

EVIDENCE REPORT

No 198

Addressing and Mitigating Violence

The Violent Politics of Informal Work, and How Young People Navigate Them: A Conceptual Framework

Marjoke A. Oosterom with Caroline Kache, Daniel Mususa and Lloyd Pswarayi

June 2016

The IDS programme on Strengthening Evidence-based Policy works across seven key themes. Each theme works with partner institutions to co-construct policy-relevant knowledge and engage in policy-influencing processes. This material has been developed under the Addressing and Mitigating Violence theme.

The development of this material has been led by the Institute of Development Studies who holds the copyright. The author would like to acknowledge the contributions of Caroline Kache, Daniel Mususa and Lloyd Pswarayi of the Research and Advocacy Unit, Harare in carrying out the fieldwork.

The material has been funded by UK aid from the UK Government, however the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the UK Government's official policies.

AG Level 2 Output ID: 627

THE VIOLENT POLITICS OF INFORMAL WORK, AND HOW YOUNG PEOPLE NAVIGATE THEM: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Marjoke A. Oosterom^a with Caroline Kache,^b Daniel Mususa^b and Lloyd Pswarayi^b

^a Institute of Development Studies, UK

^b Research and Advocacy Unit, Harare, Zimbabwe

June 2016

This is an Open Access publication distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are clearly credited.

First published by the Institute of Development Studies in June 2016

© Institute of Development Studies 2016

IDS is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England (No. 877338).

Contents

	Abbreviations	2
1	Introduction	3
2	Conceptual framework	5
	2.1 Dimension I: The political nature of the local economy	5
	2.2 Dimension II: Social navigation and situated agency	6
	2.3 Dimension III: Youth identities and work	7
3	Youth and (un)employment: key concepts	9
	3.1 Youth and diversity	9
	3.2 Youth and agency	11
	3.3 Identity and the meaning of work	12
4	Youth and the informal economy	14
	4.1 Introduction	14
	4.2 Politics and networks in the informal economy	15
	4.3 The informal economy as a site for identity formation and social practice	16
	4.4 Agency and identity in areas affected by violence or conflict	19
	4.5 Conclusion: propositions for research	21
5	Zimbabwean youth navigating the politics of informal work	23
	5.1 Introduction	23
	5.2 Country context	23
	5.3 Case study site and methodology	24
	5.4 Dimension I: Nature of local economy in Murehwa	26
	5.5 Dimension II: Situated agency	28
	5.5.1 Avoidance	29
	5.5.2 Compliance and disguise	30
	5.5.3 Support	31
	5.5.4 Resistance	32
	5.6 Dimension III: Youth identities and work	33
6	Concluding remarks	36
	References	37
Figures		
Figure 2.1	Conceptual framework: youth identity and economic and political agency	6
Tables		
Table 5.1	Numbers of male and female participants per research method	25

Abbreviations

DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FGD	focus group discussion
ICT	information and communications technology
KCC	Kampala City Council
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change (Zimbabwe)
MDC-T	Movement for Democratic Change MDC-Tsvangirai
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NYS	National Youth Service (Zimbabwe)
PDP	People's Democratic Party (Zimbabwe)
RAU	Research and Advocacy Unit
RDC	Rural District Council (Zimbabwe)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front

1 Introduction

This report explores the linkages between young people's economic engagement and their social and political engagement in contexts of violence in Africa. The enquiry started from the assumption that, in the everyday lives of young people in Africa, engagement in formal or informal livelihood activities is rarely separated from their social lives and politics, especially the politics that operate in the local economy. As young people are embedded in social and, possibly, also in political relationships, the ways in which they pursue opportunities for work will depend not only on their skills and demand for labour, but on their navigation of the political actors that shape the nature of the local labour market and economy. These issues become all the more complex in settings that are in the middle of, or recovering from, violent conflict; or are otherwise affected by high levels of violence. In these settings, the politics of the local economy might be entangled with the dynamics that sustain the violence.

Why is this important, and why now? The year 2015 saw an historical peak in youth unemployment, with 74 million young people in the 15 to 24 year age group unemployed worldwide (UNDP 2015). The highest youth unemployment rate was in the Arab states with 29 per cent; the youth unemployment rates in East Asia and Pacific and in sub-Saharan Africa are respectively 18.6 per cent and 13.5 per cent, while the world's average is 15 per cent (*ibid.*: 64). In policy circles and in the field of international development, high levels of youth unemployment are considered problematic for a number of reasons. First of all, it will have a negative impact on young people as they seek to sustain their livelihoods and further the development and wellbeing of their families, and it will negatively affect economic development of the country at large. Second, the presence of demographic youth bulges (where youth form the majority of the population) and youth unemployment are regularly associated with increased levels of instability in a country and, in the age of the so-called 'war on terrorism', with the increased risk of radicalisation that encourages young people to join extremist groups (UNDP 2015), despite the fact that there are major evidence gaps to support these claims (Cramer 2010).

The association of large numbers of unemployed youth with instability has urged international development actors to develop and support youth employment and entrepreneurship programmes, many of which aim to not just improve young people's employability and material conditions, but also to foster peace and conflict transformation (Boudreaux 2007; Williams 2008). Given the importance of informal work for young people, there are also calls to focus interventions on the informal economy (Fox, Senbet and Simbanegavi 2016). However, others argue that the informal economy cannot provide definite and sustainable solutions because it cannot absorb all unemployed youth (Hansen 2010). More critical voices, such as Munive (2010), point out that too often ideas about the 'crisis of youth' means that the issue of youth (un)employment is securitised by state actors and international agencies, and that young people are objectified. Moreover, there are many 'unknowns' about the linkages between forms of youth engagement in the economic, social and political sphere, particularly for contexts of violence. Concerning entrepreneurship, Tobias, Mair and Barbosa-Leiker (2013) argue that little is known about the mechanisms that might lead to entrepreneurship playing a role in promoting peace, and in general there is only fragmented knowledge about how entrepreneurship can produce social change. There is, therefore, a need for critical research into how young people deal with unemployment and navigate opportunities in the informal sector, and how this might relate to other forms of social and political action.

The objective of this Evidence Report is to develop a conceptual framework for studying the links between young people's economic activities in the informal economy and forms of social and political engagement, in contexts affected by violent conflict. The report puts the agency of young people at the centre of the enquiry, and relates this to the question of youth identity: young people's awareness about what 'youth' means in a particular context, how this has implications for their agency, and their perspectives on how work relates to the process of 'becoming' adults. This requires attention to be paid to social differentiation among the highly diverse social category of 'youth' and the multiple identities that young people ascribe to, which affect their experiences and possibilities in the informal economy as well as their agency.

The conceptual framework will enable research on the politics of youth employment and youth entrepreneurship, and the meaning of work for youth identities, to address the following questions that are relevant for policy and programmes: How can programmes that support economic activities among youth be implemented with due attention for local and national politics? Might these programmes be improved in a way that they may also strengthen social and political engagement among youth?

2 Conceptual framework

The objective of this study was to formulate a conceptual framework for research on the linkages between young people's economic, social and political engagement in contexts of violence, thus placing young people's agency at the centre. An important part of the enquiry therefore entailed a literature review of studies focusing on youth agency and identity, the politics that govern the informal economy, and forms of social and political action in relation to informal work. The majority of the studies included in the review for this report were carried out in (post-)conflict situations or highly violent settings. A number of studies did not focus on young people, but they have been included in the report because they further thinking about what youth agency in relation to work might entail in violent settings.

Based on the literature review, a number of propositions were formulated that describe the linkages between social, economic and political engagement in violent settings. First of all, the nature of the local economy can be deeply political and political actors shape the economy through formal and informal practices, with implications for young people. Second, in their pursuit of economic opportunities in contexts of violence, young people are required to navigate the politics of the local economy, and this includes navigating potentially violent political actors. Third, the agency that supports young people's social navigation is 'situated agency', which means it is informed by the social networks and relationships in which young people are embedded, as well as the cultural models that define appropriate/expected behaviours for young men and women. Finally, the local (informal) economy is more than a space where young people can earn an income. It is a site for social practice, where young people interact with peers and construct their identities in interaction with their social context. Through their participation in these networks they may also learn how to navigate the politics in the informal economy, in order to access economic opportunities.

This leads to a conceptual framework with three dimensions:

1. the nature of the local economy;
2. social navigation and situated agency;
3. youth identity.

Figure 2.1 describes the relationships between the key concepts of these three dimensions. The remaining part of this section elaborates the conceptual framework.

