Approved research grants 2017
In alphabetical order

Cyrus Samii
New York University

Member of FBA Research Working Group on:
- *Peacekeeping*
- *SSR*

Project title
Social Networks and Reduction of Recidivism in Colombia

Project description
This project looks at the effect of ex-combatants' social networks on integration into the legal labor market as opposed to criminal recidivism during the aftermath of conflict. In particular, we build on recent work by Daly, Paler and Samii (2017) on "wartime networks" that shows the relevance of social networks to understand recidivism among recently demobilized FARC combatants in Colombia. The project proposes to analyze a program that directly intervenes on the FARC ex-combatants' social networks and aims to reduce the strength of wartime connections. We argue that decreasing the pull of wartime networks positively affects the decision to enter into the legal labor market, as oppose to joining illegal activities. Given that we have little empirical evidence of the effect of community-oriented interventions in peacebuilding initiatives, and that the current context of Colombia provides a unique opportunity to study the role of social networks in such contexts, we propose to analyze a randomized intervention that tries to increase positive social contact of former FARC fighters with civilian community members in Colombia.

The study of this project will involve a baseline survey with FARC ex-combatants, the design of a vocational program that fosters group activities that have ex-combatants work closely with non-combatant peers, and a final survey with the same population. The intervention aims to increase social contact of former combatants with community members as part of a vocational educational program. After several weeks of contact and cooperative group work with non-combatants in an educational environment, we expect to see changes in several features of a participant's social network (most importantly, dependency on war-time connections and dominance of such connections in one's social network) that will affect ex-combatants ability to integrate into legal markets.

The study will provide valuable lessons for ex-combatant reintegration programs about the social dimensions of reintegration. We also hope to provide lessons for engaging civilians and civil society in peace processes. We believe that a careful description of the role of social networks is a novel approach that will be useful in providing new tools for peacebuilding policy makers. Evidence of how to effectively integrate ex-combatants to society is crucial; if they find no opportunities to reintegrate, they are more likely to re-join rebellious groups, commit crime, and threaten political stability.

Dara Kay Cohen
Harvard University

Member of FBA Research Working Group on:
- *1325*

Project title
Women, Peace and Security: What are the mechanisms?

Project description
In this project, we explore questions at the intersection of research on gender and political violence. Why do men and women have such different beliefs about the justifiability of war and the use of violence to solve political problems? What are the conditions under which that gap might close? What are the gendered consequences of violence, how long do these last, and how might these affect factors that are critical to post-conflict recovery, such as trust and social cohesion?

The so-called women and peace hypothesis—that women and men have fundamentally different preferences over war and political violence—has strong empirical support in the US and Europe. But limited research in other regions of the world suggests the gender gap in attitudes about war, in which women are far less supportive of violent responses to conflict than men, is not universal. In countries where insecurity is a persistent feature of life, a small number of studies have found that the gender gap disappears completely, or is reversed.

To examine the gender gap in support for war in an insecure and developing world context, with the generous support of a previous grant from FBA, we are currently (of as June 2017) in the process of fielding a survey of 1,000 respondents in the slum areas of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. We selected Haiti because it is an understudied country with a long history of political violence and instability, including the only successful slave revolt in history, a recent civil war, and contemporary gang violence. Our survey will map the nature and extent of the gender gap in Haiti; results from the pilot study of 100 respondents in May 2017 suggest that the gender gap is quite large. But importantly, our survey will include a series of survey experiments aimed at exploring the mechanisms that underlie the gender gap; that is why do these differences exist? To explore these mechanisms about the gender gap, we build on studies from the literature on civil wars, including those that reveal variation in the gendered effects of conflict.

The results of our survey will highlight several mechanisms, including biological differences, family structure (number and sex of children), prior exposure to political violence and traumatic events, and the role of ideology (particularly support for gender equality).

We also explore whether emphasizing the costs of war for women (based on findings from Plumper and Neumayer 2006 on the reduction in female life expectancy as a result of war) or the benefits of war for women (based on findings from Tripp 2015 on political gains for women in the post-conflict period) alters support of war by men and women. Results from the pilot--which should be treated with caution due to the small number of respondents—suggest that men are much less likely to express support for war when exposed to an experimental vignette describing the benefits of war for women; women, however, are unmoved by the vignette. In other words, the gender gap in support for war shrinks considerably when men are exposed to the possibility that women may benefit politically from war. This interesting preliminary finding complicates recent research about the feminist peace, which has found that people who express beliefs about gender equality are less bellicose when it comes to political violence.

