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Drivers of Crime and Violence in Papua New Guinea

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This paper has been prepared as part of a broader study to understand the socioeconomic costs of crime and violence to businesses, government agencies, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and households in PNG. This work was requested by the Prime Minister and was undertaken with extensive input from international partners and local stakeholders.

Contents

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I. Introduction

Reports in both the national and international media and anecdotal evidence indicate that the prevalence of crime and violence is high in PNG, and presents an important obstacle to long-term development. A growing body of literature and data on the issue identify a diverse range of forms of crime and violence; from Family and Sexual Violence and other forms of inter-personal violence to violent conflict between different clans, and from armed burglary of domestic premises to corruption within government. The widespread prevalence of high levels of crime and violence have been linked to the ethnic diversity and weaknesses in the nation-building agenda, the growing use of firearms, a lack of effectiveness of law enforcement, , and the introduction of large-scale natural resource projects, amongst other drivers.

This paper presents an analysis of the drivers and stressors behind violence and crime in PNG. We begin with a description of the role of conflict in PNG society, and of traditional mechanisms for managing conflict. Next, we discuss key stresses that increase the risk of violence in PNG. The fourth section examines how these stresses affect the capacity of institutions in PNG to manage the conflicts that have emerged along with rapid social and economic changes. The paper concludes with a summary of gaps in the current understanding of the stresses and drivers of violence in PNG.

Conflict and violence have historically been an integral part of social life in PNG. Policy makers must distinguish between 'socially generative' social contest, and forms of conflict that are corrosive and destructive for society (Dinnen, Porter and Sage 2011). Managed conflict has been identified as central to the maintenance of social cohesion and social capital within and between communities in Papua New Guinea. However, while traditional systems of managing disputes have been effective in maintaining social order, recent changes in societies in PNG have created disputes that are less amenable to management by traditional means and are linked to at least some of the current violence witnessed. At the same time, the cultural characteristics of societies in t in PNG, and of conflict in particular, may render formal systems of law and justice ineffective in managing it. Other stresses, discussed in more detail in the note, are also rendering conflict unmanageable by traditional systems. A key message of this paper is that it is necessary to understand the cultural basis for conflict, and for modern day crime and violence in PNG. Changes are currently occurring in these conflict systems, alongside broader social and economic changes taking place across

PNG. It is on the basis of such an understanding that effective strategies for addressing crime and violence can be developed.

2. Traditional Mechanisms for Managing Conflict: Talking, Fighting and Compensation

In Papua New Guinea, conflict is an integral part of life, and is not seen as inherently negative (Banks 2008, Dinnen et al 2011, Goldman 2007, Fitzpatrick 1982). Commentators note that conflict is a regularly used, encouraged, and seen as a legitimate way of dealing with disputes and seeking justice and restitution for perceived wrong-doings (Goldman 2007, Dinnen et al 2011).

While the country has several hundred different ethno-linguistic groups, traditionally, the issues that have been fought over—"land, women and pigs" [1] **—and the forms that conflict takes, appear to be very similar across the country** (Yala 2002, Goldman 2007). Conflicts have traditionally taken place between neighboring clans also known as 'tribes'), but can also take place within clan units, and even within families (Banks 2008). The high levels of connectivity between many neighboring clans in PNG, through inter-marrying, trade, lineage mixing and so on, means that rather than being static, groups engaging in conflict are constantly shifting their boundaries. Fights are owned by a head-man and the disputants involved vary from conflict to conflict, depending in the issue as interests and allegiances are easily shifted based on the issue at hand and the way in which any individual, family or group chooses to identify itself during a given dispute (Goldman 2007).

Active conflicts between clans can take place almost continuously, and are never fully resolved, but rather continue over long periods of time, even decades. Disputes may lie dormant for extended periods of time, and be drawn upon suddenly when a new event or issue triggers the old claims[2]. Most disputes are comprised of a mix of multiple claims that have never been resolved, some of which may have been 'settled' on a temporary basis. It is not possible, nor useful ,to distinguish between traditional *forms of conflict* and forms or *mechanisms of conflict resolution*, as the enactment of a dispute is, at the same time, both the manifestation of the conflict (and often the source of conflict) as well as the means through which it is managed.

There are three main, inter-related, means of addressing conflict in PNG. The first two are referred to as "talking and fighting" (Goldman 2007). Additionally, there is a system of compensation that often accompanies conflict, especially across clans. These mechanisms, in addition to their function

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[1] Goldman (2007:78). Banks (2008:25) also notes that "…women, land or pigs …are all deeply implicated in the construction and maintenance of social networks."

[2] Intergenerational cycles of pay-back are not uncommon, and are encouraged through the telling of *tumbuna, or* ancestral stories, to children.

in dispute resolution, also play an important role in the maintenance and evolution of culture in PNG. Considering this, what is often referred to as 'inter-ethnic fighting' must be understood not only as something negative, occurring between two predefined entities, and as related to a discreet dispute, but rather as an ongoing process of verbal and physical negotiation that plays a critical role in affirming culture and social relationships and in wealth redistribution between social groups.