2.1 Dimension I: The political nature of the local economy

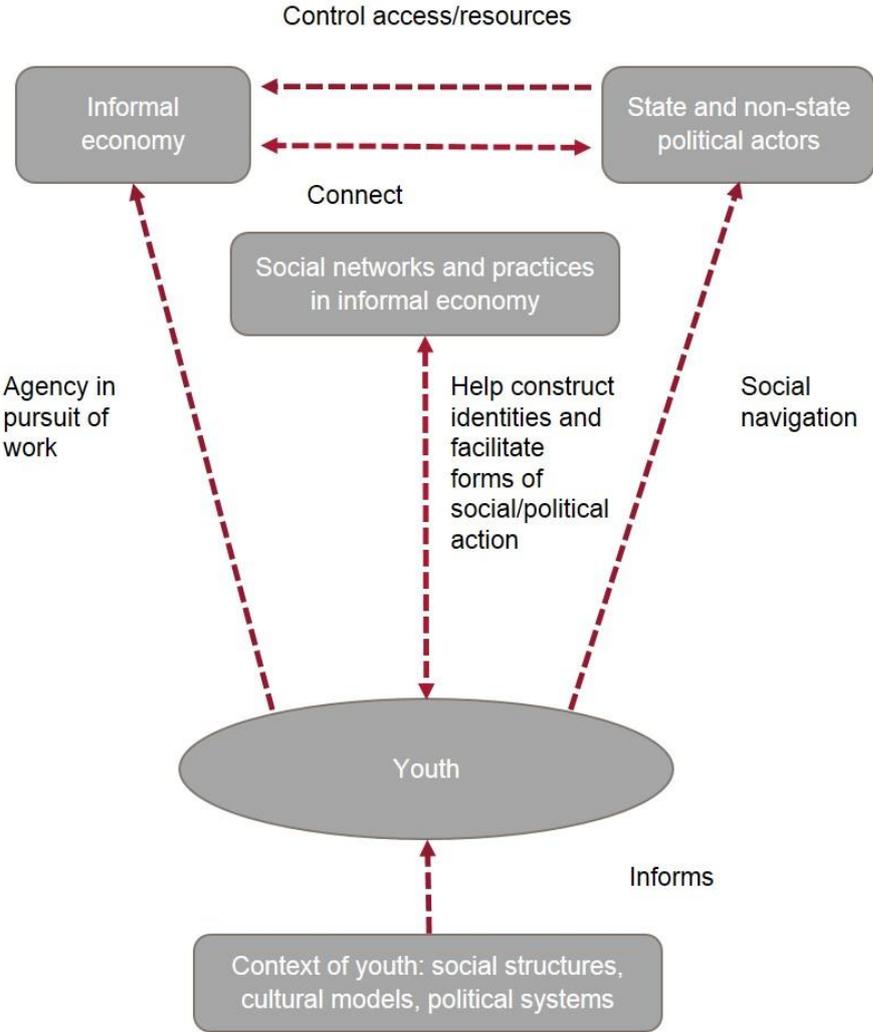
Several empirical studies discussed in this report show that the boundaries between the market and the state, and between the formal and informal economy are permeable. Informal networks and practices cut across the boundaries. Albeit highly context-dependent, the linkages between political actors and the local economy significantly shape the nature of the local economy. Political actors may include state actors and (state-sponsored) non-state actors, who exercise power in the public domain to accumulate and mobilise resources, and shape the institutions that organise the social, political and economic sphere. Political actors might dominate important sectors of the local economy, run trades and businesses, or act as patrons to businesses. As gatekeepers they may mediate access to jobs and livelihoods.

In (post-)conflict situations and violent settings, political actors and entrepreneurs may seek to protect their interests and resources by using violence, or the threat of violence. The politics at play in the informal economy are therefore potentially violent. The threat or the use

of violence can be an effective instrument for denying people access to certain areas to start a business, or to exclude them from professional and economic networks.

These conditions have implications for young people’s opportunities in the local economy, and for their agency. Research on how young people exercise agency when looking for work therefore requires an analysis of the political nature of the local economy. This includes an analysis of the political actors and their formal and informal practices that regulate economic activity.

Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework: youth identity and economic and political agency



Source: Author’s own.

2.2 Dimension II: Social navigation and situated agency

In contexts of violent conflict, or high levels of violent crime, the need for social navigation of political actors is crucial. All young people exercise agency in dealing with adverse contexts, but they often need to assess trade-offs and sometimes they are forced to opt for less ideal outcomes. The definition of *agency* used here, then, is ‘the capacity to reflect and act’, and *social navigation* is defined according to Vigh (2006: 13) as the ways in which agents reflect upon the real and imagined environment, and how they navigate the networks and events as they move within fluctuating social structures. Different forms of agency may involve more or less risk, and there is a spectrum of forms of agency ranging from avoidance of political

actors, to compliance and accommodation, with varying degrees of defiance and resistance. The spectrum thus represents degrees in the extent to which agency might lead to more or less exposure in the public domain, in particular in relation to political actors.

The agency of young people that supports their social navigation is situated agency. Concerning *situated agency*, this framework will address the ways in which agency of young people is informed by the social and political networks and relationships in which they are embedded, as well their positionality through the social identities they ascribe to. Young people are embedded in social relationships and are socially positioned *vis-à-vis* age groups and other social and political structures. Situated agency matters for the kinds of economic opportunities and work that young people pursue. Family members and peers are particularly important for young people, who may mediate opportunities, placements and apprenticeships, and destinations for labour migration, or restrict young people's choices and possibilities. Work itself, then, can enable agency in others' spheres: new networks, forms of social engagement and possibly political influence outside the workplace. In other words, economic agency may facilitate social and political engagement. A cross-cutting issue is that young people's experiences of insecurity, politics and (un)employment are strongly gendered, as are their responses. Intersecting identities like gender, social-economic background, age cohort, and ethnicity and religion also inform experiences of insecurity and agency.

2.3 Dimension III: Youth identities and work

This dimension explicitly addresses the link between youth identity and work. This report adopts a social-constructivist approach to the meaning of youth identity. How society defines youth, how youth see themselves, the cultural models that define what is expected of young men and young women, and the specific social identities that youth ascribe to themselves such as gender, age cohort and ethnicity: all of this defines what it means to 'be' a young person at a certain point in time. At the same time, in this conceptual framework a youth identity is also seen as '*a process of social becoming*': youth is a period in which identities form, again informed by the social relations and networks that young people are embedded in. The conceptual framework pays attention to the real and imagined identities of young people as important factors in the choices they make: their aspirations about the future and the kind of person they want to be, may inform their efforts in the present.

The workplace can be seen as a site for social practice, and a site of negotiation and contestation. Having work can be constitutive of the process of social becoming as a young person, since work can be accompanied by having a group of peers who share certain values, modes of organisation and social practices; and/or hierarchical institutions that teach young people norms and values. To understand the meaning of work in young people's lives means going beyond focusing on what one earns, to include a focus on the immaterial and intangible aspects of work such as the status and the social networks that work can bring. At the same time, *not* having work or being unemployed can also be constitutive of youth identity, as Jeffrey's concept of 'unemployed masculinity' illustrates (2008).

This report will discuss a number of instances in which a sector in the informal economy, like bike riders, work as an identity group, with social boundaries between 'insiders' and 'outsiders', and with strong conventions and institutions that regulate the group. In these instances the young workers were renegotiating what it means to be young and reframing certain cultural models, while others in society may see a certain profession or economic activity as deviant from desirable youth behaviour. Hence, work can be a site of negotiation and contestation over youth identities. Particular identity groups that form through work can form the foundation for social and political action, thus linking back to the previous dimension.

The next sections in this report will discuss the literature review on which this conceptual framework was based. Section 3 discusses some of the key concepts: youth, (un)employment, identity and agency. Section 4 discusses a selected number of studies that were found to be particularly useful for exploring the linkages between youth, work and forms of social and political engagement, with specific reference to contexts affected by violent conflict and high levels of violence. After this review of the existing literature, Section 5 presents the results of the pilot of the framework in Zimbabwe.

3 Youth and (un)employment: key concepts

3.1 Youth and diversity

One of the first issues one encounters when entering the diverse field of youth studies is the challenge of defining 'youth'. It is common to use age-based definitions, which have enabled governments and international actors to target their youth policies and programmes to a clearly defined section of the population. UNICEF's widely applied definition puts the age band for youth at 15 to 24 years old, whereas many African countries and institutions such as the African Union Youth Charter stretch the age band and define youth as those aged 15 to 35 (Gupte, te Lintelo and Barnett 2014). However, it is commonly understood that youth is primarily a socially constructed category. Youth represents a transitional category of people who are entering adulthood (Ismail 2016). Society has certain expectations of what adult roles and responsibilities entail (Abbink and Van Kessel 2005; De Boeck and Honwana 2005; Honwana 2011; Ukeje and Iwilade 2012), and specifies the social markers that mark the transition from youth to adult irrespective of age. Typical markers are marriage and starting a family, and the transition from being a dependant of a household to becoming a contributor. Youth unemployment is therefore associated with large numbers of young people who are stuck in 'waithood' (Singerman 2007; Honwana 2011). However, it is clear that young people are not spending their time 'waiting' but are constantly engaging in creative and innovative acts to pursue their aspirations (Locke and te Lintelo 2012).

Whether using age-based or socially constructed definitions, the label 'youth' misrepresents an extremely diverse population group as largely homogenous, while young people's experiences of life and work are strongly influenced by gender, by the age cohort they belong to, whether a young person was raised in urban or rural settings or migrated, and by other intersecting identities (Gupte *et al.* 2014). Social differentiation within the social category of youth will have implications for how different groups have access to formal and informal work, which opportunities they can pursue, structural positions that influence their agency, and for how they experience their work or unemployment. There are age and gender-based hierarchies in the informal economy, which make certain jobs accessible only to certain people and curtail upward mobility (Hansen 2010; Chen 2014).

Young people are not just economic agents; they are socially situated and embedded in social relationships. Çelik (2008) highlights that unemployment is usually seen as an attribute to the individual agent, but the impact of unemployment on the individual will also depend on other factors, notably social relationships to the family, and welfare regimes offered by the state. Jeffrey (2008) agrees with the widely accepted convention that class no longer *determines* people's identity, mobility and career, but he argues that class, together with other intersecting axes of inequality such as ethnicity, religion, and caste, shape the abilities of young people to navigate economic uncertainty and the options they have available. Writing about educated unemployed men in India, Jeffrey *et al.* (2008) show that those belonging to higher castes were better connected than men from lower castes, and were able to use those connections to find reasonably secure work in the informal economy.

