Andreas Mehler/ Claudia Simons/ Denis Tull/ Franzisca Zanker

The Local Arena of Power-Sharing: Patterns of Adaptation or Continued Disorder

Preliminary Findings,

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In the pages that follow, preliminary findings of our fieldwork are summarized. The findings are referring to our initial hypotheses. Fieldwork was conducted in Gbarnga/ Bong County and Ganta/ Nimba County, **Liberia** (June-August 2011); Sake/ North Kivu and Kalehe/ South Kivu, **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** (July-September 2011); Nakuru and Eldoret, **Kenya** (October-December 2011) and Bubanza and Gitega, **Burundi** (October-December 2011). Focus group discussions with teachers, youth and market women[1] as well as interviews were conducted in all four countries. In total we conducted 26 focus group discussions and 219 interviews.

Prior to discussing the results it should be noted that the application of our proposed methodology proved to be more difficult than anticipated (see Simons/Zanker forthcoming). We intended to identify peaceful and non-peaceful local arenas in the four countries (both of which have been former hotspots, i.e. heavily affected by the war) in order to test our hypotheses according to the variance in the levels of peacefulness.[2] Once in the field, we found that the differences in the degree of peacefulness between the arenas were less than clear-cut, and often marginal, especially when taking the subjective perceptions of local citizens as a baseline. Arguably, negative peace was observable in each of the local arenas of Burundi, Kenya and Liberia, whereas the local arenas in the DR Congo are more difficult to categorize since the situation neither in Sake nor in Kalehe has even remotely evolved in a linear fashion across time.

This means that an important aspect of our research methodology has been of limited use. Nonetheless, the fact that the variance of local peace may be smaller than previously assumed is an important finding in itself – especially when we consider that 'the local' and attendant

[1] For moderation and assistance in the Focus Group Discussions we would like to thank Felesu Swaray, Beatrice Duana, Claudius Mehtua and Magnus Marvey (Liberia); Doudou Kalala and Serge Ramazani (DRC); David Okeyo, Leah Ngugi and Silas Kipchumba (Kenya); Alexis Macumi and Athanase Gahungu (Burundi).

[2] We work with a negative definition of peace, namely the absence of armed political violence. For further information on this project please look at http://www.spp1448.de/projects/the-local-arena-of-power-sharing/

concepts (i.e. local ownership) is currently gaining growing currency in policy-making circles and academic research. The absence of variance in levels of peacefulness could have many reasons, among others the size and geography of the country in question, pre-conflict politics and patronage, political culture etc. It certainly shows that a simple dichotomy of peaceful/non-peaceful is not sufficiently accurate to use in a post-conflict context. A continuum-based scale is certainly more appropriate to capture empirical realities. For an elaboration on this issue see Mehler/Simons/Tull/Zanker (forthcoming).

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Hypothesis 1: The quality of the negotiation process/peace agreement determines the prospects for both local and national peace

By this we meant two interrelated factors. First that the inclusion of locally relevant actors in a peace deal is necessary to foster local peace; and second that successful peace-promoting power-sharing requires its extension to the local level. Through addressing the local level (local elites and their interests), a comprehensive power-sharing agreement in the negotiation phase improves the prospects that the agreement will instigate peaceful change. We define locally relevant actors as those individuals or groups operating primarily on the local level, and more precisely in the selected local arenas.

Our research into the negotiation process and the peace accords shows that all four national agreements were carefully crafted, though perhaps least so in Liberia.[3] Peace processes and negotiations were intense and protracted, perhaps to a lesser extent in Kenya than in the three other countries. However, the extension of the provisions of the peace accords to the local level and the inclusion of locally relevant actors and interests was a different matter.

a) Inclusion of locally relevant actors in the peace deal

We have found that the inclusion of locally relevant actors in peace agreements was at best indirectly and randomly fulfilled in both **Liberian** local arenas (Gbarnga and Ganta). This was so because a few locally relevant actors were present at the negotiations, but they never

[3] Whilst the agreement was very detailed, more emphasis seems to have been placed on dividing up the „spoils of war“ (i.e. the ministries) between the warring factions rather than addressing any long-term grievances.

represented the local arenas, and local issues were not addressed.[4] This did not constitute a major obstacle to national peace (defined as "negative peace") which was arguably secured by the large United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission. Nonetheless, continued tensions after the peace agreement in both Gbarnga and Ganta, namely land disputes and sporadic acts of violence, were at least partly attributed to the lack of attention to such local conflict causes in the peace agreement. However, variation in the degree of peacefulness between the two arenas was relatively small. We assume that this could be due to a number of factors including the small size of the country as well as a historically strong tradition of political centralization in the capital Monrovia.

The findings in **Burundi** mirror those in Liberia inasmuch as a specific inclusion of locally important actors in the peace process was never foreseen. Furthermore, actors – even if especially strong in or originating from a specific region – did not consider themselves defenders of specific local interests, but of ethnic concerns cutting across space. One may argue that the *Forces Nationales de Libération* (FNL) rebels, based mainly in the western part of Burundi, not least in Bubanza, in fact excluded themselves from the peace process by boycotting peace talks for a long time, explaining why the security situation there continued to be rather fragile in comparison to our second local arena, Gitega, where the FNL has never been strong.

The findings for Kenya and DRC differ from Burundi and Liberia. In **Kenya**, two of the main individual protagonists of the post-electoral crisis (William Ruto and Mwai Kibaki) can be identified with Eldoret and Nakuru respectively, the local arenas we selected.[5] While their local stronghold and power-base was of undisputable importance, the two strongmen rarely acted "on behalf" of those. They used their influence in the mediation process to enhance their political clout through power-sharing, rather than seeking to address conflict roots and/or particular local issues, which was instead the focus of civil society activists. The perception of our local interviewees was therefore somewhat ambivalent. A feeling of being represented was frequently expressed, but a direct association could not be identified.

[4] Some locally relevant actors were present at the negotiations, like members of the Taylor government, whose party, the *National Patriotic Party* (NPP), remains popular in Gbarnga today, as well as to a lesser extent in Ganta (whilst it is a stronghold for former *National Patriotic Front of Liberia* (NPFL) combatants, primary loyalty remains with Prince Johnson, a one time enemy of Taylor). In Ganta the elected Representative Nohn Kidau from 2005 had also been present at the negotiations, as part of the civil society delegation. All these actors never represented these local arenas at the negotiations.

[5] Though the link between Ruto's roots in Eldoret run deeper than those of Kibaki in Nakuru.