Desiree Nilsson
Uppsala University

Member of FBA Research Working Group on:
- *Peacekeeping*

Project title
Closed Doors or Open for Talks? Civil Society Actors in Peace Negotiations

Project description
Mediators engaged in peace efforts to bring civil wars to an end are often faced with the pertinent question of who to include in the peace talks. For example, in a large number of contemporary peace processes, notably those in Colombia, Mali, Syria, and South Sudan, voices have been raised to involve stakeholders from civil society, such as women's groups, human rights groups, or religious associations in the peace negotiations. Yet, we currently lack knowledge concerning several key features of peace negotiations, in particular, the extent to which civil society actors are given a seat at the negotiation table. The purpose of this project is to create a unique dataset covering civil society involvement in peace negotiations across civil wars during the period 1989–2013, which will make it possible, for the first time, to examine the general patterns concerning the involvement of civil society in peace negotiations. This should allow for analysis of a wide range of important questions concerning the role of civil society actors in peace negotiations. For example, under what conditions do civil society actors participate in peace negotiations? Are negotiations that include civil society more or less likely to result in a peace agreement? Does the presence of civil society actors at the negotiation table influence the quality and character of any resulting peace agreement? Increasing our knowledge about the role of civil society actors in peace negotiations is crucial so as to help facilitate better guidance to policymakers working on these important issues.

Govinda Clayton

Centre for Security Studies, ETH Zürich

Member of FBA Research Working Group on:
- *Conflict prevention*

Project title
Civil War Ceasefires – A Data Collection Project

Project description
Ceasefires are an essential component of all peace processes. The transition from violence to peace always requires a settlement on the terms under which belligerents agree to cease hostilities. Creating or sustaining a ceasefire is therefore often a primary focus for mediators and peacekeepers. Yet there is huge variation in the content and timing of ceasefires. Agreements can range from loose temporary and informal arrangements, to detailed legal documents, and can occur prior to, during, or as a culmination of political negotiations. It is not clear in what ways ceasefires influence conflict dynamics, and how the substance and timing of an agreement conditions their effect. To avoid biased assessments of conflict management methods, it is necessary to include ceasefires in model specifications, and consider how different forms of ceasefire complement and constrain conflict management tools. Unfortunately, we currently lack suitable data.

The purpose of this project is to systematically collect data on all ceasefires in African civil conflicts from 1989-2017. The compilation of the database will rely on publicly available news sources, and utilize a coding procedure developed during a prior 6-month pilot project. The funding will provide 1200 hours of research assistance for data coding. The project will produce outputs tailored to both academic and policy communities, and is the result of close collaboration between both groups.

Isak Svensson
Uppsala University

Member of FBA Research Working Group on:
- *Conflict Prevention*

Project title
Conflict Prevention 2.0: Preventing 'transjihadization' of Islamist armed conflicts

Project description
Armed conflicts involving groups with self-proclaimed political Islamist aspirations represent the majority of conflicts in today's world. The most challenging type of Islamist conflicts is in turn 'transjihadist' conflicts, in which rebel demands go beyond the nation-state, for example by demanding the establishment of a caliphate. The increase in such conflicts in recent years is driven almost entirely by the territorial expansion of the Islamic State (IS), which has drawn existing armed conflicts into what is portrayed as a global jihad. IS has created new 'provinces' of its alleged caliphate in other countries, and in several cases (e.g. Afghanistan and Nigeria), initially locally oriented Islamist conflicts have been globalized. Thus, the most significant change is not primarily the increase in Islamist armed conflicts, but how they mutate and change form.

This project will examine the conditions under which Islamist conflicts are transformed into transjihadist variations, and how such processes of transjihadization (a combination of internationalization and radicalization) can be prevented. Data on three different levels will be gathered and analyzed: 1) a global comparative analysis of transjihadist versus other types of Islamist (or Muslim-identity) conflicts; 2) process-tracing of four cases of conflicts that became transjihadist; 3) field-work on a crucial case (the Patani conflict in Southern Thailand) that has so far resisted attempts of internationalization and radicalization. This research project will help us understand how to create greater resilience against attempts of transjihadization. The project will generate one high-impact journal publication, a policy brief, and an article on Mänsklig Säkerhet.