Even today, much of the generic literature on young people and (un)employment pays little attention to gender dynamics. As young people often live with parents or relatives, these social relations matter for their opportunities to find work. For instance, Çelik writes that both young men and women in Turkey are encouraged to find a house of their own and relocate when they find employment in the public sector. However, families will let their sons relocate for private jobs, but usually not their daughters, afraid that the environment might not be 'proper'. Certain families prefer their daughters not to work outside the home, for it might

adversely impact their marriage prospects. In Africa, 25 per cent of women aged 15 to 19 have had their first child or are pregnant, while men become parents at a later age. Women therefore have to make choices about whether to continue education and find work much earlier, and must consider the trade-offs with respect to child care (Fox *et al.* 2016). There is well-established evidence that women are largely included in the most vulnerable, low-paid segments of the informal economy, and that their incorporation into the informal labour market only adds to the burden of providing for and taking care of their families in a context of unemployment among men (Meagher 2010; Chen 2014; Kabeer, Milward and Sudarshan 2013). Women may avoid certain forms of informal work even when these pay better but are considered risky. Lahai (2012) for instance describes that women in urban Sierra Leone opt for selling cold water rather than foreign currency, which men tend to do, because carrying cash might expose them to violence out in the streets and from their husbands. There is also 'invisible' productivity: large numbers of women are engaged in economic activities from their homes, like tailoring, food catering, or running a small food stall (Hiralal 2010). Young women's engagement in unpaid care and domestic work, often to support the labour of other family members, is still too often not recognised as a productive activity by society and the state.

Youth employment was linked to stability and security after a number of studies argued that countries that have a 'youth bulge' risk experiencing instability and violence. Kaplan's work (1994) on West Africa was one of the first to make a connection between insecurity and the presence of masses of unemployed, dissatisfied youth. Several studies provided statistical evidence that shows that most wars take place in 'young nations' (Leahy *et al.* 2007; Cincotta 2008). The 2011 *World Development Report* (World Bank 2011) refers to unemployment and idleness as key factors that drive young people's involvement in violence, particularly young men. In post-conflict situations, youth unemployment is usually considered a risk especially when high numbers of young ex-combatants are struggling to find meaningful work (Munive 2010). Relating unemployed youth to participation in violence has led to critiques from various sides. Such views typify unemployed, mainly male, youth as violent. Moreover, many countries with youth bulges have not experienced civil war (Sommers 2011). Assertions that link unemployed (male) youth to violence tend to overlook the structural inequalities and major challenges that put young people themselves at risk and cause youth marginalisation, and ignore social and political structures that cause violence (Munive 2010; Richards 1997, 2002; Utas 2005).

Young people are targeted by state-building and development interventions, guided by the rationale that young people can contribute to peace-building when they are properly employed (Munive 2010). In Liberia following the civil war, for instance, the focus on young people by the government and the international community is underpinned by the belief that economic marginalisation was the key motivator for young people to join rebel groups (Munive 2010). Youth (un)employment has become a political language; it shapes the encounters between young people and the state bureaucracy, and frames a new relationship between young people, the state and the international community. The discourse tends to disregard the numerous ways in which young people are engaged in the informal economy, and state officials speak dismissively of young people's economic activities, referring to them as 'hustling' and 'vending'. Young people themselves express their desire to find formal office jobs, of which there are few. Munive therefore warns that the emphasis on formal employment may create unattainable expectations among young people, possibly undermining the fragile peace, and asks whether and how their activities in the informal sector could be recognised and qualified (2010: 335).

3.2 Youth and agency

Why is it relevant to study agency among young people, and why assume it is any different from anyone else's agency, particularly adults? Given the conceptual challenge to define 'youth' and the social diversity within 'youth' as a social category it is problematic to come up with a definition of 'youth agency' that applies to all young people. There is, however, a rationale for looking at agency among young people. This is informed by sociological approaches to agency, which emphasise agency as relational, thus dependent on specific social situations (Utas 2005: 407). Agency is informed by and can inform social structures. When seeing young people as an identity group, who occupy a position in society and live with specific cultural models, expectations and social conventions about what it means to be a youth, there will be structural constraints to finding work that are specific to young people. Social conventions will also shape what forms of work are considered 'proper' for young men and women. Hence, there is also a need to focus specifically on agency among young people.

Bordonaro and Payne (2012) explain how one of the challenges for understanding young people's agency is that their actions are often contrasted with normative conceptions about what behaviour is deemed appropriate for youth, the kind of activities they should engage in, the spaces and places they can use. They point to the tension between, on the one hand, recognising young people as agents and their right to participation and, on the other hand, policies and interventions that seek to discipline or re-educate young people to adopt particular kinds of behaviour, especially when young people's actions challenge a certain moral or political order. Which agency is deemed 'good' thus depends on the context in which it is exercised, and on who asks the question. Neo-liberal approaches to agency emphasise taking responsibility, autonomy and self-sufficiency (*ibid.*) and therefore within the context of capitalist markets, good behaviour is that of the youth entrepreneur who creates opportunities, while deviant behaviour is that of the unemployed youth who seems to take no action. Podder (2015) contends that young people exercise 'subaltern agency' to emphasise both their positionality (youth as a marginalised population group) and the nature of agency (potentially subversive, challenging structures).

The question of youth agency has received much attention regarding contexts of violent conflict and civil war. Here, precisely the interaction between agency and the dynamic environment that conflict creates comes centre-stage, as something that evolves in response to this dynamic environment. Writing about young people in war-torn Guinea Bissau, Vigh (2006) introduces the term *social navigation* to describe how young people try to shape their life trajectories in an environment that is constantly in flux. He contends that agents plan and act upon the real and imagined environment, and in relation to the imagined future position and possibilities of movement. Since young people move in instable environments, they will have to adjust their actions and trajectories constantly while taking the movements in their environment into account. Utas describes the distinction between tactics and strategies, used by Honwana (2005) and De Certeau (1984). Tactic agency is a short-term response to society's structures, which Honwana (2005) links to the marginalised people in society, while those who are in a position to influence their future use strategic agency.

There is a tendency to stress that young people have agency and are not merely victims of violent conflict. Indeed, contexts of civil war and violent conflict can even open up opportunities for young people, as has been described in detail about the wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone, when young people joined insurgent groups to gain status, power over 'big men', and access to resources, particularly land (Tom 2014), and when young women were able to challenge gender hierarchies (Utas 2005). At the same time, this emphasis on agency has led to normative definitions of agency that stress the 'ability to influence processes or structures', doing something 'productive' and making improvements to one's life. However, several authors show that young people's agency may be 'ambiguous agency'

(Bordonaro and Payne 2012). In these contexts they often have to choose between sub-optimal pathways, make high-risk choices and actively place themselves in dependant positions in patron–client relationships (Seymour 2014), and their most important form of agency may be avoidance or withdrawal (Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014; Seymour 2012).

3.3 Identity and the meaning of work

Having meaningful, paid work is important for the transition from youth to adulthood, and acquiring an adult identity. What is often overlooked is that the forms of paid work that young people are involved in are important for the construction of youth identities in various ways. Different types of work have different forms of status attached to them, both from the perspective of young people and the adult generations. Rather than for simply materialistic purposes of getting an income, young people may pursue the intangible outcomes of doing certain kinds of work: the lifestyle or subculture associated with doing such work, the places where one can go. It is therefore important to look beyond the material benefits of work and see how intangible aspects of work shape youth identities. Likewise, the lack of formal and informal work can give impetus to certain ‘unemployment identities’ (Jeffrey 2008).

Young people navigate not only economic opportunities, they also navigate culturally defined norms and expectations, and cultural models imposed by others in society, including about what good moral behaviour is for young people and what forms of work are considered appropriate for young men and women. This touches upon a potentially important distinction between young people and adults; and the different cultural models and everyday discourses about morality that prescribe moral behaviour for young people. These can pose real constraints to what young people see as feasible economic options and what they assess as socially accepted forms of work (Bürge 2011). Building on Foucault, Bürge (2011: 66) conceptualises the navigation between different sets of constraints, economic and moral, as ‘moral navigation’. Evidently, cultural models are strongly gendered and shaped by other intersecting identities, and therefore social navigation will look different for young people belonging to various identity groups.

Part of young people’s trajectories of self-actualisation is how they negotiate such norms and expectations; they may confirm or challenge them. Important for the purpose of this report, is that young men and women’s agency in looking for work is partly informed by their social-economic backgrounds, of which identity is an important part, as well as by these sets of expectations, norms and duties in relation to their youth identity. At the same time, young people can choose certain economic activities in order to belong to or actualise an identity, or make up for the missing elements of an aspired identity and ideas about what appropriate youth behaviour is. For instance, Hansen (2006) describes how unemployed young men are involved in the taxi business in South Africa, which in this context offers unemployed young men a way of regaining respect, thus supporting a masculine identity. Educated men from richer backgrounds bought expensive vehicles with sound systems, whereas poorer men had to buy cheap vehicles, which illustrates how young men seek to actively craft identities. This underlines the need to recognise the diversity in the social category of ‘youth’, and the factors that play into the development of different youth identities such as class, gender, rural or urban upbringing, ethnicity and religion. Young people may consider themselves as part of various identity groups, and the different elements of a young person’s identity that he or she might emphasise over time need to be recognised (Bürge 2011).

Podder (2015) emphasises that young people construct their identity partly through social practice. This prompts us to look at the informal economy as a site for social practice, since forming an identity can be stimulated by membership in collectivities that are related to economic activities. For instance, Hartley and Johnson (2013) write about the positive effects of participation in youth cooperatives for the sense of identity among participants, both as the result of social interactions among peers and due to the recognition by external community

members of the activities of the youth cooperatives as doing something meaningful and productive. Certain categories of informal workers constitute close-knit identity groups, like the motorcycle taxi riders in African cities discussed in this report.

