’ - in spite of a growing body of research which shows that mid-level leaders or institutions are often central to the dynamics of conflict escalation or de-escalation⁴⁸, The links between implementing agencies or sub-national organisations and either very localised dynamics of a project intervention or national/international interventions do not feature in most of the research found in the search. Some of the studies hint at the importance of mid-level leaders and processes; for example the role of local governors in championing public security in Latin America (Gutierrez et al. 2013) or conversely the failure of peacemakers to appreciate the complex brokering arrangements that connected national political elites to their local constituencies in Sri Lanka (Sørbø et al. 2011). However, very few studies were able to throw light on these meso level mechanisms or processes; this supports the need for a stronger commitment to longitudinal research, process tracing and the study of variation (in conflict and peacemaking/building dynamics) at the local level. This research would help illuminate how different configurations of subnational governance, state-society relations or local elite pacts explain variations in the impacts of interventions on armed violence in particular contexts.

Second, there is a prevailing “methodological nationalism”. Very few of the studies found in the search address properly either the borderland and regional dynamics of either armed conflict or interventions to prevent, manage, resolve, or mitigate it or the broader global dimensions and drivers of armed violence and the global-level constraints on preventing, managing or mitigating armed violence. This matters because it is obvious that there are many regional and international factors that affect the timing and scale of interventions, what form they take, how many actors take part, how this can affect relative bargaining power of key actors in mediation processes, and whether or not interventions are effective. Domestic US politics and Cold War political dynamics, for example, affected the way that the regionally interlinked conflicts in South Africa, Namibia, and Angola were addressed in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Politics within Russia, Turkey and the USA, to take another example, influence the dynamics of intervention to resolve ongoing armed conflict in Syria.

5.5 How the body of evidence has (and has not) advanced

There are some features of this REA that the research team found surprising. Although this is a subjective comment, it is worth highlighting impressions about the way the body of evidence on conflict prevention and violence mitigation has developed in recent years:

- The *What Price Peace?* study published by DFID in 2009 identified some quantitative work based on a dataset on third party mediation. The published research suggested that such mediation was often effective. This REA search did not find any more recent work of this kind.⁴⁹ Follow-up interviews found that the database could not be maintained and updated because of funding shortages. We support greater investment in the revival and development of this kind of dataset.
- The REA found very few structured comparative/contrastive case study analyses. This kind of research (ideally combining qualitative and quantitative methods) was something that *What Price Peace?* advocated as one viable research design for this field, partly because

⁴⁸ See Kalyvas (2006)

⁴⁹ There were some studies, however, that addressed related issues, such as the diplomatic effects on armed conflict risk of membership in highly structured international organisations (Karreth and Tir, 2013, RA →).

of the methodological challenges in quantitative modelling of conflict prevention adopted by other studies such as the earlier *Spending to Save* study (DFID 2005).

- *What Price Peace?* also suggested that careful ‘counterfactual history’ may offer one way to address the counterfactual challenge in studies of conflict prevention; this would entail methods including thick description and process tracing, drawing on elite interviews among other sources, and identifying potential turning and trigger points. There is no evidence of this kind of work in the REA database. However, linking to the limitations of the REA discussed elsewhere, it is possible that there are monographs that adopt methods closer to this that the REA has been unable to cover.
- We have noted already that the body of evidence reflects the influence of PEA less than might have been expected. This perhaps continues to reflect the gap that Mack (2002) identified some time ago, between researchers and policy makers; how researchers frequently fail to ‘translate’ or operationalize their research findings, whilst policy makers find it difficult to choose between competing or contradictory bodies of work.
- A number of studies identified in this REA reinforce the finding of *What Price Peace?* that the manner in which international actors, including emerging global powers, combine – with “greater or lesser friction” – has an important effect on the impact of conflict prevention. Case studies of international engagement in Sri Lanka, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, and Namibia highlight this point, although these stand out as exceptions to the tendency to neglect the implications of international political economies for programming.
- Given the highly visible international research literature in recent years on ‘horizontal inequalities’ (Stewart 2010; Cederman et al 2013), it is surprising that the REA did not find more studies of interventions designed to address such inequalities and related ‘grievances’.
- The body of evidence on employment and labour market interventions designed to influence conflict prevention/violence mitigation/criminal violence has begun to improve in terms of both scale and research design, if not on quite at the pace that is required given the emphasis given to employment generation and private sector development by the international community.

6 Conclusion

This REA, based on a systematic search of evidence published through a number of platforms and institutional websites and with additional snowballing, has found that there is only a weak body of evidence published between 2010 and 2015 on conflict prevention and violence mitigation: there is no medium- to large-scale body of evidence on specific interventions with clear findings on ‘what works’ grounded in moderate or high quality research (as assessed in terms of the principles and indicators of good evidence adopted in the REA). The 149 studies that were analysed – after a process of exclusion on grounds set out above – were spread across a wide array of interventions. Not all of these were directly assessed in terms of their contribution to conflict prevention or violence mitigation and instead quite a number focused on intermediate outcomes. Further, the quality of many of the studies was not high. There are also major geographical gaps in the research, with very little research focusing on the Middle East or South Asia. In short, at this aggregate level knowledge on conflict prevention/violence mitigation has advanced only moderately since 2010. This presents a major challenge for policy makers and resource allocation.

At a closer level of disaggregation, there are still excellent studies and interesting findings throughout much of the body of evidence. Some of the research on the governance of Latin American cities affected by high levels of violence has implications that are clearly of interest to donor agencies and policy makers and whose relevance for other parts of the world may be worth drawing out in future both research and programming. A range of studies looked at micro-economic interventions – wage employment generating schemes, self-employment promoting projects, and entrepreneurship – with a degree of rigour and producing some results that genuinely add to the stock of knowledge. They all have problems with the level of external validity of the studies but they nonetheless make up one of the stronger bodies of evidence for particular types of intervention.

While there is only a limited extent to which the search uncovered ‘what works’, there were some clear signals about ‘what doesn’t work’. 27 studies had clear findings that interventions had been ‘ineffective’ and six of these were high quality studies. The best of these studies highlighted the dangers of ignoring political drivers of conflict, the need to consider the distortionary effects of different aid modalities, and the specific design features that may render some forms of intervention (e.g. CDD) more vulnerable to attack than others.

The REA search and analysis have been thorough and transparent and the assessment has involved careful quality assurance. However, there remain limitations to this analysis. Team members believe that there is a wider body of evidence relevant to the research question posed by this REA but that has not been revealed by the search. It may be unlikely that analysing this additional work would dramatically transform the findings of this report. However, further resources allocated to deepening the work carried out for this REA would help resolve this uncertainty and strengthen confidence in the overall findings. Additional work might enable the evidence assessment to expand to include books; it would allow for the inclusion of work in other languages (notably in French and on francophone countries); and it would allow for more interviews with a greater number of expert individuals in the field.

While there is an opportunity to further expand the scope of the present research to incorporate additional bodies of literature, there is a parallel opportunity to narrow down the search to specific interventions and/or regions. The present study represents a starting point for more individual research on selected types of intervention. For example, exclusively focusing on ‘Security and policing’ would allow for a further refinement of search of key terms, more sectoral expertise and a fine grained understanding of intervening factors.

One of the factors that leads to the finding that there is no strong body of evidence overall is adherence to and application of the principles of good evidence adopted in this research and

largely informed by DFID's How To Note on good evidence (DFID 2014). There is scope for a critical discussion of these principles and their interpretation but they help to provide a clear foundation for assessing the quality of research and monitoring and evaluation evidence. The implication is that there may need to be a substantial effort to disseminate these principles and to advocate for greater commitment to them among researchers working in this field. In other words, the body of research that has been identified is not up to the high standards of the principles of good evidence. Either the research catches up, or those same principles need to be somewhat relaxed and/or adjusted in order to more flexibly include intervening factors in conflict, for example. One thing that a critical discussion of the principles of good evidence adopted here would include would be to focus on the weighting of the principles and associated indicators.

One feature missing from much of the body of evidence was the kind of fine-grained PEA to which many people working on conflict affected contexts (including DFID) have increasingly been committed to in recent years. Where there was a PEA, sometimes it was not matched by sufficiently rigorous evidence collection. If further research is commissioned in this field, one possibility is that researchers could mine the body of evidence on the political economy of violent conflict/criminal violence to tease out possible implications for interventions.

The REA suggests that there remains a large gap between the demand for evidence by policymakers/practitioners and the supply of research by researchers and evaluators in the field of conflict prevention and mitigation. The stubbornness of this gap raises questions about how policymakers can help researchers to overcome barriers to supply and provide incentives for improving the body of evidence about what works. One approach to consider would be the development of 'action research', which would bring together academic researchers and policy makers/practitioners across the policy cycle at the project or programme level, starting with design and inception through to the various phases of an intervention and its subsequent impacts. Such an approach would help to ensure that:

- researchers have access to the high quality and longitudinal data they require, including an appropriate baseline;
- interventions are designed in a way that maximises evaluability of impact (for example through random, staggered or purposive assignment of treatment and control groups);
- restricted access arising from security concerns are less of an obstacle to researchers;
- researchers can more easily distinguish between instances of 'implementation failure' and 'design failure' and therefore nuance findings appropriately;
- practitioners have easy access to expertise that can 'translate' the wider research and identify what worked in other contexts and why.

