

30 YEARS FOR A MORE PEACEFUL WORLD

bicc

bicc
Bonn International Centre for Conflict Studies

a n n u a l r e p o r t 2 0 2 4

We thank our Supervisory Board,
our International Board, our partners
and funders for their trust in our
work and their joint commitment to

a more peaceful world.

CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR page 4

GLOBAL REACH page 6

TOPICS & PROJECTS

BUILDING PEACE & SOCIAL COHESION page 8

AGENTS & PATTERNS OF SECURITY & WAR page 22

MILITARISATION & ARMS CONTROL page 40

MIGRATION & FORCED DISPLACEMENT page 50

VIOLENT ENVIRONMENTS & INFRASTRUCTURES page 66

THE MISSING PEACE

30 YEARS FOR A MORE PEACEFUL WORLD page 74

OUTREACH

PUBLICATIONS page 80

MEDIA & TRANSFER page 90

PEOPLE AT bicc

OUR TEAM page 94

BOARDS page 96

FINANCES page 97

MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Conrad Schetter



To advocate “for a more peaceful world” has never felt as urgent—and at the same time as fragile—as it does today. The devastating wars in Ukraine, Sudan, Gaza and the Sahel, global power shifts and growing social injustice in many societies show how vulnerable peace and democracy have become.

In its 30 years of existence, bicc has responded to such unsettling developments, evolving from an institute focused primarily on conversion and arms control in its early years to an international centre for Conflict Studies that applies a multi- and transdisciplinary approach. Today, bicc is dedicated to research and policy advice on the conditions, dynamics and consequences of violent conflicts, militarisation, peace-building, forced migration and environmental conflicts in their broader political and societal context.

In this setting, one of bicc’s defining characteristics has become all the

more important: its consistent presence in conflict-affected regions and its ability to conduct research under difficult conditions—a feature that sets bicc apart from other institutes in Germany. To name only a few examples: our colleagues conducted research in Afghanistan, Iraq, Mali, Ukraine, Nigeria and South Sudan. Their work is closely attuned to how violent conflict affects people’s everyday lives and how non-state armed groups gain influence. At the same time, we cooperate with local partners to understand how communities resist brute violence and develop their own ideas of peace and security. In the Sahel, for instance, bicc colleagues and local researchers are closely engaged in research and multi-scalar policy advice on international, national, regional and local levels > PAGE 30.

bicc examines which political, economic and social dynamics drive violence, how arms flows and policies shape conflicts, and what is

To advocate “for a more peaceful world” has never felt as urgent—and at the same time as fragile—as it does today.

required to make the world a more peaceful place. This includes creating a platform for dialogue and representation of those most affected by violence and displacement. The Refugee Advisory Board Germany—the first of its kind in Europe—has its secretariat at bicc and seeks to represent and strengthen refugee voices in (inter)national processes and policymaking > PAGE 38.

Over the past three decades, bicc itself has grown considerably and strengthened its advisory role. Our expertise informs political processes at the national and international levels; for example, bicc was represented in the German *Bundestag*’s Enquete Commission on Afghanistan, established to draw lessons from Germany’s involvement in Afghanistan for future policymaking > PAGE 60.

All of this follows a common objective: to understand the drivers of violent conflict and to identify ways

to prevent, reduce and transform brute violence. Our 30th anniversary provided a moment for reflection and renewed commitment. The world has not become more peaceful since bicc was founded. But our conviction remains that rigorous, independent research, critical dialogue and close cooperation with partners in politics, civil society and academia can make a difference—however small and incremental the impact may be.

bicc owes the opportunity to pursue this mission above all to the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, which has supported us institutionally for three decades, and to our project funders and partners at the federal and institutional level, in Germany and abroad. To all of them—and to our dedicated staff—I would like to express my sincere gratitude.

GLOBAL REACH

1 — number of projects in the country
Country
PROJECT p. 00 — page number
project name

- field research in countries
- research on countries
- research on countries: Arms Exports project

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by bicc.

1
United States of America
p. 43 SALW CONTROL AFRICA
p. 26 US-CHINA DETERRENCE

1
Switzerland
p. 43 SALW CONTROL AFRICA

1
The Netherlands
p. 52 GAPS

1
Belgium
p. 43 SALW CONTROL AFRICA

1
Sweden
GAPS p. 52

2
Poland
GAPS p. 52
RETURN & p. 54 BELONGING (RE-MIG)

1
Moldova
RETURN & p. 54 BELONGING (RE-MIG)

1
Greece
GAPS p. 52

3
Turkey
GAPS p. 52
LIQUID WARFARE p. 24
RETURN & p. 54 BELONGING (RE-MIG)

2
Syria
GAPS p. 52
RETURN & p. 54 BELONGING (RE-MIG)

1
Russia
LIQUID WARFARE p. 24

2
China
LIQUID WARFARE p. 24
US-CHINA p. 26 DETERRENCE

4
Afghanistan
AFGHANISTAN & DEVELOPMENT p. 20
CORRUPTION, PATRONAGE & CLIENTELISM IN AFGHANISTAN p. 36
ENGAGEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN p. 34
ENQUETE-COMMISSION p. 38

1
Pakistan
CHINA'S BELT & ROAD INITIATIVE p. 70

1
Bangladesh
MOBILITY, p. 64 TRANSLOCALITY & GENDERED VIOLENCE

1
Singapore
US-CHINA p. 26 DETERRENCE

1
Myanmar
MOBILITY, p. 64 TRANSLOCALITY & GENDERED VIOLENCE

1
United Arab Emirates
LIQUID WARFARE p. 24

1
Saudi Arabia
LIQUID WARFARE p. 24

1
Yemen
LIQUID WARFARE p. 24

2
Uganda
ARMS EXPORTS p. 48
SALW p. 43 CONTROL AFRICA

3
Kenya
ARMS EXPORTS p. 48
SALW p. 43 CONTROL AFRICA
VIOLENT p. 68 FUTURES?

1
South Africa
SALW p. 43 CONTROL AFRICA

1
Chad
ARMED GROUPS IN THE SAHEL p. 30

1
Cameroon
ARMED GROUPS IN THE SAHEL p. 30

1
Ghana
p. 43 SALW CONTROL AFRICA

1
Sierra Leone
p. 43 SALW CONTROL AFRICA

1
Togo
p. 43 SALW CONTROL AFRICA

1
Benin
p. 43 SALW CONTROL AFRICA

2
Nigeria
p. 30 ARMED GROUPS IN THE SAHEL p. 52 GAPS

1
Gambia
p. 43 SALW CONTROL AFRICA

1
Niger
p. 30 ARMED GROUPS IN THE SAHEL

1
Cabo Verde
p. 43 SALW CONTROL AFRICA

1
Mali
p. 10 HOW CAN THE HDP NEXUS SUCCEED?

1
Tunisia
p. 52 GAPS

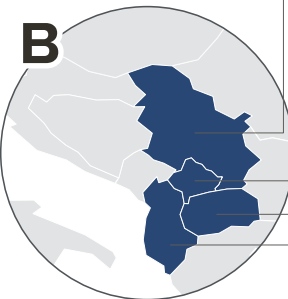
9
Germany
CHINA'S BELT & ROAD INITIATIVE p. 70
coreNRW p. 14
CORRUPTION, PATRONAGE & CLIENTELISM IN AFGHANISTAN p. 36
ENGAGEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN p. 34
ENQUETE-COMMISSION p. 38
GAPS p. 52
PREVENTING ISLAMISM p. 16
RETURN & p. 54 BELONGING (RE-MIG)

1
Serbia
RETURN & p. 54 BELONGING (RE-MIG)

1
Kosovo
RETURN & p. 54 BELONGING (RE-MIG)

1
North Macedonia
RETURN & p. 54 BELONGING (RE-MIG)

1
Albania
RETURN & p. 54 BELONGING (RE-MIG)



21 projects

72 countries bicc conducted research on

32 countries visited for fieldwork

BUILDING PEACE & SOCIAL COHESION

This topic brings together bicc's research on the potentials for peace within societies. Projects within this topic aim to understand actor experiences and perceptions to identify common or competing visions of peace and social cohesion.



HOW CAN THE HDP NEXUS SUCCEED?

NGOS BETWEEN HUMANITARIAN AID, DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE AND PEACEBUILDING



HIGHLIGHTS

- Publication of four *bicc* reports and one *bicc* policy brief in English, French, Spanish and Arabic
- Two international conferences:
 - ‘The Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus from a Decolonial Perspective: A Bottom-up Approach?’ with 130 international participants
 - ‘Ways Forward for the Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus: How to Conceptualise and Implement Peace Activities?’ with 170 international participants

PARTNERS

International Rescue Committee (IRC), Malteser International, Welthungerhilfe (WHH)

FUNDER

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

COUNTRIES

Iraq, Mali, South Sudan

DURATION

11/2021–03/2025

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The HDP (humanitarian–development–peace) nexus is a policy and practice to better link humanitarian assistance, development cooperation and peace-building activities of aid organisations in settings of war and protracted crises.

While borne of good intention, the different mandates of NGOs in these three fields do not always complement one another or, at worst, clash. Local concepts of conflict resolution and approaches to humanitarian assistance, development and peace in the global South can also differ from those of the global North. The question then arises: How does the HDP nexus contribute to building peace in local communities?

To address this question, this project investigates the experiences and perspectives of local communities and NGOs working in HDP projects in Iraq, South Sudan and Mali. So far, we find that in HDP projects, there is no regular monitoring of how HDP activities impact local conflict dynamics. We argue that HDP nexus projects need to consider local understandings of conflict and locally existing peace potentials to succeed. The HDP project adopts a qualitative approach based on several months of fieldwork per country

(two months in three localities each). bicc researchers interview individuals from local communities as well as staff of our HDP-implementing INGO partners and their local NGO counterparts. The bicc project team is also developing an HDP app to support implementing HDP projects in the future.

WEBSITE

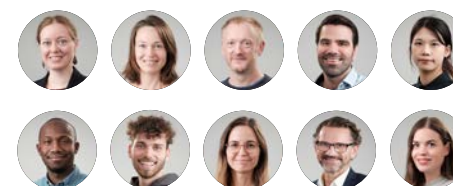


PUBLICATION



Müller-Koné, M., Meininghaus, E., Kemmerling, B., & Haidara, B. (2024). *How can the HDP Nexus Work from the Bottom Up?: A Discussion Paper on Implementation Challenges from a Decolonial Perspective. Insights from Iraq, Mali and South Sudan* (bicc report). bicc.

COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Esther Meininghaus and Birgit Kemmerling (project leaders), Rolf Alberth, Rodrigo Bolaños Suárez, Hien Giang, Boubacar Haidara, Jason Krämer, Marie Müller-Koné, Conrad Schetter, Carina Yildirim-Schlüsing



 **HDP nexus**

**Create your
own
HDP nexus
network
and projects!**

 **HDP nexus**

**Innovative (I)NGO
Management System offering:**

- ▶ a dynamic visualisation of how your HDP nexus activities are connected;
- ▶ tools for conflict analysis and conflict resolution;
- ▶ documentation of the contextual changes in your area.

 **HDP nexus**

- ▶ Share your data and information with your partners.
- ▶ Exchange your insights and analysis of local conflict dynamics.
- ▶ Integrate local concepts into conflict-sensitive planning and implementation.

Coordinate your projects

**bicc
bonus
track**





HIGHLIGHTS

- Growth of the network to 560 experts on extremism from NRW and across Germany
- Consolidation of coreNRW as a vital knowledge hub and important actor and source within the research and practitioner community
- 14 papers, including two annual research reports
- Six multidisciplinary events with over 230 participants

FUNDER
Ministry for Culture and Science of North Rhine-Westphalia (MKW)

COUNTRY
Germany

DURATION
08/2024–07/2028

ABOUT THE PROJECT

coreNRW is a multidisciplinary and multi-professional network. Here, researchers, prevention practitioners, and (security) officials analyse the current developments in various extremist movements.

Within the network, we discuss research findings, knowledge requirements and show effective prevention options. Due to its structure and multi-disciplinary approach, the work of coreNRW is unique in Germany.

We

- conduct research to better understand radicalisation dynamics and processes;
- build networks to promote targeted knowledge exchange;
- pool expertise to fill knowledge gaps;
- use our expertise to broaden perspectives and provide constructive impetus.