Violent conflict has a strong cultural basis in PNG, as the use of violence is seen as a legitimate means of expressing grievances *Physical fighting* is one of the most common ways in which societies handle disputes (Goldman 2007). [3] Fighting can take place with traditional weapons such as bows and arrows, spears or bush knives and, increasingly, with firearms. Fighting, along with the demand and payment of compensation, are important events in which norms and values are reaffirmed by the participants. Cultural beliefs and norms encourage revenge-seeking through retributive fighting or 'payback', as it is known, particularly for deaths incurred. An attack on an individual is considered an attack on the whole group and any individual linked to one of the groups involved in a dispute can be targeted for 'pay-back' actions. Similarly, kin, friends and allies of an aggrieved individual are all equally wronged-against, and all are expected to support fighting (Kopi 2010, Goldman 2007). While still common in rural areas, there is significant evidence that the continuation of 'pay-back' or retributive actions takes place in urban areas as well. [4]

In addition to the use of physical violence, disputes are also 'prosecuted' in public by '*talking it out*' in informal gatherings of people who discuss the issue. Agreements are reached by consensus or through mediation of a 'headman' or another interested party (Banks 2008). Ongoing dialogue, rather than permanent resolution of a dispute, is most common. The lack of a fixed code of acceptable behavior along with the lack of role for third or external parties means that prosecution of disputes and resolution occur through individual discretion and self-regulation (Goldman 2007).

The particular characteristics of conflict systems in PNG have implications for strategies for law enforcement and peace-brokering of conflict. The involvement of external parties—such as mediators or courts looking for rapid and final resolution to conflicts, and non-financial sanctions may simply not resonate with

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[3] Haley and May (2007) also note that another form of dispute resolution that was traditionally used in some parts of the Southern Highlands when conflict became unmanageable was to dissolve clan ties and relocate. The increased sedentary nature of life, bound up with the modern state, has effectively removed this way of managing conflict.

[4] The Justice Advisory Group (JAG 2008), for example, notes that findings from crime victimizations studies show that a large proportion of violent crimes in urban areas are 'provoked', or part of a chain of 'payback' or revenge- actions. Our consultations also revealed that payback fighting between groups, even if it originates in one part of the country, may equally take place between wantoks in other parts of the country.

disputants (Banks 2008) [5] . Given the strong cultural impetus to engage in violence and the use of sanctions that have no basis within cultures in PNG - such as incarceration, formal justice systems have not proved effective in deterring the use of violence and in halting cycles of 'pay-back' between disputants[6].

The payment of *compensation* in the settling of disputes is another important aspect of traditional forms of engaging in and managing conflict; it is key to accumulation and distributing wealth, and also in demonstrating group status and power. Material compensation, traditionally in the form of pigs, but today more often as cash, is often demanded, and paid from one party to another to 'resolve' a grievance. Observers have noted that historically long-dormant disputes would suddenly be reactivated and compensation demanded, for example, when a group had accumulated an above-average number of pigs or when a group faced depletion of their own resources. Maintaining equilibrium of resources between neighboring clans is very important to some societies in PNG, and this is achieved primarily through compensation exchange (Kopi 2010, Banks 2008, Strathern 1977 quoted in

Goldman 2007). As well as acting as a form of restitution, payment of compensation it is also an important custom that "mends restores and strengthens relationships so that society is back in order" (Constitutional and Law Reform Commission of PNG, 1980). The exchange of resources between disputants creates and affirms economic, cultural and family links between different groups. As such, the payment of compensation has been both an important cultural symbol and a resource in the maintenance of identities, and wealth, in PNG.

3. Internal and External Stresses

The contemporary dynamics of conflict, crime and violence in PNG are multiple and more complex than the issues that, historically, have been central to conflict. The 2011 World Development Report (World Bank 2011) provides a useful framework for understanding this complexity. It argues that fragility, conflict and different forms of violence stem from a combination of economic, political, or security stresses, amongst others, and weak institutional capacity to manage those stresses. The table below[7] summarizes some of the internal and external stresses for crime and violence in PNG, as emphasized in the literature and research undertaken by the World Bank and others. The following discussion focuses on what has been identified as the most relevant stresses.

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[5] The lack of centralized processes of dispute resolution and governance more broadly has also been pointed to as resulting in a modern-day lack of regard for centralized law and formal state authority (C.f. Goldman 2007, Moya, 2007).

[6] Goldman (2007) notes that imprisonment has not helped address law and order problems in PNG because it does not have the same stigma attached to it that it does in western cultures, as such incarceration has little effect as a deterrent.

[7] The table is adapted to PNG-specific stresses from table 1.1 in World Bank 2011, p. 7.

Stresses	Internal	External
Security	• Inaccessibility/remoteness of many rural areas, lack of presence of formal state institutions, including the police • Porous border and extended coastline that facilitates illegal importing/exporting of firearms • Increased availability and use of illegal firearms • Growing private security sector that is largely unregulated by the state • Central role of conflict in the life of clans • Communal land tenure system under stress	
Social and cultural	• Gender inequalities in power and constructions of masculinity that emphasize 'aggression' • Rapidly transforming social norms • Large youth population • Distrust and lack of cultural relevancy of modern state institutions • Substance misuse (alcohol, marijuana)	
Economic	• Large-scale rural-urban migration • High rates of poverty and growing inequality, especially in urban areas • Growth of the cash economy and increases in the cost of living, coupled with few income generation opportunities for the majority of the population • High levels of unemployment, especially among young people • Domination of the economy by several large resource-projects, creating enclave economies • Pressures on land (and housing) that are inflating prices • Perception of unequal benefits of resource projects accrued to communities	
Justice	• Lack of cultural relevance of, and confidence in, the formal justice institutions • Under-resourcing of the justice sector • Inability of customary forms of conflict-management to handle modern-day violent conflict and crime	
Political	• Strong patronage politics within decentralized and central state structures • Incitement of violence by local politicians • Strong economic incentives and opportunities for elected representatives • Weak accountability mechanisms between citizens and the formal state	