Such an approach would also put the spotlight on the incentive structures, capacities and learning processes of interveners, which tends to be a blind spot in the research, yet intuitively appears to be critical in determining 'what works'.

Finally, if policy makers wish to know more about what works and to have clearer foundations for resource allocation, they need to invest in research – a lot of it – that develops this small body of evidence and that pushes for greater knowledge on particular, key types of intervention. There is scope for much more, and better, research of different designs and methodologies, to pursue greater knowledge about interventions and their effects addressed in the studies analysed here. Although the tone of the discussion in this REA may appear downbeat, the highest quality research identified here is encouraging and demonstrates that useful, policy-relevant research into conflict prevention and mitigation is both possible and necessary.

References (Quality Assessed Articles)

Reference	Theme	Method	Quality	Finding
Abuom, A. et al (2012) 'Internal review of NCA three year programme; the Right to Peace and Security, Gender and Economic Justice Report (South Sudan)', Oslo: Norwegian Church Aid	Peace mechanisms	MM	↓	Mixed
ACT (2012) 'Terminal evaluation of the Action for Conflict Transformation (ACT) for Peace Programme (Philippines)', Sydney: Act for Peace	Peace mechanisms (prevention)	MM	↑	Promising
Ahmad, A. (2012) 'Agenda for peace or budget for war? Evaluating the economic impact of international intervention in Somalia', International Journal, Spring 2012, pp.313-331	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	CS	→	Ineffective
Al Qurtuby, S. (2012-2013) 'Reconciliation from Below: Indonesia's Religious Conflict and Grassroots Agency for Peace', Peace Research, 44:2/45:1, pp.135-162	Multiple (Peace mechanisms (prevention); Mediation (subnational and community))	CS	↓	Promising
Al Qurtuby, S. (2015) 'Interethnic Violence, Separatism and Political Reconciliation in Turkey and Indonesia', India Quarterly, 71:2, pp.126-145	Multiple (Mediation; Governance; Other)	CS	↓	Mixed
Andersen-Rodgers, D. (2015) 'Back home again: Assessing the impact of provisions for internally displaced persons in comprehensive peace accords', Refugee Survey Quarterly, No.34, pp.24-45	Peace mechanisms (peace agreements)	DS	↓	promising
Andrada, A. F. (2013) 'UPP E PREVENÇÃO DA VIOLÊNCIA NA SANTA MARTA', Revista do Laboratorio de Estudos da Violencia da UNESP/Marilia, No. 11, pp.28-46	Security and policing	MM	↓	Mixed
Barma, N.H. (2012) 'Peace-building and the predatory political economy of insecurity: evidence from Cambodia, East Timor and Afghanistan', Conflict, Security & Development, 12:3, pp.273-298	Multiple (Peace mechanisms (intervention); Governance)	MM	↓	Ineffective (counter-productive)
Beardsley, K. et al. (2015) 'Resolving Civil Wars before They Start: The UN Security Council and Conflict Prevention in Self-Determination Disputes', British Journal of Political Science, pp.1-23	Peace mechanisms	SA	↑	Mixed
Bennett, J., Pantuliano, S., Fenton, W., Vaux, A., Barnett, C., and Brusset, E. (2010) 'Aiding the Peace - A Multi-donor evaluation of support to conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities in southern Sudan 2005-2010', Amsterdam: Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Multiple (Peace mechanisms; Governance; Security and policing; Justice and reconciliation)	MM	↑	Mixed

Bercovitch, J., Chalfin, J. (2011) 'Contact and conflict resolution: Examining the extent to which interpersonal contact and cooperation can affect the management of international conflicts', <i>International Negotiation</i> , No.16, pp.11-37	Mediation (international & civil war)	SA	→	Promising
Bercovitch, J., Simpson, L. (2010) 'International mediation and the question of failed peace agreements: Improving conflict management and implementation', <i>Peace & Change</i> , 35:1, pp.68-103	Mediation (international & civil war)	CS	→	Mixed
Berg, L., Carranza, M. (2015) 'Crime, Violence, and Community-Based Prevention in Honduras', Washington DC: World Bank	Peace mechanisms (prevention)	MM	↑	Promising
Berk-Seligson, S. et al (2014) 'Impact Evaluation of USAID's Community-Based Crime and Violence Prevention Approach in Central America - Regional Report for El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama', LAPOP & Vanderbilt University	multiple (peace mechanisms (prevention), economic (micro))	MM	→	Effective
Berman, E., Shapiro, J. N., Felter, J. H. (2011) 'Can hearts and minds be bought? The economics of counterinsurgency in Iraq', <i>Journal of Political Economy</i> , 119:4, pp.766-819	Economic (micro)	SA	↑	Effective
Best, M.L., Long, W.J., Etherton, J., Smyth, T. (2011) 'Rich digital media as a tool in post-conflict truth and reconciliation', <i>Media, War & Conflict</i> , 4(3), pp.231-249	Media and communication	QE	→	Promising
Bhowon, V., Robert, P., Wille, C. (2014) 'Final Evaluation of the Project 'Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Eastern and Southern Africa Region' (CPMR)', Brussels: IBF International Consulting	Governance/I4P	INT	↓	Inconclusive
Bilali R., Vollhardt, J. R. (2013) 'Priming effects of a reconciliation radio drama on historical perspective-taking in the aftermath of mass violence in Rwanda', <i>Journal of Experimental Social Psychology</i> , No.49, pp.144-151	Media and communication	EXP	↑	Promising
Bilali, R., Vollhardt, J., Rarick, J. (2015) 'Assessing the Impact of a Media-based Intervention to Prevent Intergroup Violence and Promote Positive Intergroup Relations in Burundi', <i>Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology</i> , 26:3, pp.221-235	Media and communication	QE	↑	Mixed
Blattman, C., Annan, J. (2015) 'Can employment reduce lawlessness and rebellion? A field experiment with high-risk men in a fragile state', Working Paper No. 21289, Cambridge MA: NBER	Economic (micro)	EXP	↑	Promising
Blattman, C., Fiala, N., Martinez, S. (2014) 'Generating skilled self-employment in developing countries: experimental evidence from Uganda', <i>The Quarterly Journal of Economics</i> , 129:2, pp.697-752	Economic (micro)	EXP	→	Ineffective

Blattman, C., Hartman, A., Blair, R. (2011) 'Can we teach peace and conflict resolution? Results from a randomized evaluation of the Community Empowerment Program (CEP) in Liberia: A Program to Build Peace, Human Rights and Civic Participation', New Haven: IPA	Multiple (Peace mechanisms (prevention); Mediation (subnational and communities))	EXP	→	Mixed
Blattman, C., Hartman, A., Blair, R. (2014) 'How to promote order and property rights under weak rule of law? An experiment in changing dispute resolution behavior through community education', American Political Science Review, 108:1, pp.100-120	Mediation (subnational and community)	MM	↑	Promising
Bombelli, J. I., Muratori, M., Mele, S. V., & Zubieta, E. M. (2014) ' Procesos de perdón y reconciliación intergrupal en Argentina: aportes psicosociales al estudio de los efectos de la violencia de estado.', Anuario de Investigaciones, Vol. XXI, pp.119-126	Justice and reconciliation	DS	↓	Ineffective
Braithwaite, J. (2012) 'Evaluating the Timor-Leste peace operation', Journal of International Peacekeeping, No.16, pp.282-305	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	CS	→	Mixed
Braithwaite, J., Charlesworth, H., Soares, A. (2012) 'Networked Governance of Freedom and Tyranny: Peace in Timor-Leste', Canberra: ANU E-Press	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	CS	→	Ineffective (counter-productive)
Campbell, S. et al (2014) 'Independent external evaluation of the UN Peacebuilding Fund Project Portfolio in Burundi', Geneva: The Graduate Institute Geneva	Multiple (Governance; Security and policing)	MM	↓	Mixed
Carayannis, T., Bojicic-Dzelilovic, V., Olin, N., Rigterink, A., Schomerus, M. (2014) 'Practice without evidence: interrogating conflict resolution approaches and assumptions', London: LSE	Multiple (Mediation; Peace mechanisms)	SR	↑	Ineffective
Cárdenas, M., Páez, D., Arnosó, M., Rimé, B. (2013) 'Percepción del clima socioemocional y la confianza institucional en víctimas de violencia política: Valoración del impacto de la Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación. ', Psykhe, 22:2, pp.111-127	Justice and reconciliation	QE	↑	Mixed
Cerda, M. et al. (2012) 'Reducing Violence by Transforming Neighborhoods: A Natural Experiment in Medellín, Colombia', American Journal of Epidemiology, 175:10, pp.1045-53	Economic	QE	→	Effective
Cerqueira, D., Coelho, D. S. C. (2015) 'Redução da idade de imputabilidade penal, educação e criminalidade violenta no Brasil. ', Nota Técnica No.15, Rio de Janeiro: IPEA	Security and policing	SA	↓	Ineffective