In the two arenas of the **DR Congo** nearly to all relevant local actors where directly involved in the peace talks, that is, groups, not individuals, including most of the warring factions (insurgencies) that had well defined local roots, with the exception of the foreign (i.e. Rwandan) *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR) rebel group, which continues to cause insecurity in both North and South Kivu to this day. One could argue that the included local actors went to a certain length to defend (or claim to defend) the interests of their constituencies during the peace talks, notably the Mai Mai militias and the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD) insurgency.

Preliminary conclusions: The fact that local actors were only superficially or randomly included in both Burundi and Liberia may be attributed to the small size of these countries, where ideas, conflicts and actors tend to quickly gain "national" relevance. The issues at stake during the conflicts and the ensuing peace processes varied quite strongly across the four countries. Liberia came out of a protracted phase of disorder and was headed towards a rudimentary degree of stateness, Burundi experienced scenes of genocide, the DRC struggled with an intricate mix of national and local issues (i.e. citizenship and a troublesome regional neighborhood) while Kenya had "only" experienced a post-electoral crisis. All major actors involved in these crises, notably opposition groups and insurgents, claimed first and foremost to struggle for a *national* cause, i.e. had national ambitions. However, one issue of undisputable local relevance was common across the country cases and local arenas: conflicts over land.

In summary, the findings neither support nor contradict our original hypothesis. The most direct inclusion of locally relevant actors into the peace deal (in the DRC) did not prevent the two Congolese local arenas from remaining violent or once more turning violent after a relatively short lull following the 2002 peace agreement. It remains unclear whether the indirect (Kenya) and random (Liberia) inclusion of some actors with strong local support was directly beneficial to peace.[6] The difference between the selected local arenas in terms of their relative peacefulness was not strong enough to assess this with any accuracy. In Burundi no relevant actor had local roots (coming from or fighting for a specific region), but this has not directly affected local peacefulness (though the long absence of the FNL from the peace

[6] Ruto is a key player in Eldoret (see below) and was a main player in the negotiations but not really on behalf of Eldoret, rather as an important member of one of the political factions. In Liberia, locally relevant actors were part of the negotiations, but randomly so, e.g. they represented one of the conflict parties, Taylor's government, or civil society, see Footnote 3.

negotiations may be causal to a significantly higher level of the sense of insecurity in Bubanza compared to Gitega). In DRC the conflict was much more territorially defined (with a *de facto* split of the country). Therefore relevant actors were per se "local". The hypothesis may need refinement if it should prove relevant.

b) Successful peace-promoting power-sharing requires its extension to the local level

We have found that an extension of power-sharing to the local level (formally or informally) did not take place in **Liberia** and **Kenya**, where peace agreements followed a top-down approach of power-sharing that did not extend to local arenas. In one Kenyan locality, Nakuru, the city council exhibits a composition similar to the post-agreement coalition government at the national level (on a voluntary basis), but this is as far as it goes. One explanation for the lack of local (translation and) adaptation may be that the post-electoral violence at the local level was mainly instigated by national actors, and the *need* to come to terms at the local level may therefore be low. Indeed, interviewees strongly emphasized the *national* dimension of post-election violence and characterized the main players as national ones.

This differed from Liberia where one of the main dividing lines on the local level for decades has been between Mandingos and other ethnic groups, often staked against each other. This was the case especially under Samuel Doe in the 1980s who repressed the Gios and Manos in Nimba County (where Ganta is located) and favoured the Mandingos. This policy was reversed after Charles Taylor took power. The dividing line between Mandingos and other groups has always, at least partially, concerned land and property rights. This meant that there were clearly locally relevant issues (in our arenas) at stake. The advance of the *Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy* (LURD) and their conquest of certain parts of the country was nonetheless not only of local significance, but had nation-wide repercussions. There was never any replication of power-sharing at the local level - in Ganta pro-Taylor militias exclusively controlled local government structures after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement had been signed, without any power being delegated or shared with LURD.

Power-sharing was extended (top-down) to the local level in **Burundi** and had a positive effect on conflicts/division within the population. The ethnic mix on all administrational

levels is generally seen as positive, given the ethnic mix (Hutu, Tutsi) of the population in both Gitega and Bubanza.[7]

The picture in the **DRC** is more differentiated. Congo's power-sharing formula foresaw the extension of power-sharing to the local level in each province.[8] However, there was a *de facto* attribution of the entire province of North Kivu (and therefore the local arena of Sake) to the RCD rebellion, i.e. there was no power-sharing between the conflict parties locally. Namely, the dominant local actor refused to share power with the Kabila factions or other signatories of the national power-sharing agreement - who were not able to oppose the RCD's hold on power in North Kivu and were often chased away and sometimes even killed. On the other hand, in Kalehe, the explicit inclusion of power-sharing at the local level generated new conflicts, although later the formula worked somewhat satisfactorily for peace (after the exclusion of those RCD elements that opposed the power sharing deal locally).

Preliminary conclusions: The difference between the national and local context seem to be of utmost importance, while the variation between the local arenas within one country is not as important as we initially assumed, with the exception of the DRC. Scenes of genocide in Burundi were a country-wide phenomenon, experienced locally in most dramatic terms; the post-election violence in Kenya was instigated nationally and experienced locally, though only temporarily; inter-ethnic violence in Liberia was a permanent condition, but exacerbated temporarily at the local level by the LURD advance and its ramifications. Of course it could be argued that everything is experienced locally since "national" is mostly an abstract notion. Nonetheless specific events have played a direct role in our local arenas, the premise behind this hypothesis.

Overall, our findings cannot support the original hypothesis as the extension of power-sharing to the local level was either not stipulated (with few effects in Liberia and Kenya) or caused additional conflict (DRC) and only in Burundi was found to be beneficial. The hypothesis must be considerably refined to take the conflict context, as well as perhaps geography, into account. Power-sharing was not directly and formally transferred to address local actors and

[7] Whilst the effects of ethnicity will not be discussed in detail here please note that we undertook a comprehensive mapping of all conflict actors in each local arena.

[8] In theory, local power-sharing was stipulated by the Pretoria Accord in Annex 1 ("De la repartition des responsabilités"). Section D (Administration provincial) suggests appointing one governor and 3 vice-governors in each province. It likewise suggested that three months after the start of the transition, a law on decentralization would be adopted (D part 7). However, decentralization (adopted in the new Constitution in the middle of the transition in 2005) was never implemented.

their interests in 6 out of our 8 cases, though the important exception is the DR Congo, where it had a variable impact on peace and conflict in our two selected local arenas. Informal adaptations or translations with concepts not only "travelling" to Bujumbura, Kinshasa, Monrovia and Nairobi (the capitals of the four countries), but further down to the local level, could not be easily detected.