3.1 Youth and Inter-generational tensions

A growing youth population, along with social and economic changes that have transformed societies in PNG, is linked to some forms of crime and violence. In other countries, research has associated large youth populations with the risk of violence, especially where other stresses - such as high rates of unemployment, lack of educational and recreational opportunities, and rapid urbanization - are also present. PNG has a very large youth population; 40% of the population was under the age of 15 at the time of the 2000 census. High youth unemployment[8] has been identified by several studies in PNG as having a relationship with high levels of crime and violence in PNG (see also Haley and May 2007), although this relationship is not a direct one. Lowering quality of education in the past years, it is

indicated, has had an impact on employment opportunities, with young people finding it difficult to enter into the labor market. Businesses interviewed as part of the World Bank study reported that graduates leaving school were not equipped with the social and technical skills to assume even entry-level positions in their firms. Crime victimization studies conducted in select urban areas of PNG reported a perception that the lack of productive activities for youth is a driver of violence and crime perpetration among young people. The respondents in these surveys emphasized that the provision of community and church organized youth activities were important in addressing high rates of crime and violence[9]. While some of the literature and make reference to *'raskols'*, or young people committing crimes together as a group, there is little evidence to capture the extent of raskol gangs and no studies that explore their composition and functioning. The available evidence seems to suggest that these gangs are actually loose groups of young people who engage in crime opportunistically (UNHABITAT 2004), rather than as formalized criminal gangs as found elsewhere in the world. The link between young people, unemployment and misuse of alcohol and other substances is explored later in this paper.

Changes in social norms have been pointed to by other commentators as being a factor in the involvement of young people in crime and violence in PNG. The literature reviewed and consultations undertaken by the team

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[8] In 2002 ILO estimated that each year approximately 50,000 young people enter the labor market, whilst the absorptive capacity of the economy can only take 5,000. Unemployment rates for men were 21.2% and for women at 12.8 %, across all age groups, but for young people these figures are even higher-at 50% for men and 30 % for women in the 15-24 yrs age group. A UNHABITAT study of Youth and Crime in POM (2004) similarly found that most of the youth surveyed were either unemployed (39%) or enrolled in education (28%). Only 14% were formally employed, with a further 10.5 % 'informally' employed. The victimization survey for NDC, 2010, notes that qualitative comments received during the survey highlighted the relationship between unemployment amongst youth and crimes such as stealing and breaking and stealing. The study also notes that the reduction in unemployment figures in the 2009 survey maybe part of the explanation for the marginal decrease in aggregated crime for NCD.

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[9] JAG (2008), Lae urban crime victimization survey 2010.

indicate the growth of a wide inter-generational gap in norms and values. The assertion is that traditional social hierarchies and the associated values and codes of conduct which regulated action and social behavior have eroded, leaving young people in particular lacking a social structure for guiding their values and behavior. Others have noted that the external stresses brought by the increasing presence of high-value resource projects which liaise with local communities have led to a privileging of young people- who can speak English, have some basic education, but are lacking in leadership and dispute resolution skills- as community leaders in negotiations with project personnel (Haley and May 2007, Walters 2007). These young leaders are, it is alleged, without the necessary life-skills that the *'big-man'* had developed, more likely to revert to violent methods of dispute resolution. The presence of young migrants to areas with resource projects has also been identified with increased conflict as they do not operate within a clan structure in their new environments, and as such fall outside the mechanisms for maintaining social order.

3.2 Poverty, high cost of living and lack of economic opportunities

PNG has experienced major structural shifts in its economy over the last few decades, which contribute to conflict in society. The key role of poverty and the lack of dynamic employment growth in the formal and informal economies since the 1970s have been identified as a key driver of high crime rates in PNG (Barker 2009)[10]. Although the economy has been experiencing sustained growth for several years, this has been driven primarily by mineral- exploitation and other resource projects. The contribution of these industries,- particularly mineral-exploitation -to the rest of the economy and to poverty reduction has been weak (ADB 2011)[11]. At the same time, problems of law and order problems have limited new investments and expansion of existing businesses (see Allen, no date, INA and ADB 2008, see also paper no. 3 this series on the cost of crime and violence to businesses).

The economy has shifted in the past 30 years from small scale agriculture to a resource economy (ADB 2011), but without a wide or equal distribution of the benefits of resource projects. Inequality in the distribution of benefits from these natural resource projects within and between communities is noted as a significant source of conflict, as perceptions of injustice prevail and communities seek to maintain resource equilibrium among themselves (Banks 2008). [12] Conflicts have also arisen

[10] The paper cited, although it makes reference to several studies, is an opinion piece rather than an analytical paper

[11] PNG is not on track to meet any of the MDGs by 2015 (ADB 2011) and, in 2011, was ranked 152 out of 187 countries for its Human Development Indicators- below other countries with similar per capita incomes (UNDP 2011)

[12] A question, raised by this perspective but not covered in any of the literature reviewed, is the extent to which crimes involving property- such as theft, breaking and entering and even vandalism- are driven by traditional cultural norms operating within an environment of unequal wealth. In other words, do perpetrators of such crimes feel justified

between communities and the state, and between communities and the private companies investing in the resource projects. Lack of clarity in roles between the state, private actors and community leaders in negotiating land-leasing or of benefits on behalf of these communities makes a significant contribution to conflict and violence around resource projects. These forms of conflict, when they occur can result in heightened and extended violent conflict, with severe repercussions for communities, private companies and the state alike (Banks 2008).