Channel Research (2011) 'Joint Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peace-building in the Democratic Republic of Congo - Synthesis Report', Ohain: Channel Research	Multiple (Peace mechanisms; Security and policing; Justice and reconciliation)	MM	→	Mixed
Chou, T. (2012) 'Does development assistance reduce violence? Evidence from Afghanistan', The Economics of Peace and Security Journal, 7:2, pp.5-13	Economic (micro)	SA	→	Inconclusive
Chr. Michelsen Institute (2014) 'Building Blocks for Peace - An evaluation of the Training for Peace in Africa Programme', Oslo: Norad	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	MM	↓	Promising
Chuma, A., Ojielo, O. (2012) 'Building a Standing National Capacity for Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Kenya', Journal of Peacebuilding & Development, 7:3, pp.25-39	Peace mechanisms (prevention)	CS	↓	Promising
Ciepley, D. (2013) 'Dispersed Constituency Democracy: Deterritorializing Representation to Reduce Ethnic Conflict', Politics & Society, 41:1, pp.135-162	Governance	MM	→	Promising
Clayton, G. (2013) 'Relative rebel strength and the onset and outcome of civil war mediation', Journal of Peace Research, 50:5, pp.609-622	Mediation (international & civil war)	SA	→	Effective
Clayton, G., Gleditsch, K. S. (2014) 'Will we see helping hands - Predicting civil war mediation and likely success', Conflict Management and Peace Science, 31:3, pp.265-284	Mediation (international & civil war)	SA	→	Inconclusive
Coakley, J., Fraenkel, J. (2014) 'Resolving conflict in bipolar societies - The fate of political settlements in Fiji and Northern Ireland ', Political Science, 66:1, pp.23-45	Governance	CS	→	Promising
Coffey (2012) 'Darfur community peace and stability fund impact assessment - Final report', London: Coffey	Multiple (Peace mechanisms (prevention); Mediation (subnational and community); Governance)	INT	↓	Mixed
Costalli, S. (2013) 'Does Peacekeeping Work? A Disaggregated Analysis of Deployment and Violence Reduction in the Bosnian War', British Journal of Political Science, 44:2, pp.357-380	Peace mechanisms	SA	→	Ineffective
Crost, B., Felter, J. H., Johnston, P. B. (2014a) 'Conditional cash transfers, civil conflict and insurgent influence: Experimental evidence from the Philippines', HiCN Working Paper 174, Brighton: IDS	Economic (micro)	EXP	↑	Effective
Crost, B., Felter, J., Johnston, P. (2014b) 'Aid under fire: development projects and civil conflict', American Economic Review, 104:6, pp.1833-1856	Economic (micro)	QE	↑	Ineffective

CSPS (2012) 'Final evaluation of peace through development (PTD) project (Indonesia)', New York: UNDP	Multiple (Governance; Peace mechanisms (prevention))	MM	↓	Inconclusive
Cunningham, D. E. (2010) 'Blocking resolution - How external states can prolong civil wars', <i>Journal of Peace Research</i> , 47:2, pp.115-127	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	SA	→	Ineffective (counter-productive)
da Nóbrega Júnior, J. M. P. (2015) 'Políticas públicas e segurança pública em Pernambuco: o case pernambucano e a redução da violência homicida.', <i>Latitude</i> , 8:2, pp.315-335	Security and policing	SA	↓	Effective
Dasgupta, A., Gawande, K., Kapur, D. (2014) 'Anti-poverty programs can reduce violence: India's Rural Employment Guarantee and Maoist Conflict', Delhi: ISID	Economic (micro)	SA	→	Promising
de Paula, M. C. R. (2011) 'A modificação do espaço urbano como fator de redução do medo, da violência e da criminalidade: o caso da urbanização da favela do Sacadura Cabral (Santo André, SP)', <i>Revista do Laboratorio de Estudos da Violencia da UNESP/Marília</i> , No. 8, pp.19-39	Economic	INT	↓	Ineffective
de Soysa, I. (2011) 'The Hidden Hand Wrestles Rebellion: Theory and Evidence on How Economic Freedom Prevents Civil Violence', <i>Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism</i> , 11:2, pp.285-297	Economic (macro)	SA	→	Promising
DeRouen, K., Möller, F. (2013) 'The Short-Term Effects of Mediation on Low-Intensity Civil Wars', <i>Negotiation Journal</i> , pp.413-438	Mediation (international & civil war)	SA	→	Effective
Dhiaulhaq, A., Grittena, D., De Bruyna, T., Yasmia, Y., Zazalic, A., Silalahi, M. (2014) 'Transforming conflict in plantations through mediation: Lessons and experiences from Sumatera, Indonesia', <i>Forest Policy and Economics</i> , 41, pp.22-30	Mediation (subnational and community)	CS	→	Effective
Dyck, C. (2011) 'Football and post-war reintegration: exploring the role of sport in DDR processes in Sierra Leone', <i>Third World Quarterly</i> , 32:3, pp.395-415	Security and policing	INT	→	Promising
Elzarov, Z. (2015) 'Community Stabilization and Violence Reduction - Lessons from Darfur', <i>Stability</i> , 4:1, pp.1-7	Economic (micro)	CS	↓	Promising
Esmail, R. (2014) 'Sistematización Experiencias de Implementación de Policía Comunitaria en cuatro países de Centroamérica', <i>La Libertad</i> : GIZ	Security and policing	MM	↓	Promising
Fiedler, C. (2015) 'Towers of Strength in Turbulent Times? Assessing the effectiveness of international support to peace and democracy in Kenya and Kyrgyzsan in the Aftermath of Interethnic Violence', <i>Discussion Paper 6/2015</i> , Bonn: DIE	Multiple (mediation, governance, peace mechanisms (prevention))	CS	→	Mixed

Finkel, S. et al (2015) 'Impact evaluation of Peace through Development II (P-DEV II) Radio Programming in Chad and Niger', Washington DC: USAID	Media and communication	SA	↓	Mixed
Fleury, S. (2012) 'Militarizacao do social como estrategia de integracao: o caso da UPP do Santa Marta', Sociologias, 14:30, pp.194-222	Multiple (Security and policing; Economic)	CS	↓	Mixed
Gartner, S.S. (2011) 'Signs of Trouble: Regional Organization Mediation and Civil War Agreement Durability', The Journal of Politics, 73:2, pp.380-390	Mediation (international & civil war)	SA	↑	Promising
Goswami, N. (2010) 'The Naga intra-community dialogue: preventing and managing violent ethnic conflict', Global Change, Peace & Security, 22:1, pp.93-120	Peace mechanisms	CS	→	Promising
Greig, J., Meernik, J. (2014) 'To prosecute or not to prosecute: Civil war mediation and international criminal justice', International Negotiation, No.19, pp.257-284	Justice and reconciliation	SA	→	Mixed
Grossman-Vermaas, R., Reisman, A. (2013) 'Final Evaluation Report - Peace in East and Central Africa (PEACE II) Programme', Washington DC: USAID	Multiple (Economic (micro); Justice and reconciliation; Peace mechanisms (prevention))	MM	→	Inconclusive
Guevara de la Paz, M. (2012) 'Terminal evaluation of the GPH-UNDP conflict prevention and peace-building programme (CPPB) (Philippines)', New York: UNDP	Peace mechanisms (prevention)	MM	↓	Promising
Gutierrez, F. et al (2013) 'The Importance of Political Coalitions in the Successful Reduction of Violence in Colombian Cities', Urban Studies, 50:15, pp.3134-3151	Security and policing	CS	↑	Mixed
Harris, C. (2014) 'The use of participatory gender analysis for violence reduction in (post-) conflict settings: A study of a community education project in Northern Uganda', Gendered Perspectives on Conflict and Violence, Vol.18B, pp.145-170	Other (analytical lens)	CS	→	Promising
Helms, E. (2010) 'The gender of coffee: Women and reconciliation initiatives in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina', Focaal - Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology, No.57, pp.17-32	Justice and reconciliation	ETH	↑	Ineffective
Hoelscher, K., Nussio, E. (2015) 'Understanding unlikely successes in urban violence reduction', Urban Studies, pp.1-20	Security and policing	CS	↑	Effective
Hoffmann, E. (2012) 'Towards full spectrum conflict prevention: the international peace and prosperity project in Guinea-Bissau', Canadian Foreign Policy Journal, 19:1, pp.75-86	Peace mechanisms (prevention)	CS	↓	Ineffective
Höglund, K., Orjuela, C. (2011) 'Winning the peace: conflict prevention after a victor's peace in Sri Lanka', Contemporary Social Science, 6:1, pp.19-37	multiple (Justice and reconciliation, economic (macro), governance)	CS	→	Ineffective (counter-productive)