Hypothesis 2: The inclusion of dimensions of territorial power-sharing increases the likelihood of both local and national peace.

The academic literature on power-sharing puts a strong emphasis on territorial power-sharing as a contributory factor to peace. This aims at decentralizing power, for example to regionally concentrated groups, enhancing their sense of security by providing them with formal or informal autonomy. Additionally, territorial power-sharing can be equated with Lijphart's component of "segmental autonomy" within consociational democracy, if identity groups with specific grievances/interests tend to dominate particular administrative units. From this point of view it was compelling for our research to postulate that dimensions of territorial power-sharing contributes to peace because – by its very definition – it addresses local or sub-national concerns and interests.

Although we found that there was no territorial power-sharing in the formal and traditional sense (e.g. autonomy), we identified broader dimensions of territorial power-sharing relevant to our cases. Examples of informal adaptations of power-sharing at the local level are not considered to be a dimension of territorial power-sharing. Rather this has been discussed above when considering the extension of power-sharing to the local level, and will be revisited below where we describe the degree of implementation of power-sharing at the local level. However, one dimension of territorial power-sharing, relevant to most of our cases, was devolution/decentralisation.

Results:

Formally, no devolution of power was foreseen in **Burundi**. However, two important provisions have been added to the new constitution as a result of the Arusha peace accord. Firstly, governors must now come from the provinces they are supposed to administer. Secondly, a Senate was established with two locally elected representatives of each province. Therefore the local ownership of political decisions has improved (mostly for Bubanza which

has always been administered by individuals from southern Burundi) and this is generally valued as positive by local citizens. It should be noted that territorial aspects have never played a significant role in the Burundian civil war as the ethnic mix of the population makes territorial separation of power unfeasible (and is strongly opposed by all conflict parties and the population).

De facto territorial power-sharing, namely the devolution of power to the provincial level, took place in **DRC**, bolstering local strongholds of conflict parties (maintained under peace provisions) both during the negotiation and in the implementation phase. One may argue that the conflict on the national level (long fought along the frontiers between the regions controlled by the RCD, MLC and Kabila faction respectively) was thereby mitigated while it was increasingly transferred to the local conflict arenas, which were more or less attributed to different warring factions. Proxy forces fought each other, mostly in those areas where no clear monopoly of force existed before the agreement. This may explain the paradoxical result that there was "peace" on the national level (along the official frontline), evidently symbolized by the survival of the transitional government in Kinshasa throughout the transition period and until the elections in 2006, alongside increased levels of local violence in Eastern DRC, notably the Kivu provinces and Ituri.[9]

In **Liberia**, as already mentioned above, power-sharing was not translated to the local level. and no dimensions of territorial power-sharing- through devolution or otherwise- were formally or informally put into place. Like in Burundi, territorial gains of certain regions have never played a significant role in the war, and neither do they in peace times. Liberia remains a heavily centralized nation. Plans for local elections and decentralisation are yet to be implemented. The elections of local representatives (under Taylor they were assigned under a system of proportional representation) has created a sense of local ownership to some degree. At the very least, the representative from Ganta (2005-2011) explained it was a first time this seat belonged to someone who was "a child of the soil".

[9] The DR Congo (and consequently the two local arenas in Eastern DRC) was further exposed to a transborder, regional dimension of conflict and violence. For example, a Rwandan rebel group (the FDLR) continues to roam Eastern Congo while seeking to destabilize the government in Rwanda. We consider the FDLR as exogenous to the conflict given that it was not included in Congo's national power-sharing agreement. This, of course, made it difficult to isolate the impact of the FDLR on peace from the impact of the power-sharing agreement. Interestingly, the FDLR has repeatedly called on the Rwandan government and the international community to hold a Rwandan national dialogue and to agree to a power-sharing arrangement similar to the one in the DRC.

Kenya's post-election accord did not contain formal dimensions of territorial power-sharing, but the subsequent constitution-making process – an outcome of the former – contained new elements of administrative and political devolution. Full effects of this cannot be detected yet, but a positive connotation exists at the local level, especially amongst the (locally strongly dominant) Kalenjins in the Eldoret area. Devolution remains somewhat feared by administrative elites, who could easily jeopardize the process. Nonetheless, the inclusion of issues for future discussion that address dimensions of territorial power-sharing, like land and decentralisation, may have a positive effect on both local and national peace.

Preliminary Conclusions: Overall this hypothesis might need refinement, even though it cannot be totally rejected either. We have identified elements pointing to the relevance of territorial dimensions of power-sharing, sometimes expressed in the form of an expectation, like in Kenya, where it was later included in the Constitution. The DRC case seems to contradict the hypothesis, though. This might be related to geography and other factors we will have to explore. North and South Kivu were not only strongholds of main players in the national power-game, but their control was, for a variety of reasons, a main ambition in itself. We will need to carry out a more thorough analysis of the local-national nexus to modify the hypothesis accordingly.

Hypothesis 3: A high degree of implementation of a power-sharing arrangement is a necessary condition for lasting peace both on the local and the national level.

A peace and power-sharing agreement that is not implemented cannot reap the positive effects that are expected from it. Non-implementation of provisions agreed upon during negotiations can lead to renewed conflict on the local and national level. We presume that both power sharing provisions (on the national and local level), and other provisions, such as land reforms, the establishment of truth and reconciliation commissions, security sector reform (SSR) foreseen in an agreement must be implemented in order to facilitate peace.

Results:

a) Implementation of power-sharing provisions

The formal elements of power-sharing, e.g. a power-sharing interim government (and relevant constitutional amendments) were implemented in all four cases relatively successfully. The translation and/or adaptation of these national power-sharing agreements to the local level is a different matter, however. The extension of power-sharing was already noted as limited in Kenya and Liberia, to have brought renewed conflict in at least one local arena in the DRC and have a positive effect in both Burundian localities.

Concerning the repercussions that resulted from the implementation of power-sharing agreements at the local level, no specific provisions for local power-sharing were stipulated in the agreements in Burundi, Kenya or Liberia. However, there were local effects of the implemented national agreements. The DRC is the only case with an exact formula for power sharing on the local level, with ambiguous effects.