Cash incomes for most of the population are very low[13]. The lack of opportunities for the large percentage of the population of employable age is seen as a key driver in violence in crime in PNG as well as elsewhere in Melanesia (Dinnen et al. 2011, World Bank 2009). Evidence from urban victimization surveys also highlights the link between economic forces and crime; they found that areas

with high income reliance [14] and poverty correlated with higher incidences of crime victimization (JAG 2008). Perceptions of those households surveyed also highlighted this link. Nearly one-fifth of respondents, when asked what they felt was the key reason for the growth in crime, answered that economic issues (poverty, food insecurity, unemployment) were driving crime (JAG 2008:49). The World Bank consultations found similar perceptions amongst experts and local stakeholders. The lack of economic opportunities is also ostensibly the driver for some of the politically-oriented violence described in the next sections. As commentators point out, political office—through which resources can be secured for oneself and one's kin—is an immensely attractive livelihood opportunity.

With the cost of living very high in PNG, particularly in urban areas, relative to income levels, tensions around securing household resources may be a trigger for violence experienced within the family and a motivation for crime perpetration. Inflated housing prices in the main urban areas, and pressures on land even in rural areas, mean affordable housing is hard to come by. Household sizes are difficult to estimate with accuracy from the surveys analyzed because of the way in which many household residents may be transient members, moving between different households and between urban

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in engaging in theft or destruction of property based on the prerogative of 'compensation' and wealth redistribution? There is already a strong body of evidence from other developing countries that points to the link between violent crime and inequality in income and education (Bourguignon 2001).

[13] Allen (2007) estimates cash incomes in rural areas of Southern Highlands Province to be around K20 per year. This is very small compared with costs in the cash economy. For example, the cost of bus (PMV) transportation for a journey of approx. 3hrs, was about K10 in 2002, and K20 in 2013. Bride-price payments in 2003 in some areas of the SHP were K10-20,000 in cash, plus pigs (Lewis 2007). Cost of Basic Needs was not available for PNG at the time of writing.

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[14] Income reliance is the number of persons within a household supported an income earner. It is an indicator of household income stress potentially leading to poverty. The victimization studies found that on average in PNG each income earner supported 4.2 people, including themselves.

and rural areas. Overcrowding, with household sizes of 7-10 residents per household, with only 1-2 income earners, is common. The cost of housing in urban areas and a slow expansion of lower-income residents to settlements on the periphery of urban areas also add to the challenges in securing employment, and in service provision—including law enforcement- for state agencies.

3.3 Family and Sexual Violence and Gender-Based Violence

Family and sexual violence (FSV) and gender-based violence (GBV) are widespread and highly prevalent in PNG, with some parts of the country experiencing extremely high levels. A recent UN report presented findings that, in Bougainville for example, 62% of men surveyed admitted to having committed rape[15]. Gender-based violence is manifest in myriad forms in PNG. In the domestic sphere, violence is very common, with reports of approximately two-thirds to three-quarters of women having been beaten by their husbands (Lewis et al 2007, PNG Law Reform Commission 1992 quoted in Kopi 2010) and injuries from domestic violence account for between 80-90% of all patients seen at health clinics (Amnesty International 2006). In the public sphere, women, such as those trading goods at market at subject to rape and other serious sexual assault, accusations of sorcery, robbery, beatings and

intimidation by men (UN Women and NCDC, no date, Kopi 2010).

Certain cultural values and social mores have been highlighted as explaining the wide-spread nature of gender-based violence (Kopi, Hinton and Robinson 2010, Eves 2006 and 2010, Bradley 2001, Siebert 2009) [16] . Extreme inequality in status between men and women is founded on the notion that women are the 'property' of men, subject to the dictates of their male family members, in particular their husbands (c.f. Kopi et al 2010). Harmful social beliefs and practices, such as bride exchange between clans, the payment of bride price and a belief in witch-craft contribute to perpetuate the inequality. At the same time, exaggerated masculinities encourage aggression, and even violence, by men in pursuit of their aims (Eves 2006). This results in a situation where violence is a tool used frequently by men, not only towards each other, but to control women in both the domestic and public sphere (Kopi et al 2010). Some of the stressors also presented in this paper - such as housing pressures, lack of employment- and proximate triggers such as misuse of alcohol, also contribute to the high levels of FSV and GBV.

The impacts of FSV and GBV, as numerous studies from around the world illustrate, are not limited to physical injuries on the victims (see Paper No. 4 in this series for an overview of costs and impacts of FSV and GBV in

[15]Fulu et al 2013

[16] See also Paper No. 1 in this series, on the evidence on the prevalence of gender-based violence

the workplace). Psychosocial trauma experienced not only by direct sufferers of violence, but also by others in the household, can have pervasive effects on social relationships; suffers of violence, particularly at a young age, are likely to commit violent acts towards others, perpetuating cycles of violence.