Similarly, unemployed and underemployed youth can pursue lifestyles and activities that are meant to construct an identity in the absence of work. The concept of masculinities is used to describe the link between (un)employment, self-esteem and respect – usually for unemployed young men, or ‘unemployed masculinities’ (Jeffrey 2008: 745). In the field of youth (un)employment and youth cultures, various authors have discussed how cultural practices emerge among the unemployed that deal with the tension about waithood, and seek to build a self-esteem as long as young people haven’t been able to make the transition to adulthood. Jeffrey (2008) describes cultural practices among educated unemployed men in India: they dress smartly in ‘city clothes’, and may refuse to do locally available work that they consider demeaning such as manual labour. These practices emerge among men from the wealthier *Jat* caste and among the lower caste of *dalits* alike. For men from poorer backgrounds like the *dalits*, however, this relatively expensive lifestyle is not always an option. Citing Parry (1999), Jeffrey describes how better-off *dalits* who do manage to find employment usually try to distinguish themselves from poorer, unemployed *dalits* by ending the practices associated with poverty – for instance, they stop their women from doing manual labour.

4 Youth and the informal economy

4.1 Introduction

The label 'youth unemployment' masks the fact that many young people are active in a range of income-generating or otherwise productive activities. Munive (2010) therefore questions the category of 'unemployed youth' as an indistinguishable mass, in particular when most of a country's economy is informal. What exactly constitutes the informal economy, however, is open for debate. Common definitions point to the enterprises and economic activities that operate outside the regulatory realm of the state (Castells and Portes 1989; Meagher 2010, 2014). They are not formally registered and do not pay taxes for the goods and services produced, and labour 'contracts' lack the regulation and protection of labour law.¹ Others have challenged the stark separation between the formal and informal economy, for instance due to the financial transactions that cut across the boundaries between formal and informal production, and because informal producers supply and service formal enterprises (Raeymaekers 2011). There are, therefore, degrees of informality (Ismail 2016) and people engaged in income-generating activities carry out formal and informal work-related practices simultaneously. Ismail (2016: i39) lists a number of assumptions that tend to accompany definitions of the informal economy: activities are small-sized, require low levels of technological skills, rely on 'indigenous' resources and require little start-up capital, and there are no clear employer–employee relationships. For these reasons, among others, the informal economy has relatively low entry costs and is therefore considered attractive for young people.

Many will agree that the informal economy is and will remain very important for young people in need of work for a long time to come (Fox *et al.* 2016). For the majority of African young people, family farms and household enterprises will be the main providers of work (African Development Bank 2012). Others have argued that small-scale enterprise and entrepreneurship in the informal economy are not going to solve unemployment, since the informal economy cannot absorb everyone and in some areas is already saturated (Hansen 2010; Meagher 2014).

This section will address key issues in the literature on young people's engagement in informal work. First of all, the existing literature on unemployment tends to focus on macroeconomic factors that shape employment challenges, and pays insufficient attention to the politics of the informal economy at the local level. Although it is claimed that the informal economy operates entirely outside the control and protection of the state (Fox *et al.* 2016: i12), informal networks and practices cut across the domains of the state and the market. Second, young informal workers are not just economic but also political agents, who engage with the politics of the informal economy. This section presents a review of existing literature that discusses the informal economy as a site for social practices, which contribute to local politics and help construct identities. It will also discuss these issues for settings affected by violence and conflict.

¹ The International Labour Organization definition includes (a) everyone who works in an unincorporated enterprise that is unregistered or small (fewer than five people), including subsistence farming and non-farm self-employment; and (b) anyone in any kind of wage labour not covered by social protection through their work, domestic workers, such as regular, temporary, or casual day labourers, and non-wage contributing family workers. Chen (2012) provides an overview of different schools that emphasise various aspects and meanings of informality.

4.2 Politics and networks in the informal economy

There has been an extensive debate about whether the formal and informal economy can be considered as distinctly separated (Chen 2014). Numerous studies highlight the complex interactions between the state and the informal economy. Social networks in the informal economy are highly diverse in terms of how they are organised, whom they represent, the strategies they pursue to interact with other actors and networks, sectors and the state.

Meagher (2010, 2014) discusses social networks and professional associations among workers in three informal production clusters in Nigeria (weaving, the garment sector, and shoe-making). As the result of economic adjustments and rising unemployment, all three clusters had to absorb large numbers of workers, including high numbers of educated and middle-class people. The increased diversity among the workers led to divisions within production clusters. Producers shifted to more individual forms of networking within people's inner circle based on friendships, religious or community affiliation. The more educated producers were able to form credit or marketing networks with influential friends and relatives in the formal sectors – networks not accessible to poorer and less educated workers. Each production cluster has cluster associations, which offer a range of services to their members and provide the platform to negotiate with the government, despite the informal status of the work itself. Meagher describes the differences within and between clusters in terms of their networks and strategies for engaging with the state. Some associations are more 'modernist' and distance themselves from patrimonial, clientelist practices to engage with the state, while other associations actively maintain patrimonial relationships with state actors. The latter might have more political influence, but often collude with state actors at the expense of representing the interests of their workers. Class and the level of education of the leadership, as well as the social status associated with the product (shoe production, for instance, is less respected than the garment sector) also strongly determine how much political influence the associations have in the political arena. Meagher's study illustrates the diversity of networks and practices in the informal economy, and how distinct organisational cultures and norms within clusters shape interactions with the state.

Another example of the networks that cut across the state and the informal economy is found in Hansen's study (2010) on the politics of designated markets in Zambia. Historically, markets have been strategic places for political actors and thus require the skills and networks for political navigation. During the Kaunda regime (1964–91), membership of the ruling party was a prerequisite for obtaining a stall in the market, and stallholders paid a fee to the party rather than taxes to government. After 1991, with ongoing liberalisation, local authorities started subcontracting private firms to manage designated markets. However, the legacy of a cadre mentality remains visible, and the presence of offices for various political parties led to competition and social conflict among market associations and municipal state actors. Donor-driven efforts to regulate markets have urged the government to establish inclusive market boards, but as members were selected based on party allegiance it did not democratise market management. Recently established market associations demand a higher stake in decision-making, including in market boards, but rarely have a representation of young people.

Several studies describe how politicians are actively involved in the informal economy, again blurring the strict separation between the market and the state. Konings (2006) notes that several administrators in the municipality in Douala, Cameroon, own large numbers of motorcycles that are hired out to the taxi drivers. Some of these activities border on being illegal or are directly linked to crime. For instance, Nairobi has a long history of urban gangs that are linked with politicians through patron–client relations. The gangs can be involved in the businesses owned and run by politicians, but they have also been mobilised by politicians to take action against other politicians from rival parties (Anderson 2002; Mueller 2011).

In post-conflict or violent settings the linkages between the informal economy and politics may be rooted in the conflict, or may have been affected by it. For instance, Cramer (2010) has demonstrated that economic networks and institutions that emerged as part of a war economy may continue to exist after a conflict has ended. Raeymaekers (2013) has described the complex relationships between capitalist brokers and entrepreneurs, rebel rulers, and state actors that shape local production, trade routes and local economies in eastern parts of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In repressive regime environments like President Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe and Tunisia under President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, informal tactics to politicise local economies enable regimes to control resources, maintain their power and undermine accumulation of resources by the political opposition. Political actors, who channel resources to loyalists of the regime, mediate access to jobs and economic resources. Consequently, these informal tactics work against the employment and livelihood opportunities of young people (Honwana 2011; Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014). In violent or conflict-ridden contexts, powerful actors may use violent practices to protect their interests and control over the local economy.

The recognition of the politics in the informal economy, and the networks and practices that may cut across the informal economy and the state, has implications for thinking about young people's agency in relation to work. If the nature of the informal economy in certain contexts is deeply politicised, young people will need to navigate these politics when pursuing livelihood opportunities. Possibly, they assess their options in the light of the political nature of the local, informal economy; and the social networks they have access to can help them navigate the politics at play. In contexts affected by violence and conflict, the potential use of violence by the actors that dominate the local economy poses an additional challenge to the already uncertain and precarious situation of young people. The next section will discuss a different aspect of the social networks and practices in the informal economy: how these relate to the construction of youth identities and forms of agency.

4.3 The informal economy as a site for identity formation and social practice

The previous section indicated that sectors in the informal economy can be characterised by dense social networks, organisational mechanisms and institutions created by their members. Some of these networks are highly organised and have hierarchical leadership structures, contradicting the assumption that the informal economy is any less organised than the formal sector. The informal economy is therefore, like the formal sector, a site of social practice. This has two implications for thinking about youth and work. First of all, recognising that youth identities partly form through social practice (Podder 2015), engagement in informal work can thus inform the construction of youth identities. Second, social practice in the informal economy can go beyond purely economic engagement and extend into forms of social and political action. This sub-section discusses some of the literature that demonstrates these points.