In the **DRC** most armed groups refrained from fighting after the Sun City talks. The buy-in tactic worked, but the RCD, a major rebel group which later fragmented and transformed into the *Conseil National pour la Défense du Peuple* (CNDP) under the command of General Nkunda, resumed violence in 2004. This was halfway through the power-sharing transition, and violence fully resumed in 2006, after the end of the transition and post-conflict elections. Interviewees in North Kivu suggested that Nkunda's rebellion was partly caused by the sentiment of many former RCD fighters that they were being left behind by their leaders who for their part enjoyed the benefits of the partitioning of power in Kinshasa. Furthermore, the short time span of the transition and hostility of significant parts of the local population towards the RCD meant that the upcoming elections, which ended the transition, would also politically weaken the influence of the RCD. It thus seems that the implementation of power sharing at the national level had a somewhat negative effect on the local level. Power-sharing suspended the fighting, which resumed once the RCD recognized that it would lose all the power positions through elections it had previously gained through violence and power-sharing. We found that in North Kivu local power-sharing arrangements only existed on paper – and violent conflict continued on and off within the province. In South Kivu the power-sharing provisions were taken much more seriously, but one could argue that their attempted implementation – against our hypothesis - generated renewed violence, at least in an early stage (2004), but subsiding over the last two years of the transition.

In **Liberia**, the interim power-sharing government lasted as scheduled for two years without a renewed outbreak of violence. However, it is assumed both in the literature and by our respondents that the main peace-guarantor was the UN peacekeeping operation *United*

Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) – which assured the implementation of an accord. Liberia provides an example where top-elite arrangements implemented on the national level may even harm peace locally, through the lack of translation at the local level. In Gbarnga, for example, conflict continued to a certain degree during the interim government phase when foot soldiers continued to loot/rampage villages as they had been left behind by their commanders, now all living in relatively luxurious conditions in the capital Monrovia. The DRC showed us that that the implementation of national power-sharing at the local level can actually enhance local conflict dynamics. Findings from Ganta suggest that when power-sharing is not extensive enough it can also lead to negative repercussions at the local level. The lack of a local adaptation or replication of the national power-sharing agreement in Ganta could be a factor in understanding local conflict dynamics. It could be argued that the continued influence of former militia commanders in Ganta (e.g. the mayor in 2003 was appointed by the *National Patriotic Front of Liberia* (NPFL) General Adolphus Dolo, the new mayor appointed in 2008 was a former NPFL fighter himself) without a counterweight from the Mandingo/LURD faction was of importance for the continued salience of land conflicts in the region. Interview data suggests that, at the very least, Mandingos do feel they have not been adequately represented in the community since the peace agreement was signed.

Kenya's elite pact, or its main provisions regarding a grand coalition, was also implemented swiftly, though some related elements of the agreement, and the Constitution that followed, are still in the process of being implemented. In fact, Kenya's experience with power sharing is more recent than in all other cases and its implementation has therefore to be interpreted cautiously. The coalition is holding together in its fifth year – despite a number of serious crises - which has an ongoing positive effect on peace. The Eldoret arena shows that the departure from the unity government of an important national player with a strong local basis like William Ruto can have destabilizing effects locally in his stronghold (but no return to open violent conflict). This – ex negativo – attests to the relevance of Ruto's inclusion for local peace in the first place, even as the scope of violence is still very limited, especially when compared to DRC.

Burundi is exceptional in terms of the *power sharing implementation – peace nexus* as the ethnic power-sharing formula and a political power-sharing formula (power-sharing between political parties) was implemented before ceasefires were signed by the main rebel movements *Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie - Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie* (CNDD-FDD) and FNL. Therefore military power-sharing remained only on

paper until the inclusion of the CNDD-FDD. Subsequently, the CNDD-FDD benefitted from a power-sharing formula in the security sector, albeit less so on the political level. However this was not due to an exclusion of the CNDD-FDD per se. The group prioritized its political consolidation in anticipation of elections rather than on putting their personnel in the power-sharing institutions. It is remarkable that many people belonging to groups other than the CNDD-FDD (mainly from the *Front pour la Démocratie au Burundi* (FRODEBU) and to a lesser degree from the *Union pour le Progrès National* (URPONA)) started to leave their parties to join their former enemy, the CNDD-FDD, anticipating an electoral victory of the latter at the end of the transition. Therefore more and more CNDD-FDD members were *de facto* taking part in the transitional institutions, though it should be noted that many of them belonged to other parties before the inclusion of the CNDD-FDD into the peace deal. The FNL only benefitted after the transition. One could argue that the implementation of the ethnic power-sharing formula paved the way to ceasefires with both rebel movements. This terminated decades of dominance of the Tutsi minority in the state apparatus and the army, one of the main grievances of all Hutu-dominated rebel movements.

A specificity in Burundi as opposed to the other three countries is the institutionalization of (ethnic) power sharing after the transition. This has definitely appeased the original conflict in the long-term. During the transition political power-sharing was implemented in both arenas in Burundi, but it was difficult to distinguish its immediate relevance as interviewees were unsure about the exact partition of posts in Gitega and Bubanza. The perception was prevalent that new and old conflicting political elites (UPRONA and FRODEBU parties) shared power in both Gitega and Bubanza as a - peace enhancing - effect of the 2000 Arusha agreement. But today's ruling party and former rebel movement CNDD-FDD occupies all relevant posts on the local level. Individuals come from both main ethnic groups (Hutu and Tutsi), thereby respecting the ethnic quotas laid down in the constitution, but the older political power-sharing formula of the Arusha agreement is no longer relevant as it was only applicable during the transition. This is largely seen as a breach of the spirit of the Arusha agreement, and many Burundian observers suggested that political power-sharing would be more appropriate than ethnic power-sharing under today's circumstances, where the major conflict line has shifted towards intra-Hutu political struggles.

Preliminary Conclusions: The implementation of power-sharing proved to have somewhat complex consequences. Formal elements of power-sharing were implemented in all cases – and resulted in appeasing major conflict actors, who were included in interim

governments. Nonetheless, the translation of these power-sharing agreements to the local level, or the lack thereof, had some negative repercussions on local peace. The implementation of power-sharing on the national level in Kenya, Liberia and the DRC led to national peace, but in turn threatened peace at the local level, where fighters of the conflict parties felt marginalised by their own leaders. One may argue that the local level power-sharing formulas in both of DRC's local arenas met stiff resistance by the former RCD rebellion, even as its leaders went to Kinshasa to take their seat in transitional institutions, suggesting their sense of political uncertainty. In Kenya, when one conflict actor (Ruto) was dropped from the formal power-sharing this did not affect the national coalition government, but it increased tensions in Eldoret. In addition, one could also find evidence that peace-enhancing effects were missed when there were no local power-sharing elements (or other conflict-mitigating strategies) implemented in parallel to the national agreement.

b) Implementation of other provisions

In all four countries elements of the peace deal other than power-sharing provisions are prominent, although they have taken even longer to be implemented.