Whilst a wide body of literature exists with regards to the cultural basis of gender-inequalities and the triggers of individual experiences of domestic violence (c.f Kopi et al 2010, Lewis et al 2007), **there is little analysis of the impact of changing economic and social circumstances on gender-relations, and ultimately on the vulnerability of women to gender-based violence.** Urbanization, evolution in cultures and customs such as the paying of bride-price and recent changes in living arrangements within families, the spread of HIV and increased knowledge of HIV/AIDS, gender employment programs in the face of high levels of male unemployment, and are just some of the factors that may increase the vulnerability of women to abuse and violence. Consultations by the World Bank team found that women's economic empowerment and education interventions had little impact on arresting gender-based violence in the short term. The implication is that development agencies should understand the risks and opportunities that these changes, and their own interventions, can have on cultural norms and as such on gender-based violence.

3.4 Inter-ethnic tensions

Inter-ethnic tensions, it is suggested, constitute a major driver of violent conflict in PNG. This is more common in some rural areas (c.f. Muggah 2004, Haley and May 2007, Goldman 2007) where cultural norms underscore the use of violence in engaging in disputes and retributive actions between social groups. The role this plays in urban areas has not been discussed widely in the literature available, however, there is some indication in the literature (see for example Kopi et al 2010) and evidence highlighted in the urban crime victimization studies that 'inter-ethnic violence' is also present in urban areas, particularly in settlements [17] . Similarly, consultations with justice agencies and experts undertaken by the World Bank team found that urban areas also experienced significant ethnic conflict, particularly in the settlements, and that some of the violence is 'transferred' between rural and urban areas through wantoks and migration. The use of

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[17] The presence of inter-ethnic fighting in urban areas can also be inferred by the categorization and definition of crimes used by the victimization surveys; they describe 'provoked' incidences of violence (provoked violence is one of the crime classifications used in the surveys) as related to 'revenge or pay-back', indicating cycles of violence between individuals or groups. Incidences of provoked violence are amongst the most prevalent in the urban areas surveyed. The surveys also use '*wantok*' as a category of perpetrator of crime. They consistently found that the majority of all crimes were perpetrated by wantoks. Whether wantoks engage in ethnically-motivated crime or are simply the largest group of perpetrators for other reasons- such as access to potential victims- is not apparent in the survey data.

firearms in such ethnic conflict has contributed to an increase in the scale and impacts of violence, and increasingly protracted cycles of violence, as they alter the way in which disputes can be managed (Goldman 2007).

Inter-ethnic tensions are also to be found bound-up in politically motivated violence. Ethnic tensions have been described as having become 'enmeshed' in the political system which is organized, at all levels, along traditional structural lines (Allen, no date, Dorpar and Macpherson 2007). This is seen as particularly problematic in certain parts of the country, such as the Southern Highlands Province (Haley and May 2007). Election-related violence, and the distribution of firearms by local political candidates to their allies has also been pointed to as significant in the Southern Highlands and some parts of the Western Highlands (Muggah 2004, Haley 2004, Haley and May 2007, Strathern 1993, Lewis 2007). Securing a seat as a Member of Parliament gives the Member substantial control over expenditure programs. This is commonly seen, rather than simply a political role, as a lucrative business opportunity, not only for the MP him or herself, but also for supporters and kin-folk (Allen, no date, Goldman 2007). Given this, the stakes in getting someone from one's own ethnic group into power are high, and as such, one of the key drivers of political violence.

3.5 Decentralization and violence

The role of decentralization in contributing to conflict and resulting violence is noted by a few of the studies reviewed. The interplay of 'wantokism[18]' and decentralization has led to the politicization of local government andas such, of service delivery. In the Southern Highlands Province for example, ethnic competition in local governance-constituencies defined largely geographically, corresponding to ethno-linguistic groups (Mendi, Huli and Kewa speakers) - has led to competing administrations, ethnically-motivated appointments, sackings and re-instatements, resulting in multiple claims for the same position (Lewis 2007). Haley and May (2007) note that for one position, several individuals were even paid for the same role. This has further contributed to tensions between different ethnic groups. Weak accountability between elected representatives and their constituencies is the result of the compromised political system, and a change in the electoral system from a 'first past the post' to a 'limited preferential voting' (LPV)system-introduced in 2007- has not made a significant difference as yet . Research indicated that the use of violence and money-politics or other criminal activity in gaining votes is still common, with responsiveness on the part of elected official towards a broad constituency after election is weak (World Bank, 2011b).

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[18] Wantokism describes a strong and pervasive system of patronage based on the concept of 'Wantok'- that is a related member of a social group- such as family, clan, tribe, or even if from the same province, etc. It is expected that Wantoks take care of each other, (see for example Lewis 2007, describing the extent of Wantokism in many aspects of life in PNG)

Discontent between different groups has been further heightened by the fact that, despite being on the payroll, many public servants are not physically present in their constituencies. The lack of security and public services has motivated public servants to live elsewhere, often outside of the province (Allen, no date). The result, Haley and May (2007) note, is that governance is very weak in the Southern Highlands; public institutions such as the courts, police and other law enforcement agencies have deteriorated due to the political fighting, inflated government expenditures and a lack of accountability. This situation further exacerbates tensions between different ethnic groups and raises discontent towards government in its lack of capacity to deliver public services. (Haley and May 2007, Allen no date).

