

SUBMISSION FROM PROTECTION APPROACHES

World Bank Group Strategy for Fragility, Conflict and Violence Global Consultation

This submission addresses the questions set out in phase one of the World Bank Group consultation and online questionnaire relating to the Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence terms of reference.

About Protection Approaches

Protection Approaches works to assist the UK in better predicting and preventing identity-based violence, particularly mass atrocity crimes (genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity and war crimes). It runs the only research and policy programme in the UK on atrocity prevention and coordinates the UK Civil Society Mass Atrocity Prevention Working Group. Protection Approaches is a registered charity in England and Wales, charity number 1171433 For more information please see www.protectionapproaches.org.

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Definitions

Identity-based violence: Protection Approaches defines identity-based violence (IBV) as any violence motivated by perpetrator conceptualisations of victim identity.¹ Identity-based violence encompasses hate crime, violent extremism, ethnic cleansing, and genocide or other mass atrocities; whether the violence is committed against one person or thousands, each victim suffers specifically because they are perceived by the perpetrator(s) as belonging to an identity group deserving of violence.²

What is your view of the World Bank Group's proposed approach to its future work in fragility, conflict and violence contexts, outlined in the Concept Note?

The strategic objectives of the concept note are to be welcomed: for example, on page 4, "The nature of the support to FCV-affected countries therefore needs to be tailored, innovative, and focused on the drivers of fragility and factors of resilience". Protection Approaches endorses the flexibility of this approach, but recommends that any such tailored, innovative and focussed support – or indeed the World Bank's FCV Strategy more broadly – should include a frame by which the risks and prevention of identity-based violence and mass atrocities are assessed.

¹This is adapted from Frank Robert Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn's typology of genocide using the frame of reference of the perpetrator, as discussed in *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Case Studies*, Yale University Press, 1990, p31

² Dr. Ferguson developed the term identity-based violence in 2012. For further discussion of its advantages as a non-legal and politically neutral term, see her forthcoming monograph, *Architectures of Violence: The Command Structures of Modern Mass Atrocities*, Hurst/OUP.

Mass atrocities are often predictable. The violence that has been committed since 2011 in Central African Republic, Myanmar, Burundi, Sudan, South Sudan, Yemen, Syria, Gaza and elsewhere was largely predictable - and indeed it was predicted.³ Viewing issues through how best to prevent atrocities and identity-based violence ensures that a central focus in decision making is how best to protect populations from these crimes. Applying such a focus across the World Bank Group's FCV Strategy would assist the development and delivery of the strategy with respect to a more consistent, joined up approach to protecting lives.

Escalating identity-based violence in parts of the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, including violent extremism, indicates that development and governance agendas have not matched the frequent rhetorical commitments that states have made in recent years, due to a failure to integrate effective atrocity prevention frameworks into decision making⁴. The resurgence of identity-based violence only highlights the limitations of current policy approaches to conflict prevention and development. The FCV strategy proposed by the World Bank Group therefore provides a welcome opportunity to implement a more holistic development agenda that takes seriously the emerging challenges of the world today: an agenda that has at its core the prevention of mass atrocities and identity-based violence.

Introducing IBV as a frame of analysis would not only assist the World Bank Group's approach to these forms of violence, but also to the interconnected challenges of climate change, resource scarcity, rising inequality, demographic pressures, new technologies, and violent extremism – all of which are likely to act as threat multipliers substantially increasing the risk of identity-based violence in the years 2020-25 and beyond.

It should be noted here that some aspects of IBV are already indirectly included in the Strategy, for example the reference on page 3 that “interpersonal and gang violence annually kill many more people than violent conflicts, and thwart development”. This interpersonal and gang violence is usefully captured by the notion of identity-based violence.

The three categories of Fragility, Conflict and Violence identified on pages 3-4 are also situations in which the notion of identity-based violence plays a key role. IBV and FCV share common causes – and *each of the components* of FCV can themselves fuel further IBV. Protection Approaches' view is that the frame of prevention of identity-based violence therefore has a crucial role to play in both the understanding of the causes of FCV and the solutions that the World Bank Group could adopt.