In this way, coreNRW makes an important contribution to the task of countering extremism and promoting peaceful coexistence in a pluralistic society. We strengthen the exchange of knowledge. As the coordination unit, we at bicc are the network's

internal and external information and service interface. We provide news in our newsletter, organise events, publish scientific publications, stimulate discussion and support network members and interested parties with all kinds of enquiries.

The published research work of the network is part of the core content of coreNRW. The publication series includes an annual research report and short expert reports.

WEBSITE



ALL PUBLICATIONS OF THE PROJECT



COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Maurice Döring (project leader), Lena Guesnet, Marc von Boemcken

PREVENTING ISLAMISM

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD TO THE INTERMINISTERIAL WORKING GROUP



HIGHLIGHTS

- Commenting on NRW policy decisions in the 'security package' following the Solingen attack
- Commenting on political and societal discourses in Germany regarding Islamism, antisemitism and anti-Muslim sentiments after 7 October 2023
- Extension of the board to eleven experts
- Continuation of coordination and chairmanship at bicc for 2024–2025

PARTNERS
Ministry for Children, Youth, Family, Equality, Refugees and Integration in North Rhine-Westphalia (MKJFGFI)

COUNTRY
Germany

DURATION
01/2023–12/2025

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Scientific Advisory Board to the Interministerial Working Group (IMAG) on preventing Islamism provides scientific knowledge on societal phenomena and current developments in the prevention of radicalisation and advises on acute crises.

The Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry for Children, Youth, Family, Equality, Refugees and Integration in North Rhine-Westphalia founded the Scientific Advisory Board in 2022. With the chairmanship of Conrad Schetter, bicc took over the coordination of the Board's work.

Appointed to the Board are eleven academics who conduct research on topics related to Islamism, including Islamist currents, Islamic religious education, antisemitism, prevention of radicalisation and psychosocial stress in migrant families.

The members advise the IMAG both in terms of content and strategically. In addition, they contribute to the IMAG reports and provide expertise regarding prevention measures in sub-working groups on antisemitism, digitalisation, refugees and networking.

Based on long-standing expertise and new research results, the board suggests ways to prevent online radicalisation, provides knowledge on the social-psychological dimensions of radicalisation and resilience-building or highlights risks in current political and societal discourses.

WEBSITE



COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Conrad Schetter (project leader), Carina Yıldırım-Schlusing

THE ADVISORY BOARD TO THE
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR

CIVILIAN CRISIS PREVENTION AND PEACE- BUILDING

THE ADVISORY BOARD PROVIDES
GUIDANCE TO THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT WITH THE AIM OF
STRENGTHENING GERMANY'S INTER-
NATIONAL PEACE EFFORTS, BOTH
STRATEGICALLY AND IN PRACTICE.

To this end, it brings together civil society and academic expertise on crisis prevention and peacebuilding and comments on overarching political developments and events. As part of its expert advisory work, it defines its own work projects, develops recommendations for various advisory formats, conducts studies and organises events. The twenty members of the Advisory Board come from non-governmental organisations, church organisations, academic policy advisory institutions, public security policy institutions, political foundations or the United Nations.

The Board was established in connection with the adoption of the 2004 Action Plan for Civilian Crisis Prevention. In addition to an internal government coordination body—the Interministerial Working Group on Civilian Crisis Prevention—the Action Plan provided for an independent advisory body to the federal government. The Board convened for the first time in 2005.

The federal government appoints the members of the Advisory Board on Civilian Crisis Prevention and Peacebuilding for a four-year term. The current Advisory Board (2023–2026) comprises twenty representatives from German academia and civil society.

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER



Since 2024, bicc's Senior Advisor Milena Berks is part of the Advisory Board.

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AFGHANISTAN & DEVELOPMENT

ADVICE ON HUMANITARIAN, SECURITY AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES



HIGHLIGHTS

- An expert discussion on women-led civil society organisations in Afghanistan in December 2024
- A background paper and expert discussion on 'The Role of Local Power and Decision-Making Structures for Aid Organisations' in December 2023
- Joint workshops and exchange formats with the BMZ, implementing organisations and (I)NGOs
- Facilitating reflection sessions with the BMZ desk 312

PARTNER
Susanne Schmeidl

FUNDERS
German Development Cooperation (GIZ)

COUNTRY
Afghanistan

DURATION
09/2022–12/2026

ABOUT THE PROJECT

bicc provides expert advice on Afghanistan for the Regional Department of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Since the Taliban took power on 15 August 2021, the question of how development cooperation should be conducted with Afghanistan remains unanswered. This question gives rise to many development, security and social challenges, including the exclusion of women, which policymakers must address.

Our advice considers current developments in Afghanistan and relates them to the needs of German development policy. We prepare related inputs and offer space for reflecting on how the identified developments might affect Germany's future engagement.

bicc acts as

- a knowledge facilitator for evidence-based decision-making in complex situations;
- a sparring partner for the BMZ;
- an initiator of internal reflections to support the BMZ's internal learning process.

The focus of this integrated strategic approach lies on a continuous, iterative process of reflection and learning anchored in all exchanges. Conceptually, this is based on a decolonial perspective, which is especially useful for critically examining development policy action in non-European contexts with regard to implicit constructions of Western demarcation processes ("othering") and the perpetuation of global inequalities.

WEBSITE



COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Conrad Schetter (project leader), Katja Mielke, Susanne Schmeidl, Constantino Vendra

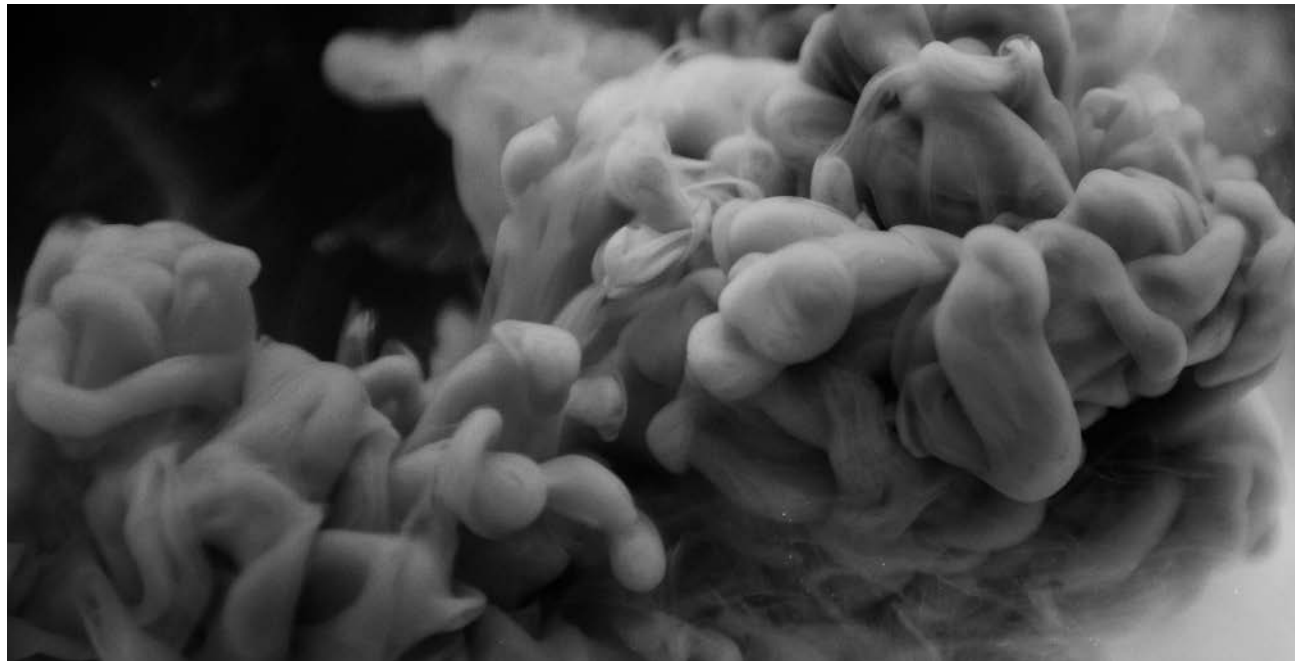
AGENTS & PATTERNS OF SECURITY & WAR

bicc's research on agents and patterns of security and war looks into the mechanisms of organised violence. Projects contributing to this topic explore how individuals and groups secure themselves, how violence is used at different levels of social organisation and the possible implications of transforming the conduct of war.



LIQUID WARFARE

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROLIFERATION OF MODERN MILITARY TECHNOLOGY
ON THE WARFARE OF AUTOCRATIC STATES AND NON-STATE ARMED ACTORS



The development and proliferation of military technology are significantly changing the way wars are fought—with far-reaching consequences.

We do not know enough about how the rapid proliferation of precision-strike technologies, such as cruise missiles, armed drones or precision-guided munitions, affects the warfare of autocratic states and non-state armed groups. With this project, we aim to change this.

We focus on the socio-spatial dimension of warfare. Drawing on Zygmunt Bauman's ideas about the reduced role of territory in 'liquid modernity', the project has developed a typology of solid (territory-focused) and liquid (target-focused) warfare. Based on this typology, we analyse the warfare practices of autocratic states and nonstate armed groups.

In the first phase (October 2020–September 2023), our case studies were the Gulf States, the Houthi in Yemen and the Islamic

State (IS) in Syria and Iraq. In the second phase (December 2023–May 2025), the focus will shift to Russia, China and Turkey.

The results of the research will be presented mainly in the form of articles in peer-reviewed academic journals.

COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Max Mutschler (project leader), Marius Bales

- Two journal articles published in *Small Wars & Insurgencies* and the *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*.
- Visiting the Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy in the United Arab Emirates in September 2023 to talk with experts about the military strategy of the Gulf States

HIGHLIGHTS

PARTNER
Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO)

FUNDER
German Research Foundation (DFG)

COUNTRIES
China, Yemen, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates

DURATION
10/2020–05/2027

ABOUT THE PROJECT

WEBSITE



PUBLICATIONS



Mutschler, M., Bales, M., & Meininghaus, E. (2024). The Impact of Precision Strike Technology on the Warfare of Non-State Armed Groups: Case Studies on Daesh and the Houthis. *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 1–28.



Swan, R., & Mutschler, M. (2024). China's 'Liquid' Warfighting Shift and Its Implications for Possible Future Conflict. *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*, 11(2), 169–189.

US-CHINA DETERRENCE

NEW TECHNOLOGIES FOR REMOTE WARFARE AND
THE SHIFTING BALANCE OF DETERRENCE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Visiting the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore in January 2024 to discuss issues of Asian security and present research outcomes
- Presenting research outcomes of the project at Fudan University and the University of Nottingham Ningbo in China in February 2024
- Article published in the *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*

FUNDER
Gerda Henkel Foundation

COUNTRIES
China, Singapore,
United States

DURATION
06/2022–05/2025

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Leading military nations are engaged in an accelerating arms race in militarising emerging technologies. This development has significant implications for the global security environment and risks increasing the likelihood of inadvertent nuclear war.

The rationale for developing new military technologies is deterrence. But how does the advancement of these capabilities affect deterrence? Does it strengthen it, or perhaps even weaken it? In his doctoral research, Ryan Swan seeks to answer this central question.

The research design for testing the impact of emerging military technologies has a theoretical and an empirical component. It involves deriving insights and forming hypotheses from game theoretic modelling of abstract scenarios

These theoretical conjectures are then tested empirically in the context of the Sino-American deterrence relationship. The empirical component uses a variety of data, including observational data, a range of scholarly and policy literature, experimental wargame simulations and interviews.

This project is closely related to the bicc project “Liquid Warfare” which analyses the influence of precision strike technology on the socio-spatial dimension of warfare. China is swiftly developing such technologies and in this project, we study what this means for Chinese military strategy and US-China deterrence.

COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Max Mutschler (project leader), Ryan Swan

WEBSITE



PUBLICATION



Swan, R., & Mutschler, M. (2024). China's 'Liquid' Warfighting Shift and Its Implications for Possible Future Conflict. *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*, 11(2), 169–189.



 podcast



**GIVE PEACE
A CHANCE**

 Episode 5 The Youth in the Sahel

Young people in the Sahel region face many challenges. A lack of prospects, political instability as a result of coups and the increasing influence of Russia and jihadist groups characterise their everyday lives.

**The Youth in the Sahel—
new Voices, old Problems**

with Milena Berks (bicc), Jerome Schroth (GIZ), Zeinabou Boubacar Zakou from Niger and Mustapha Alhassan from Nigeria.