Violence plays a central, dynamic, role as one of the contributing factors to shrinking revenues and resources available for service delivery, and as a tool employed in the capture of political seats as a well as a result of (a reaction to) the political capture. A reduction in state revenues, the politicization and deterioration of public services and the intensified, often violent competition for political positions have been identified as having a direct relationship (Kopi et al 2010, Standish 2007). Understanding more clearly this relationship and the extent and impact of decentralization, recent reforms in the availability of development budgets at the local level, and ethnic politics across the country would be important in considering suitable interventions to address crime and violence.

3.6 The availability of firearms

While traditional weapons such as bush knives and spears have traditionally been used in tribal conflict, some commentators have pointed to the widespread and growing use of firearms, in both tribal conflict and in the perpetration of crime (Kopi et al 2010, Muggah 2004, Haley and May 2007, Haley and Muggah 2006, Goldman 2007). For example, referring to the Southern Highlands, Lewis (2007) refers to claims that the majority of adult men own a homemade gun. Others have noted that younger leaders, operating outside of the traditional cultural codes of conflict and lacking in the oratory skills traditionally used in conflict negotiation, are increasingly using firearms as a means of 'resolving' disputes (Goldman 2007, Haley and May 2007, Walters 2007). The prevalence of firearms, it is purported, is one of the reasons for the reluctance of the police force to address the law and order situation (Haley and May 2007)[19].

While the evidence for the widespread availability of firearms is neither clear nor strong due to the lack of nationally representative and up-to date quantitative data, what is clear is that

[19] Haley and Muggah (2006), for example, note that the police are reluctant to intervene and attend to reports of crime, particularly those that could involve weapons, due to the perception that they will be out-numbered and 'out-gunned' by the perpetrators. This particular proposition was not reflected in the discussion held between the WB scoping mission and the police

there has been an increasing prevalence of crimes and forms of violence involving the use of firearms (see Paper 1 in this series). These crimes- such as rape and serious sexual assault, GBH, robbery kidnapping and other serious forms of violence- are made far easier to execute, and are far more harmful, with the use of high-powered weapons. The scale of impact occurring with the use of firearms in inter-group conflict- death, serious injury etc. it is suggested , is too great to be handled by the traditional way of seeking recompense, as such contributing to increasing rounds of retributive violence, or 'payback'.

3.7 Misuse of alcohol, marijuana and other drugs

The misuse of alcohol and drugs has also been pointed to as contributing to violence and crime in PNG (Muggah 2004, Barker, UNHABITAT 2004, Eves 2006). The data available does not illustrate a causal relationship, although some kind of a relationship does exist. Alcohol has been identified as linked to crime and violence in two ways. Firstly, victims of crime often responded that they believed that the perpetrator(s) had carried out the crime while intoxicated (JAG 2008, LJSS (LAE) 2010, LJSS (NCD) 2010, UNHABITAT 2004). Victims of domestic violence often cited that alcohol had played a factor in triggering the violence towards them (Kopi et al 2010, Eves 2006, Lewis et al 2007). Secondly, financing the consumption of alcohol, cigarettes and other substances may be a driving factor behind some crime. Consumption amongst young people was found to be high. A survey of youth and

violence conducted by UNHABITAT found that nearly half of all respondents drink alcohol and nearly one-fifth acknowledge taking drugs [20] . Of these respondents using alcohol and drugs, 36% reported having stolen money to pay for the drugs, alcohol or cigarettes.

4. Institutional Factors: Traditional Systems under Modern Day Stresses

The internal and external stresses PNG is currently facing places enormous pressure on traditional systems for resolving conflict. [21] Rapid population growth and large flows of migrants from rural to urban areas, and even between urban areas, an increase in poverty levels (World Bank 2004), particularly in urban areas (Storey 2010), the growing importance of large-scale resource projects in the economy (ADB 2011), a growing HIV/AIDS epidemic and the introduction of modern governance including formal state institutions, laws and law enforcement (Haley and May 2007, Banks 2008, Allen, no date) have changed many aspects of everyday life in PNG. These changes call into question the continued role of traditional conflict

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[20] Men were more likely to use such substances, and to start at a younger age than women.

[21] Studies have found that even in many urban areas, traditional mechanisms for managing conflict are still relied upon. This is true particularly for settlements, many of which maintain the same social norms and conflict management mechanisms as found in villages (Justice Advisory Group 2008). More recent data on the use and spread of traditional mechanisms for dispute resolution was not available.

systems in contributing to social cohesion, and the efficacy of traditional means of dispute resolution.