What is your view of the Strategic Areas of Engagement identified on page 7 of the Concept Note? Are there additional areas you think should be considered?

The Strategic Areas of Engagement on page 7 identify that the prevention of risks is superior to responding to emergencies. This is to be welcomed.

As an organisation founded on the principles of prevention, Protection Approaches is encouraged by the growing consensus that current approaches to the prevention of violence and the protection of civilians are simply not working. The United Nations-World Bank Pathways for Peace report broke new ground in calling for a “comprehensive shift toward preventing violence and sustaining peace” and presenting national and international actors “an agenda for action to ensure that attention, efforts, and resources are focused on prevention”.⁵ However, securing such a shift has nonetheless remained

³ Butcher C.R., Goldsmith B.E., and Semenovich D., 'Understanding and forecasting political instability and genocide for early warning', Atrocity Forecasting Project, University of Sydney, 2012

⁴ The political commitment of a 'responsibility to protect' all populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity was unanimously adopted by UN member states at the 2005 World Summit. It has since been reiterated in annual General Assembly dialogues on the subject since 2009 and through a number of thematic and country-specific resolutions.

⁵ United Nations/World Bank. 2018. 'Pathways for Peace : Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict'. Washington, DC: World Bank.

a challenge. We believe that prevention is a matter of both national security and national interest for all states, and therefore requires state-level as well as multilateral commitment.

We recommend that from grassroots communities to state-level process, key actors need to better integrate prevention into cross-cutting strategies that match local, national, and international responsibilities. All actors can think more strategically and more politically about how warning signs and risk factors are approached, and better adapt their prevention responses to specific situations. Effective prevention requires identifying precise measures and involving a diverse set of ‘prevention actors’, often outside of formal states.

While the fourth Area of Strategic Engagement correctly notes that the most vulnerable should be protected from the impact of FCV challenges, as well as noting that these challenges are “not constrained by national borders”, we are concerned that unless identity-based violence is explicitly included then many at risk groups and populations could be ignored.

The most grievous occurrences of mass violence in the last century have been based on identity: from the Holocaust to the genocide in Rwanda. Since 2011, identity-based mass violence has been both a cause and a consequence of conflicts in Central African Republic, in Myanmar, Burundi, Sudan, South Sudan, Yemen, Syria and Gaza. In situations where acute FCV contexts such as South Sudan, CAR, and Kenya have been viewed from an imperative to prevent atrocities, massacres and large-scale loss of life have been averted.⁶

What is your view of the 4Ps outlined on page 10-12 of the Concept Note to enhance the effectiveness of the World Bank Group’s operations in fragile and conflict-affected settings? Are there any additional areas you think should be considered?

Personnel: In order to enhance the effectiveness of WBG’s operations in these settings, the importance of local knowledge cannot be overemphasised. Well-meaning programmes and interventions can have perverse impacts if implemented without the requisite knowledge of the specific contexts in which they are carried out. *Atrocity prevention-specific training for WBG staff would therefore be a useful way to avoid these unintended impacts.*⁷

Partnerships: Protection Approaches welcomes the promotion of partnerships as the “new normal” in FCV settings. The advantage gained from bringing in knowledge from the whole of the civil society space is significant, allowing specialist organisations to make tailored recommendations so as to maximise the effectiveness of project delivery. All activities carried out by the World Bank Group should have at their core a principle of “do no harm”: this principle can be best served by ensuring at all times that the actions of the World Bank Group and their partners are considered within a frame of preventing identity-based violence and mass atrocities and not inadvertently increasing their likelihood.

Programming. It is correctly identified that “local political sensitivities...and the prevalence of inter- and intra-group tensions all require the careful selection of programs that can most effectively address FCV”. However, these sensitivities and tensions can equally be negatively affected by programs that do not take into account the risk of *inadvertently* stoking identity-based violence.