Jana Krause
University of Amsterdam

Member of FBA Research Working Group on:
- *1325*

Project title
A Gender Perspective on Civilian Ceasefire Monitoring and Protection in Myanmar Project

Project description
Countries with higher levels of gender equality are less vulnerable to armed conflict and more likely to build peace after civil war. However, how gender impacts local-level conflicts and the prevention of renewed fighting has remained under-explored. This project examines the local gender dimension of civilian protection and peacebuilding in Myanmar, a country that has recently established a fragile peace with various ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) after decades of civil war. To date, eight out of 15 EAOs have signed ceasefire agreements with the government. Civilian ceasefire monitoring and protection teams have been established in the absence of international peacekeeping support. Civilian monitors and protection workers negotiate with armed groups, engage with conflict-affected communities about the peace process, and report ceasefire compliance and violations to maintain a fragile peace.

Research into civilian ceasefire monitoring and protection is sparse to date. Studies have examined non-violence, civilian agency, and self-protection in conflicts in Colombia, the Philippines, South Sudan, or Nigeria (e.g. Arjona 2016; Kaplan 2017; Krause 2017). However, we lack a thorough gender analysis of civilian self-protection and peacebuilding. In Myanmar, civilians have been pioneering protection practices in difficult-to-access areas. Civilian monitors stressed that gender dynamics are key for effective protection (Interviews, Yangon, 2016). This project aims to fill the existing research gap. It applies a gender perspective on civilian protection and ceasefire monitoring, analyzing how the gender dimension links to effective protection, community resilience, women's empowerment, and sustainable peacebuilding.

Kyle Beardsley
Duke University

Member of FBA Research Working Group on:
- *1325*
- *Conflict Prevention*
- *Peacekeeping*

Project title
The Local Legacies of International Crisis: The Dynamics of Gender Inequality and Social Tension during Threatening Times

Project description
Under what conditions can periods of international crisis offer an opportunity for social reforms to take root, leading to outcomes of greater gender equality and reduced social tensions? Conversely, under what conditions can periods of international crisis entrench practices that marginalize groups based on gender, ethnic or political identities?

Answering these questions can shed important light on understanding threats to human rights and threats of political violence in many countries across the globe. More practically, they can help peacemakers and peacebuilders better anticipate when their efforts might open up space for gender and other social reforms and when their efforts might contribute to more pervasive gender inequality and social tensions.

This project aims to assess what, if any, shifts in women's empowerment and social tensions occur in the midst of international crises. To this end, the PI and researchers on the project will develop a theoretical framework by which to understand the impacts that international threats have on prevailing views and practices of gender inequality and pluralistic inclusion. After positing observable implications, the PI and researchers will build a dataset of changes in gender inequality and social tensions during international crises. The PI and researchers will then use quantitative analysis on the occurrence of shifts in gender inequality and social tensions during periods of international crisis. The data will be published online and available to the public.

Pip Nicholson
Melbourne Law School

Member of FBA Research Working Group on:
- *Rule of Law*

Project title
Managing inclusion for sustainable peace through constitutional implementation

Project description
Constitutions are integral to peacebuilding efforts and effective rule of law in fragile and conflict affected (FCA) settings. Inclusive peacebuilding and constitution making processes are widely recognized as critical to sustainable peace. This project will focus on a hitherto under-researched and less understood issue: the implementation of constitutions in FCA contexts and the nexus with sustainable peace. Constitutional texts and structures created in FCA contexts use 'inclusion mechanisms' to address the root causes of conflict (whether socio-cultural, ethnic, economic, religious or other). Examples include reforms to parliamentary and executive structures to reflect power-sharing agreements; restrictions on political parties; revised electoral processes. Constitutional structures such as federalism may mitigate the risk of further conflict by accommodating the interests of diverse groups within the state. Human rights commitments may be implemented in domestic law. Without effective implementation of these and other inclusion mechanisms in FCA settings, the risk of return to conflict is ever-present. By understanding the drivers and barriers to full implementation and applying these lessons to peacebuilding, constitution-building and rule of law practice, we can enhance prospects for sustainable peace. The project will focus on Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka and Kyrgyzstan, case studies chosen for their diverse causes of conflict and approaches to constitutional implementation. A report will highlight relevant lessons for peacebuilding and rule of law practitioners, drawing on evidence gained from literature reviews, case studies and forums.