This is particularly relevant for **Kenya**, where the protracted reforms through the new constitution are supposed to be enacted within five years of the Constitution's promulgation in 2010. Legislation is already running behind schedule. Many of the new prerogatives of (partly) new institutions touch on the roots of the conflict, not least those dealing with the devolution of power to the local level. It can be assumed that a delayed implementation of the constitution will raise tensions, as can be seen already with the setting of a date for the next general elections (currently scheduled to take place in March 2013 instead of August 2012 as set out in the new Constitution). At the same time, the implementation could create (powerful) losers, suggesting that implementation can potentially prove dangerous. On the level of our local arenas land reform may prove particularly salient.

Liberia's transition has more or less followed the prescribed calendar. The interim government period passed without a new outbreak of violence. Elections were held in 2005 and 2011 without significant violence, despite enormous technical problems and a political crisis before and after the first round of the 2011 elections. However, several core elements of the *Comprehensive Peace Agreement* (CPA) have been less smoothly implemented. A Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was created in 2005 and conducted

proceedings as stipulated by the CPA. It published its final report in 2009, but the recommendations have never been fully put into place, due to its suggestion that any politician with links to the civil war should be banned from public politics for at least 30 years – this would include President Johnson-Sirleaf. Security sector reform, another core element of the CPA, has also not been fully implemented - the police is still considered to be both corrupt and underfunded and the army is barely working – they are still not entitled to carry weapons. This is despite major international support for reform, not least from the US. Notably UNMIL and *United Nations Police* (UNPOL) still have a heavy presence providing security in Liberia.

In **Burundi** many respondents in both Gitega and Bubanza deplored the delayed establishment of various post-conflict commissions. The C*ommission nationale des droits de l'Homme* has been established but is not effective. In both arenas respondents stated that human rights violations are one of the main problems today. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission as well as the Special Court for Burundi are yet to begin their work (the commission was scheduled to start work in February 2012). Expectations towards the truth and reconciliation commission are high, but many citizens doubt that it will be independent and able to uncover the worst cases of crimes as high politicians might have been involved. An amnesty for all criminal acts except genocide granted in the agreement was initially meant to facilitate the transition phase. Until today, however, there were no investigations into acts committed by the President of the Republic or other high officials. This *de facto* extends the amnesty, against the provisions of the constitution, which states that no person who has committed crimes against humanity should be allowed to take part in elections. The *Commission nationale des terres et autres biens* (CNTB) has been set up, but does not work satisfactorily and thus many land conflicts are settled violently today. Many internally displaced persons (IDPs) remain in camps *inter alia* because their houses have been occupied or destroyed. The (so far) successful army integration stipulated in the Arusha Agreement and implemented since late 2004 (with the integration of the main rebel movement) can be interpreted as a crucial development towards peace in both arenas. The reform of the police has also been implemented, but as the overall level of training and discipline in the police forces was low from the beginning and compared to the army progress is rather slow. The new police have a negative rather than positive effect on local peace. They have been rated as negative by almost all interview/focus group participants due to their human rights abuses.

The inability to create a unified national army with a single command structure in **DRC** has been a major obstacle of peace in both North and South Kivu. However, since peace has never

really been stable in the DRC, this is strictly speaking not so much a question of peace consolidation/peace-building (as in the three other countries), even though donors refer to the DRC as a "post-conflict" country. In the Memorandum II on army and security (Kinshasa 29 June 2003), the composition of the army was established, but this memorandum has never been implemented. In fact, a major failure of the Intercongolese Dialogue was its inability to create an integrated national armed force. Until today the army remains split between different factions with parallel hierarchies and competing loyalties. The government has no effective control over the entire army and attempts at SSR are unsuccessful to this point. Since 2011 a restructuring process of the battalions stationed in North and South Kivu has started which was supposed to cut parallel hierarchies and facilitate centralized management of the army. However the effects were partly the opposite, with the ex-CNDP (officially integrated since 2009) gaining even more influence within the new regiments. This created tensions in both Sake and Kalehe (already since the arrival of CNDP battalions in 2009). In addition, the new nationality law has been promulgated but there has never been a population census. Therefore many people in both North and South Kivu perceive the granting of citizenship rights to all Banyarwanda as a means for Rwandans to acquire Congolese citizenship to control the state. Conflicts surrounding nationality still persist.

Preliminary Conclusions: Overall, the implementation of core elements of peace agreements *other than* power-sharing was slow and incomplete in the four countries. Prospects for long-term peacefulness are probably harmed by this lack of implementation.
This is the case when

a) ordinary citizens lose their belief in reforms and come to the conclusion that some commissions, by-laws or institutions will never see the light of day
b) the recommendations from the constitutions and their actions have no effects.

We were not able to clearly establish immediate effects of (non-) implementation to national or local peace (or respectively its absence). Most serious should be failures in security sector reform implementation, but this has more detrimental effects in the case of DRC than in Liberia, where a strong UN peacekeeping mission is able to control large-scale violence. For example, UNMIL battalions are deployed very close to Ganta and Gbarnga, and can therefore react very quickly to turbulences. In North and South Kivu the *Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en Republic Démocratique du Congo* (MONUSCO) does not have the same effect, as it is largely unable to prevent violence from happening even in zones with

MONUSCO bases close by such as Kalehe. This suggests that context conditions play an important role and not just the degree of implementation of a reform per se.

Hypothesis 4: The extension of power-sharing to the local/sub-national level involves the re-ordering of power relations on local level, but it will only contribute to local peace if new and widely acceptable patterns of authority emerge.

The first part of the hypothesis proved challenging as our research found that the extension of power-sharing to the local level was formally established only in the DRC in general terms. Furthermore, a top-down approach of ethnic (and during the transition: political) power-sharing down to the local level was pursued in Burundi, i.e. power relations on the local level were closely linked to power relations on the national level. However, we observed effects of re-ordering of power relations on war and peace in all eight local arenas.