Holmes, R. et al (2013) 'What is the evidence on the impact of employment creation on stability nad poverty reduction in fragile states: A systematic review', London: ODI	Economic	SR	↑	Inconclusive
Hosli, M., Hoekstra, A. (2013) 'What fosters enduring peace? An analysis of factors influencing civil war resolution ', Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy, 19:2, pp.123-155	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	SA	↓	Promising
Huggins, C., Azeez, K. (2014) 'Final Evaluation of the Land Conflict Resolution Project in Liberia', Washington DC: USAID	Justice and reconciliation	QE	↓	Inconclusive
Hultman, L., Kathman, J., Shannon, M. (2014) 'Beyond keeping peace: United Nations effectiveness in the midst of fighting', American Political Science Review, 108:4, pp.737-753	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	SA	→	Mixed
Hussein, M.K. (2011) 'Intra-state conflict and indigenous-based conflict resolution mechanisms in Malawi: the role of the Public Affairs Committee', African Security Review, 20:1, pp.26-39	Justice and reconciliation	CS	↓	Promising
Iji, T. (2011) 'Contact Group Diplomacy: The Strategies of the Western Contact Group in Mediating Namibian Conflict', Diplomacy & Statecraft, 22:4, pp.634-650	Mediation (international & civil war)	CS	→	Effective
Ioritim-Uba, G. (2014) 'Language, ethnicity and conflict: Applying linguistic measure to prevent ethnic violence in middle belt Nigeria ', International Journal on Minority and Group Rights, No.21, pp.557-590	Media and communication	MM	→	Promising
Iyengar, R., Monten, J., Hanson, M. (2011) 'Building peace: the impact of aid on the labor market for insurgents', Working Paper 17297, Washington DC: NBER	Economic (micro)	SA	→	Effective
Jacob, J. (2014) 'Transforming conflicts with information: Impacts of UN peace radio programmes in the Democratic Republic of Congo', War & Society, 33:4, pp.283-301	Media and communication	MM	↓	Inconclusive
Karreth, J., Tir, J. (2013) 'International Institutions and Civil War Prevention', The Journal of Politics, 75:1, pp.96-109	Governance	SA	→	Effective
Khadiagala, G. (2014) 'Road maps in resolving African conflicts: Pathways to Peace or Cul de Sacs?', African Security, No.7, pp.163-180	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	CS	→	Promising
Kinne, B. (2014) 'Does third-party trade reduce conflict? Credible signaling versus opportunity costs', Conflict Management and Peace Science, 31:1, pp.28-48	Economic (macro)	SA	→	Mixed
Kirchner, E. (2013) 'Common Security and Defence Policy peace operations in the Western Balkans: impact and lessons learned', European Security, 22:1, pp.36-54	Multiple (Peace mechanisms (intervention); Security and policing)	CS	↓	Promising

LaFavor, B. (2013) 'An Evaluation of Education as a Mechanism for Peacebuilding in Conflict-Torn Regions', The Journal of Global Development and Peace, Fall 2013, pp.22-32	Peace mechanisms (prevention)	CS	↓	Mixed
Larrabure, J. L., Vaz, E. (2011) 'Final Evaluation - Peace Building Fund Programme in Guinea Bissau 2008-2011 (Draft Report)', New York: UNPBF	Multiple (Peace mechanisms (prevention); Security and policing; Governance; Economic (Micro))	MM	↓	Ineffective
Li, Q., Reuveny, R. (2011) 'Does trade prevent or promote interstate conflict initiation?', Journal of Peace Research, 48:4, pp.437-453	Economic (macro)	SA	→	Mixed
Macabuac-Ferolin, M.C., Costantino, N.V. (2014) 'Localizing Transformation: Addressing Clan Feuds in Mindanao Through Pcia', Journal of Peacebuilding & Development, 9:1, pp.10-25	Other (analytical lens)	CS	↓	Promising
Maia, P. (2014) 'As Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora como estratégia de desenvolvimento e resolução de conflito. ', Intellector, No. 21, pp.110-122	Security and policing	CS	↓	Ineffective
Maoz, I. (2011) 'Does contact work in protracted asymmetrical conflict? Appraising 20 years of reconciliation-aimed encounters between Israeli Jews and Palestinians', Journal of Peace Research, 48:1, pp.115-125	Justice and reconciliation	ETH	↑	Mixed
Martin-Shields, C. (2013) 'Inter-ethnic Cooperation Revisited: Why mobile phones can help prevent discrete events of violence, using the Kenyan case study', Stability, 2:3, pp.1-13	Media and communication	CS	↓	Promising
McCallum, J. (2013) 'Rift Valley Local Empowerment for Peace II (LEAP II) Final Evaluation Report', Washington DC: USAID	multiple (peace mechanisms (prevention), economic (micro))	MM	↓	Promising
McManus, R. W. (2014) 'Fighting words - The effectiveness of statements of resolve in international conflict ', Journal of Peace Research, 51:6, pp.726-740	Media and communication	SA	↓	Effective
Meernik, J. et al (2010) 'The Impact of International Tribunals and Domestic Trials on Peace and Human Rights After Civil War', International Studies Perspectives, No.11, pp.309-334	Justice and reconciliation	SA	↑	Ineffective
Midodzi, P.F., Imoro, R.J. (2011) 'Assessing the effectiveness of the alternative dispute resolution mechanism in the Alavanyo-Nkonya conflict in the Volta region of Ghana', International Journal of Peace and Developmetn Studies, 2:7, pp.195-202	Mediation (subnational and community)	CS	↓	Promising

Mieth, F. (2013) 'Bringing justice and enforcing peace? An ethnographic perspective on the impact of the Special Court for Sierra Leone', <i>International Journal of Conflict and Violence</i> , 7:1, pp.10-22	Justice and reconciliation	ETH	→	Ineffective
Mietzner, M. (2010) 'Political conflict resolution and democratic consolidation in Indonesia: The role of the Constitutional Court', <i>Journal of East Asian Studies</i> , No.10, pp.397-424	Justice and reconciliation	CS	↓	Promising
Millar, G. (2012) 'Our brothers who went to the bush': Post-identity conflict and the experience of reconciliation in Sierra Leone', <i>Journal of Peace Research</i> , 49:5, pp.717-729	Justice and reconciliation	ETH	↑	Inconclusive
Mironova, V., Whitt, M. (2015) 'International Peacekeeping and Positive Peace Evidence from Kosovo', <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> , pp.1-31	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	MM	→	Promising
Miti, K. (2012) 'South Africa and Conflict Resolution in Africa: From Mandela to Zuma', <i>Southern African Peace and Security Studies</i> , 1:1, pp.26-42	Mediation (international & civil war)	CS	↓	Ineffective (counter-productive)
Morgan, B. M., Duncan, N., Leslie, G. (2011) 'Final evaluation report - Jamaica Violence Prevention, Peace and Sustainable Development Programme', Kingston: UNDP Jamaica	Multiple (Peace mechanisms (prevention); Security and policing)	MM	↓	Inconclusive
Mueller, P. (2013) 'Europe's Foreign Policy and the Middle East Peace Process: The Construction of EU Actorness in Conflict Resolution', <i>Perspectives on European Politics and Society</i> , 14:1, pp.20-35	Mediation (international & civil war)	CS	→	Mixed
Mutanda, D. (2013) 'The art of mediation in resolving African conflicts: Lessons for Zimbabwe and Africa', <i>Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research</i> , 5:3, pp.130-146	Mediation (international & civil war)	CS	↓	Promising
Nakov, N. (2012) 'The impact of social policy on sustainable peacebuilding: the case of Kosovo', <i>Security Dialogues</i> , Vol. 6, pp.1-14	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	CS	→	Ineffective (counter-productive)
Nascimento Filho, J. R. M., de Moraes, F. R. P. (2014) 'Estatuto do desarmamento e sua eficácia no tocante a redução da violência no país', <i>Juris Rationis</i> , 7:1, pp.33-46	Security and policing	DS	↓	Ineffective
Nascimento, D. (2011) 'The (in)visibilities of War and Peace: A Critical Analysis of Dominant Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Strategies in the Case of Sudan', <i>International Journal of Peace Studies</i> , 16:2, pp.43-57	Other (analytical lens)	CS	→	Ineffective