Richard Caplan
University of Oxford

Member of FBA Research Working Group on:
- *SSR*

Project title
After Exit: Assessing the Consequences of UN Peacekeeping Withdrawal

Project description
This project will document conditions on the ground in states that have played host to United Nations peacekeeping operations (UNPKOs) immediately *after* those operations have come to an end and peacekeeping forces have withdrawn. The project is needed because we currently have a rich understanding of the intended and unintended consequences of UNPKOs while missions are ongoing but only a limited understanding of social, economic, and political conditions following the withdrawal of peacekeeping forces. Our knowledge of the longer-term legacies left by UNPKOs is also limited. This study aims to redress this imbalance.

To gauge the impact of peacekeeper withdrawal on formerly 'peacekept' states, we will take quantitative and qualitative measures of three key indicators of state capacity over the short-term period following UNPKO withdrawal: security capacity, governmental/administrative capacity, and productive/extractive capacity. We will focus on state capacity, in particular, since we recognize that UN peacebuilding now often entails statebuilding and, thus, to assess the efficacy of UN interventions we need to measure the capacity of states that have been 'built' by the UN -- after the scaffolding of UN support has come down. A focus on state capacity is also sufficiently broad to allow for consideration of the diverse unintended social legacies of UN peacekeeping interventions.

To address these issues, we will combine cross-national and within-case quantitative analysis with qualitative investigation of selected cases of recent and impending UNPKO withdrawal. Our analyses will be based on available datasets and documents and also focused interviews. While these data sources will provide 'top-down' indicators of state capacity we are keen to gauge and report on citizens' perception of state functionality following UN withdrawal as well so we are applying for FBA support in order to run a series of large-m surveys of citizen attitudes and experiences in formerly 'peacekept' states.

Sabrina Karim
Cornell University

Member of FBA Research Working Group on:
- *Peacekeeping*
- *1325*

Project title
Understanding the Protection and Prevention Pillars of UNSCR 1325: Data Collection on Sexual Violence in Liberia

Project description
U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent Resolutions have identified sexual violence as a threat to peace and security. While there has been significant research and attention on conflict-related sexual violence, there is less knowledge about sexual violence that happens after a war ends. This project allows the PI to continue data collection efforts in Monrovia, Liberia to study post-conflict sexual violence. She has been collecting data from five one stop rape centers in Monrovia since 2015. The FBA award last year allowed the PI to collect data instantaneously from the centers using tablets, allowed for the geocoding of incident reports, enabled a follow up survey of 2015 survivors, and led to four focus group discussion with perpetrators. One of the main findings from the research indicated that there is massive under-reporting of sexual violence by adult women. Over 75% of the cases reported at of minors. Thus, the 2018 grant includes a representative survey to better understand whether adult women are indeed under-represented in sexual violence reporting in Monrovia as well as research on better understanding why adult women are not reporting incidents of sexual violence to the authorities. Continued funding will also allow the PI to collect data from the clinics in 2018 to improve the prediction of neighborhood characteristics that contribute to higher levels of sexual violence. The data generated from the grant has already informed practitioner and policymaker decisions in Liberia and will continue to do so. Moreover, the project serves the goals of the Swedish Embassy in Liberia, and will greatly contribute to the overall understanding about how to address sexual violence in post-conflict states.

Summer Lindsey

Columbia University

Member of FBA Research Working Group on:
- *1325*

Project title

Protection Norms: Understanding changes in gender roles after armed conflict in eastern DR

Project description

This project is part of a dissertation that examines how armed conflict shapes gender norms in eastern DR Congo. My previous research has shown that armed conflict affects community norms for punishing rape and domestic violence in opposite ways and for men and women differently. These findings cannot be explained by current theories, which predict that norms around gender-based crimes such as rape and domestic violence are affected by conflict similarly. I find that conflict exposure increases the acceptability of domestic violence among women and decreases the acceptability of rape among men. This finding lends support to a theory of protective masculinities, a concept that is underexplored in the literature on gender norms and armed conflict. Yet, in-depth qualitative research designed specifically to probe how norms of protection are associated with conflict is needed to further link my theory of protective masculinities and the findings. To this end, I will conduct qualitative research in two villages in eastern DR Congo using interview methods such as timelines and narrative focal points to probe how armed conflict has shifted masculinities, femininities and norms of protection. This project will provide a new understanding of gender norms that emerge in the wake of armed conflict in an area where there is intense ongoing interest in advocacy work to improve the lives of women. This research thus informs the nature of these interventions as well as key academic debates.