Aside from the money-making activities in the informal economy, a range of local institutions exist that combine economic with social activities. These include credit societies, Village Saving and Loan Associations, neighbourhood groups and slum federations, and others. They vary in size, the extent to which they are profitable or non-profitable organisations, and whether they have been formalised and linked in with government schemes or support from (international) non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Some have clear objectives to achieve social and political outcomes, while for others this occurs as a side effect of an economic activity. A number of studies highlight that participants do not just gain economically from such local institutions, but that they are also instrumental for learning about collective action, and for navigating local politics. Makau's (2011) short piece on a youth federation in the Nairobi slum Kambi Moto shows how local associations can venture

into economic activities after a social foundation has been established. Activities diversified to include 'civic' activities like mentoring children by older youth and neighbourhood clean-ups, and economic activities like starting a waste recycling business and setting up a fund for entrepreneurial start-up activities. Practices like mentoring, peer support and confidence-building were of central importance to get the entrepreneurial activities off the ground with young people. Maconachie, Binns and Tengbe (2012) describe the recent upsurge in cooperatives active in urban and peri-urban agriculture in Freetown, Sierra Leone, as a response to the need for food and employment. The associations help to mobilise farm labour at particular times, but are also important for tackling constraints in relation to land ownership. Among youth, it was felt that associations offered them bargaining power to gain access to land owned by 'big men'. Some associations had built alliances with big men and certain politicians to secure land tenure. Hartley and Johnson (2013) find that youth cooperatives in Uganda and Lesotho are sites of 'youth learning'. Although members valued formal learning opportunities, the authors show that much of the learning actually takes place in informal, situated learning processes, in interactions with peers and on exchange visits. Activities helped the members gain self-confidence and contributed to earning respect from the wider community. These studies emphasise the social practices and networks that evolve around economic activities, some of which offer important learning schools for young people, and are constitutive of youth identities.

In certain places, identity and social processes strongly underpin young people's economic activities. An example is the activities and forms of organisation of 'area boys and girls' in Nigeria, which organise access to and control over economic resources and distribution. 'Area boys and girls' are collective groupings of young people who identify socially and within a particular area, and share a community of origin. They together engage in petty entrepreneurship and casual labour, and collectively claim the right to access those local resources through their identification with a geographical area (Gore and Pratten 2003). In urban settings, they organise around the existing labour and market opportunities, and try to regulate the flow of goods and services. For instance, at markets and transport interconnections, like car parks, area boys ensure that only residents of their area ('sons of the soil') and not outsiders carry out income-generating activities. This has partly evolved in response to the high numbers of incoming migrants into urban areas, where economic opportunities are scarce. In particular around strategic sites of commerce ('junctions') in major cities like Lagos, large groups of area boys and girls are involved in the collection of illegal levies and taxes from private and commercial transporters, builders and other enterprises and visitors (Ismail 2009), and in other activities bordering on criminal such as the drug trade.

Other studies have pointed to the explicit political actions by certain sectors in the informal economy, often when informal workers in the sector constitute a close-knit identity group, which functions as a strong foundation for social and political action. Goodfellow and Titeca (2012) show that people working in informal markets and motorcycle riders (*boda boda*) in Kampala, Uganda, know how to use the politics of the informal economy in their favour, by making strategic use of their numbers as political capital, or 'vote banks'. The motorcycle riders in particular have been able to provoke personalised interventions by the President. The *boda boda* constitute a group of nearly 45,000 in Kampala, mainly young men, and they are an active voting group, unlike some other informal sectors. The Kampala City Council (KCC) is supposed to enforce regulations and raise revenue from the markets and the *boda boda*. The workers contested the regulations by reaching out to politicians of the ruling party and the President, who framed the taxes as 'exploitation of the poor' and stopped the KCC from levying the tax, effectively undermining the authority of KCC. His actions, and those of national politicians, engage at the local level in a way that recognises the informal market, rather than challenging its illegality.

In Douala, Cameroon, the informal transport sector is a site of contentious political action for young men who *contest* the state, rather than mobilising for its support. Konings (2006) describes the organisation and politics of the motorcycle riders (*'bendskin'*) and handcart operators (*'pousseurs'*). According to Konings, the professions offer a sustainable livelihood and feelings of self-esteem to mainly young men. They have organised themselves in small groups that link a range of social institutions together. Groups are area-based, with 'members only' parking places, and the members usually belong to the same ethnic group. They also participate in the same savings groups and social safety networks.

Despite clear boundaries between the different groups, the *bendskin* have collectively mobilised against the police when members from other groups were harassed. *Bendskin* in particular have frequently taken collective action against state representatives and the police in their contest for control over the roads, which has sometimes taken violent forms through riots and violence against officials. They particularly target the police for its corruption, harassment and extortion practices. According to Konings, the roots and developments of youth engagement in the *bendskin* and *pousseurs* 'cannot be understood without reference to the corruption and authoritarianism of the post-colonial state, which characteristically strips young people of the dignity of meaningful citizenship' (2006). Young Cameroonians had actively participated in opposition parties to push for democratic reforms in the late 1990s, but they had become disillusioned with the regime when it manipulated and controlled the process of reforms, and when members of the opposition were pursuing their self-interests. The *bendskin* and *pousseurs* professions offered a viable alternative to party politics, and sites for resistance against the state.

Reviewing the engagement of African youth in different sectors of the informal economy, Ismail (2016) concludes that young people's economic activities have strong identity elements and serve a broader purpose than generating income: they tap into sociocultural assets, push conventions in society, and offer spaces where young people can exercise citizenship and voice. Movements like the Born Again among Christians and the Mujahidin among Muslims have attracted large numbers of youth. They play a role in creating employment for young people, they train youth and provide platforms to develop cognitive skills. Through their emphasis on education and prosperity they shape social attitudes, identity, and forms of civic engagement (*ibid.*: i51). The rapid increase in the use of ICT and technology has offered young people across Africa the opportunity to start businesses, while at the same time they are keen to use and develop technology that is used to, for instance, enhance voter education and monitor elections.

Not all professional groups engage in political action. Despite their large numbers, street vendors in Zambian cities are not politically organised to challenge, for instance, state-led evictions and round-up exercises of vendors (Hansen 2010: 21). The proportion of young people among vendors has increased considerably over time. Hansen argues that young people collaborate primarily in order to get by, and they have less interest in organising a 'movement' because many hope that vending is a temporary activity and something they will move out of.

Like informal work, unemployment can also be a foundation for the construction of identity and forms of social and political action. Honwana's analysis of the involvement of youth in the uprisings in Tunisia shows that unemployment was a major, but not the sole, issue that drove the revolts (2011). Young people's grievances about unemployment were closely linked to the unequal distribution of resources across the country, disillusionment with the government in how it handled unemployment, and a deep sense of injustice concerning politics that operated in the economy to sustain the regime. Jeffrey (2008: 747) describes various forms of 'unemployment politics' in India: organised social-political action taken by unemployed young people from rich and poor backgrounds, prompted by their unemployed status. The educated unemployed have intellectual and organisational capacities, and

participate in networks that are sites of political discussion and mobilisation. They are involved in party- and class-based politics, and lead and participate in youth organisations. Actions include protests, initiating political organisations, and helping to establish self-help organisations in poor communities. Actions also include violence: educated unemployed men from Hindu backgrounds have participated in anti-Muslim riots (2008: 747–8). Some actions targeted positive discrimination measures to support education and employment among poorer communities. Jeffrey notes that the educated unemployed that belong to the middle classes may feel the need to '*police the boundaries of their relative privilege*' (2008: 748) and seek to prevent the upward mobility of poorer people.

To conclude, when young people enter the informal economy they start participating in social networks of peers and colleagues. This can contribute to the formation of youth identities, and the networks can offer learning schools for how to navigate politics, thus contributing to the development of young people as political beings. In certain cases, like the motorcycle riders in Cameroon, informal work has become the site for negotiating state–society relations and enacting citizenship. Other studies have shown that unemployment can also constitute particular identities and be a foundation for social networks and forms of unemployment politics, including forms of political action that take on the state. The next section will discuss the politics in the informal economy and questions of youth agency and identity for contexts of violence.

4.4 Agency and identity in areas affected by violence or conflict

Violent conflict has a range of effects on labour markets. Overall, violence can lead to reduced economic opportunities and resource scarcity in general, and specifically for young people. As discussed above, it may have generated certain politics and networks that are dominated by possibly violent political actors. At the same time, violent conflict can change social and political institutions, some of which may outlast the conflict (Justino, Brück and Verwimp 2013). Some of these changes have direct implications for young people, including for their positionality and agency in relation to work. Vigh (2006) and Seymour (2014) for instance note that the social support mechanisms in which youth were embedded, like financial assistance from parents and relatives, deteriorated as the result of conflict. Podder (2015) writes that social norms about the extent to which young people in Liberia ought to contribute to households changed as a consequence of the civil war, raising expectations from youth and forcing them into forms of labour that are considered inappropriate. Although strongly context-dependent, changes in social and political institutions can thus give impetus to the way young people navigate their social and political environment in pursuit of work. Aside from 'social navigation' of the political landscape and an assessment of how this landscape might develop in the future (Vigh 2006), youth may need to engage in 'moral navigation' (Bürge 2011) and develop agency in interaction with cultural models.

Several studies discuss young people's agency and show that young people are coping despite the lack of social support mechanisms, but they emphasise how this agency is 'ambiguous'. The labour market in a war-affected town in North Kivu, in DRC, is tightly controlled by a closed group of oligopolist traders that have a vested interest in maintaining the war economy (Raeymaekers 2011). Raeymaekers argues that the political economy of the urban market legitimates the accumulation of capital and the distribution of resources to some, and there is a progressive commoditisation of social relations. Many young people who are displaced into the town have arrived without parents or carers. They often *lack* material or social relationships with those acting as gatekeepers into the job market. Moreover, the townspeople tend to mistrust displaced young males, thinking they may have a history as fighters in armed militias. Displaced young people therefore need to live off a combination of insecure, often hazardous and low-paid activities. Also writing about the Kivu provinces in DRC, Seymour (2014) argues that young people exercise agency by situating themselves in positions of weakness by trying to access patronage relationships. The tactic

they have learnt to use is the self-projection of weakness and dependence, making use of 'victimhood', to convince 'big men' to become their patrons. Despite the fact that many patron–client relationships have become less reliable, because of the large numbers of clients in need of a patron's support, young people will try very hard to come into the circle of 'big men' in the hope that they will benefit someday. Elsewhere, Seymour (2011) has described the survival tactics of young children, which may involve risk to their personal security, such as engaging in transactional sex, participating in armed factions, and living on the street with possible access to occasional work. These studies show how young people navigate social relationships and that their agency is situated agency: it develops in relation to their context and is informed by the relationships they are, or are no longer, part of.