Results:

In the case of **Gbarnga** (Liberia), the re-ordering of power-relations was limited. Loyalists of former president Taylor remained powerful after the peace accord and the transition (e.g. Senator Howard-Taylor, Representative Mulbah), but the roles they hold have changed (from First Lady to Senator; from appointed Minister to elected Representative). This can be interpreted in the sense that these actors used to be mostly "national" figures before the CPA. They have since retreated to more local positions in their strongholds while keeping national relevance. Alternatively, free multi-party elections are new in Liberia and confer a form of authority that never existed before; hence there is a new incentive to "prove" one's own local legitimacy. In terms of the mutual accommodation of local elites, an element incorporated in this hypothesis, all local elites interviewed felt that they have been accommodated. Though Mandingo representation remains a contested issue in Gbarnga (and some low-scale violent acts along the Kpelle-Mandingo line were reported), it is plausible to observe some progress on the symbolic level. For example, the former superintendent Ranney Jackson- from the locally dominant Kpelle tribe- once marched in a Mandingo peace-march during Ramadan, and the newly appointed Assistant-Superintendent, Anthony Sherrif, is a Mandingo himself.

In **Ganta**, Taylor loyalists quickly gained back their prominent power-position after the CPA. Former combatants, especially former General Adolphus Dolo, known as General Peanut Butter during the first war, were influential in appointing the mayor (the most important

power position in Ganta), and a former combatant was even appointed mayor in 2008. The current mayor Dorr Cooper seems to be popular and for the most part is seen as a positive actor. He is also acceptable to the national government, contrary to his predecessor who had difficult relations with the local Representative, District Commissioner and President. He has had a pacifying effect on the land conflict. The original mayor from 2003, Nohn Tennsonen, was acceptable at the local level, but not at the national level. Furthermore it seems that she enjoyed a degree of legitimacy amongst the ordinary population of Ganta, but not among business leaders and civil society activists. She was accused of worsening the land conflict by handing out land owned by Mandingos to (ex-rebel) squatters. In terms of the mutual accommodation of local elites the majority ethnic group of Gios and Manos seemed to have been accommodated, as well as the high concentration of former fighters, partially through the appointment of one of their former commanders as mayors. Nonetheless, the minority Mandingo group is not even represented in the Town Council, nor as a specific group in local peace commissions.[10] The current composition of the local elite excludes one important group and their grievances are not adequately addressed.

In **Nakuru** (Kenya), one element in the re-ordering of power-relations is striking: the illegal sect Mungiki has become very powerful in the post-electoral period. Mungiki means a "united people" or "multitude" in the Kikuyu language, and is a quasi-militia which rejects all elements of western influences and is believed to have been founded in the late 1980s.[11] It has been alleged that during the post-election violence, Mungiki was hired to contribute to the revenge attacks against Luos and Kalenjins in both Nakuru and Naivasha. Mungiki was not included in the power-sharing arrangement and has remained illegal. It has been difficult to establish whether they "brought" conflict to Nakuru, and /or whether more Mungiki members remained in Nakuru after the conflict. Either way, Mungiki has become increasingly important in the perception of the local population. Mungiki is of course not a new individual actor in Nakuru, rather a power-network with links all over Kenya. Interestingly, in all our interviews and focus group discussions, Mungiki were *not* believed to be acceptable (ranked as negative by everyone). However, there seems to be no discernible effect on peace (probably because Mungiki are not as powerful as perceived).

[10] Monthly meetings with the UNMIL battalion in Ganta on peace and security issues with a variety of stakeholders include a Muslim representative, but not a Mandingo.

[11] Membership is secret, with a number of unknown rituals being part of their beliefs. Mungiki quickly moved to control the local transportation industry in Nairobi, through the extortion of mini-bus owners using threats of violence. In 2002 the sect was banned.

In the aftermath of the post-electoral violence a sort of ethnic cleansing took place in some of the more heterogeneous neighborhoods of Nakuru, creating more ethnic homogeneity and probably less opportunities for both peaceful and violent encounters between the main ethnic groups in the years that have followed. This has probably changed power relations on the very micro-level of the city's wards. In terms of mutual accommodation of elites, there seems to be some tension between the MP Lee Kinyanjui (Party of National Unity (PNU)) and the Mayor Mohammed Suraw (Orange Democratic Movement (ODM))[12] as well as between the Town Council and the (PNU/Kikuyu) administration. Nonetheless, this seems to be only to a certain degree, with no significant repercussion on local peace.

In **Eldoret**, local strongman William Ruto has become even more powerful since the post-electoral violence episode and the ensuing elite pact. Ruto became an MP for Eldoret in 1997, before which he had been a youth advocate for former President Moi. In the run-up to the 2007 elections, he allied himself with the ODM's presidential candidate Raila Odinga, stopping his own plans to run for President. Ruto was one of Odinga's negotiators in the Kenyan National Dialogue, and was appointed as Minister of Agriculture in the power-sharing cabinet that followed. In 2011 he was relieved of his ministerial duties after serious corruption allegations. He has also been charged with crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court (ICC). Newcomers to the local power game include the other Eldoret resident indicted by the ICC, Joshua Sang, because he has risen in international prominence. This is obviously a fact one seems to be able to capitalize upon. Ruto's authority has a) increased, b) is acceptable to the majority, but c) has potentially a negative effect on peace in the wider area. Paradoxically this is because Ruto has been accused of crimes against humanity and is perpetuating the Kalenjin narrative of eternal victimhood. In terms of mutual accommodation of elites, minority groups in the Town Council (PNU Councilors) feel left out, but this probably has little effect on local peace as most people who feel particularly threatened in the Eldoret area have moved away.

In **North Kivu/Sake** (DRC) power relations changed *de jure* (with the official power-sharing formula) but not *de facto*. The RCD stayed in power almost everywhere after the 2002 Pretoria accord, people from the Kabila faction, though officially deployed to North Kivu, were not able to participate in power. We cannot speak of mutual accommodation of local elites, as Kabila elites were not accommodated, nor were antagonistic "traditional" elites

[12] His election is disputed and currently before the Courts.

(such as the "real" *Mwami* (traditional chief) Kalinda Ndandu Gustave[13]) reincorporated in their positions. The RCD rule has never been accepted by the majority of the local population (of Sake), proof of which can be found in continuous fighting of Mai Mai militias against the rebellion and widespread popular support of *Mwami* Kalinda Ndandu Gustave. In addition, openly hostile attitudes of autochthonous groups[14] prevail towards RCD, CNDP or more generally all Banyamulenge/Tutsi[15] elements. The RCD (and CNDP respectively) kept power by force during and after the transition – with the implicit acquiescence of Kabila during the transition (power-sharing) as well as since 2009. In summary therefore, during the transition (2002/03 – 2006) there was de facto no re-ordering of power relations, as the RCD prevented other signatories of the power sharing agreement from effectively participating in power in the province. A fundamental re-ordering began with the 2006 elections, somewhat leveling the playing field, but also making local politics more complicated and tensely negotiated. Power became more contested than ever as autochthonous politicians won the elections and took revenge on the Banyarwanda (who rightly or wrongly were associated with the hated RCD rebellion). Given the turning of tables, inter-ethnic relations in the province were polarized and a mutually acceptable accommodation of (local) elites was excluded. Since 2009, however, political fortunes shifted once more as the CNDP fought its way back to power, forcing President Kabila to accommodate the CNDP at the expense of local "autochthonous" groups.

