

# Preventing Violent Conflict in Africa Perceptions and Horizontal Inequalities

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# Perceptions

- People act because of the way they see a situation
- Need not be the same as objective realities
- Questions addressed in the book with perceptions surveys in each country:
  - Are perceptions of inequalities the same as actual ones.
  - Analysed for five countries by Arnim Langer and Satoru Mikami

# Why its important

- HIs are beginning to be acknowledged as an important cause of conflict.
- And getting into policy dialogue
- And some actual policies:
  - E.g. affirmative action programmes
  - Regional programmes
  - Design of political systems.
- But may not be effective in preventing conflict unless also perceptions change too

# Survey sites and numbers

Country	Survey site	Nos interviewed
Ghana	Accra	406
Nigeria	Lagos	412
Kenya	Nairobi; Nakuru; Mombasa	907
Uganda	Kampala; Gulu; Hoima; Mbarara	500
Zimbabwe	Harare; Bulawayo	402

And made use of Afrobarometer Round 4 surveys

# Reasons why perceptions may differ from actuality

- Personal situation drives perceptions, not whole country or group
- Perceptions manipulated by media/elites
- Absence of objective data
- Limited access to information
- Misleading comparisons (with immediate neighbours not whole society).
- Cross-dimensional 'contamination'.

# Estimated actual country economic HIs

	Asset index: ratio of highest to lowest	Variance squared
Nigeria	1.4	0.052
Ghana	2.0	0.186
Zimbabwe	1.7	0.08
Kenya	1.7	0.079
Uganda	1.9	0.093
Source: derived from Afrobarometers		

NB many measurement problems. These are not adjusted by size of group

# Perception measures

- ‘Think about the condition of your ethnic group. Are their economic conditions worse, the same as, or better than other groups in the country?’
- Scale of 1-5 from ‘much better’ to ‘much worse’.

# Perceptions of socioeconomic HIs: Similar results from JICA surveys and Afrobarometer

Country	Perception of being most deprived	Actual position of group	Perception of being most privileged	Actual position of group
Nigeria	Igbo	2/4	Yoruba	1/4
Ghana	Ewe	4/5	Mole/Dagbani	2/5
Zimbabwe	Ndebele	1/3	Shona	2/3
Kenya	Somali	6/8	Kikuyu and Kisii	5/8 (Kik);1/8 (Kis)
Uganda	Acholi	5/5	Banyankole	4/5

1 = highest socio-economic position

Only Acholi (neg.) and Yoruba (pos) quite right;

Wrong: Ndebele, Igbo (neg); and Kikuyu, Banyankole (pos).



# Also questions on political HIs

- Think about the position of your ethnic group: do they have less, the same, or more influence than other groups in the country.
- Also on scale of 1-5

# Perceptions of political HIs

Country	Perception of being politically deprived	Perception of being politically empowered	'True' situation
Nigeria	Igbo	Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani	Broadly correct
Ghana	Ewe and Ga/Dangbe	Akan	Broadly correct
Zimbabwe	Ndebele	Shona	Correct
Kenya	Somali	Kikuyu	Correct
Uganda	Banyankole	Acholi	Broadly correct

# Can we explain socio-economic 'misperceptions'?

1. Regression analysis suggested a person's own basic needs position influenced their perceptions of group position.
2. Clear correspondence between perception of socio-economic position and actual and perceived political position

# Correspondence between economic and political perceptions

Country	Perceived econ. deprivation	Political deprivation	Perceived econ privilege	Political empowerment
Nigeria	Igbo	Yes	Yoruba	Yes
Ghana	Ewe	Yes	Mole/Dagbani	No
Zimbabwe	Ndebele	Yes	Shona	Yes
Kenya	Somali	Yes	Kikuyu and Kisii	Yes
Uganda	Acholi	Yes	Banyankole	Yes

# Implications of findings

If correct, political HIs are especially important since seem to determine perceptions of socio-economic ones.

Does not entirely accord with evidence on HIs and conflict.

# Evidence on HIs and conflict shows

- 1. socio-economic HIs associated with raised risk of conflict
- 2. political HIs associated with raised risk of conflict.
- 3. combination of economic and political raise risk of conflict most.
- *Maybe perceived inequalities are not conflict-producing unless they reflect realities?*

# Policy implications

## 1. political

- Critical need to eliminate political HIs in multiethnic societies.
- Book explores policy options:
  - Systems of shared power at centre
  - Dispersed power (federalism; decentralisation)
  - Most ‘good governance’ rules; and democratisation guidelines ignore this requirement.

# Policy implications

## 2. socio-economic

- Does this mean we can ignore socio-economic?
- No because evidence suggests they do contribute to conflict.
- And such inequalities are unjust and inefficient.
- Book explores a range of policy options.
- Better information on actual situation also needed.