Although not focusing on youth, a study on entrepreneurs in Guatemala demonstrates the range in forms of agency that protects economic activity in a context with high levels of criminal violence (Sutter *et al.* 2013). The forms of agency are shaped by the social networks in which entrepreneurs are embedded. The study by Sutter *et al.* (2013) is included in this review due to the relative scarcity of literature on entrepreneurship in contexts of violence in Africa. Criminal organisations enforce informal 'codes of conduct' upon entrepreneurs through coercion, like payments for protection, and extortion. Respondents in the study had experienced violent crime to varying degrees, and all reported that their businesses are indirectly affected by the general climate of fear. Certain entrepreneurs are able to defy criminal, powerful elements through controlling physical spaces and organising vigilante protection, hiring private security, detaining criminals, and using violence against criminals. Another group of entrepreneurs avoid interference by altering their business model in such a way that decreases exposure to illegitimate actors, for instance by working out a home delivery system. Some work without publicity and disguise the nature or existence of the business, or have relocated their businesses to areas where criminal actors could not find them. A last group complies with the demands of criminal actors by paying extortive 'taxes' to local gangs or by terminating their ventures. When analysing the reasons for opting for different strategies, Sutter *et al.* (2013) find that entrepreneurs with strong, geographically proximate network ties are able to be more resistant. Those who have strong but geographically dispersed ties tend to opt for avoidance, while entrepreneurs without strong networks cannot easily undertake collective action and are forced to acquiesce. By establishing the relationship between the nature of social networks and forms of agency, this study underlines the situated agency among entrepreneurs.

Studies of motorcycle taxi riders in Sierra Leone provide insights into the construction of (mainly male) youth identities through economic activity in a post-civil war context, and reveal how situated agency also refers to the degree to which young men are embedded in sociocultural models. The situation of young people in Sierra Leone has attracted much scholarly attention because of the social-political marginalisation of youth, which has been considered a major cause of the participation of many young males in the insurgency (Richards 2005; Peters 2011). Motorcycle riding as public transport became a booming business in the wake of the conflict and attracted high numbers of young ex-combatants, although also many non-combatants started riding (Bürge 2011; Menzel 2011). Partly because of the association with their involvement in war violence, bike riders (*okadamen*) face stigmatisation. Ordinary people describe them as rude, potentially violent and criminal, and disrespectful of human life. Due to their ability to be mobile, people believe they cannot be controlled by social conventions. They are seen as immoral compared to the cultural models that require adults to settle and contribute to the prosperity of the community. *Okadamen* are believed to waste their money on gambling, drinking and unnecessary worldly goods, while 'good persons' spend their income on the family and kin. However, Bürge presents a more nuanced understanding of their spending: by buying expensive consumer goods, *okadamen* gain status and strengthen ties with their age mates. As members of gambling and savings groups (*esusu*) bike riders invest their money in social relationships with people they choose, rather than having to make their money available to their kin who

may claim a 'natural' stake in their wealth. Through participation in several savings groups, including with non-riders, *okadamen* diversify their networks and also contribute to their communities, although not through the routes prescribed by moral conventions. This shows that they exercise innovative agency, creating economic opportunities through social institutions, and in the process they negotiate the cultural models that describe youth, and youth behaviour. Other people consider bike riding a questionable activity from a moral and social point of view, and therefore *okadamen* remain stuck in the liminal status of youth, even though they have gained economic independence. Aside from underlining situated agency, the studies on *okadamen* show the conflict history of Sierra Leone is part of the socio-political context in which agency and youth identities evolve, and references to the conflict figure in the framing of youth identities.

Writing specifically about ex-combatant youth in Sierra Leone, Christensen and Utas (2008) show how tactics and networks of power formed during the war were revived in the run-up to the 2007 elections. Prior to the elections, former commanders belonging to the insurgent militant groups had been released from prison and invited by presidential candidates and politicians to support their campaigns. Using war-time command structures, young ex-combatants were mobilised by political parties to 'protect' politicians, to create a general sense of insecurity among the population, and sometimes to use violence against supporters of rival parties. Christensen and Utas emphasise how young ex-combatants were active social navigators: combining tactical agency and strategic manoeuvring, they joined several parties and thus 'abused' several politicians to obtain short-term benefits. Various motivations drove their engagement with political actors. Ex-combatants first of all tried to address forms of post-war *re*-marginalisation. Joining the security task forces was a chance to become 'somebody' (*ibid.*: 522–23). Harassed by the state and police, linking up with 'big men' was a way of finding protection during the potentially volatile election period. For some, the command structure substituted for the lack of a social network embedded in family relationships, during *and* after the civil war. Short-term material benefits mattered, but a key motivator was future prospects if 'their' party came to power, in the form of jobs, political positions and businesses. Political convictions were the least important. This study shows the persistence of the influence of social networks formed during the war. It also shows how social navigation continues to be important after the civil war, in a context of uncertainty in terms of politics affecting ex-combatants, a lack of jobs, and the absence of secure family relationships.

Thus, in contexts of violence, the politics in the informal economy may be entangled with the politics and dynamics that sustain the violence, or have done so in the past. Also, in these settings the informal economy can be a site where youth identities form through social interactions and practices in professional networks. In various ways, the history of violence and conflict has a direct influence on the kinds of social networks that exist, and on the construction of youth identities among some groups, such as among the motorcycle riders in Sierra Leone. This underlines the necessity to investigate how dynamics of violence and conflict (*re*)configure the local economy, and the social networks in which young people participate. Finally, the studies reviewed in this section have all focused on predominantly male social groupings, such as the motorcycle riders and ex-combatants, and a gender analysis of social practices and identity formation in the informal economy is lacking.

4.5 Conclusion: propositions for research

The purpose of this paper is to formulate a conceptual framework for studying the connections between economic, social and political engagement of young people in contexts of violence and conflict. The following propositions are formulated based on the literature reviewed, which describe these connections:

1. Political actors are connected to the local economy through informal practices, and may dominate important sections of the formal and informal economy.
2. In contexts affected by violent conflict or high levels of violence, young people need to navigate potentially violent politics and political actors when pursuing opportunities for work.
3. The agency of young men and women that enables social navigation is situated agency; it is informed by their socioeconomic background, the social relationships they are embedded in, and other identity markers.
4. The informal economy is a site for social practice, where young people interact with peers and construct and reproduce their identities, and the immaterial aspects of work can become constitutive of a youth identity.

These propositions then informed the conceptual framework that was described at the beginning of this report: the political nature of the local economy, social navigation and situated agency, and youth identity. The next, and final, section will elaborate the findings of the pilot study in Zimbabwe, which was carried out to test and refine the conceptual framework.

5 Zimbabwean youth navigating the politics of informal work

5.1 Introduction

Since the question of how young people navigate unemployment and political actors in adverse political contexts has hardly been addressed in the existing literature, a first version of the conceptual framework was tested in a small pilot study in a rural area in Zimbabwe. The findings were used to refine the conceptual framework by identifying themes and issues that had not been generated by the literature review, but that needed to be incorporated in a framework that adequately captures the linkages between the key concepts. Zimbabwe was selected for the high unemployment rate among young people and for the high levels of political violence that the country has experienced in the past, during which political actors often targeted and mobilised young people to take part in the violence (Dzmiri 2014). The pilot study was small and the findings can therefore not be considered as representative for rural youth in Zimbabwe.

5.2 Country context

Zimbabwe has a young population: 69.8 per cent of the population is younger than 30, and young people constitute 74 per cent of the unemployed (Zimstat 2012). Growing up in a repressive regime, many of these young people have seen high levels of political violence (Sachikonye 2011; McGregor 2013). Since independence in 1980, the regime – formed by President Mugabe and his party, the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) – inherited and developed state systems of repression to stay in power. This included the incorporation of youth into these systems through, for example, the creation of a National Youth Service (NYS) to engage in (violent) party activities (Dzmiri 2014; LeBas 2006). As in other repressive regimes, political violence in Zimbabwe is carried out by state (sponsored) actors from the national to the local level, and political violence has been a key instrument to reinforce regime authority (Johnston 2012). State-sponsored actors include the ‘war veterans’, who fought the liberation war, and NYS graduates. Together with state security actors, these actors were responsible for high levels of election violence in 2002 and 2008. Also the opposition has mobilised young people for party activities, and in the past violent clashes have occurred between ZANU PF youth and young people supporting the opposition, mainly the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC).

Apart from violence, patronage is a powerful mechanism used to ensure that regime supporters remain loyal and (potential) opposition supporters are excluded from accessing critical social and economic resources (*ibid.*). The ZANU PF regime is furthermore known for encouraging social polarisation as a way of consolidating its powers (LeBas 2006). Previous research by IDS and the Research and Advocacy Unit (RAU) explored how Zimbabwean youth exercise agency in response to political violence (Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014). The study shows that young people feel strongly affected by patronage along party lines, which they see as a major impediment to finding work in the formal or informal sector (Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014). Conscious *disengagement* is a key strategy to reduce the risk of violence and avoid becoming targets of the regime. Some youth initiate social and entrepreneurial activities, despite challenges to their engagement posed by the risk of state interference. Other youth engage with the regime for social recognition and as a potential career path.