In **South Kivu/Kalehe** power relations changed not only on paper but in reality, with the inclusion of Kabila people in the formerly RCD-dominated administration and military. The inclusion of Kabila elements into the local power system led to outright conflict with the old RCD elite and to armed clashes (the war of Bukavu) in 2004. Thus the accommodation of elites first failed and then (after 2004) succeeded when the remaining RCD and Kabila elements complied with the official power-sharing rules. These patterns of authority were widely acceptable to the larger public. In Kalehe, "traditional" elites opposed to the RCD,

[13] There is a long-term dispute between Mwami Kalinda Ndandu Gustave and his brother, who is supported first by the AFDL and then by the RCD (and CNDP). Mwami Kalinda Ndandu Gustave claims to be the "real Mwami" and calls his brother an instrument of the rebellion.

[14] Autochtonous is a highly politicised term for all those groups that claim to be „truly Congolese" as opposed to the allegedly Rwandan Tutsi/Banyamulenge.

[15] Banyarwanda is the term for all Kinyarwanda speaking peoples. They can be Hutu (such as the FDLR) or Tutsi (such as large parts of the CNDP). They are often simply referred to as Rwandans by other Congolese ethnic groups. This is an expression of a century old struggle around the question who is Congolese and therefore entitled to citizenship and tribal lands. The Banyamulenge are Congolese Tutsi who have settled in South Kivu before colonisation. They are still considered by many other groups in South Kivu as "Rwandans". People often lump the RCD, CNDP together with "Rwandans" or Banyamulenge more generally.

such as the *Mwami* and the *Chef de groupement*, who had to flee under RCD occupation were called back and reintegrated into the administrative system. Remaining RCD elements started working together with local "traditional" leaders in what could be seen as a successful accommodation of elites (and thus a widely acceptable pattern of authority). The short phase of Nkunda's occupation of Kalehe (in 2004) can be seen as an effort by those RCD elements which rejected the power sharing formula for South Kivu to regain Kalehe by force even against those RCD elements already in place complying with the formula (such as the administrator, who had to flee from Nkunda's troops). During this time most people of Kalehe lived as IDPs and "traditional" leaders had to flee once again. After the withdrawal of Nkunda, the old elite returned to Kalehe. With the integration of the CNDP into the *Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo* (FARDC; the integrated national army), new tensions emerged between incoming CNDP elements (from North Kivu) and the local population in Kalehe.

In **Burundi**, it is interesting to see how easily the CNDD-FDD established and consolidated political power as well as a monopoly over security (through the police, the CNDD-FDDs youth wing *Imbonerakure*, acting as a new policing agent, and the intelligence service) in both arenas of Burundi. One aspect is the end of ethnic exclusion which means that at least when it comes to the ethnic question, the new power arrangements are acceptable to all. However, disappointment with the CNDD-FDD is rampant in both arenas. The highly centralised nature of the territorially small Burundian state reduces local variation. The centralised nature has the effect that the local population accepts political hierarchies implemented in a top-down manner, as this has been ingrained in their political culture. The fact that the FNL continued its armed fight even after the inclusion of the CNDD-FDD into the transitional government seems to be of rather little relevance to the local population in **Bubanza** when asked whether they consider their province as peaceful. In fact, the FNL has already been seriously weakened long before they finally adhered to the peace agreements. They completely lost their *raison d'être*, which was the abolishment of Tutsi hegemony and a mono-ethnic army. One could argue that the FNL did not accept the new patterns of local rule; however they were not part of the peace deal anyway and seemed to have somewhat lost track of what their claims actually were until they joined into the power sharing with almost no leverage. Today, the FNL is persecuted (or at least: feels persecuted) by the CNDD-FDD government throughout the country, but this is especially perceived in the west (including Bubanza). This leads to renewed tensions as many people feel that democratic principles are not respected. Furthermore, parts of the FNL went into Congolese exile again to rearm. It is

however widely acknowledged that they do not have the force (yet) to seriously threaten the government.

In **Gitega** the FNL was a rather marginal phenomenon which means that the 2004 inclusion of the CNDD-FDD already resulted in the resumption of peace. Local power-sharing was generally accepted, in line with the acceptance of power sharing on the national level (conflicts and cooperation on the national level was more or less mirrored in Gitega).

Preliminary Conclusions: In summary, we can argue that the second part of the hypothesis - local peace is taking hold only if acceptable new patterns of authority emerge - is largely corroborated by our findings – with a major qualification: One critical factor is the importance / size of groups that have not been accommodated. Some groups may not have the capacity to sustain conflict and would not be considered a threat to peace in the short run. However, their unanswered grievances during the conflict settlement phase and the new local balance of power may exacerbate tensions in the long run. A different matter difficult to gauge are the effects of a changed (ethnic) composition of a local population after an escalation of violence which led to the forceful relocation of entire segments of the population (e.g. Nakuru, Kenya). Power relations may have changed primarily for this reason and not as a consequence of a peace agreement.

Hypothesis 5: The ability of new local authorities to transfer local concerns upward to the national agenda and, in turn the inclusion of local arenas into the distribution of public goods and (political and economic) resources is crucial for maintaining peace.

In **Gbarnga (Liberia)**, the link between the national and local arena seems to be strong. Instances of violence in Gbarnga were immediately reacted to from the national level. This is probably partially because of the central location of Gbarnga and because of the relative importance of local patrons. For example Representative Mulbah was able to call the Minister of Defence on a Sunday morning, telling him to do something about his soldiers beating up residents in Gbarnga. In addition, public goods seem to be available in Gbarnga – notably because it is accessible by a fairly good road. Gbarnga even received some street lights at the occasion of the 2010 Independence Day celebrations, as well as several buildings like Administration Building, Stadium, Superintendents Compound, Presidential Palace (all perceived as public goods). Bong County, where Gbarnga is located, also gets lots of revenues from the Social Development Fund. While we do not know the degree of influence local

leaders have at the national level, our respondents for the most part believe that this influence counts and is instrumental in securing funding and public good for Gbarnga.