 Episode 4 At the Border

EU asylum policy is hotly debated—from externalisation plans, new border camps and pushbacks to payment cards.

**At the Border:
EU Asylum Policy between
Aspiration and Reality**

with the migration researchers Benjamin Etzold (bicc) and Franck Düvell (University of Osnabrück, FFVT).

 Episode 3 The Paradox of Modern Warfare

Wars have changed. Whereas governments used to fight against other states, today it is militias, tribes and terrorist organisations.

**The Paradox of
Modern Warfare**

with Max Mutschler (bicc) and participants of our 30th anniversary conference.

 Give Peace a Chance



bicc
bonus
track



ARMED GROUPS IN THE SAHEL

REGIONAL APPROACHES TO DEALING WITH
ARMED GROUPS



HIGHLIGHTS

- Participating at a policy forum of the African Union in Addis Ababa in November 2024
- Conducting a regional workshop in N'Djamena, Chad, in November 2024
- Providing briefings to the UN, AU, EEAS and the Lake Chad Basin Commission
- Conducting field research in North-West Nigeria and South-West Chad
- Realising a webinar series targeted at practitioners and policymakers of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration from the African continent

PARTNERS

UN Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI), Department of Peace Operations (DDR Section), African Union Political Affairs and Peace and Security Department (AU-PAPS), DDR/SSR Division, Research Centre on Anthropology and Social Sciences (CRASH); University of Maroua; Neem Foundation

FUNDER German Federal Foreign Office (AA)

COUNTRIES

Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria

DURATION

11/2022–10/2025

ABOUT THE PROJECT

All too often, programmes to assist in the reintegration of ex-combatants take on a national perspective, even when armed actors operate in cross-border spaces. This project conducts research on regional conflict systems as they emerge, for instance, in the Lake Chad Basin to bring the regional dimensions to the attention of practitioners and policymakers.

Our field research is guided by a mixed-methods approach that includes interviews, focus group discussions and quantitative surveys at the community level. We work with local researchers in Chad, Nigeria and Cameroon who are closely involved in the research design and implementation.

To deepen the collaboration and exchange between the project partners (African Union, United Nations, bicc) and the Sahelian research partners, we organised a mid-term residency of Sahelian researchers at bicc in Germany and short-term residencies at the United Nations in New York and the African Union in Addis Ababa. These residencies aim to facilitate exchange between project partners and local researchers, provide insights into different institutional settings and perspectives and offer networking opportunities with other researchers at bicc and beyond in Germany.

From our research, we shared policy recommendations that can be used by the United Nations, the African Union and other regional, national and local actors to improve regional cooperation and programming and support sustainable peace processes. The project's research findings were disseminated through various formats and transfer activities in 2024.

WEBSITE



PUBLICATIONS



Oginni, O. S. (2024). *How to Stop "Jihadi Banditry" from Becoming the New Normal in the Lake Chad Basin* (bicc policy brief). bicc.



Berks, M., Oginni, O., Breitung, C., Alhassan, M., & Tondandi, A. (2024). *Risky Business: Engaging Vigilante Groups in the Lake Chad Basin* (bicc policy brief). bicc.

COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Claudia Breitung (project leader), Milena Berks, Boubacar Haidara, Oyewole Oginni, Amelie Philipsen

PEACE REPORT 2024

A WORLD IN TURMOIL

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Promote peace in the Sahel as a core concern of Germany and Europe
- 2 Maintain political dialogue with Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger
- 3 Suspend development cooperation only after thorough review
- 4 Strengthen local civil society and non-military peace strategies
- 5 Support the reform of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
- 6 Take the hopes of the people in the Sahel seriously



WEST AFRICA: A CRISIS HOTSPOT WHERE FAILED INTERVENTIONS LEAD TO MILITARY COUPS

In the shadow of the war in Ukraine and the escalating violence in the Middle East, a further crisis hotspot has emerged in West Africa. Around the world, conflicts are increasingly being resolved through the use of force, and the number of forcibly displaced people continues to rise.

While Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine continued in 2023 with little change on the front lines but with undiminished brutality, the Gaza conflict has dominated global news coverage since October of last year. Following a terrorist attack on 7 October 2023, in which the Palestinian Hamas militia and other Islamist groups murdered around 1,200 people in Israel and abducted around 250 hostages, the Israeli military launched a large-scale offensive against the Gaza Strip, including the deployment of ground troops. The death toll in the Gaza Strip is high. There are no reliable figures on the casualties of the war between Russia and Ukraine.

In the first chapter of the *2024 Peace Report* (in German), the authors provide an overview of recent developments in global conflicts and then focus on the conflict situation in West Africa.

The peace report has been published since 1987 and is jointly edited by

bicc Bonn International Centre for Conflict Studies
IFSH Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy
INEF Institute for Development and Peace
PRIF Peace Research Institute Frankfurt

READ ON



Bayer, M., Berks, M., von Boemcken, M., Breitung, C., Haidara, B., Oginni, O., Atieno Owino, E., Schetter, C., Wirkus, L., Witt, A. (2024): Krisenherd Westafrika: Militärputsche infolge gescheiterter Interventionen. In bicc, ISFH, INEF, & PRIF (Eds.), *Friedensgutachten 2024*. transcript Verlag.



ENGAGEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN

EVALUATING GERMANY'S CIVILIAN
ENGAGEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN 2013–2021



HIGHLIGHTS

- Publication of two evaluation reports and one policy brief

- Participating at three high-level events:

BMZ panel on 'Fragility and the Future of Development Cooperation', Berlin, November 2024

Keynote speaker at GIZ exchange on Lessons Learned in Afghanistan, Eschborn, June 2024

Panellist at DEval Podium 'International Engagement in Highly Fragile and Violent Contexts', Berlin, April 2024

PARTNERS

German Police University (DHPol), German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval), GFA Consulting Group

FUNDER

German Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (BMI)

COUNTRY

Afghanistan, Germany

DURATION

05/2022–11/2023

ABOUT THE PROJECT

bicc takes part in the evaluation of the German Ministry of the Interior's engagement in Afghanistan in the framework of the inter-ministerial evaluation of Germany's civilian engagement in Afghanistan from 2013 to 2021.

Between 2002 and 2021, the Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI) deployed German federal and state police officers to Afghanistan as part of the bilateral police project in Afghanistan (GPPT), aiming to establish a civilian Afghan police force.

The purpose of the evaluation was to take lessons learned and develop recommendations for future joint foreign and development policy action. The evaluation focussed on the police commitment of Germany before 2013 and the commitment of the BMI in Afghanistan between 2013 and 2021.

For a differentiated view of the object of evaluation, three levels of analysis were examined:

- the political–strategic decision-making level,
- the strategic level at the level of ministerial responsibility and
- the implementation level.

Questions at the political–strategic level are primarily dealt with in the joint departmental evaluation report. The most important data sources are interviews with project participants, beneficiaries and experts as well as extensive project documents. Secondary literature and secondary data was consulted.

WEBSITE



PUBLICATIONS



Hartmann, C., Weeger, M., Lange, A., & Mielke, K. (2024). *Learning from Germany's Civil Engagement in Afghanistan* (Policy Brief). DEval.



Lange, A., Mielke, K., & et al. (2023). *Interministerial strategic evaluation of Germany's civilian engagement in Afghanistan: Report for the Federal Ministry of Interior*. DHPol.

COLLEAGUE INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



Katja Mielke (appointed bicc expert)

CORRUPTION, PATRONAGE & CLIENTELISM IN AFGHANISTAN

COUNTERMEASURES
IN FUTURE CRISIS
OPERATIONS



The failure of the international intervention in Afghanistan (2001–2021) is repeatedly attributed to the fact that corruption, clientelism and patronage (CCP) permeate Afghan politics and society, rendering external state-building efforts futile. In a study for the Enquete Commission 'Lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's Future Networked Engagement', bicc analysed the role of CCP in the German mission for the first time.

The study found that the international community—above all the United States—used and reinforced the patronage and clientelist structures for its own interests from the very beginning. Germany also followed this path by consciously relying on certain patronage networks. This created a path dependency that was difficult to break.

The picture is different when it comes to corruption. Although so-called petty corruption was omnipresent in everyday life during reconstruction, the financial damage it caused was marginal. Far more problematic were the large trust funds, which were repeatedly hit by multi-million dollar corruption scandals and from which members of the country's elite enriched themselves.

Overall, however, it was not corruption but poor planning and wasteful procurement that were primarily

responsible for the mismanagement of Afghanistan's reconstruction.

The study shows that, in international interventions, the way corruption, clientelism and patronage (CCP) is handled has a significant impact on mission outcomes: It can not only result in financial losses but also in the failure of state-building and good governance. The lesson from Afghanistan is therefore that CCP must be avoided and tackled resolutely from the very first decisions in any intervention. It is also essential that all external actors involved commit to a common code of conduct in dealing with CCP.

COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Conrad Schetter (project leader), Rodrigo Bolaños Suárez, Boubacar Haidara, Gesa Himmelstoß, Susanne Schmeidl, Timor Sharan, Constantino Vendra

HIGHLIGHTS

- First study ever unpacking the scale of corruption, patronage and clientelism in the German engagement in Afghanistan
- Presentation of the study in the Enquete commission on "Lessons from Afghanistan" in June 2024

FUNDER
German Federal
Parliament

COUNTRIES
Afghanistan, Germany

DURATION
05/2022–11/2023

ABOUT THE PROJECT

WEBSITE



PUBLICATION

Corruption, patronage and clientelism using the example of Afghanistan and countermeasures in future crisis operations

Schetter, C., Schmeidl, S., Sharan, T., Suárez, R. B., Haidara, B., Himmelstoß, G., & Vendra, C. (2024). *Korruption, Patronage und Klientelismus am Beispiel von Afghanistan sowie Gegenmaßnahmen in künftigen Kriseneinsätzen*. bicc.

ENQUETE COMMISSION

LESSONS FROM AFGHANISTAN FOR GERMANY'S
FUTURE NETWORKED ENGAGEMENT



HIGHLIGHTS

- Interim Report of the Study Commission on Lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's future networked engagement, February 2024
- Panellist at "Afghanistan at the crossroads. 23 Years Afghanistan Conference - Challenges and Opportunities", Petersberg/ Königswinter, November 2024
- Participation in the strategy consultation on "Afghanistan - New year, new times and new strategy?" with members of the *Bundestag*, organised by IRC, Save the Children and FES, Berlin, March 2024

FUNDER
German Bundestag

COUNTRIES
Afghanistan, Germany

DURATION
09/2022–01/2025

ABOUT THE PROJECT

In the summer of 2022, the German *Bundestag* set up a commission of enquiry to draw lessons for future foreign, development and security policy from Germany's involvement in Afghanistan.

The committee, comprising eleven members of parliament and eleven experts, initially examined the entire period of German involvement in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2021 and presented an interim report in February 2024.

On this basis, recommendations were developed to optimise the networked approach as the basic principle of Germany's contribution to international crisis management. This approach describes the dovetailing of military, police, diplomatic, development policy and humanitarian instruments in international peacekeeping missions.

The Commission set up five working groups to formulate recommendations in various priority areas:

- Analysis, knowledge, concepts, monitoring, evaluation;
- Strategy and mandate formation, deployment law, strategic communication;
- International governance, coordination, integration;

- Role of parliament, oversight, stakeholder environment, national governance, integration;
- Implementation, effectiveness, deployment law, capabilities, instruments, personnel, communication.

The Commission's final report contains recommendations on various fields of action and their implementation. These include institutional and organisational proposals for better preparation, as well as for the staffing and equipment of missions, for more efficient coordination within the federal government and for stronger parliamentary oversight.

COLLEAGUE INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



Katja Mielke (appointed bicc expert)

WEBSITE



PUBLICATION

Summary: Strategic failure. On the interim report of the Enquete Commission

Mielke, K., Nachtwei, W. (2024). Bilanz: Strategisch gescheitert. Zum Zwischenbericht der Enquete-Kommission »Lehren aus Afghanistan für das künftige vernetzte Engagement Deutschlands«. *Zentralasien-Analysen*: 29-31.

MILITARISATION & ARMS CONTROL

bicc projects in this topic focus on the effects of militarisation and weapons proliferation. bicc's work aims to reduce their negative impact by strengthening arms control measures at various levels of society.