The system of compensation has in many cases been overwhelmed by the challenges brought on by social changes. The desire to seek compensation payment continues to be one of the key drivers of conflict today (Goldman 2007, Dinnen et al 2011). As the participant in one consultation conducted by the World Bank team told us "I wake up everyday thinking about compensation- how can I get some, from who? .: Commentators have noted, however, that the traditional system of compensation payments, although still practiced widely, cannot deal with the demands of the present socio-economic situation (Goldman 2007, Haley and May 2007) where wealth is readily apparent, seemingly randomly distributed and gained and accompanied by a sense of injustice. Commentators note that there is not enough wealth to provide for the increased compensation demanded [22] . While strict rules and regulations were traditionally observed in the implementation of compensation arrangements, in some parts of the country there is evidence that compensation claims are now often set at inflated rates -sometimes even when mediated by the district or village courts - that bear little relevance to the wrong-

doing nor to the economic means of the wrong-doer. In ability or unwillingness to pay inflated demands contribute to continued cycles of 'pay-back' (Kopi et al 2010). There is also some anecdotal evidence to suggest that disputes are more easily trigger or even manipulated for the sole purpose of extracting compensation. In addition, the use of firearms in 'tribal -fighting' is challenging the compensation system due to the severity and number of casualties and degree of property destruction that guns can bring (Haley and May 2007).

Traditional systems cannot effectively manage the social and economic conflicts arising from increasing investment in natural resource projects. Traditional life in PNG has been impacted through the emergence of other, more recent actors- such as mining and logging corporations, local government, and the modern state more generally. Perceptions of wrong-doing by these actors, or demands for redistributing their wealth cannot be managed by traditional means (Goldman 2007).

Disputes over communally-held land are very common. Historically, land has been intimately linked to tribal fighting, and there is evidence to suggest that land is still a central issue triggering disputes.[23]

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[22] Data from the urban victimization studies from 2004 to 2010 highlighted that while crimes were more likely to be reported to community leaders and family than to police, a majority of respondents in every survey favored imprisonment for stealing rather than restorative justice such as the payment of compensation or community work (JAG 2008).

[23][23][23] The independent Committee to Investigate Tribal Fighting in the Highlands Districts, appointed in 1973 after a surge in tribal clashes in the early 1970s found that most fights were connected to land disputes (Oliver and Fingleton 2008). Preliminary analysis of data from the 2009 Household Income and Expenditure Survey shows that land disputes comprise nearly one-quarter of all disputes that had occurred in the previous 12

Disputes occurred commonly between clans over land ownership and boundaries, but there is evidence to suggest that the type of dispute and the reasons for these may be changing alongside broader socio-economic changes., Larger family sizes and the increased monetary value of land are two of the factors identified in a growing number of disputes *within* families (Kopi et al 2010). The existence of urban based 'paper' landowners, lack of consensual decision-making by leaders amongst all land-owners and inter-generational differences over royalties and their distribution are examples of the kinds of tensions that demand for land by large natural resource projects has created. Much of these take place within clan and family units, and have been less amenable to traditional means of dispute resolution.

Despite progressive land reform that has sought to address the challenges in land tenure systems–including the high incidence of disputes—inefficiencies have challenged the efficacy of the system (Oliver and Fingleton 2008). Village courts, established at the local level and based on traditions of mediation and arbitration rather than adjudication of disputes, have been underperforming. Since funding responsibility was transferred from national to provincial governments in 1995 they have been severely underfunded, ceasing to exist in some provinces (Kopi et al 2010). At the same time corruption and abuse of land-legislation in favor of acquisition of

months (forthcoming National Statistics Office publication).

customary land by private actors threatens to undermine the progress made by reform in addressing land-disputes (Filer 2011).

The anonymity of urban life poses important challenges to traditional systems built around restorative justice and community-enforced sanctions on anti-social behavior. Victimization studies conducted in selected urban areas found that perpetrators are less likely to be known to the victim than in rural areas, and as such, traditional mechanisms which rely on community-enforced sanctions are not effective (JAG 2008). These challenges affect the efficacy of these forms of conflict management (Banks 2008, Lavu 2007, Dinnen et al 2011). At the same time, our consultations found that victims are still reluctant to rely on formal agencies to address their justice needs. Informal networks—for example in tracking down perpetrators of crime- were still heavily relied upon, even in instances where a crime had been reported to the police.

Forum-shopping is common in Papua New Guinea for those seeking resolution for disputes, but may challenge the efficacy of each of the justice systems. A range of different options still exist in some parts of the country for claimants. In part, the plural legal framework, comprising formal, hybrid and informal justice, providers provides rich alternatives for a variety of disputes. At the same time the way in which fora are used may also be compromising the efficacy of conflict-management and justice systems in general. Consultations with the RPNGC and other stakeholders found that the

access to options meant that justice providers were used incorrectly, and often to leverage advantage between disputants rather than simply to resolve disputes. For example victims sometimes report a crime to the police without any intent that it be investigated and remedy arrived at through the courts, but rather that it provides them with an advantage in negotiation that is conducted informally. Similarly, the World Bank team learned of domestic violence victims who were pressured to take their claims to the village court rather than the police despite the fact that according to law, as criminal acts, domestic violence cases fall outside of the jurisdiction of village courts.