Neumann, H. (2011) 'Taking a Micro-social Perspective of Impact of Peacebuilding Interventions on Rural Citizens', <i>Journal of Peace, Conflict & Development</i> , No.18, pp.47-67	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	ETH	→	Ineffective
Nunn, N., Qian, N. (2014) 'US Food Aid and Civil Conflict', <i>American Economic Review</i> , 104:6, pp.1630-1666	Economic	SA	→	Mixed
Ohanyan, A. (2010) 'The Effects of Global Policy Networks on Peacebuilding: Framework of Evaluation', <i>Global Society</i> , 24:4, pp.529-552	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	CS	→	Mixed
Omotosho, M. (2014) 'Managing religious conflicts in Nigeria: The inter-religious mediation peace strategy', <i>Africa Development</i> , 34:2, pp.133-151	Multiple (Peace mechanisms (prevention); Mediation (subnational and community))	CS	↓	Promising
Otto, F., Meyer, C. O. (2012) 'Missing the story - changes in foreign news reporting and their implications for conflict prevention', <i>Media, War & Conflict</i> , 5:3, pp.205-221	Media and communication	INT	→	Mixed
Pareja, F. A. (2011) 'La Mediación para la regulación del conflicto político en la Venezuela de hoy:: Un Giro Epistemológico a la luz de la experiencia de la Mesa de Negociación y Acuerdos 2002/2003. ', <i>Cuadernos Unimetanos</i> , No. 28, pp.46-61	Mediation (subnational and community)	CS	↓	Mixed
Park, J. (2010) 'Conflict Management and Mediation Theory: South Africa's Role in Burundi's Civil Conflict', <i>International Area Review</i> , 13:3, pp.181-201	Mediation (international & civil war)	CS	↓	Inconclusive
Pena, P., Urrego, J., Villa, J. M. (2015) 'Civil conflict and antipoverty programmes: effects on demobilisation', <i>Medellin: Universidad EAFIT</i>	Economic (micro)	QE	↑	Promising
Peres, M. F. T., Ruotti, C., Vicentin, D., de Almeida, J. F., Freitas, T. V. (2015) 'Avaliação de programas de prevenção da violência: Um estudo de caso no Brasil', <i>Revista Brasileira Adolescência e Conflitualidade</i> , 2, pp.58-71	Economic	QE	↑	Ineffective
Peterson, J. (2010) 'Rule of Law' initiatives and the liberal peace: the impact of politicised reform in post-conflict states', <i>Disasters</i> , 34:1, pp.15-39	Multiple (Security and policing; Justice and reconciliation)	MM	↓	Mixed
P-FIM (2012) 'External evaluation of Norwegian Church Aid's Programme 'Towards lasting peace in Burundi 2010-2012'', <i>Oslo: Norwegian Church Aid</i>	Multiple (Peace mechanisms (prevention); Economic)	INT	↓	Effective
Piombo, J. (2010) 'Peacemaking in Burundi: Conflict Resolution versus Conflict Management Strategies', <i>African Security</i> , 3:4, pp.239-272	Mediation (international & civil war)	CS	↑	Ineffective
Quinn, D., Wilkenfeld, J., Eralp, P., Asal, V., Mclauchlin, T. (2013) 'Crisis managers but not conflict resolvers: Mediating ethnic intrastate conflict in Africa', <i>Conflict Management and Peace Science</i> , 30:4, pp.387-406	Mediation (international & civil war)	SA	→	Mixed

Radnitz, S. (2015) 'Historical narratives and post-conflict reconciliation - an experiment in Azerbaijan', <i>Conflict Management and Peace Science</i> , pp.1-21	Media and communication	EXP	→	Promising
Ratton, J. L., Galvao, C., Fernandez, M. (2014) 'Pact for Life and the Reduction of Homicides in the State of Pernambuco', <i>Stability</i> , 3:1, pp.1-15	Security and policing	CS	→	Effective
Rodríguez, E. (2011) 'Escuelas abiertas, prevención de la violencia y Fomento de la cohesión social en América Latina: Experiencias destacadas y desafíos a encarar', CODAJIC	Economic	CS	↓	Promising
Ruteere, M. et al (2013) 'Missing the point - violence reduction and policy misadventures in Nairobi's poor neighbourhoods', Brighton: IDS	Security and policing	CS	↓	Ineffective (counter-productive)
Samantha, M. (2011) 'Prospects and Challenges of Peace-building An Evaluation of External Actors in Sri Lanka', <i>History and Sociology of South Asia</i> , 5:1, pp.31-47	Economic	CS	↓	Ineffective
Santos, S. M. D., Silveira, A. M. (2015) 'Os desafios de um projeto de prevenção à violência e à criminalidade: o Mulheres da Paz em Santa Luzia/MG. ', <i>Estudos Feministas</i> , 23:1, pp.99-118	Economic	MM	↓	Effective
Sarvananthan, M. (2012) 'Fiscal Devolution - A Stepping Stone towards Conflict Resolution in Sri Lanka', <i>South Asian Survey</i> , 19:1, pp.101-111	Economic (macro)	CS	↓	Promising
Schulenkorf, N. (2010) 'Sport events and ethnic reconciliation: Attempting to create social change between Sinhalese, Tamil and Muslim sportspeople in war-torn Sri Lanka', <i>International Review for the Sociology of Sport</i> , 45(3), pp.273-294	Justice and reconciliation	CS	↑	Promising
Selway, J., Templeman, K. (2012) 'The Myth of Consociationalism - Conflict reduction in divided societies', <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> , 45:12, pp.1542-1571	Governance	SA	→	Mixed
Shirinyan, A. (2013) 'Assessing Russia's Role in Efforts to Resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: From Perception to Reality', <i>Journal of Conflict Transformation</i> , Online	Mediation (international & civil war)	CS	→	Inconclusive
Singh, R. J., Bodea, C., Masaaki, H. (2014) 'Oil and civil conflict - can public spending have a mitigation effect', Policy Research Working Paper 7100, Washington DC: World Bank	Economic (macro)	SA	→	Mixed
Soares, Y.S.D., Sviatschi, M.M., Andrade, R., Montenegro, J. (2010) 'The Impact of Improving Access to Justice on Conflict Resolution: Evidence from Peru', Washington DC: IADB	Justice and reconciliation	DS	→	Inconclusive

Sørnbø, G. et al (2011) 'Pawns of Peace - Evaluation of Norwegian peace efforts in Sri Lanka, 1997-2009', Oslo: Norad	Multiple (Mediation (international & civil war); Economic (micro))	CS	↑	Ineffective
Strand, H., Urdal, H. (2014) 'Hear nothing, see nothing, say nothing: Can states reduce the risk of armed conflict by banning census data on ethnic groups?', International Area Studies Review, 17:2, pp.167-183	Governance	SA	→	Promising
Subedi, D. (2014) 'Dealing with Ex-Combatants in a Negotiated Peace Process - Impacts of Transitional Politics on the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme in Nepal ', Journal of Asian and African Studies, 49:6, pp.672-689	Security and policing	ETH	→	Mixed
Svard, P. (2010) 'The international community and post-war reconciliation in Africa: A case study of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission', African Journal on Conflict Resolution, 10:1, pp.35-62	Justice and reconciliation	CS	↓	Promising
Tir, J., Stinnett, D. (2012) 'Weathering climate change: Can institutions mitigate international water conflict?', Journal of Peace Research, 49:1, pp.211-225	Governance	SA	→	Promising
Tjønneland, E.N., Albertyn, c. (2010) 'Navigating Complexity. A Review of Training for Peace in Africa', Oslo: Norad	Multiple (Peace mechanisms; Security and policing)	INT	↓	Inconclusive
Tobias, J.M., Mair, J., Barbosa-Leiker, C. (2013) 'Toward a theory of transformative entrepreneuring: Poverty reduction and conflict resolution in Rwanda's entrepreneurial coffee sector', Journal of Business Venturing, No.28, pp.728-742	Economic (micro)	MM	↑	Promising
Towle, N. (2015) 'Evaluating peace support operations to enhance international policy', Peace and Conflict Studies, 22:1, pp.60-80	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	CS	↓	Effective
Trujillo, H. et al. (2014) 'The Role of Information and Communication Technology in Preventing Election-Related Violence in Kenya, 2013', Perspectives on Global Development and Technology, No.13, pp.111-128	Media and communication	CS	→	Promising
Tully, M. (2014) 'Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation through Recognition: Assessing an Integrated Peace Media Strategy in Kenya', Journal of Applied Communication Research, 42:1, pp.41-59	Media and communication	MM	↓	Promising
USAID (2013) 'Final Evaluation of USAID Kenya Conflict Mitigation Activities', Washington DC: USAID	Peace mechanisms (prevention)	MM	↑	Mixed