This project takes on the current challenges in small arms and light weapons (SALW) control in Africa from the practical to the strategic level. bicc supports its partners in implementing the provisions set out in relevant SALW control regimes, thereby strengthening these regimes, countering the risk of diversion and unintended explosions and increasing community security.

bicc's embedded advisors in the African Union and ECOWAS and technical staff in Bonn provide advice and capacity-building to national, regional and international organisations. Methods include facilitating dialogue, supporting regional training of trainers in physical security and stockpile management (PSSM), harmonising regulatory frameworks and introducing new components as needed. bicc also conducts mixed-methods research to analyse the impact of environmental changes on conflict and the use of SALW.

bicc continued to support PSSM through regional training courses for technical experts in the RECSA and ECOWAS regions. These courses create regional pools of trainers who can act as multipliers and train technical staff at local, national and regional levels. bicc also implemented a new training course on identifying and tracing weapons and continued to produce and disseminate

updated SALW guides and infographics during its training activities and other events. A flagship of this project is an annual course in Germany, jointly implemented with the Bundeswehr Verification Centre which aims to enhance the awareness of executive-level representatives of African national and regional organisations on the importance of weapons and ammunition management (WAM) in a wider SALW and ammunition control context.

COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Joe Farha (Project Leader), Christine Beeck, Saskia Boniello, Irina Brüggemann, Lena Guesnet, Louai Haddad, David Häfner, Elvan Isikozlu, Julia Jagalski, Hannah Jülich, Matthias Krötz, Rebecca Navarro, Pinar Rey, Lamis Saleh, Conrad Schetter, Marc von Boemcken, Lars Wirkus

HIGHLIGHTS

- Supporting to the ECOWAS Commission in the delivery of national PSSM training in Benin, Togo and Cabo Verde
- Supporting the African Union Commission in the development and validation of a Common African Position
- Supporting the SADC in the development and validation of the Southern African Chapter of the African Union's Silencing the Guns by 2030 Agenda
- Development and Validation of an East African Roadmap focusing on WAM in a disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) context

ABOUT THE PROJECT

PARTNERS
African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), The Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA), Bundeswehr Verification Centre (BwVC/ZVBw), Multinational Small Arms and Ammunition Group (MSAG),

FUNDER German Federal Foreign Office (AA)

COUNTRIES
Belgium, Benin, Cabo Verde, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Switzerland, Togo, Uganda, USA

DURATION
01/2021–03/2025

WEBSITE



PUBLICATION



Häfner, D., & Farha, J. (2024). Removing fire-arms? An alternative approach to civilian fire-arms ownership in post-conflict settings. In G. Harris (Ed.), *The Elgar Companion to War, Conflict and Peacebuilding in Africa*. (pp. 152–172). Edward Elgar Publishing.



Executive Level Course on Weapons and Ammunition Management (WAM) in cooperation with the Bundeswehr Verification Centre (BwVC)

EXPERT GROUP ON ARMS EXPORTS

ADVOCATING FOR A RESTRICTIVE GERMAN ARMS EXPORTS POLICY



HIGHLIGHTS

- Presenting the GKKE's *Arms Exports Report 2023* at the Federal Press Conference in Berlin, December 2023
- Presenting the GKKE's *Arms Exports Report 2024* at the Federal Press Conference in Berlin, December 2024
- Publication of the GKKE *Arms Exports Report 2023* and *Arms Exports Report 2024*

PARTNER
Joint Conference Church and Development (GKKE)

FUNDER
Joint Conference Church and Development (GKKE)

COUNTRIES
not applicable

DURATION
ongoing since 2012

ABOUT THE PROJECT

bicc has been involved in the expert group on arms exports of the Joint Conference Church and Development (GKKE) for many years. Since 2012, a bicc researcher has (co-)chaired the expert group.

As the joint voice of the two main churches in Germany, the GKKE aims to give political weight to the idea that the world is one. It engages in dialogue with parliament, government and social interest groups in Germany on issues of North–South cooperation and development policy. Based on the expertise of the Arms Expert Group, the GKKE actively advocates for a restrictive German arms export policy. In its annual *Arms Exports Report*, the GKKE critically comments on German export policy and makes suggestions for improving the export control system. With its expertise in the field of arms exports, bicc provides significant input to this report.

The GKKE expert group on arms exports organises an annual parliamentary expert discussion with members of the German *Bundestag* on the

German arms export policy. Over the past years, the GKKE expert group has made concrete proposals and lobbied intensively for new and better arms export control legislation in Germany.

WEBSITE



PUBLICATIONS



Gemeinsame Konferenz Kirche und Entwicklung (2023). *Rüstungsexportbericht 2023*. GKKE.



Gemeinsame Konferenz Kirche und Entwicklung (2024). *Rüstungsexportbericht 2024*. GKKE.



COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Max Mutschler (project leader), Markus Bayer



bicc
bonus
track

bicc policy brief

ARMS EXPORT CONTROL: TURNING THINGS AROUND

ARMS EXPORT CONTROL LEGISLATION AS THE COALITION GOVERNMENT'S CON- TRIBUTION TO A MORE RESTRICTIVE AND TRANSPARENT ARMS EXPORT POLICY

In the coalition agreement and the National Security Strategy, the German government set out its commitment to a restrictive arms export policy. A key project for implementing this commitment was to be arms export control legislation that would codify existing regulations and thereby strengthen them. In addition, transparency on arms exports was to be increased.

Since the beginning of Russia's attack on Ukraine and the outbreak of the war in the Gaza Strip, the geopolitical situation has changed significantly. Arms export legislation is no longer expected at present, and with the decision to supply Euro-fighters to Saudi Arabia, the coalition government now appears far removed from a restrictive arms export policy.

Even though the overarching goal—the adoption of arms export control legislation—has not been achieved, a closer look at the traffic-light coalition's track record on arms export control shows that it is not as negative as it might seem. With individual export licences worth €8.36 billion in 2022, the coalition reached its second-highest figure since the publication of arms export reports. Nevertheless, the share of exports to third countries is low compared to previous years. The majority of these exports went to Ukraine and were legitimate under the right to self-defence. After deducting all exports to Ukraine, the share of export licences to third countries in 2022 was only 12 per cent—a historically low figure and, in absolute terms, had last been lower in 2002. This figure remained similarly low in the first half of 2023.

READ ON



Bayer, M., Mutschler, M., & Rohleder, P. (2024). *Rüstungs-exportkontrolle: Jetzt die Kurve kriegen* (bicc policy brief). bicc.



Germany is one of the world's largest arms exporters. While weapons can enhance security, they can also cause insecurity and fuel violent conflicts. For recipient countries, arms imports always represent an investment that cannot be made in other areas, such as education or health.

Arms and military equipment are ambivalent products: They can contribute to greater security and at the same time are a source of insecurity or an instrument of repression. Similarly, military spending always means less investment in education and health. Due to this ambivalence, German arms exports are bound by the rules of the EU Common Position. The project therefore provides the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) with information on the potential impact of arms exports in the recipient countries and thereby attempts to minimise their negative effects.

The project team collects original data from field research or secondary sources. They analyse the data using qualitative and quantitative approaches before drawing conclusions. bicc is committed to applied research and seeks to present evi-

dence-based conclusions and policy recommendations to political decision-makers and the public. A key challenge is to reduce the complexity for the 'end user' while still doing justice to the complexity of the issue.

bicc's research is disseminated to the academic, policy and practitioner communities through:

- the Global Militarisation Index (GMI) website, including the Database on German Arms Exports and specific Country Reports;
- contributions to the German annual *Peace Report*, the annual publication on the GMI and by participating in public debates.

COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Markus Bayer (project leader), Marc von Boemcken (project leader), Rolf Alberth, Rodrigo Bolaños Suárez, Stella Hauk, Paul Rohleder, Fiona Wilshusen, Lars Wirkus

HIGHLIGHTS

- Publication of the *Global Militarisation Index 2023* (GMI)
- Publication of one peer reviewed journal article on militarisation in December 2023
- Publication of three new country reports: Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan
- Publication of a *bicc policy brief* on German arms export control policy
- Consultations with the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) on German arms export control policy in 2024

ABOUT THE PROJECT

FUNDER
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

COUNTRIES
55 countries
see Global Reach Map (p. 6–7)

DURATION
01/2021–04/2025

WEBSITE



PUBLICATIONS



Bayer, M., & Hauk, S. (2023). *Global Militarization Index 2023*. bicc.



Bayer, M., Mutschler, M., & Rohleder, P. (2024). *Rüstungs-exportkontrolle: Jetzt die Kurve kriegen* (bicc policy brief). bicc.

MIGRATION & FORCED DISPLACEMENT

bicc's projects on migration and forced displacement focus on the mobility, livelihood strategies, integration and reintegration prospects of forcibly displaced individuals, along with the causes and consequences of protracted displacement. They provide policy advice, engage in dialogue with key stakeholders and contribute to public debates on the topic.





GAPs aims to examine the disconnects and discrepancies between expectations of return policies and their actual outcomes by decentring the dominant, one-sided understanding of 'return policy-making'. The project examines the shortcomings of the European Union return governance, analyses enablers of and barriers to international cooperation and explores the perspectives of migrants themselves to understand their knowledge, aspirations and experiences with return policies.

The GAPs project focuses on return gaps in three return systems between EU countries and countries of transit or origin, spanning the wider Middle East (including Afghanistan), Africa (northern and western), and eastern Europe. The project treats 'gaps' as a heuristic that allows us to zoom in on three dimensions:

- governance
- international cooperation
- migrants' agency.

The project combines a decentring approach with three innovative concepts to analyse governance fissures, understand how relations among EU member states and third countries hinder cooperation on returns, and use a socio-spatial and temporal lens to understand migrant agency. The project involves multi-disciplinary, qualitative, and quantitative comparative research, with wide-ranging impacts such as the creation of an interactive

data repository on returns, a return cooperation index, policy briefs and stakeholder expert panels.

GAPs also aims to examine the agency of migrants and the autonomy of migration processes that influence and are influenced by governance and cooperation. It will also seek to co-create alternative pathways and models for existing return policies, practices and cooperation that would contribute to the interplay between policy and science.

COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Zeynep Şahin-Mencütek (project leader), Katja Mielke, Lamis Saleh, Monique Michelle Treutler, Ruth Vollmer, Daphne Wolf

HIGHLIGHTS

- Regional workshop in Morocco with experts and stakeholders from North Africa, Europe and beyond
- High-level roundtable in the European Parliament to address the widening gap between return migration policies and their practical implementation
- Expert panel discussion on Afghanistan's return and reintegration policies
- Workshop with project MORE on "Deutsche Rückkehrpolitik und deutsches Abschieberegime" at the University of Göttingen

ABOUT THE PROJECT

PARTNERS
Seventeen consortium members including Uppsala University (co-coordinator) and bicc (co-coordinator)

FUNDER
European Commission, HORIZON Research and Innovation Actions

COUNTRIES
Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria

DURATION
03/2023–02/2026

WEBSITE



PUBLICATIONS



Şahin-Mencütek, Z., Mielke, K., & Wolf, D. (2024). *Legal and Policy Infrastructures of Returns in Germany: Country Dossier (WP2)*. GAPs.



Şahin-Mencütek, Z., & Triandafyllidou, A. (2024). Coerced return: formal policies, informal practices and migrants' navigation. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 51(2), 483–500.



Peacebuilding and political actors working on return policies rarely take into account the experiences of people going through a return process. The Return and Belonging project (RE-MIG) explores these experiences and argues for their inclusion in policymaking.

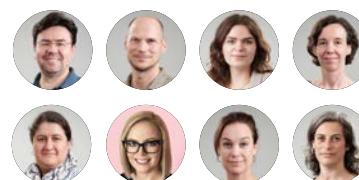
Addressing the perceptions and aspirations of displaced and returned persons must be key to finding solutions to their displacement and for building inclusive communities.

The project empirically studies the role and meaning that displaced people and returnees attach to the notions of return, how they relate to people at 'home' and at the place of living, and how their aspirations and hopes for the future shape their lives. It also explores the role of identity and the social boundaries that are drawn and re-drawn during violent conflict, political transitions and (re)migration and investigates access barriers to rights and services, livelihoods and societal participation. Moreover, the project builds up strong cooperation partnerships with local researchers.

By disseminating the project findings to political decision-makers and practitioners, bicc hopes to

contribute to more informed and inclusive policymaking on displaced people and their (potential) return. Using a qualitative and multi-sited research design, the study is based on field research in eastern Europe, the Middle East and the Western Balkans. Outputs include bicc policy briefs, academic publications, blog posts, informal briefings, workshops and policy events.

COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Osman Bahadır Dinçer (project leader), Benjamin Etzold (project leader until 12/2023), Selina Engelberth, Katja Mielke, Zeynep Şahin-Mencütek, Inna Şupac, Clara Schmitz-Pranghe, Ruth Vollmer

HIGHLIGHTS

- Seven months of field research and capacity exchange with research partners in all three case study regions
- Tailored takeaway notes on findings from all case studies, updates and advice on the political situation in Syria and Ukraine and its implications on returns
- Panel discussion on the changes following the Assad regime's collapse in Syria
- Brownbag Lecture Series "Displacement and Development"

ABOUT THE PROJECT

FUNDER
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

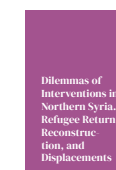
COUNTRIES
Albania, Germany, Iraq, Kosovo, Moldova, North Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine

DURATION
02/2023–02/2026

WEBSITE



PUBLICATION



Dincer, O., Şahin-Mencütek, Z. (2024). Dilemmas of Interventions in Northern Syria. Refugee Return, Reconstruction, and Displacements. In A. Al-Azmeh, H. Akdedian, & H. Dukhan, H. (Eds.), *Spoils and War in the Arab East. Reconstructing Society and Polity in Conflict*, I.B. Taurus.



Etzold, B., & Ansar, A. (2024). Geflohen Rohingya in Bangladesch: Wie kann diese langanhaltende Vertreibungskrise gelöst werden? In J. Oltmer, M. Berlinghoff, F. Düvell, C. Lang, & A. Pott (Eds.), *Report Globale Flucht 2024* (1. Auflage, pp. 98–111). Fischer.

FORCED MIGRATION & REFUGEE STUDIES

NETWORKING AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER (FFVT)



HIGHLIGHTS

- Holding the 5th Conference of the German Network for Forced Migration Studies in September 2024 at the University of Bonn
- Publication of the *Report Globale Flucht 2024*
- Two roundtables on Forced Migration Studies in cooperation with the Forum Internationale Wissenschaft (FIW)
- Five international fellows from the FFVT Fellowship Programme visiting bicc

PARTNERS
Centre for Human Rights Erlangen-Nürnberg (CHREN), German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS), Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies (IMIS)

FUNDERS
Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)

COUNTRY
not applicable

DURATION
01/2020–12/2024

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Research on forced migration and refugees is highly relevant in Germany. As its importance has grown, so has the demand for expertise from civil society, the media and politics. To meet this demand, it is essential to establish strong networks in Germany and worldwide.

The project aims to strengthen interdisciplinary and international research on forced migration and refugees. Through its various activities, FFVT is helping to establish a sustainable infrastructure for research on forced migration and refugees in Germany, thereby enabling high-quality scientific work. The project brings together research on migration, development, conflict and violence, climate change, health, good governance and human rights. In this way, FFVT facilitates networking between researchers and institutions working on issues related to forced migration.

A key element of the project is dialogue between academia, practitioners, the media and policy-makers. The FFVT website contains a dedicated Ukraine information hub and an interactive database covering nearly 700 research projects in Germany. The *Report Globale Flucht* (report on global displacement; in German) is published annually as part of the project. To internationalise German research on forced migration and refugees, FFVT co-organises international conferences and offers a global fellowship programme and a summer school in Nuremberg.

WEBSITE



PUBLICATION



Oltmer, J., Berlinghoff, M., Düvell, F., Lang, C., & Pott, A. (Eds.). (2024). *Report Globale Flucht 2024*. Fischer Taschenbuch.

COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Maarit Thiem (project leader), Rolf Alberth, Benjamin Etzold, Ann-Christin Komes, Merle Müller, Julia Reichert, Conrad Schetter, Madita Vennemann, Lars Wirkus

REGIONAL AND LOCAL RESPONSES TO GLOBAL REFUGEE MOVEMENTS: CONTEXTS, CHALLENGES, SOLUTIONS

In recent years, forced migration and displacement in the context of violent conflicts and natural disasters has increased. At the same time, right-wing populist voices against immigration and people seeking protection are gaining attention and influence in many countries. The conference was dedicated to a comprehensive analysis of these global, regional and local facets of displacement, including the causes and trends that force people into mobility and immobility.

The conference went beyond Eurocentric questions and focused more on global critical perspectives. Special attention was given to gender-specific, queer and post-/ decolonial approaches, as well as reflections on ethical dimensions and research-reflective contributions. The conference also focussed on “best practices” and on “innovative” solutions to global refugee movements, including initiatives and strategies from policy, civil society, education and research, but above all, from people with lived experience of displacement.

For the first time, the European Coalition of Migrants and Refugees (EU-COMAR), a refugee organisation, formally co-organised the conference.

COORDINATED BY



Maarit Thiem,
bicc Project Coordinator

READ ON



5TH CONFERENCE OF THE

GERMAN NETWORK FOR FORCED MIGRATION STUDIES

bicc
bonus
track



REFUGEE ADVISORY BOARD GERMANY

REFUGEES: EQUAL PARTNERS IN POLITICAL
DECISION-MAKING



HIGHLIGHTS

- Personal meeting with Reem Alabali-Radovan, integration officer at the Federal Chancellery
- Participation in the 75th session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner as part of the German delegation (UNHCR)
- Participation in a training week in Berlin jointly organised with R-SEAT
- Participation in the Dialogue Meeting with German migrant/diaspora organisations organised by the the Federal Chancellery

PARTNERS
bicc supported the establishment of the Refugee Advisory Board Germany in cooperation with R-SEAT with funding by the Robert Bosch Foundation. bicc acts as the Secretariat of the Refugee Advisory Board Germany

FUNDER
Robert Bosch Foundation

COUNTRY
not applicable

DURATION
07/2024–12/2025

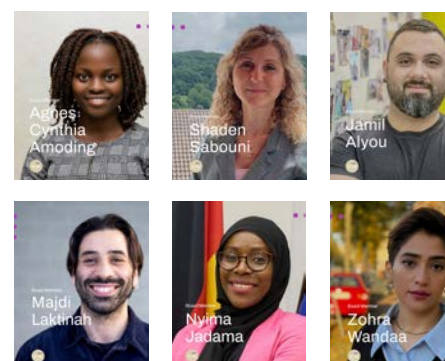
ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Refugee Advisory Board Germany has been established to ensure that international decision-making is informed by the perspective and expertise of forcibly displaced persons who provide critical feedback on international refugee issues and programmes. The Secretariat is located at bicc and coordinates the activities.

As the first national board of this kind in Europe, its members work together to contribute their insights to (inter)national dialogues and to participate in a meaningful way in (inter)national policymaking. The board members join the German delegation at global meetings on refugee issues, such as the UNHCR ExCom meetings, the Global Refugee Forum and high-level official meetings. They are also actively involved in national socio-political processes and work closely with key German government agencies and participate in consultative meetings with ministries, civil society and UNHCR.

In addition, board members advise governmental and non-governmental actors on refugee-related policies at the national and transnational levels. To support these efforts, the board publishes policy briefs to inform and guide decision-makers. The board aims to strengthen the representation and amplification of refugee voices in (inter)national processes and policies related to forced displacement and refugee protection.

BOARD MEMBERS



WEBSITE



COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Maarit Thiem (project leader), Nina Bretkopf

SPACES OF (IM)MOBILITY, VIOLENCE & PRECARITY

CONCEPTUAL REFLECTIONS ON LABOUR AND ASYMMETRICAL DEPENDENCIES



HIGHLIGHTS

- An academic workshop on “Intersections between Dependency and Slavery Studies and Peace and Conflict Studies” in April 2024
- An academic workshop on “Gendered Violence and Dependencies in Refugees’ (Im)Mobilities” in October 2024
- bicc is part of the Cluster of Excellence at the Bonn Center for Dependency & Slavery Studies “Beyond Slavery and Freedom: Asymmetrical Dependencies in Pre-Modern Societies” at the University of Bonn

PARTNER
University of Bonn, Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS)

FUNDER
The Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) is a cluster of excellence at the University of Bonn funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG)

COUNTRY
not applicable

DURATION
01/2024–12/2025

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The project brings together otherwise separate fields of expertise, compares conceptual approaches and formulates new research ideas at the intersections of (forced) migration studies, peace and conflict studies, labour geography, as well as dependency and slavery studies.

The project aims to explore the spatial expressions and interrelations between mobility, violence and labour precarity, drawing on secondary literature, existing data and two pilot studies. A particular focus is on livelihoods and labour relations in conflict-affected settings in the global South, and on how these are shaped by human (im)mobility, systems of violence and coercion and dependency relations. In line with the central analytical approach of the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies’ (BCDSS), the research is based on the argument that strong asymmetrical dependencies are formative for societies and particularly shape labour relations in spaces of violence.

The project addresses three specific research questions:

- What forms of violence and coercion do workers experience under conditions of war?
- To what extent is labour precarity in spaces of violence shaped by mobility or immobility?

- What asymmetrical relations co-constitute precarious work and conditions of violence?

Researchers from BCDSS and bicc, as well as international scholars, will be brought together through a series of workshops and events. The conceptual reflections and empirical findings will be documented in a BCDSS working paper and a peer-reviewed journal article.

COLLEAGUE INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



Benjamin Etzold (project leader)

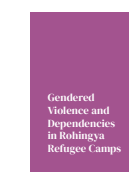
WEBSITE



PUBLICATIONS



Etzold, B. (2024). Mobility, Violence and Asymmetrical Dependencies in Labour Relations - Exploring Intersections. *The Dependent* 9, 38–40.



Etzold, B., & Ansar, A. (2024). Gendered Violence and Dependencies in Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh. *The Dependent* 10, 42–46.

MOBILITY, TRANSLOCALITY & GENDERED VIOLENCE

ROHINGYA WOMEN IN
THE BANGLADESH-
MYANMAR BORDERLANDS



This empirical study aims to better understand the everyday lives of Rohingya women and their responses to pervasive gender-based violence in refugee camps and the Bangladesh–Myanmar borderlands from the perspective of translocal mobility and transnational conflict.

Against the backdrop of a protracted refugee crisis, ongoing armed conflict and illicit cross-border mobilities, this study investigates the gendered consequences of refugeehood in the Bangladesh–Myanmar borderlands.

Since August 2017, Bangladesh has been hosting nearly one million Rohingya refugees from Myanmar in some of the largest refugee camps in the world, located directly on the Myanmar border. Currently, Rohingya refugees face bleak prospects of returning to Myanmar, very few legal options for onward movement and increasing precariousness and insecurity in the refugee camps, compounded by declining humanitarian support.

bicc aims to empirically investigate the lasting effects of violent conflict, informal security regimes and transnational trade networks, with a particular focus on their manifestations in the everyday lives of Rohingya

women. This study thus aims to capture women's strategies for enhancing their security, support mechanisms, and strategies for resisting gender-based violence (GBV), immobilisation and social exclusion.

In adopting a translocal lens, it recognises the agency of displaced people while also acknowledging the factual power of the violent borderlands in the camps. This study thus broadens discourses on refugee women's vulnerability to GBV and explores new avenues for humanitarian action.

COLLEAGUE INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



Benjamin Etzold (project leader), Anas Ansar

- Field research in Rohingya camps and the Bangladesh–Myanmar Borderlands in April and May 2024
- Publication of one *XCEPT Policy Brief* and two blog contributions

HIGHLIGHTS

PARTNERS
Bonn Centre for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS), XCEPT

FUNDER
UK International Development

COUNTRIES
Bangladesh, Myanmar

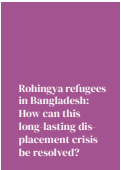
DURATION
02/2024–03/2025

ABOUT THE PROJECT

WEBSITE



PUBLICATIONS



Etzold, B., & Ansar, A. (2024). Geflohene Rohingya in Bangladesh: Wie kann diese langanhaltende Vertreibungskrise gelöst werden? In J. Oltmer, M. Berlinghoff, F. Düvell, C. Lang, & A. Pott (Eds.), *Report Globale Flucht 2024* (p. 98–111). Fischer Verlag.

VIOLENT ENVIRONMENTS & INFRASTRUCTURES

For its research on violent environments and infrastructures, bicc explores how differing worldviews on access to resources, climate-driven scarcity and development projects contribute to social conflicts, aiming to understand and address the link between violent conflict and social inequalities through the lens of sustainability.