In **Ganta**, (Liberia) the link between central and local arena is less strong. The government makes some attempts to solve land conflicts, but with limited success so far. The former mayor entertained a bad relation to national government figures, and elected Representative (Nohn Kidau[16]) is hardly seen locally, and therefore is not believed to be knowledgeable of what is happening. New development projects and public goods have seen the light of day, but do not originate in government investments, but are rather the work of private investors. The importance of public goods for peace and legitimacy cannot be denied. Namely, in the 2011 elections both in Gbarnga and Ganta businessmen were elected as Representatives, who focus group participants had named as influential *because* they provided public goods: Prince Moye (65% in Gbarnga Electoral District 2 Bong) who installed some (water) wells for different communities and Jeremiah Koung (35% in Ganta Electoral District 1 Nimba) who installed some street lights on Ganta's main street a few months before the election.

Most respondents in **Eldoret** and **Nakuru** (Kenya) felt like they already had significant influence at the national level prior (and after) the agreement, because of their central location (Nakuru) and importance for food production in Kenya (Eldoret). Both fall under the patronage networks of former Presidents Moi and Kenyatta and have benefited from this in the past. And one may argue that the mere presence of William Ruto, but also his rhetoric of Kalenjin victimhood, somewhat reinforced this trend for **Eldoret** as a focus city of national concern. There is therefore more emphasis of transferring local concerns to the national level from Eldoret than elsewhere. The major difference of both Kenyan local arenas to all others is that the provision of some basic public goods is already good in comparison to the other countries (e.g. running water, electricity). **Nakuru** seems to have benefited economically and demographically since the post-election violence, not because of altered distributional policies related to the power-sharing accord, but rather because many IDPs have stayed there and invested.

In Burundi only one region (Bururi) as well as the capital Bujumbura were believed to have enjoyed privileged access to public goods over the past decades. Today President Nkurunziza is believed to privilege his natal province of Ngozi, where he has built a huge sports stadium.

[16] Who then lost her seat in the November 2011 elections, see below

Respondents in **Gitega** as well as **Bubanza** have not seen any tangible improvement of basic services. Less substantial, people in Bubanza, long time seen as a safe haven for "terrorists", have the impression that things have slowly changed, that they no longer feel as discriminated against as before. Arguably Burundi's (top-down) political culture does not favour responsiveness of elected or other elites with local roots, local grievances are pretty similar across the country - and are rather ignored by the central government. Grievances mobilized in the past did not refer to regional or local specificities but to grievances relevant to the respective ethnic group, which are those spread all over the country, and to a much lesser degree to the South-against-the-rest cleavage. Therefore the channelling of specific local grievances does not seem to be of particular importance to explain the absence or presence of armed conflict in Burundi.

In **DRC** there was rather strong advocacy of a solution to major local grievances by the RCD at negotiations in Sun City - the issue of nationality and the return of refugees from Rwanda. However, both issues have not satisfactorily been solved. In **North Kivu/Sake** the tensions between the local RCD leadership and the RCD representatives in Kinshasa were mentioned as one explanation for the war waged by Nkunda, as well as the birth of the CNDP (associated with the Banyarwanda ethnic group). In other words, the disappointment with national representatives seemingly failing to address local grievances was at least a conflict aggravating element that ultimately led to a new rebellion. The same is true for **South Kivu** in so far as Nkunda's motivation to invade South Kivu in support of fellow former RCD officer Mutebutsi was part of the same reasoning as his subsequent rebellion in North Kivu. The feeling among the RCD in South Kivu that Banyamulenge interests were not protected persisted – at least this was the justification of the RCD at the time.

Preliminary Conclusions: Overall, one may say that the provision of public goods originating from the national level are reported as being of high importance by most respondents. However, firstly, where those are not (or scarcely) provided they were also not (or at least scantly) provided in the past (Liberia, Burundi, DRC). This is the reverse in Kenya with a much better provision of public goods in both Eldoret and Nakuru. Therefore the distribution of public goods does not appear to have changed much over time. Secondly, the rather good provision of public goods in Nakuru and Eldoret did not prevent them from becoming hotspots during the post-election violence. The expectations of local people towards their representatives and designated advocates at the national level have remained quite unclear during our research, as have the strategies of those elites. It can be assumed that

an established “political culture” plays an important role here and inertia by the central government is deeply embedded in the cases of Burundi and DRC, less so in Liberia and least in Kenya. This would mean that problems with public service provision from the state apparatus may be more apparent in Kenya than in the other countries where such public services have never or barely existed.

In summary we have found little evidence to confirm this hypothesis and – what is more – its relevance for (negative) peace, despite the fact that local respondents expressed their needs in terms of public goods quite strongly. One is tempted to conclude that the hypothesis would have a much higher impact if our dependent variable would have been the more ambitious concept of “positive peace” rather than the very basic concept of negative peace. Furthermore, it seems that geography plays a critical role in the need and ability to represent local grievances at the national level and to provide solutions in exchange. Gbarnga is near to Monrovia, Nakuru and Eldoret are both centrally located (Nakuru being closer to Nairobi) while Sake and Kalehe evidently are very far from Kinshasa. And the tendency to view all grievances in Burundi as national grievances may help to explain why local grievances per se were not voiced.

Our very preliminary analysis suggests that the production of political order and the re-ordering of socio-political relations in war-torn countries by means of power-sharing has been fairly successful when measured against the very modest concept of “negative peace”. Indeed, our fieldwork indicates that at least 6 out of our 8 selected local arenas are at present at peace, though many interviewees strongly emphasized the fragility of the situation even in the absence of violence; hence the notion of negative peace. This finding corresponds with the widespread idea that all of the countries in this project are post-conflict countries, with the possible exception of the DRC where former local hotspots defy a simple binary categorization. These findings suggest a weaker degree of autonomy for local arenas, their actors, processes, institutions and interests, than we assumed at the outset of our project. Therefore they also seem to indicate a stronger link between the national and the local level than we had previously expected, though the relative weight of other variables (e.g. the large peacekeeping mission in Liberia, to give one example) still needs to be determined. The relatively minor degrees of variance in terms of peacefulness in the selected local arenas (exception: DRC), a cornerstone of our research design, will pose a challenge to our aim to explain the causal mechanisms facilitating processes of translation and adaptation of power-sharing arrangements between the local and the national level.