Viaene, L. (2010) 'The internal logic of the cosmos as 'justice' and 'reconciliation': Micro-level perceptions in post-conflict Guatemala', <i>Critique of Anthropology</i> , 30:3, pp.287-312	Justice and reconciliation	ETH	↑	Mixed
Vieira da Cunha, N., Mello, M. (2011) 'Novos conflictos na cidade: A UPP e o processo de urbanizacao na favela', <i>Dilemas: Revista de Estudos de Conflito e Controle Social</i> , 4:3, pp.371-401	Multiple (Security and policing; Economic)	CS	↓	Mixed
Vilalta, C. J. (2013) 'Towards an understanding of community organization against crime: the case of Ciudad Juarez', <i>Stability</i> , 2:1, pp.1-15	Peace mechanisms (prevention)	SA	↓	Inconclusive
Webster, J. (2013) 'Peace education and its discontents: An evaluation of youth, violence, and school-based peace programs in Northern Uganda', <i>Pursuit</i> , 4:2, pp.59-81	Peace mechanisms (prevention)	ETH	↓	Inconclusive
Whalan, J. (2012) 'Evaluating Peace Operations: The Case of Cambodia', <i>Journal of International Peacekeeping</i> , No.16, pp.226-251	Peace mechanisms (intervention)	CS	↓	Mixed
Whitfield, T. (2013) 'Mediating criminal violence: Lessons from the gang truce in El Salvador', <i>Oslo Forum Paper</i> , No.1, Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue	Multiple (Mediation (subnational and community); Security and policing) multiple	CS	→	Promising
Wielders, I., Amutjojo, L. (2012) 'Final evaluation report of UN peacebuilding fund programmes in Acholiland, Northern Uganda', New York: UNPBF		INT	↓	Promising
Zenelaj, R. et al. (2015) 'Determinants of mediation success in post-conflict Bosnia: a focused comparison', <i>Australian Journal of International Affairs</i> , 69:4, pp.414-437	Mediation (international & civil war)	CS	→	Promising
Zoethout, M. A. (2015) 'Recuperar el control estatal en territorio de la Mara Salvatrucha: un análisis a partir del acuerdo "Santa Tecla Municipio Libre de Violencia". ', <i>Revista Policia y Seguridad Publica</i> , 5:1, pp.179-245	Multiple (Peace mechanism, Security and policing)	CS	↓	Effective
Zurcher, D., Manandhar, D., Dinges, S. (2010) 'Interim evaluation - Support of measures to strengthen the peace process, Nepal', Zurich: GIZ	Multiple (Security and policing; Economic (micro))	INT	↓	Effective

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Annex A Methodological limitations

This annex summarises the key methodological limitations at each step of the REA.

A.1 Scope

The search design had several limitations. Several of these related to the need to limit the scope given resource constraints.

The definition of ‘armed violence’ that the study adopted excluded sexual violence from the search. This decision was taken given the existence of other recent literature reviews on ‘what works’ to prevent violence against women and girls, and DFID’s interest in sexual violence.

The search did not include literature published in French or Arabic, which likely leads the review to underrepresent studies examining interventions in MENA and Francophone Africa. The inclusion of Spanish and Portuguese literature was made in order to capture the literature on what the ToR had originally described as ‘criminal violence’. However, a noteworthy finding of the study was that the Spanish and Portuguese literature was on average of significantly lower quality than the English-language literature, with high-quality studies conducted in Latin America or published by Spanish/Portuguese-speaking academics tending to be published in English academic journals. It is plausible that the inclusion of Arabic, and to a lesser extent French, literature would have followed the same pattern, and therefore not omitted a large number of high quality articles that would regardless have been translated into English. Design of future systematic reviews should bear this in mind when designing the search protocol.

The systematic search of the Spanish and Portuguese literature did not use the keywords in search string set 2. This may have led to an underrepresentation of Spanish and Portuguese literature on peacebuilding.

The search results are not representative of the literature examining impact on possible drivers of conflict (referred to as ‘intermediate outcomes’ of interventions in this report). The wording of the research question meant that the inclusion criteria were initially designed to *only* capture articles examining the impact on conflict and *not* intermediate outcomes of such interventions. Although this criteria was later relaxed given the scarcity of evidence on the former, the search would have excluded a range of interventions that could potentially have positive side-effects on armed violence (e.g. those that seek to improve service delivery, perceptions of state legitimacy, reductions in firearms ownership).

The search protocol did not seek to identify articles that examine the potentially negative side effects of interventions (e.g. broken social contracts, reductions in equity, diverted resources/opportunity cost of investment in conflict prevention, or weakened compliance with human rights). It is possible that, even where impact on conflict prevention and mitigation is positive, the net impact on welfare is negative given these side-effects. Such an assessment is beyond the scope of this REA.

A.2 Applying the inclusion criteria

A number of challenges arose relating to the application of the inclusion/exclusion criteria. In the initial search, inclusion/exclusion was assessed based on articles’ titles and (where available) abstract. This generated 320 studies identified for further assessment. During this stage, the team intentionally took a broad view of the inclusion criteria at this initial stage to ensure a minimum of potentially relevant evidence would be excluded prior to in-depth assessment. These articles were

downloaded for further assessment. A second phase was conducted during which inclusion/exclusion was assessed through a review of the content of the downloaded articles. This reduced the number of studies to 150.

There is inevitably potential for researchers to interpret the inclusion/exclusion criteria differently. In order to mitigate this, regular team meetings were held during the initial search to ensure a shared understanding and application of the inclusion criteria. During this process, **'intervention'** proved to be the most challenging term, probably as it was the least clearly defined term in the overall research question as agreed in the ToRs. The ambiguity of the term also stems from the variety of disciplines and applied fields that the team tackled: from social psychology, over peace and conflict studies, economics and to development with all of its sub-fields. These fields of study are interested in different sorts of interventions. By the same token, the range of reviewed materials (journal articles, policy articles, program evaluations) proved to be interested in different sorts of 'interventions'.

The team agreed to treat any action by a national or international actor with potential bearing on armed violence as an intervention. On this broad reading, interventions include all development cooperation and peacekeeping missions, but also mediation efforts, armed violence reduction efforts by national governments, community initiatives, overarching peacebuilding initiatives, as well as relatively durable structural factors, such as changes in horizontal inequalities, trade flows or membership in international organisations. Studies dealing with such factors were deemed likely to be relevant for assessing what works in preventing armed violence.⁵⁰ During the quality assessment phase, the team members conducting the quality assessment were in regular contact to discuss inclusion and exclusion of pieces of evidence to ensure a shared application of inclusion criteria. Towards the beginning of the quality assessment phase, five articles considered as borderline cases by one researcher were circulated to the rest of the team as a quality control mechanism. The remaining team members conducted individual assessments on which of these articles should be included or excluded, followed by a group discussion and final agreement on each. This served to further define the operationalisation of the inclusion criteria and ensure consistency and inter-coder reliability. Borderline cases were repeatedly discussed, with final decisions made by the Lead Researcher.

Reflecting the decision to include as many potentially relevant articles in the initial search as possible, a large number of further exclusions took place during the quality assessment phase.

In terms of the assessed journal articles, the most frequent reasons for exclusion related to an absence of **'primary research'**. The team took a broad view of primary research in order to include the broadest possible evidence base in the review, assigning low scores to articles with a weak evidence, rather than excluding them outright. Thus, the review included research if it appeared that new primary research had been carried out, even where this was not made explicit, as well as any articles that combined existing evidence in new ways, or applied an original analytical framework to the analysis of existing evidence.

The other main reason for exclusion of articles was the **dependent variable**. If an article did not consider the impact of an intervention on armed violence, it was excluded in the first search phase based on title/abstract. However, here too, the team opted to take a broad view, and in the second phase also included studies that considered the impact of an intervention on any plausible driver of armed violence; such as perceptions of ethnic others, inclusiveness of the political settlement, community cohesion, and similar measures. This led to the distinction used in the study between 'effective' interventions (which are shown to have an impact on armed violence itself) and

⁵⁰ As a result of this agreement, one team member, who had been taking a narrower view of intervention, re-ran all searches conducted up until this point to ensure coherence and replicability.

‘promising’ interventions (which have an impact on intermediate outcomes). The most frequent reason for exclusion of donor evaluations and project documents was an **absence of impact or outcome evaluation**. Evaluations that did not consider impact beyond project outputs, or did not provide a methodology, were excluded, although such evaluations may have included findings regarding the relevance, efficiency or sustainability of interventions that are useful for decision makers. The decision to focus on impact was taken partially due to the limited time-frame and resources, but also due to the poor transparency of many process evaluations and other operational assessments that makes it extremely difficult to assess their quality and therefore the value they bring to the empirical evidence base.

Finally, a number of borderline articles discussed the **potential** for a certain approach to reduce, prevent or mitigate conflict. Where these papers remained in the realm of opinion or policy/advocacy, affirming the potential benefits of the adoption of a specific approach without primary evidence to back-up these claims, they were excluded. On the other hand, when a paper generated evidence of effectiveness to justify its claims, it was included.

A.3 Quality assessment

The quality assessment process had a number of drawbacks, many of which are noted in the DFID How To Note on which the process was based (DFID 2014).