Large-scale infrastructure projects like the LAPSSET corridor in northern Kenya cut through the pastures of pastoralist communities in Kenya and Tanzania. The standard-gauge railway, for example, runs through the pastoral lands in Narok in southern Kenya and Morogoro in central Tanzania. What is the impact of these projects on local conflict dynamics?

In this research project, we turn the concept of 'frontiers' into an analytical tool for comparative empirical research on development corridors cutting through pastoral lands in Kenya and Tanzania. A frontier is understood as a shifting socio-spatial boundary where expansive development agendas push into new territories, often overlooking local contexts. The project refines the frontier approach through comparative research on development corridors in Kenya and Tanzania.

In Kenya's northern Rift (LAPSSET corridor), we examine how a planned megaproject fuels conflict and how such violence might be mitigated. In Narok county (southern Kenya), where a proposed standard-gauge railway line cuts through a region that is no longer purely pastoral, external development visions clash with local livelihoods. In Samburu (northern Kenya), we analyse how

patterns of organised violence shift under frontier conditions. An exploratory study of Tanzania's Central Corridor—a similar infrastructure push through pastoral lands with stronger state control—allows us to compare how state involvement shapes frontier conflicts. Outputs of this research include three PhD theses, five Master of Arts theses and peer-reviewed journal articles in collaboration with our partners in Kenya and Tanzania.

- Twenty-eight months of field research in Kenya and Tanzania
- Three dissemination workshops in Tanzania, Kenya and northern Kenya with local communities

HIGHLIGHTS

PARTNERS
Kennedy Mkutu (United States International University-Africa), Lucy Massoi and Venance Shillingi (Mzumbe University), University of Bonn, University of Cologne

FUNDER
Collaborative Research Centre 228 of the German Research Foundation (DFG)

COUNTRIES
Kenya, Tanzania

DURATION
04/2022–12/2025

ABOUT THE PROJECT

WEBSITE



COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Conrad Schetter (project leader), Evelyn Atieno Owino, Marie Born, Marie Müller-Koné, Elizabeth Mumbi Ndunda

CHINA'S BELT & ROAD INITIATIVE

INVESTIGATION OF LOCAL IMPACTS OF LARGE-SCALE
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN PAKISTAN & AFGHANISTAN



HIGHLIGHTS

- More than eight months of field research in Pakistan, China, North Rhine-Westphalia
- Participating in the World Café “New Insights about the Belt and Road from Eur(Asia) to East(Africa): Strategies, Narratives and Reactions” at ZOiS, November 2023
- Input at Parliamentary breakfast on “Municipalities’ perspectives on Chinese Engagement in North Rhine-Westphalia” at the state parliament of North Rhine-Westphalia, July 2024

PARTNERS
Humbolt University Berlin (Lead), Centre for East European and International Studies (ZOiS), Leibniz Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO)

FUNDER
Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)

COUNTRIES
Germany, Pakistan

DURATION
11/2021–09/2027

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Large-scale infrastructure projects promise regional development and prosperity—But is this truly the case? This is a key question asked in the research consortium ‘De:link//Re:link: Local perspectives on transregional processes of entanglements and disentanglements—investigating local impacts of China’s Belt and Road Initiative’ introduced in 2013.

The research network “De:link//Re:link: Local perspectives on transregional processes of entanglements and disentanglements” uses the example of the Belt and Road Initiative to investigate new spatial configurations and local perspectives on transregional infrastructure projects in Asia, Africa and Europe.

The Belt and Road Initiative, initiated by China in 2013, serves as a case study for the network.

The focus of the project is on Germany and Pakistan, where the project team examines the influence of Chinese presence around the inland port of Duisburg—the end point of the New Silk Road in Europe—and along the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor. From a process-oriented perspective, a PhD dissertation will generate knowledge on the following questions:

How are local societies influenced by the implementation of large-scale infrastructure projects? How do projects gain acceptance, and what change processes are induced by Chinese–local encounters?

WEBSITE



COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



FLTR: Katja Mielke (project leader), Nadia Ali, Conrad Schetter

FOOD SECURITY IS UNTHINKABLE WITHOUT PEACE!

bicc
bonus
track

FOOD SECURITY IN RURAL KENYA

Why is the implementation of the three global Sustainable Development Goals—Zero Hunger (SDG 2), Climate Action (SDG 13) and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (SDG 16)—essential for ensuring long-term food security in a region? We explore this question using the example of the Marsabit region in Kenya. The population there has suffered for many years from drought, hunger and violent conflicts.

Around 80 per cent of the population in Marsabit are pastoralists, while a smaller proportion engage in farming. Both groups depend directly on the natural resources available locally. Their livelihoods are increasingly threatened by climate change, which manifests in frequent, recurring and increasingly severe droughts. For pastoralists, mobility is the key response to reduced water availability and poorer grazing conditions—but a two-and-a-half-year, region-wide drought, such as the one that ended in March 2023, is almost impossible to cope with. As a result, their livestock perish, and pastoralists lose their livelihoods and suffer from hunger.

Farmers are also affected by the consequences of climate change. In response, they have partly shifted their production from food crops such as maize, wheat, beans and vegetables to the cash crop Mirra. While this crop is more drought-resistant, provides an additional income and suppresses hunger, it cannot prevent rising food insecurity in the event of a prolonged drought. In addition, the population of Marsabit suffers from regularly recurring violent conflicts, often manifesting as cattle raids and attacks on other ethnic groups. The causes of these conflicts are complex. They are not only linked to droughts and resource scarcity but also rooted in decades-long political tensions.

READ ON



THE MISSING PEACE

WHY FIELD RESEARCH MATTERS
TO POLICY AND PRACTICE

What do we know about the local realities of violent conflict? And how can we use what we know for peacebuilding? There are often considerable gaps between beliefs and practices 'on the ground' and national and multilateral peacebuilding, development and humanitarian efforts. The bicc 30 years Anniversary Conference aimed to explore how these gaps can be bridged.





Gonca Türkeli-Dehnert
Ministry for Culture
and Science NRW



Anka Feldhusen
German Federal Foreign Office

30 YEARS FOR A MORE PEACEFUL WORLD



Elizabeth Ferris
Georgetown University



Paul Holtom
United Nations Institute
for Disarmament Research

ZOOMING IN ON PEACE

EXPLORING NEW TRENDS IN PEACE-BUILDING THROUGH THE LENS OF RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE

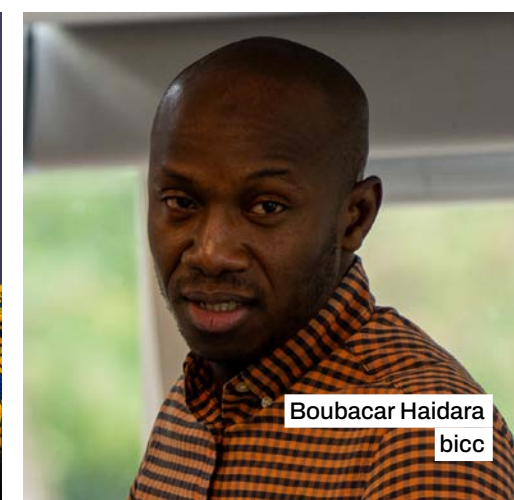
This panel explored the different understandings of peace and conflict in conflict affected regions and why these understandings are relevant for policymaking. A key takeaway was that international, but also local actors need to consider local perceptions to be able to develop effective and sustainable peacebuilding activities.



Tomas Kontogeorgos
United Nations Department
of Peace Operations



Esther Omam
Reach Out Cameroon



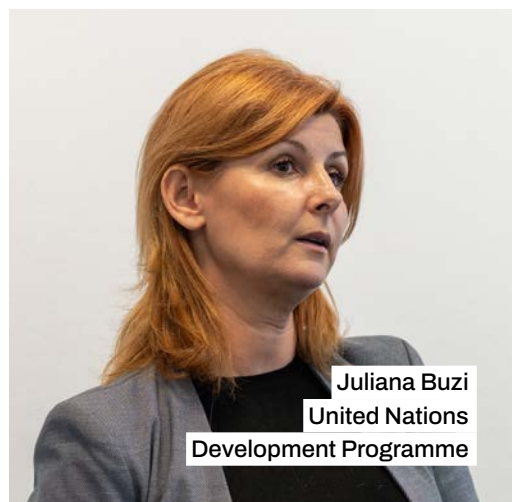
Boubacar Haidara
bicc

Experience from various bicc research projects suggests that knowledge of local conflict dynamics can improve government policies and external engagement—at minimum to ‘do no harm’ and at best to prevent or end violence. Our conference focused on the opportunities for integrating findings from field research into national and

multilateral approaches to sustainable peacebuilding and conflict transformation. We looked at concrete examples of research in different conflict regions as we discussed local peacebuilding, the distribution of small arms and light weapons, non-state armed groups and forced migration and return.

PEACE BETWEEN THE LINES

CONNECTING LOCAL DYNAMICS
AND GLOBAL SOLUTIONS
FOR ARMED CONFLICTS



Juliana Buzi
United Nations
Development Programme



Oyewole Oginni
bicc



Tatiana Smirnova
Université de Sherbrooke



Milena Berks
bicc

Armed violence and illicit flows of arms across borders continue to pose challenges to global, regional, national and local security and stability. While global solutions are often sought after, local dynamics are rarely taken into account. For example, there is a gap between local and (inter)national knowledge of the cross-border dynamics of arms flows and armed violence. This participatory panel explored how a better understanding of the operations of armed groups and illicit arms flows in border regions can contribute to more sustainable solutions for activities that reduce violence.

WITH US FOR PEACE

ACKNOWLEDGING MIGRANTS'
EXPERIENCES IN POLICYMAKING

Migrants' experiences must be reflected in migration-related policies. This panel explored how the consideration of the intersectional realities of mobile people can be acknowledged in policymaking. It asked how best to strengthen the participation of migrants in processes that directly affect them so that policymaking reflects and responds to their reality.



Osman Bahadır Dinçer
bicc



Shaza Alrihawi
Global Refugee-led Network & Global
Independent Refugee Women Leaders



Berivan Aymaz
Vice-President
of the Parliament of NRW



Terry Martin
Journalist

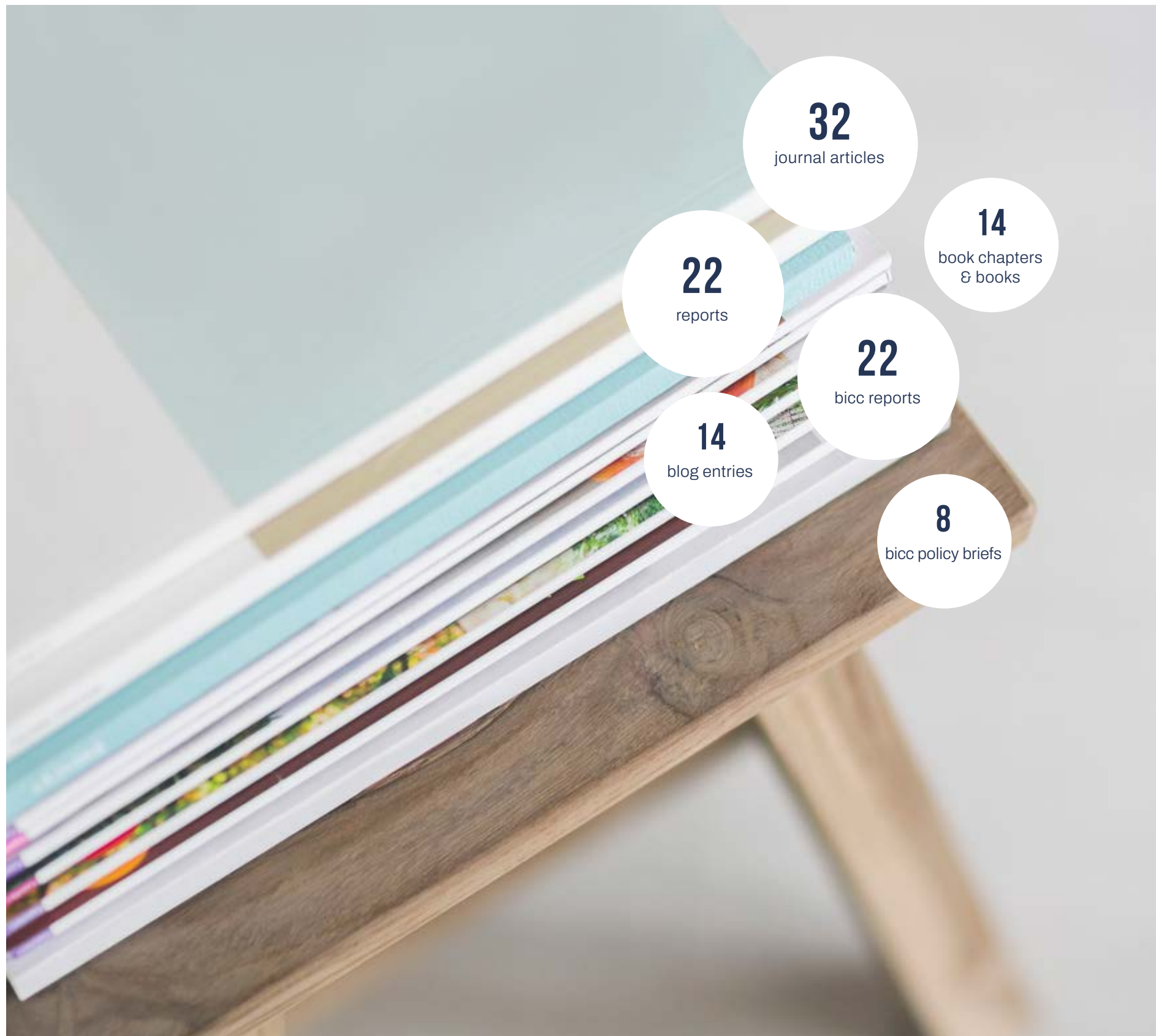
PROGRAMME



bicc publishes in international journals, books or edited volumes, as well as in our own publication series. We seek to reach scholars, policymakers, practitioners and the public alike.