Since the government of national unity, factionalism within the country’s main political parties has altered the political landscape. The pilot found this had implications for the labour market

and businesses locally, and therefore this factionalism is briefly discussed here. Within ZANU PF factions emerged in the run-up to the party conference in December 2014. Severe competition culminated between two factions: the one led by party vice-president Joyce Mujuru, and one by Emmerson Mnangagwa, then secretary for legal affairs in the party. Mujuru, who long had the backing of Mugabe himself, was eventually forced to resign from the party due to accusations of plotting to assassinate the President. Mujuru registered the Zimbabwe People First party in February 2016. The ZANU PF factions continue to fight each other bitterly, especially during the nation-wide campaigns to galvanise support for their candidacy, accusing one another of all kinds of misconduct. As part of this battle certain nicknames were used: *Zvipfukuto* (weevils) and *Gamatox*, derived from a pest and pesticide metaphor, is a widely used 'verbal affront' on the Mnangagwa faction (Nyambi 2016), whereby the Mnangagwa faction represents the 'weevils' who threatened the party from within, and the Mujuru faction is the remedy, *Gamatox*. As for the opposition, a number of factions have split away from the MDC in recent years and formed political parties, leading to fragmentation of the political opposition. MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai fell out with a number of his executive MDC members, after which the disaffected MDC members split off and formed MDC-Renewal, leaving behind MDC-Tsvangirai (MDC-T). In September 2015, MDC-Renewal relaunched itself as the People's Democratic Party (PDP).

The pilot explored the question of how young people pursue work opportunities in this context, and how their employment status informs their engagement in relation to political actors at the local level, given that some of these actors are associated with political violence. As outlined in the last section, the pilot addressed the linkages between politics and the local economy; forms of agency and questions of situated agency; and how work relates to identity. The findings are organised along these dimensions, after a description of the research site and methodology.

5.3 Case study site and methodology

The pilot was carried out in the trading centre of Murehwa, which is a rural area in Mashonaland East province. Murehwa is considered a rural area and has a small town centre that hosts a number of local businesses. Murehwa was selected as the site for this pilot because of its relatively small scale, and therefore linkages between political actors and the local economy could be easily identified within a small project. The pilot could furthermore build on contextual knowledge generated in a recent project (Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014). Murehwa is also relevant for its political divisions, which caused high levels of political violence in the run-up to the 2008 elections. Murehwa has always delivered ZANU PF leaders in elections and also today ZANU PF has a majority in the Rural District Council (RDC). Tensions between ZANU PF and MDC supporters increased in the last decade. One event that fuelled these tensions was Operation Murambatsvina in May 2005, in which state security actors evicted informal sector workers (mainly those working as vendors and in flea markets) from towns. As a result of this operation, a large group of townspeople were displaced into Murehwa. Many of them were MDC supporters, while the operation itself may have persuaded Murehwa residents to start supporting the MDC. During the 2008 election violence many people, including youth, were forced to take part in violent campaigns at established 'bases'. A prominent MDC politician and senatorial candidate, Shepherd Jani, was murdered shortly before the 2008 presidential run-off.

As part of the pilot, a team of three researchers from the RAU carried out 12 focus group discussions (FGDs) and 14 individual interviews. We included equal numbers of men and women. We tried as much as possible to include respondents who support different political parties, or remain neutral, because party affiliation is considered a strong determinant of access to resources. In this context, random sampling carries risk and therefore participants were identified by a local community-based organisation facilitator, someone who knows the backgrounds and political affiliation of different wards in Murehwa to a certain extent, and

was therefore able to select participants representing different segments of the political spectrum. Concerning party affiliation, it turned out to be a challenge to form groups with participants who supported one and the same party, since many respondents had ‘swapped parties’ in the past. This was, in fact, one of the findings about young people’s strategies, as will be discussed below.

Interviews and FGDs combined, the team spoke to 67 participants in total (see Table 5.1). We invited young people aged 18 to 30. We included older youth in order to trace their trajectories as employed and self-employed (hereafter (self)employed) people and their navigation over the last few years. The average age of our respondents was 25. Their levels of education ranged from having completed grade 1 to Ordinary level; however, only 17 participants had completed their Ordinary levels, two had a Juniors certificate, and nobody had pursued tertiary education.² Three participants had ceased education after grade 1; the average level of education was grade 4.

Those who were (self)employed were in activities such as vending (cell phones and accessories, clothes, scholastic material), had a stall at the flea market, building and hair dressing. Women were mainly involved in vending and hairdressing. Many of them also looked after their family’s garden. Several of the unemployed participants had occasionally done a ‘piece job’ – casual, often seasonal work. A high number of the unemployed male youth relied on seasonal farming and gardening with water drawn from nearby wells. Young women’s piece jobs included mainly cleaning, sewing and gardening. RAU researchers spent one day in Murehwa with one female and one male self-employed person, selected from the focus groups.

Table 5.1 Numbers of male and female participants per research method

Method	Total number of male participants	Total number of female participants
Focus group discussions with unemployed youth	8	8
Focus group discussions with (self)employed youth	16	13
Individual interviews with unemployed youth	4	3
Individual interviews with (self)employed youth or entrepreneurs	4	3
Individual interviews with perpetrators of violence in 2008/2013 elections	3	3
Participant observation of individual entrepreneurs	1	1
Total number of respondents	36	31

Focus group discussions: Groups had four or five participants each, and were carried out for men and women separately. Topics for discussion included the types of economic activities for youth in Murehwa; links between politics and work; the importance of work for social status; what earning enables young people to do; and the strategies young people deploy to deal with local politics.

² Primary education has seven grades. Ordinary level is ‘General Certificate of Education’, which is four years of secondary education (Grade 8–11). Students have to pass exams in at least five subjects to attain Ordinary level. Thereafter, students can do two years’ ‘A-level’ (General Education Certificate Advanced Level). A-level is required to enrol in university.

Individual interviews: The questions addressed similar topics as those discussed in the FGDs, but were now probing for individual strategies in relation to work and political actors. This was because in the FGDs this was likely to be discussed at a general level and respondents might withhold information considered sensitive in the given context. Especially for entrepreneurs, questions focused on how politics had interfered with work or business, and strategies to avoid this, or the extent to which participants were ready to engage with political actors.

5.4 Dimension I: Nature of local economy in Murehwa

Our respondents indicated that working at the plots owned by their family is an important source of subsistence for many young people, and for those who have no other income-generating activity it is often the only source, especially if no other family member works in Harare, other cities or abroad. Murehwa is an important supplier of farm produce to Mbare market in Harare, which helps many families to produce for more than subsistence. Many young people have become involved in poultry rearing and farming tomatoes, but apparently there is now so much supply that it has become hard to sell the goods at a good price. Vending, selling mobile phone credits and food and refreshments to the public buses passing through Murehwa is another important sector for youth. There are only a few large farms in Murehwa, where some young people find seasonal work or 'piece jobs' (*maricho*, temporary work³). The one government-run Agriculture Rural Development Authority had closed. Larger businesses and companies, such as a tomato sauce factory, have shut down over the last decade. A small number of public sector jobs exist at the council, the local health clinic, and the schools, but these are usually not offered to young people.

The participants who were employees or self-employed worked as hairdressers, maids or cleaners, builders, in fast food chains or other shops and bars in the centre. The majority estimated their income to be approximately US\$2 to US\$7 per day, and between US\$30 and US\$50 per month. Certain jobs earned more. Security guards earn US\$350 per month. Builders estimated their average monthly income at US\$200 to US\$300, sometimes more than US\$1,000, and one builder was able to hire others when he got a larger contract. Being employees or self-employed definitely does not mean that one has a stable income. Those employed by shops, businesses and individuals complained that they often did not receive their full salary, were paid late and sometimes not at all. Builders experienced that those who commissioned the work ran out of money along the way. However, due to the scarcity of work many continued working despite not being paid.

It was clear that ZANU PF dominance and its contestation by the political opposition deeply pervaded the local economy, and with it the working life of (self)employed youth and the work opportunities of currently unemployed young people. In terms of finding work, politics and patronage along party lines strongly affected who got the few available jobs. However, it must be said that jobs were so scarce that young people could not rely on 'politics' to find work. The ZANU PF has the majority in the RDC, and the chairperson, youth chairperson, and the youth officer and headmen at the ward level all belong to ZANU PF. Our participants, from all political affiliations, emphasised that for public sector jobs one had to be a ZANU PF member, and preferably 'active' and with connections to people in the council. Jobs were usually given to people from two particular wards, where two prominent councillors were from. Also job opportunities created by NGOs or private companies are often communicated through local government actors, which tends to give ZANU PF supporters an advantage. Several participants reported that they had altogether given up looking for formal employment, viewing such a pursuit as a total waste of time and resources.

³ *Maricho* is the term used for when someone works in fields owned by someone else and gets some form of payment. It also happens on family farms for people who cannot weed their own fields or who choose not to do it.

The findings suggest that factionalism in ZANU PF and in the political opposition has an effect on these dynamics. The schisms within the political parties at national level have also led to divisions locally. In Murehwa, some ZANU PF members were ousted from the party because they were alleged 'Gamatox'. Some of the politicians who own farms and businesses, as well as some of the larger businesses that had taken sides, are said to recruit labour from among their supporters. At the council, factionalism is thought to have contributed to the initiation of a (seemingly) neutral 'lotto-like' process for allocating temporary council jobs. These jobs are advertised for three months each time. The council calls a large meeting of young job seekers and lets them pick cards marked 'yes' or 'no' from a box, after which the people who pick the 'yes' cards are employed. A number of participants believed this mechanism was started because the RDC found it hard to establish whether people supported the 'weevils', 'Gamatox' or the opposition. Our participants spoke quite passionately about this potential opportunity, but felt it had been corrupted because prominent council members distributed 'yes' cards to their relatives in advance, who showed them on the day.