Weak state capacity to provide security and rule of law has been pointed to by a number of the studies as a significant factor in high rates of crime and violence. The Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and other forms of inhuman, degrading and humiliating treatment (2010:2), for example, noted that the police-force had "insufficient human and financial resources, widespread corruption, low standards of professionalism, difficulties in accessing rural areas", and a lack of political will. The ratio of police officers to civilians is has been low, compared with those in developed countries in the region[24]. Low arrest and prosecution rates, even for those crimes reported, illustrative of the lack of effectiveness of current law

enforcement. Low-levels of confidence in the police in urban areas are noted in urban crime victimization surveys (Cf. JAG 2008) as well as in studies conducted in more rural areas (c.f. Kopi et al 2010).[25] In the surveys conducted in the three largest urban areas, respondents answered that perceptions of stabilizing or dropping crime-rates were due more to improved community responses to crime, and far less so to improved policing (LJSS Kopoko 2010, LJSS Lae 2010 and LJSS NCD 2009). In seeking justice, victims of crime were more likely to report their experience to family and community members than to police (JAG 2008, Kopi et al 2010). Similarly, Findlay (no date) presents findings from the Business Crime survey for Port Moresby, 2010, which indicate very low levels of confidence in the police and reporting of crime by businesses. Businesses believe that the police are "disinterested", "corrupt" and ineffective[26]. The survey also found that business believed that ethnic affiliations played a role in police investigation of crime. This was echoed in the findings of the World Bank consultations with experts and stakeholders.

Private security firms are being used to provide security for businesses, some communities as well a resource projects. There is preliminary evidence that there has been considerable growth in the

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[24] The ratio for PNG was noted in Goldman (2007) as being is 1 officer for every 1000 civilians, with ratios for Australia and New Zealand at 1:439 and 1:692 respectively.

[25] Other examples included, when questioned about what they could do to make themselves or their households safer, only 12% of respondents said that helping the police would make them feel safer.

[26] Findlay, p5,6

number and size in the number of private firms offering security services. Some commentators have suggested that private security has taken over much of the role of the police force (UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, 2010 ,Walters 2007), not least due to insufficient numbers of police personnel (Lewis 2007), with private security personnel far outnumbering police officers in active duty[27] . While figures are currently not available[28], the WB scoping mission and the follow-up mission found private security to be widespread in the NCD, used even by individual government agencies as well as smaller and larger business. Consultations even revealed that informal, private security is arranged in rural areas for local businesses . Our consultations found a variety of views – consistent with the variety in this sector- on the efficacy of these firms, their links to formal security agencies and to organized crime. Experiences from other countries would suggest that the political economy of this potentially large and growing sector of the economy deserves examination, to explore its relationship to crime and violence and the efficacy of strategies to address the issue.

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[27] The report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and other forms of humiliating and degrading treatment found 4,800 private security officers, compared with 1,200 active police officers across the country.

[28] The scoping team was unable to identify a regulatory body for the sector, or establish exactly how many firms were operating private security services in NCD.

5. Summary of Findings and Gaps in Understanding

An understanding of the traditional and evolving meanings of conflict, and the role they play in PNG, is important in developing strategies to prevent violence, as well as in identifying and addressing culturally-specific material and non-material impacts of conflict. This paper has highlighted the central role that conflict has played in social and economic life in PNG.

External and internal stresses place enormous pressure on institutions in PNG that are tasked with managing conflict. While much of the literature necessarily draws upon, and creates, rich detail in the description of *traditional* conflict systems, updating of knowledge of the socio- cultural changes that have taken place is essential to well-informed policy and interventions. In addition, augmenting the understanding of drivers and stressors of conflict, particularly from the perspective of the perpetrator would be key to understanding the evolving dynamics of crime and violence. The following issues and gaps in the data/literature have been identified in this paper:

- More evidence-based studies are required in both rural and urban areas to investigate changes in the meanings and forms of conflict taking place,[29]

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[29] This data may be provided by the findings of the 2009 Household Expenditure and Income Surveys (see Paper No 1 in this series for further information).

- Clearer and up-to-date evidence on the role of customary methods of conflict-management, their geographical spread, types of disputes handled and challenges faced in these customary mechanisms.
- The role of traditional drivers of conflict, particularly the desire to seek compensation and maintain resource equilibrium, needs to be further explored in urban environments as towns and cities are characterized by greater disparities in wealth. Whether property crimes are an expression of the desire for maintaining resource equilibrium may be a relevant question to consider in designing strategies to address these types of crime in particular.
- Greater understanding of the nature of intra-clan and intra-family conflict around land-leasing and benefit-sharing would provide valuable information for strengthening governance and dispute resolution in the natural resource management sector.
- Given the rapidly transforming social context, particularly with urbanization and greater inter-marriage, it would be important to investigate explicitly the extent of social cohesion within communities in settlements, given its key role in both preventing and addressing crime.
- A better informed understanding, including differences between rural and urban areas, of the changes in and current drivers of gender-based violence is required. For example, is there a continued tenacity of traditional cultural norms that underscore violence towards women, or have other changes in the society and economy resulted in the current prevalence and forms of GBV experienced? The current literature does not examine the impact of recent changes on gender-relations and gender-based violence.
- While some preliminary analysis of motivations and means for acquisition of firearms does exist, this would need to be updated with more current, geographically representative, empirical evidence. Accurately establishing prevalence (see Paper No.1 in this series) by triangulating the existing data and filling-in gaps would complement such analysis.
- More empirical evidence and analysis would provide detail on the real or perceived effectiveness of law enforcement agencies, and the reasons for their use/under-use (including the motivations for forum-shopping). This is particularly important as strategies to address crime and violence in PNG have, in the past, placed an emphasis on improving police capacity and confidence of communities in the law and justice institutions.
- Given the growing market for private security in response to crime and violence, sound empirical evidence is required on multiple aspects of this industry- including regulation and oversight, labor practices, and internal accountability. A political economy analysis of the private security sector may also yield valuable information for understanding drivers behind crime and violence.

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