09/2023—12/2024

OUTREACH



bicc report

INDO-CHINESE RELATIONS: ON A COLLISION COURSE

Herbert Wulf



A dangerous competition is taking place between China and India. Four primary contentious issues and protracted conflicts dominate today's competitive and uncooperative relations between India and China: unresolved territorial conflicts in the Himalayas, China's close relations with Pakistan and its military assistance, China's activities in the Indian Ocean, especially the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the New Silk Road, and both countries' far-reaching and competitive global ambitions.

The two countries are engaged in fierce competition, and the present trend indicates that they are on a collision course. Could this course lead to war? The relationship was not always so problematic, but the times of brotherly relations are long gone. China cooperates with India in some forums but has consistently opposed India's aspiration to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council. China's current drive for expansion, coupled with its forceful and assertive foreign policy approach makes it a difficult partner. The growing military power of China represents a challenge to India, although India also invests heavily in its armed forces, including nuclear weapons.

India is an attractive strategic partner in the global confrontation between the West and China. However, India's democracy is under threat, and its government does not simply want to join the Western camp. It pursues a policy of multiple alliances, which is consistent with India's traditional policy of non-alignment. Both countries pursue a geopolitical strategy in Asia, and their global aspirations and visions are at odds with each other. This puts them on a potential collision course.

To manage this crisis, both governments should seek to deescalate by promoting regular communications and refrain from further increasing their armed forces and reinforcing their military infrastructure, particularly in the contested territories.



Wulf, H. (2024). *Indo-Chinese Relations: On a Collision Course* (bicc report). bicc.

RISKY BUSINESS: ENGAGING VIGILANTE GROUPS IN THE LAKE CHAD BASIN

Milena Berks, Oyewole Oginni, Claudia Breitung, Mustapha Alhassan, Allioum Tondandi

Countries in the Lake Chad Basin region benefit from vigilante groups. The risks associated with vigilante operations are borne by the members of these groups and their communities, even when state security forces formally engage vigilante groups. Such a transfer of risk to the groups not only raises ethical concerns but also increases the risk of rivalry and violence.

Based on empirical quantitative and qualitative research conducted as part of a joint project involving the African Union, the United Nations Department of Peace Operations and bicc, this *bicc policy brief* examines the

risks that are associated with the engagement of vigilante groups in the Lake Chad Basin region. It also provides recommendations for risk management and mitigation.



Berks, M., Oginni, O., Breitung, C., Alhassan, M., & Tondandi, A. (2024). *Risky Business: Engaging Vigilante Groups in the Lake Chad Basin* (bicc policy brief). bicc.



bicc policy brief

HOW TO DECOLONISE THE HDP NEXUS?

Esther Meininghaus, Rodrigo Bolaños Suárez, Boubacar Haidara, Birgit Kemmerling, Marie Müller-Koné, Ahmad Al-Khalil, Riyadh Al-Khadhra, Mario Behrens, Flavia Eichmann, Maria Grosz-Ngaté, Fabian Halfpap, Roland Hansen, Thomas Hoerz, Demba Karagnara, Simaya Ladu James, Althea-Maria Rivas, Abdourahman Sow, Rebekka Toyka

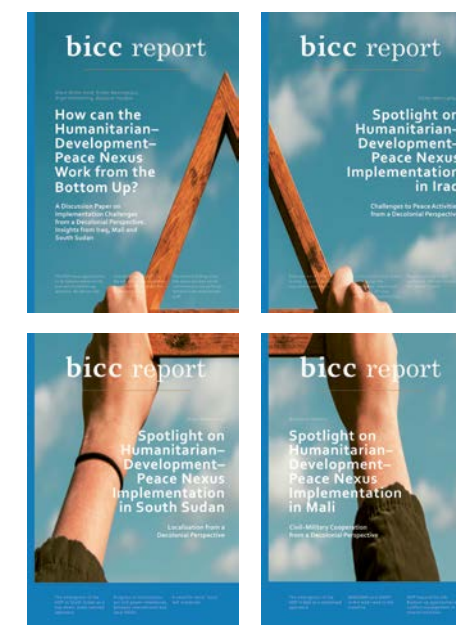
Recent calls to decolonise aid from within (I)NGOs in the aid sector stem from a fundamental critique of the international aid system that emerged from the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020. The decolonial critique draws attention to power imbalances and structural racism that can be traced back to the colonial era. These colonial legacies continue to permeate the international humanitarian system, most visibly in the dominance of international (non-)governmental organisations that shape the aid structure. The “decolonise aid” debate has been taken up

by humanitarian, development and peace-building organisations. It is broadly defined as a process of reflection, critical analysis and action that identifies and dismantles such power imbalances and structural racism in order to work towards a more equitable aid system that focuses on the shared humanity of all staff and the communities they serve.

The decolonial critique is particularly relevant to the humanitarian–development–peace nexus: The HDP nexus debate emerged around the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit

(WHS) as part of the “New Way of Working”, which means better integrating ‘local’ governmental and non-governmental aid actors into the humanitarian system. In line with the Grand Bargain, an agreement that emerged from the WHS, signatories are supposed to work towards “collective outcomes” and “localisation” in a bottom-up approach through joint analysis and direct access to funding for these local actors. The authors argue that the current implementation of the HDP nexus fails to address power asymmetries and structural inequalities in the international aid system. Beyond a bottom-up approach to localisation, they call for a decolonial rethinking that analyses and acknowledges how colonial legacies affect funding flows, the distribution of staff and decision-making power, as well as norms and attitudes within the aid sector.

bicc report



Müller-Koné, M., Meininghaus, E., Kemmerling, B., & Haidara, B. (2024). *How can the HDP Nexus Work from the Bottom Up?: A Discussion Paper on Implementation Challenges from a Decolonial Perspective. Insights from Iraq, Mali and South Sudan* (bicc report). bicc.

journal article

CONCEPTUAL COMPLEXITY ABOUT RETURN MIGRATION OF REFUGEES/ASYLUM SEEKERS

Zeynep Şahin-Mencütek



Return migration is one of the complex categories of migration, which becomes even more complicated in the context of refugees' return to their country of origin. A plethora of terms is used to describe the return of refugees/ asylum seekers, having strong political and policy relevance.

To unpack the features and drivers of conceptual complexity, the author proposes three interrelated arguments.

The first is that labelling—the choice of one concept over another—in return migration often depends on who uses the term (e.g. scholars, policymakers, practitioners, migrants) and in which part of the world.

The second argument is that return, similar to binaries in other areas of migration, is often associated with binaries, such as voluntary and forced return. Despite policy categories that reiterate the 'voluntary' character of return, the actual practices rarely confirm that return is voluntary and often remain in grey areas, as the emerging literature on bordering practices shows.

The third argument is that there are multiple levels at which labelling and binaries are constructed in relation to each other. The identifiable scales include the academic level, the policy level and the migrants themselves.



Şahin-Mencütek, Z. (2024). Conceptual Complexity About Return Migration of Refugees/Asylum Seekers. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 59(7), 2125–2138.

journal article

MULTIDIMENSIONAL MEASURES OF MILITARIZATION (M3)

Markus Bayer, Aurel Croissant, Roya Izadi, Nikitas Scheeder

In this article, we present the novel M3-dataset. This global dataset brings together 30 existing and newly developed indicators and a total of 140,000 observations on three dimensions of material, political, and societal militarization from 1990 to 2020. We introduce a novel, multidimensional concept of militarization, explain the construction of the dataset, data-collection process, and the measures taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the data. We illustrate the usefulness of the dataset for researchers by analyzing for the first time the impact of military policing as one aspect of societal militarization on violence and human rights

violations at the global level. We conclude by discussing the significance of the M3 dataset and outlining how scholars in different fields and with various research interests, including (de-)democratization, armed conflict, and human development, can benefit from incorporating this dataset into their studies.



Bayer, M., Croissant, A., Izadi, R., & Scheeder, N. (2023). Multidimensional Measures of Militarization (M3): A Global Dataset. *Armed Forces & Society*, 51(3), 815–839..



journal article

THE IMPACT OF PRECISION STRIKE TECHNOLOGY ON THE WARFARE OF NON-STATE ARMED GROUPS

Max Mutschler, Marius Bales,
Esther Meinighaus

journal article

INTERSECTING (IM)MOBILITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF DROUGHT, HUNGER AND CONFLICT

Benjamin Etzold, Marie Müller-Koné

Between late 2020 and early 2023, people in the Horn of Africa experienced the worst drought in more than 40 years, of which the world hardly took notice. By the end of 2022, almost 57 million people across eight countries faced a severe food crisis. While Kenya was not the country worst affected in terms of the number of people impacted—the highest level of food insecurity was recorded in Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia—the situation there deteriorated most rapidly over the course of that year. This drought—a failure of five consecutive long and short rainy

seasons over two and a half years—has been linked to an atypical La Niña phenomenon but must also be seen in the context of higher temperatures and greater rainfall variability that are predicted for the Horn of Africa in the years to come. The expected climate change impacts in this region include reduced freshwater availability, reduced crop production and reduced livestock productivity—all of which have serious negative impacts on people's livelihoods and food security as well as on patterns of (im)mobility, as we would argue.

Pastoral people living in remote areas of the Horn of Africa were most seriously affected by the drought. But it would be short-sighted to link this—and other—hunger crises and their impacts solely to natural factors. Poverty, long-standing patterns of marginalisation of rural and, particularly pastoral, communities living in arid and semi-arid lands, economic shocks and dependencies and violent conflict compound the effects of the drought; they co-produce food insecurity and impact on people's mobility. Political contestations and violent conflicts do have particularly serious consequences as they systemically disrupt people's daily lives, including their well-being, food security and mobility (Kemmerling et al., 2022; Martin-Shields & Stojetz, 2019).



Etzold, B., & Müller-Koné, M. (2023). Intersecting (im)mobilities in the context of drought, hunger and conflict – Reflections inspired by research in Kenya. *International Migration* 61(6); 345–348

Mutschler, M., Bales, M., & Meinighaus, E. (2024). The Impact of Precision Strike Technology on the Warfare of Non-State Armed Groups: Case Studies on Daesh and the Houthis. *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 1–28.