One contentious point was the **equal weighting given the quality principles** outlined in Box 1. The overall score or summary arrow represents a composite indicator. Even equal or ‘no’ weighting implies an assumption or judgement about the relative significance of individual indicators and the principles behind them. Thus, to some extent it must be acknowledged that the scoring in an equally weighted score such as that reported in this REA is open to dispute. For example, this can potentially lead to situations in which low validity can be outweighed by higher scores on other principles such as transparency. However, validity is a crucially important feature of research without which, it could plausibly be argued, findings do not constitute ‘evidence’ appropriate for policymaking. We would recommend that future such exercises devote time early on to a critical assessment of the relative weights of these indicators.

Furthermore, the principle of ‘validity’ did not prioritise an assessment of **‘external validity’** (i.e. the extent to which findings can be generalised to other contexts), given the complex causal dynamics that characterise armed violence and the importance of contextual factors in mediating how and whether interventions may generate impact. This means that even a high-scoring body of evidence finding that an intervention is ‘effective’ should not automatically be treated as evidence that the same (kind of) intervention would ‘work’ in a new context.

A major limitation also emerges in relation to the **‘thresholds’** that define the cut-off between high, medium and low quality evidence. Given the large number of articles assessed and relatively small scoring range (6-18), there were a large number of borderline cases that in some instances had their quality level raised above or lowered below this threshold simply by being given a score different by +1 or -1 during the QA process. This is an inevitable consequence of following the guidance in the How To Note (DFID 2014).

Finally, the **subjective nature of the quality assessment** process cannot be avoided. There is simply no objective measure of the quality principles (the possible exception to this is transparency, where the criteria allow less scope for deviation). Assessments of what constitutes a ‘strong’ conceptual framework, ‘appropriate’ research method, ‘valid’ findings or ‘cogent’ self-critique will all depend on researchers’ own training in research methods, value judgements, and changing academic fashions. Although the research team attempted to come to a shared understanding of the quality principles through discussion and debate, judgements are still

subjective in a way that other research teams working in different academic disciplines, times, and places may reasonably contest.

A.4 Synthesis

The **very small bodies of literature** identified through the search presented a challenge to the synthesis in a number of ways. First, it made it difficult to comment on ‘trends’ or ‘patterns’ in the evidence in an analytically useful way. Disaggregating the evidence, for example by quality of evidence or type of intervention, reduced the size of the body of the literature under examination even further. As a result, the research team faced a trade-off between assessing a larger, more mixed body of evidence grouped into broad but less meaningful categories (e.g. ‘economic’ interventions), and assessing a higher quality body of evidence on specific types of interventions that would be so small (often comprising one or two articles) as to make identifying trends or patterns impossible. The research team attempted to tread a middle ground between these extremes by mapping the body of evidence under broad themes in the evidence tables, and then drawing comparisons between articles within each theme on a flexible basis as the size and quality of the literature allowed.

The **inclusion of low quality evidence** was thus useful in increasing the size of these bodies of literature, but meant that readers must pay particular attention to the quality scoring of articles when interpreting their findings. The authors of the report have attempted to mitigate any misinterpretation by discussing low quality evidence in a separate section within each thematic analysis.

The nature of interventions themselves added an additional complication to the synthesis. Many articles – particularly evaluations – examined the impact of **‘packages’ of interventions that spanned across the themes** around which the synthesis was structured. For example, a study could look at the collective impact of a fund financing local peace committees, support to natural resource governance, and job creation initiatives. Such an intervention would be listed under the ‘peace mechanisms’, ‘governance’ and ‘economic’ themes though the quality scoring and in most cases the findings of the article would not distinguish between these different activities. As a result of the potential confusion in interpreting these studies, they have been separated out in brackets in the evidence tables in Section 4.

Finally, there is a danger of **publication bias** in favour of studies findings that interventions were ‘effective’. This arises from the incentives of academic research (in which papers with ‘null results’ tend to be accepted for publication less than those with ‘significant results’) and probably to a greater extent those of evaluations (where there are sometimes structural incentives around procurement and the vested interests of those funding evaluations to demonstrate positive impact). Given limited resources and the largely qualitative nature of the evidence base, the REA did not attempt to identify measures to mitigate this bias (for example, by assessing pre-registration of protocols) or apply its own measures to mitigate this bias.

Annex B Glossary

Term	Usage
Armed violence	<p>'Armed violence' involves the intentional use of armed force by groups or organisations and their members against individuals, groups, communities, organizations or states. This includes only either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) those instances of violence that meet the criteria of Uppsala/DFID's definition of 'armed conflict' ("a contested incompatibility which concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths [in one calendar year]"); or ii) those instances of violence carried out by organised groups that represent a serious (non-individual) threat to the state's monopoly of force. <p>This definition of 'armed violence' therefore excludes violent crime perpetrated by individuals and intimate partner violence.</p>
Consistent	A range of studies carried out in the same context or under the same conditions point to identical, or similar, conclusions.
Effective	An 'effective' intervention was one that identified an impact on conflict prevention or mitigation. Due to the causal complexity of conflict dynamics, in most instances an 'effective' intervention should be considered one that <i>contributed towards</i> conflict prevention or mitigation rather than one that single-handedly accounts for conflict prevention or mitigation. Some exceptions to this do exist, such as the (quasi-)experimental studies that design a stronger counterfactual and conclude with more confident claims about <i>attribution</i> than most qualitative studies included in the REA.
Inconclusive	Inconclusive findings were ones that attempted to examine the impact of an intervention but ultimately concluded that there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on impact.
Inconsistent	One or more study/studies directly refutes or contest the findings of another study or studies carried out in the same context or under the same conditions.
Mixed (findings of individual article)	<p>Either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) An individual article that finds varied impact of a single intervention across research sites, or populations. (ii) An article examining multiple interventions that finds some were effective/promising and others not.
Mixed (findings of body of evidence)	<p>Either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Studies based on a variety of different designs or methods, applied in a range of contexts, have produced results that contrast with those of another study. For example, bodies of evidence that included interventions found by individual articles to have effective, mixed, and ineffective impacts would constitute 'mixed' evidence of the impact of the overall intervention. (ii) Similarly, a body of evidence that is mostly comprised of individual articles finding a 'mixed' impact of interventions would be considered 'mixed' overall.

Promising	<p>A 'promising' impact was one where findings were positive but not to the extent that they constituted evidence that an intervention was 'effective' in preventing or mitigating armed violence. This was the case where either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) there was evidence of a positive impact on intermediate outcomes (e.g. conflict drivers) but not conflict itself; or(ii) the authors themselves found a positive change in armed violence but, for example, expressed doubts that this could be confidently attributable or even 'contributable' to the intervention.
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Annex C List of search strings

Source	Search string	Number of results
gov.uk	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:gov.uk	739
europa.eu	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:europa.eu	1070
oecd.org	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:oecd.org	103
undp.org	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:undp.org	586
usaid.gov	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:usaid.gov	266
worldbank.org	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:worldbank.org	584
gov.au	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:gov.au	3250

admin.ch	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:admin.ch	67
norad.no	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:norad.no	5
um.dk	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:um.dk	21
oxfam.org.uk	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:oxfam.org.uk	12
saferworld.org.uk	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:saferworld.org.uk	83
international-alert.org	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:international-alert.org	17
c-r.org	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:c-r.org	30
eldis.org	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:eldis.org	160

campbellcollaboration.org	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:campbellcollaboration.org	14
3ieimpact.org	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:3ieimpact.org	1
eppi.ioe.ac.uk	allintitle: violent violence conflict war prevent OR prevention OR preventing OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing OR reconcile OR reconciliation OR reconciling OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolution OR resolving OR mediate OR mediation OR mediating -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying site:eppi.ioe.ac.uk	2
gov.uk	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:gov.uk	67
europa.eu	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:europa.eu	74
oecd.org	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:oecd.org	33
undp.org	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:undp.org	153
usaid.gov	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:usaid.gov	86
worldbank.org	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:worldbank.org	32
gov.au	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:gov.au	194
admin.ch	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:admin.ch	5
norad.no	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:norad.no	31

um.dk	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:um.dk	23
oxfam.org.uk	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:oxfam.org.uk	3
saferworld.org.uk	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:saferworld.org	0
international-alert.org	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:international-alert	9
c-r.org	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:c-r.org	32
eldis.org	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:eldis.org	15
campbellcollaboration.org	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:campbellcollaboration.org	0
3ieimpact.org	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:3ieimpact.org	8
eppi.ioe.ac.uk	allintitle: (peace OR peacebuilding OR "peace-building" OR "peace building") (evaluate OR evaluation OR evaluating OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective) site:eppi.ioe.ac.uk	0
JSTOR	((ti:violen* OR tb:violen*) AND (ti:prevent* OR tb:prevent*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(africanstudies-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR economics-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR areastudies-discipline)	21
JSTOR	((ti:violen* OR tb:violen*) AND (ti:mitigat* OR tb:mitigat*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(africanstudies-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR economics-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR areastudies-discipline)	1