⁶ Charles Brown, 2016 “The Obama Administration and the Struggle to Prevent Atrocities in the Central African Republic: December 2012–September 2014” <https://www.usmm.org/m/pdfs/20161116-Charlie-Brown-CAR-Report.pdf>

⁷ Charles Brown, “AN ASSESSMENT OF USG ATROCITY PREVENTION TRAINING PROGRAMS”, <https://www.usmm.org/m/pdfs/03282016-USG-Atrocity-Prevention-Training-Assessment.pdf>. See also USAID, “FIELD GUIDE: HELPING PREVENT MASS ATROCITIES”, 2015, https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/Field_Guide_Mass_Atrocities.pdf

Do you have any views or recommendations as to how the World Bank Group can best position itself as an integral part of the international community's efforts to promote peace, stability, and prosperity in fragile and conflict-affected settings?

The WBG can best position itself as an integral part of the international community's efforts to promote peace, stability, and prosperity in FCV settings by adopting a frame of atrocity prevention into its work. This would involve:

- including atrocity-specific analysis into existing policies and decision-making processes
- establishing an atrocity prevention "seat" at the policy making table.⁸

Atrocity prevention is both a moral responsibility and a core component of national and international interests. All UN member states have committed to uphold the Responsibility to Protect populations from atrocity crimes. A number of states across Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe, as well as the United States, have also now adopted a dedicated public policy towards atrocity prevention. *The UN Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes could also provide a useful blueprint for the WBG to draw on when refining the analytical and programmatic dimensions of its FCV strategy.*⁹

Episodes of mass atrocity carry "[serious economic consequences that go beyond those of 'regular' civil wars](#)" due to the intense targeting of human as well as physical capital. They force people from their homes, increase the risk of violent extremism and terrorism, and perpetuate global instability.

A holistic understanding of atrocity crimes is intrinsic to successfully tackling conflict and instability overseas, and to strengthening the rules-based international system at a time when WBG correctly identifies that FCV is putting that system under considerable stress.

Existing conflict prevention strategies are insufficient to guard against the risk of identity-based mass violence and atrocities. Conflict prevention may actually hinder or undermine atrocity prevention efforts. As well as shifting the focus away from protection against atrocity crimes, the process of negotiating an end to armed conflict often incentivises groups to attack 'soft' civilian targets in order to strengthen their negotiating position. So while it is frequently assumed that traditional conflict prevention approaches adequately encompass atrocity prevention, the diverging and occasionally competing aims of these two agendas instead requires the insertion of an atrocity prevention 'lens' into existing policy frameworks. Without such an adjustment, the identification of specific atrocity risks, dynamics, and response measures will not be fully achievable or effective.¹⁰

Longer term atrocity prevention requires a more holistic strategy that seeks to strengthen social cohesion and build trust between state and citizen. Supporting inclusive measures and guarding against the exclusion or marginalisation of identity groups in political, public, social and economic life inhibits many of the processes that can lead to identity-based violence.

⁸ Preventing mass violence and atrocities, Wilton Park, Monday 29 – Wednesday 31 October 2018, WP1645 <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/event/wp1645/>

⁹ UN, 2014. Genocide: A Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes. https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/publications-and-resources/Genocide_Framework%20of%20Analysis-English.pdf

¹⁰ Bellamy Alex, 2011 Mass Atrocities and Armed Conflict: Links, Distinctions, and Implications for the Responsibility to Prevent <https://www.stanleyfoundation.org/publications/pab/BellamyPAB22011.pdf>; Ruben Reike. "Conflict Prevention and R2P." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Responsibility to Protect*. : Oxford University Press,, 2016-06-30. <https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198753841.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780198753841-e-31>.

An objective of this questionnaire is to explore potential new areas of World Bank Group support in fragile and conflict-affected settings. Do you have examples of innovative approaches, policies and programs, whether in the public or private sector?

One such innovative approach is presented by Protection Approaches in our recent paper “[Preventing while Protecting](#)”. While the paper focusses primarily on the UK’s protection of civilians strategy, which is currently under review, it contains an innovative approach that the World Bank Group would do well to consider: the approach considers how the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict and the Responsibility to Protect, both specifically articulated multilateral concepts, rooted in the frameworks and practices of the United Nations, can be more effectively harmonised in a way that best protects human life.

