

Heading: Policing Insecurity

Byline: The Role of State Capacity Building and Police Reforms in Peacebuilding

Anupam Varma

Textbox 1 (scrolling along the screen): This case study is based in the petid nord region of North Kivu, in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

Image 1 (behind T1):



(Image 1 goes up as we scroll down)

Textbox 2 (small, scrolls along the screen): There's a common belief that a strong state security apparatus automatically leads to peace. However, coercive police actions in Congo suggests otherwise.

Textbox 3 (Bigger box): The Core Argument

Enhancing the coercive capacity of the Police in environments of intractable conflict can entrench a wartime political order that makes peace more elusive. In Congo, Police deployed their increased capacity towards destabilizing ends which reinforced the '*everyday war*'.

(italicized words in different text).

Textbox 4 (Small, scrolls along the screen): Let's look at the situation in Petid Nord

Textbox 5 (Bigger): Petid Nord was the epicenter of the successive RCD, CNDP and M23 conflicts. Unlike other regions that saw major conflict, North Kivu was also the focus of postwar recovery efforts, which led to heavy securitization and thus, a strong police force. Police presence is more visible here than elsewhere in the country.

Textbox 6 (Smaller box): The persistent conflicts and heavy securitization lead to ‘everyday war’, where the inhabitants have frequent adversarial encounters with the state.

Textbox 7 (different colour, script etc): “The police harass the population by coming to the quartier to pick up someone to show his identity card or who they can accuse of an offense.... . People are traumatized, tortured, so we don’t want to see uniforms anymore. When we see uniforms, all we see is prison, torture, and fines”- Henry (civilian).

Textbox 8(alongside textbox 7): Civilians frequently report harassment, intimidation, demands for money, arbitrary arrests and even sexual assault by the Police.

Textbox 9 (similar to textbox 7, under 7): ““As soon as he sees a civilian, he will look for how he can procure money from him. If the civilian doesn’t have money, the police will invent an infraction and demand a fine by law.” -Filepe (civilian)

Textbox 10 (under textbox 8): These encounters entrenches a political order where trust in the state remains low.

Textbox 11 (smaller, scrolls along the screen): Why is the police force coercive?

Textbox 12 (Bigger, back to centre of screen): Police Perspectives

Joining the police force is seen as a means of self-protection and access to privileges. Police officers often justify their actions through the *logic of appropriate behaviour*, by considering behaviours like levying informal fines on civilians for various transgressions as administration of justice and inseparable from “maintaining social order”.

Further, through the *logic of victimization*, police officers view themselves as the primary victims of war, beleaguered by poverty and terrible living conditions. This allows them to justify the practice of extortion and intimidation.

Textbox 13 (similar to Textbox 7): “Yes, we use the population to solicit livelihoods. We receive money only at the end of the month and only after everyone [above us] has been paid already. After that, they call me to give the little that remains. So how am I going to say that I do not use the population?” - Paulin (police officer)

Textbox 14 (Similar to Textbox 13, next to it): “While I am worrying about my family who spend each night [hungry], how am I able to defend the population? That [changes] me. If, sometimes, we behave as we shouldn’t in the community, [it is because] we are hungry and unmotivated”. - Emmanuel (police officer).

Textbox 15 (smaller, scrolls along the screen): The situation is exacerbated by rapportage, the systems through which formal and informal payments are passed up through the internal

hierarchies of the police force. This is incentivized by the superiors.

Textbox 16 (Same script, colour as 13, but wider): “The more civilians delay paying, the more they will be tortured in order to force them to release [money] as quickly as possible.” - Antony (Police officer)

Textbox 17 (Smaller, scrolls along the screen): How does capacity building destabilize conflict ridden zones further?

Textbox 18: Material capacity like vehicles and uniforms enables wider coverage for predatory practices and bolsters the symbolic authority.

Textbox 19: Informational capacity (legal training) enhances the discursive authority of the police and creates opportunities for weaponization of legal knowledge for profits.

Textbox 20: Coordination-Based Capacity i.e. formalized communication facilitates *rappoportage*. (Texbox 18-20, similar, lined up one after the other).

Textbox 21 (smaller, scrolls along the screen): The author discusses some alternative models for capacity building, like fostering community-centred accountability, improving the salaries of workers and focusing on building a robust health, welfare and public service infrastructure to address root causes.

Textbox 22 (Bigger): A critique: What does a Policy Maker learn from reading this paper?

While the paper offers rich ethnographic insights into eastern DR Congo, its highly localized findings constrain broader applicability, leaving policymakers uncertain about how to effectively proceed with police capacity-building and state formation.

Textbox 23: Final Word

Bolstering police capacity without addressing the broader social and material landscapes of violence can lead to further destabilization.