JSTOR	((((ti:violen* OR tb:violen*) AND (ti:reduc* OR tb:reduc*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(publicpolicy-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR economics-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline)	13
JSTOR	((((ti:violen* OR tb:violen*) AND (ti:Reconcil* OR tb:Reconcil*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(politicalscience-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR economics-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline)	12
JSTOR	((((ti:violen* OR tb:violen*) AND (ti:Recidiv* OR tb:Recidiv*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(developmentstudies-discipline OR economics-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline)	0
JSTOR	((((ti:violen* OR tb:violen*) AND (ti:resol* OR tb:resol*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR economics-discipline)	1
JSTOR	((((ti:violen* OR tb:violen*) AND (ti:mediat* OR tb:mediat*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(developmentstudies-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR economics-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR anthropology-discipline)	3

JSTOR	((ti:conflict OR tb:conflict) AND (ti:prevent* OR tb:prevent*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(socialsciences-discipline OR economics-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR interrela-discipline)	9
JSTOR	((ti:conflict OR tb:conflict) AND (ti:mitigat* OR tb:mitigat*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(africanstudies-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR economics-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR socialwork-discipline)	3
JSTOR	((ti:conflict OR tb:conflict) AND (ti:reduc* OR tb:reduc*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(sociology-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR economics-discipline)	5
JSTOR	((ti:conflict OR tb:conflict) AND (ti:reconcil* OR tb:reconcil*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(publicpolicy-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR economics-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR areastudies-discipline)	20
JSTOR	((ti:conflict OR tb:conflict) AND (ti:recidiv* OR tb:recidiv*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(anthropology-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR economics-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR areastudies-discipline)	0

JSTOR	((((ti:conflict OR tb:conflict) AND (ti:resol* OR tb:resol*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(africanstudies-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR economics-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline)	80
JSTOR	((((ti:conflict OR tb:conflict) AND (ti:mediat* OR tb:mediat*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(developmentstudies-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR economics-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR socialwork-discipline)	16
JSTOR	((((ti:war OR tb:war) AND (ti:prevent* OR tb:prevent*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(economics-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR sociology-discipline)	10
JSTOR	((((ti:war OR tb:war) AND (ti:mitigat* OR tb:mitigat*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(interrela-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR economics-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR anthropology-discipline)	2
JSTOR	((((ti:war OR tb:war) AND (ti:reduc* OR tb:reduc*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(anthropology-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR economics-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline)	1

JSTOR	((((ti:war OR tb:war) AND (ti:reconcil* OR tb:reconcil*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR economics-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline)	4
JSTOR	((((ti:war OR tb:war) AND (ti:recidiv* OR tb:recidiv*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(publicpolicy-discipline OR economics-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR sociology-discipline)	0
JSTOR	((((ti:war OR tb:war) AND (ti:resol* OR tb:resol*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(sociology-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR economics-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR socialwork-discipline)	5
JSTOR	((((ti:war OR tb:war) AND (ti:mediat* OR tb:mediat*)) NOT (ti:sexual* OR tb:sexual*) NOT (ti:domestic OR tb:domestic) NOT (ti:intimate OR tb:intimate) NOT (ti:dating OR tb:dating) NOT (ti:bullying OR tb:bullying)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(interrela-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR developmentstudies-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR economics-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR sociology-discipline)	8
Google Scholar	allintitle: (reconcile OR reconciling OR reconciliation OR recidivism OR recidivist OR resolve OR resolving OR resolution OR mediate OR mediating OR mediation) (violence OR violent OR conflict OR war) -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying	4,420
JSTOR	(ti:evaluat* OR tb:evaluat* OR ti:impact* OR tb:impact* OR ti:evidenc* OR tb:evidenc* OR ti:review* OR tb:review* OR ti:effectiv* OR tb:effectiv*) AND (ti:(peace building) OR tb:(peace building)) AND la:(eng OR en) AND disc:(developmentstudies-discipline OR anthropology-discipline OR socialsciences-discipline OR interrela-discipline OR areastudies-discipline OR sociology-discipline OR africanstudies-discipline OR publicpolicy-discipline OR politicalscience-discipline OR criminologycriminaljustice-discipline OR economics-discipline OR socialwork-discipline OR peaceconflictstudies-discipline)	36

Google Scholar	allintitle: (evaluating OR evaluation OR evaluate OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effectiveness OR effect OR effectivity) (peace OR peacebuilding OR peace-building)	744
Wiley	<i>violen* OR conflict OR war in Article Titles AND Prevent* OR Mitigat* OR Reduc* OR Reconcil* OR recidiv* OR resol* OR mediat* in Article Titles NOT sexual* OR domestic OR intimate OR dating OR bullying in Article Titles between years 2010 and 2015</i>	338
Google Scholar	allintitle: (prevention OR preventing OR prevent OR mitigate OR mitigating OR mitigation OR reduce OR reduction OR reducing) (violence OR violent OR conflict OR war) -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying	2690
Google Scholar	allintitle: (prevention OR preventing) AND (violence OR violent OR conflict OR war) -sexual -domestic -intimate -dating -bullying	920
Wiley	evaluat* OR impact* OR evidenc* OR review* OR effectiv* in Article Titles AND peace* in Article Titles between years 2010 and 2015	18
SCOPUS	(TITLE(violen* OR conflict OR war) AND TITLE(Prevent* OR Mitigat* OR Reduc* OR Reconcil* OR recidiv* OR resol* OR mediat*))AND NOT TITLE(sexual* OR domestic OR intimate OR dating OR bullying)) AND SUBJAREA(MULT OR HEAL OR MULT OR ARTS OR BUSI OR DECI OR ECON OR PSYC OR SOCI) AND PUBYEAR > 2009 AND PUBYEAR < 2016 AND (EXCLUDE (DOCTYPE , "re")) AND (EXCLUDE (DOCTYPE , "ip"))	1844
SCOPUS	(TITLE (evaluat* OR impact* OR evidenc* OR review* OR effectiv*) AND TITLE (peace*) AND SUBJAREA (heal OR mult OR arts OR busi OR deci OR econ OR psyc OR soci) AND PUBYEAR > 2009 AND PUBYEAR < 2016) AND (EXCLUDE (DOCTYPE , "re")) AND (EXCLUDE (DOCTYPE , "ip"))	126
SAGE	In Title: violen* OR conflict OR war AND (prevent* OR mitigat*) NOT sexual NOT domestic NOT intimate NOT dating NOT bullying	50
SAGE	In Title: violen* OR conflict OR war AND (reduc* OR reconcil*) NOT sexual NOT domestic NOT intimate NOT dating NOT bullying	38
SAGE	In Title: violen* OR conflict OR war AND (recidiv*) NOT sexual NOT domestic NOT intimate NOT dating NOT bullying	5
SAGE	In Title: violen* OR conflict OR war AND (resol* OR mediat*) NOT sexual NOT domestic NOT intimate NOT dating NOT bullying	48
SAGE	In Title: evaluat* OR impact OR evidence OR review OR effective AND peace*	69

Google Académico	allintitle: (prevención OR previniendo OR prevenir) (violencia OR violento OR violenta OR conflicto OR guerra) -sexual -doméstica -íntima -pareja -escolar	380
Google Académico	allintitle: (mitigar OR mitigando OR mitigación OR disminución OR disminuir OR disminuyendo OR control OR reducir OR reducción OR reduciendo) (violencia OR violento OR violenta OR conflicto OR guerra) -sexual -doméstica -íntima -pareja -escolar	145
Google Académico	allintitle: (reconciliar OR reconciliando OR reconciliación OR reincidencia OR reincidente OR reincidir OR repetición OR resolver OR resolviendo OR resolución OR mediar OR mediando OR mediación) (violencia OR violento OR violenta OR conflicto OR guerra) -sexual -doméstica -íntima -pareja -escolar	221
Google Académico	allintitle: (prevenção OR prevenindo OR prevenir) (violência OR violenta OR violento OR guerra OR conflito) -Doméstica -sexual -íntima -escola -casal	137
Google Académico	allintitle: (mitigar OR mitigando OR mitigação OR diminuição OR diminuir OR diminuendo OR control OR controlar OR reduzir OR redução OR reduzindo) (violência OR violenta OR violento OR guerra OR conflito) -Doméstica -sexual -íntima -escola -casal	78
Google Académico	allintitle: (reconciliar OR reconciliando OR reconciliação OR reincidência OR reincidente OR reincidir OR repetição OR resolver OR resolvendo OR resolução OR mediar OR mediando OR mediação) (violência OR violenta OR violento OR guerra OR conflito) -Doméstica -sexual -íntima -escola -casal	108