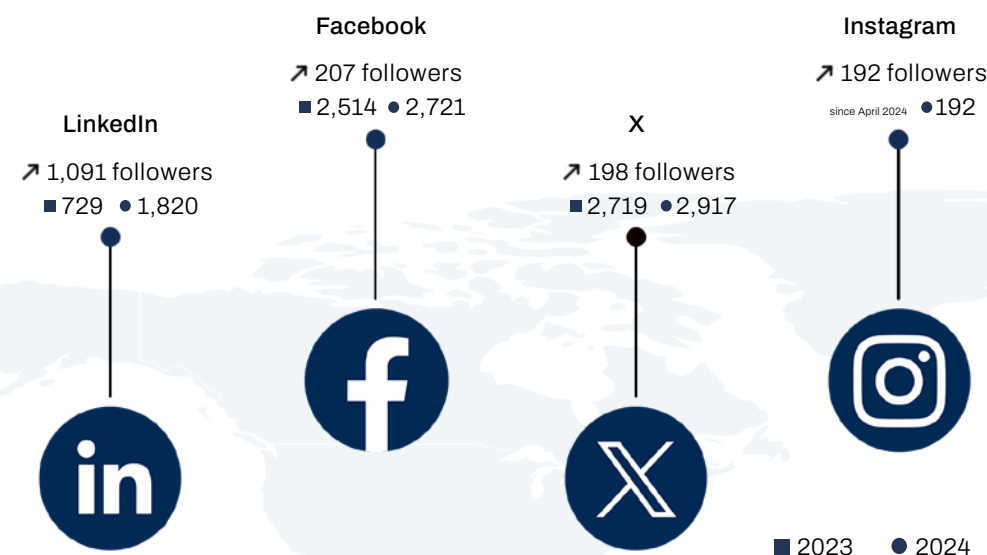


Precision strikes from a distance are a common practice of state warfare. However, the global proliferation of precision-strike technologies, like missiles and armed drones, makes such weapons progressively available to non-state armed groups (NSAGs). We look at Daesh in Syria and Iraq and at the Houthis in Yemen as two case studies to analyse the consequences of this proliferation for non-state warfare. Our focus is the socio-spatial dimension of warfare. We probe to what extent precision strike technology is used to conquer and control territory (solid warfare) or to weaken the enemy network without territorial ambition (liquid warfare). The predominant view in the literature on NSAGs perceives them as would-be state builders who desire to govern and hence, seek to control territory. Our findings support this view, as both Daesh and the Houthis have applied precision strike technologies for solid warfare. However, at the same time, both groups have used these weapons for liquid warfare, too, targeting in particular civilians and civilian infrastructure to weaken the network of their enemies. This poses new questions to scholars of small wars and insurgencies and calls upon policy makers to increase efforts to curb the proliferation of precision strike technologies.

MEDIA & TRANSFER



NETWORK GROWTH



SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILE OVERVIEW



OUR WEBSITES

bbp - Information Portal War and Peace • coreNRW - Connecting Research on Extremism in NRW • FFVT - Forced Migration & Refugee Studies • GAPs - Decentring the Study of Migrant Returns and Readmission Policies in Europe and Beyond • GMI - Global Militarisation Index • Rüstungsexport.info • RAB Germany - Refugee Advisory Board Germany • The Interactive Guide on Small Arms and Light Weapons • SALW control database

10
websites

15
applications

MEDIA PRESENCE BY MEDIUM

Newspaper

95

Television

14

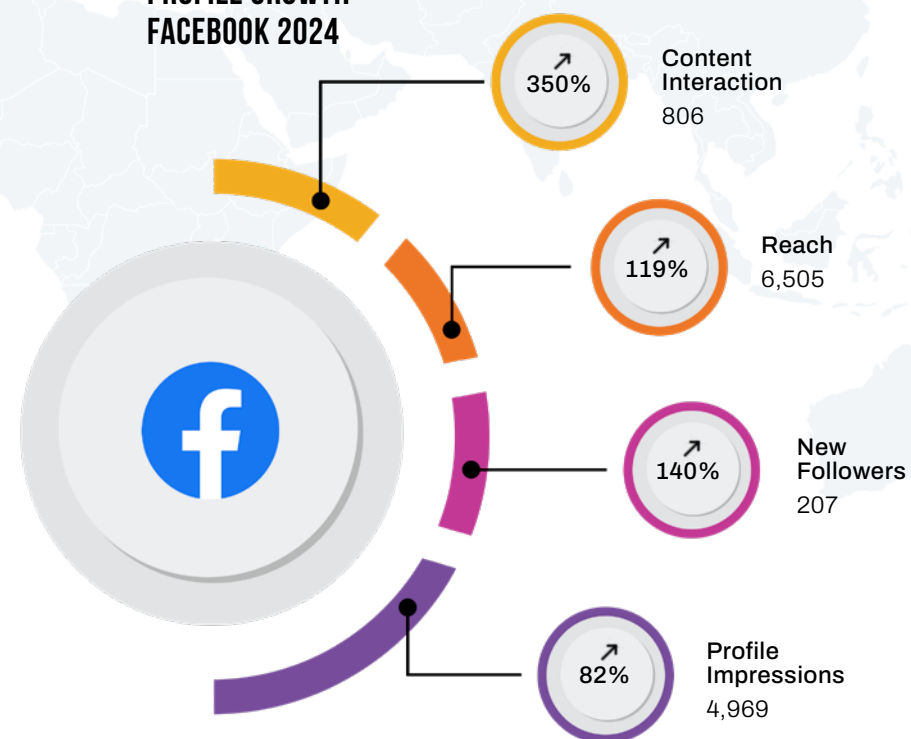
Radio

11

Podcast

4

PROFILE GROWTH FACEBOOK 2024



PEOPLE AT bicc

Our team at bicc deals with a wide range of global topics in Peace and Conflict Studies centring on the conditions, dynamics and consequences of violent conflicts. We strive to find innovative ways to improve the links between research, practice and political decision-making to contribute to a more peaceful world.



Staff

33

Research, Advisory
Services & Capacity
Development

9

Administration
& Organisation

21

Students &
Research
Assistants

DIRECTOR



CONRAD SCHETTER



SUSANNE ZACHARIAS
*Personal Assistant to
the Director*



PINAR REY

SENIOR MANAGEMENT



MARC VON
BOEMCKEN
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IRINA BRÜGGEMANN
*Finance and
Administration*



ELVAN ISIKOZLU
*Advice and
Scientific Transfer*



LARS WIRKUS
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and Data*

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SARAH HOLSCHER



JULIA JAGALSKI



ROSINE JÄGER



GHENWA LICHO



KATRIN MINNICH



MARION SALOMON



THORSTEN SCHMIDT



NINA SUCKRAU

COMMUNICATIONS



VERENA KRAUTTER



ANN-CHRISTIN KOMES



HEIKE WEBB

RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE AND DATA



ROLF ALBERTH



SANTIAGO DUQUE



SILVIA GAIANIGO



LOUAI HADDAD



LIANE HEINZ



TONI HELESIC



MARKUS
KLAUSNITZER



REBECCA
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VOLKER BOGE



JOSEPH DAHER



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DIRK HANSOHM



CORINNA
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MASOOD KAROKHAIL



GEORGE KATETE



KEES KINGMA



FLORIAN KÜHN



JOCelyn MAWDSLEY



LUCY WILLY
MASSOI



ELIZABETH
MUMBI NDUNDA



JANOSCH PRINZ



JOANNE
RICHARDS



SUSANNE SCHMEIDL



ESTER
SERRA MINGOT



VENANCE SHILLING
SALUM



LARRY SWATUK



HERBERT WULF



FATMA YILMAZ-ELMAS

OUR TEAM

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MARKUS BAYER



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MILENA BERKS



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BOLAÑOS SUÁREZ



SASKIA BONIELLO



CLAUDIA BREITUNG



OSMAN BAHADIR
DINCER



MAURICE DORING



BENJAMIN ETZOLD



JOSEPH FARHA



LENA GUESNET



YVAN GUICHAOUA



DAVID HAFNER



BOUBACAR
HAIDARA



SUSANNE HEINKE



ANDREAS
HEINEMANN-GRÜDER



BIRGIT
KEMMERLING



KALIE KERPAÇI



FARYAL KHAN



ARAS KOSAN



MATTHIAS KRÖTZ



ESTHER
MEININGHAUS



KATJA MIELKE



RYAN SWAN



MARIE
MÜLLER-KÖNÉ



MAX MUTSCHLER



OYEWOLE OGinni



EVELYNE
ATIENO OWINO



ZEYNEP
ŞAHİN-MENCÜTEK



LAMIS SALEH



DANIELE SARACINO



CLARA
SCHMITZ-PRANGHE



INNA SUPAC



RYAN SWAN



MAARIT THIEM



RUTH VOLLMER



FIONA WILSHUSEN



BRONWYN
WINCH

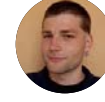


CARINA
YILDIRIM-SCHLÖSING

STUDENT AND RESEARCH ASSISTANTS



NINA BAUM



JARI BERTOLINI



NINA BREITKOPF



BEN BUCHENAU



SELINA ENGELBERTH



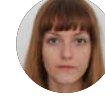
KATHARINA FAIK



HIEN GIANG



ANNA GÜNDÖZ



STELLA HAUK



GESA HIMMELSTOSS



MADITA JOUSSEN



HANNAH JÜLICH



JASON KRÄMER



NELE KERNDT



SONJA LIESCHING



MERLE MÜLLER



TIM MÜLLER



JAMILA NACHID



SARAH N'SABAKA



ANANYA PAL



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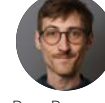
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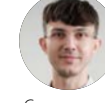
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bicc's Supervisory Board advises its Trustee and oversees the performance of bicc management. Among other things, the Board is responsible for appointing bicc's director and approving bicc's annual work programmes and financial plans.

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- current board members
- former board members

September 2023–October 2025

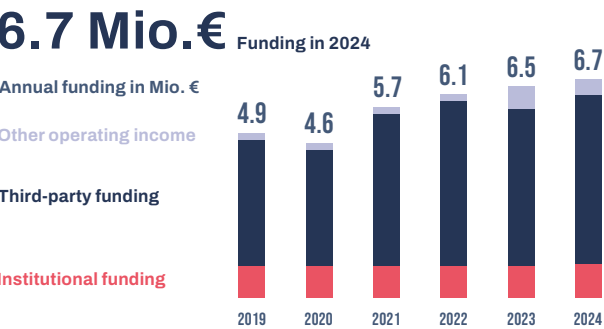
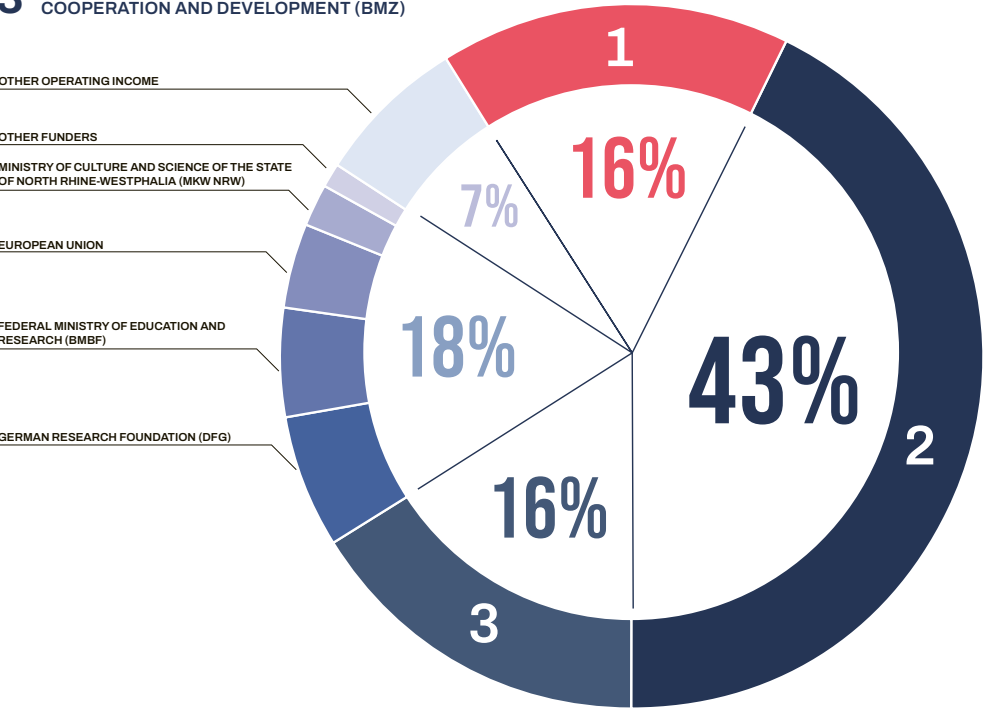
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- 2 GERMAN FEDERAL FOREIGN OFFICE
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Bonn International Centre for Conflict Studies

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Its multidisciplinary approach covers the topics of

- building peace and social cohesion
- militarisation and arms control
- agents and patterns of security and war
- violent environments and infrastructures
- migration and forced displacement

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