It is widely recognised that situations of armed conflict are often a precursor to or enabling condition for the occurrence of mass atrocity crimes. As such, atrocity prevention is often seen to follow on from protection of civilians concerns. However, such analysis fails to recognise that cause and effect are frequently reversed and so-called ‘peacetime’ atrocities can themselves lead to the outbreak of armed conflict. The eight year crisis in Syria, for example, was propelled by the deliberate perpetration of atrocities by the State, leading to protracted armed conflict and an ongoing cycle of intentional violence against civilian groups by different perpetrators. Of today’s major and emerging crises, the vast majority – Syria, Yemen, Libya, Myanmar, Sudan, DRC, Cameroon, Venezuela, Xinjiang – are all driven, at least in part, by the deliberate violent targeting of civilian groups by political elites.

These threats to civilians are worsening, and becoming more complex. It was recognised by the UN in its recent Pathways for Peace [report](#) that a “comprehensive shift towards preventing violence and sustaining peace” is required. Protection Approaches believes that introducing the concept of Protecting while Preventing into national and international frameworks of civilian protection would help narrow existing gaps between rhetorical commitments and genuine implementation, and raise ambitions from what is too frequently considered a base level of not targeting civilians.

How can the World Bank Group be more effective in helping leverage the private sector to address challenges in fragile and conflict-affected settings?

While the successful promotion of international trade is evidently a matter of global as well as national interest, so too is the pursuit of global stability, security and development. The World Bank Group is uniquely placed to view and assess global trade trends and private sector interests through a security and development or human rights “lens”. The absence of such cross-cutting approaches both at the national level, and intersectorally between the human rights and development spheres and the private sector, has resulted in some of the greatest inconsistencies - and direct challenges – to stated national and international commitments to human rights.

Any analysis mechanism or indicator framework tasked with viewing the World Bank Group’s Strategy and implementation through a prevention lens would have to respond to warning signs and initiate processes of sharing information, scrutinising government policy, and communicating with other prevention stakeholders, including private business, national departments for trade, and other related stakeholders.

Any such approach would not seek to limit the freedom of manoeuvre of business, trade, or other private sector activities. Rather, it would work to highlight potential inconsistencies in policy, draw attention to points of leverage, and ensure appropriate consideration is given to any potential causes for concern.

The World Bank Group could improve the effectiveness of communicating to the private sector that mass atrocities are in themselves detrimental to their financial interests. In countries and areas where

genocides take place, there is a sharp decline in economic activity, and while growth may subsequently resume on its old path, it does not catch up to its pre-genocide trend level.¹¹ This is differently constituted to the effect that conflict has on economic activity: genocides and strategies of widespread identity-based violence are often typified by a greater effect on human capital and a lesser effect on physical capital.¹²

One aim should be to increase engagement between private sector actors and civil society groups. Important network benefits can be reaped if the World Bank Group can connect business associations, who hold greater sway with governments than individual actors, with civil society groups and NGOs.

The private sector should be kept informed of the role that it can inadvertently play in providing perpetrators with the means to carry out mass atrocities: telecommunications companies and social media networks could help perpetrators to identify and locate certain groups, and to coordinate attacks with other perpetrators. These roles are particularly salient in situations of Fragility, Conflict, and Violence.

The role of smaller businesses should not, however, be understated. With regards to the prevention of identity-based mass violence, local businesses can play an important role in strengthening resilience and a sense of community in society.

¹¹ Dimitrios Soudis, Robert Inklaar, and Robbert Maseland, *The Macroeconomic Toll of Genocide and the Sources of Economic Development*

¹² Serneels, P., and M. Verpoorten. 2013. "The Impact of Armed Conflict on Economic Performance: Evidence from Rwanda." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Published online: <http://jcr.sagepub.com/content/early/2013/12/13/0022002713515409.abstract>.