Several prominent politicians generate employment in Murehwa. One of them is Tendai Biti, who owns a large piggery firm. Biti helped found the MDC in 1999 and rose up its ranks. During the government of National Unity (2009–13) he was Minister of Finance. He left the MDC in 2014 to form MDC-Renewal, and was elected the president of the PDP in September 2015. He has the reputation of wanting to help young people regardless of their political affiliation, and has indeed employed many young people at his firm. It is also believed that this is a strategy to attract young supporters, since the PDP is new. Another individual is Daniel Garwe, who owns a construction company in Harare and whose wife runs a service station in Murehwa. Garwe wanted to run for MP for ZANU PF in 2013, but lost the primary elections and then ran as an independent candidate. Although he lost the elections, he employs the young people who campaigned for him in his company or at the service station. According to our participants, he commended the young people for being brave enough to support him openly and knows that they are not going to be helped by ZANU PF leaders. Garwe's company is contracted to improve the main road, which is where young men currently find work. Simbaneuta Mudarikwa used to be the ZANU PF secretary of finance for Mashonaland East, but was ousted from the party in November 2014 (shortly before the National People Congress) by a vote of no-confidence, based on allegations that he was fuelling factionalism and undermining President Mugabe (Kakore 2014). It is alleged that he was centrally involved in instigating and coordinating the 2008 election violence. Before his ousting from the party he had more economic interests and power in Murehwa, but currently he still owns a number of shops and a large takeaway. Participants felt that the activities by Tendai Biti will help to improve the general economic situation in Murehwa, while activities by the other politicians are believed to further the interests of the businessmen and only help youth with temporary employment. Finally, a number of businessmen were identified as 'big men' due to the size of their businesses. Some of these big men were also identified as important local political actors, who used their economic power to undermine supporters of different parties. Others, however, were known to be 'neutral' and they employed people from, for instance, their church.

Informal practices by political parties affect local commercial activities. Locally ZANU PF is the dominant actor. Local actors like the RDC chairman, youth officers and headmen are often part of the local ZANU PF machinery that seeks to enforce people's support to the incumbent party. To enforce compliance with ZANU PF, a common strategy is to round up people to attend party meetings. When this happens, shops and markets must close and the people who work there are required to participate. According to our participants, the presence of a prominent figure like Tendai Biti has led to more suspicion among ZANU PF leaders that young people start supporting the opposition. Local party leadership has blacklisted businesspeople who are openly supporting the opposition, or are suspected of it,

and instructs the population to boycott their shops and stalls. One boy described his friend's experience:

I have a true story from a friend of mine whom I helped. He had a barber shop and people were banned from getting into his barber shop. There was a label [note stuck to his barber shop] which says if anyone get into this barber shop his/her head will be cut off when the time comes. My friend had a position in the MDC. This was also mentioned during the ZANU PF party meetings [which is when] we are all asked to close the market and attend the ruling party meetings. There is a list of shops from which people are banned to buy from, because of political issues.

In the same group, another participant gave the following example:

Two weeks ago my father-in-law's house was burnt because he had joined a new political party called People First, led by Mai Mujuru. They wrote at the door that 'pasi negamatokisi' [down with Gamatox]. Murehwa is not a clean area; it has got ngozi [bad spirits of the dead, who haunt other people, especially those who have murdered someone]. If someone in Murehwa is open about his/her political party it means that person is brave. People in Murehwa were killed [in 2008] and some had their hands cut off; the long sleeves and short sleeves. There was a man who was taken away from the Murehwa centre during the day. I was in a barber when this happened. After three days the man was seen dead. His name is [Shepherd] Jani [MDC politician].

This story illustrates the weight of the legacy of the 2008 election violence, when violence peaked and the local politician Shepherd Jani was murdered. In the previous project and in this pilot, several participants stated that many of the perpetrators are now having problems with *ngozi*. Around the 2013 elections, just making remarks about 'short sleeves' and 'long sleeves', which referred to cutting off limbs as happened in 2008, was enough to scare people off and convince them to vote for ZANU PF (Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014). References to the 2008 violence by our participants indicate how much impact it has had, especially the murder of a prominent figure like Shepherd Jani, on people's interpretation of their environment, and the potential outcomes of being associated with politics and politicians.

5.5 Dimension II: Situated agency

It will be clear that in this deeply polarised context political party affiliation strongly matters for young people's positionality, and is therefore a powerful illustration of situated agency. Moderate ZANU PF supporters and those youth who would prefer to stay out of politics altogether find it hard to refrain from any engagement. In an area where ZANU PF is strong, and where history has shown that even prominent MDC politicians are not safe from harm, MDC supporters know they are at risk. One man used an analogy of two sisters to explain that MDC supporters had no recourse against aggression from ZANU PF supporters. The elder sister represents ZANU PF and the younger sister MDC, and their children are party supporters: '*Mwana wekwaminini anotoita zvinorehwa nemwana wekwamaiguru*', which means 'The child of the little sister has no option but to obey however frivolous or abusive the demands of her mother's elder sister may be'.

As it is obvious that party politics pervade the local economy in various ways, the question is how young people navigate this context in order to find work or start a business, and once they are involved in economic activity, how they can secure it. This section discusses a spectrum in forms of agency in relation to accessing or safeguarding work, which ranges from seeking to avoid any confrontation with politics to more political forms of agency that resist politics.

5.5.1 Avoidance

Previous research by IDS and RAU showed that ‘avoidance’ is the most important strategy for the majority of young people to prevent becoming victims of political violence (Oosterom and Pswarayi 2014). Avoidance encompasses a range of tactics, but is mainly about not talking politics, not ‘doing’ politics: refrain from conversations about politics in public, and stay away from political actors and events that might get you into trouble. Now focusing on youth and work, again we find that forms of avoidance constitute their most important strategy. Importantly, in the local context the word ‘politics’ is mainly used with reference to the activities of political parties and politicians.

In particular when young people need to protect their job and businesses, appearing neutral and avoiding politics is a major strategy. Avoidance occurs through refraining from discussing sensitive issues in public. A *combi* (commuter omnibus) driver explained:

I work with public so you do not have to comment on anything especially politics. You do not know who is who in the combi. But we are free to comment when we are youths alone, away from my work place.

Avoiding political gatherings and refraining from actions that might get you labelled as a member of a political ‘camp’ from the perspective of local political actors and people is also part of avoidance. The vendor who told us about his friend, the barber who had received threats about being ‘Gamatox’, said:

I am not a member of any political party. I taught myself not to be involved in politics because if people know which party you support those supporting the other party will not buy from you. [...] At the market we do not want people to know which party we support. I will never wear party regalia.

For young people who run small businesses and need a clientele, it is better not to show any party affiliation because one might risk losing customers who belong to a different camp. Those who support the opposition face the additional challenge that they might be harassed by ZANU PF supporters and need to protect their business:

In fact everyone has a political party but you need not to be open about it, it is better to stay at the back. I support a political party but I do not want people to know. If people know which party you support you will be in danger. Everyone supports a political party but not in the open because we just want to protect our businesses. Someone will not buy my cell phones if he knows which party I supported if he is from a different party.
(Cell phone vendor, male, 4 February 2016)

As in many settings where insecurity prevails, people are careful to pick up and assess ‘rumours’, and are sensitive to the possibility that rumours might concern them. Young people who run a business are careful to avoid rumours about support to the opposition. Not only entrepreneurs were concerned about rumours. Our participants were afraid of being ‘badmouthed’ whenever they are able to accumulate even a modest amount of resources. Several times, we heard stories about jealousy and prejudice; of neighbours and other community members who become envious when someone starts earning. This quickly leads to suspicions that when one has resources he or she ‘must be supporting the opposition’. One girl told us ‘...even if a car stops at your house they [neighbours] will spread rumours saying they are not family guests but people from the opposition party. At times you may be called to the headman’s place for questioning.’ Those who had relatives who were known to support the opposition were likely to be implicated, sometimes not without consequences. One young male entrepreneur spoke about ‘hatred in the community’ and that other people

actively spread rumours about him hiding a pistol and a petrol bomb, leading to a police raid on his shop.

5.5.2 Compliance and disguise

Young people who are still *looking* for work and opportunities often need the local leadership. They need reference letters, for instance, which can be a hurdle in an economy beset with politics:

I should have a letter from the councillor, headman or chairman if I want to look for a job. If the chairman or councillor does not like you he will not give you the letter he can just say come back another day. He can even say he is busy or even tell you that you are troublesome and he cannot help you. If there has been a rumour that you support MDC, he will not help you at all.

Depending on the kind of work they want, some job seekers depend on certain mediators who are affiliated with a political party to access the labour market. Young people felt they needed to consider the political affiliation of the people they rely on, and then decide what to do. They may need either to liaise with a party or disguise themselves as a true supporter. This expression in Shona – ‘*Famba uchiendawo kurikuenda mhepo, inokutora*’ – was used several times by young men and women, meaning ‘When you move, follow the direction of the wind lest you are blown away’. This woman indicated that it applies particularly to young people growing up in search of opportunities: ‘When you are young, you just follow the party to which your parents are affiliated and when you are grown, you just follow where the wind is going.’

In the context of Murehwa, where ZANU PF’s control is strongly felt, the direction of the wind was definitely telling people it was safer to support ZANU PF. In a focus group with young, unemployed women we learnt how difficult it is for rural communities in Mashonaland not to show any loyalty to the ruling party, in particular in the villages further away from the centre of Murehwa, where the headmen know people’s political affiliation. ‘It is unacceptable to say you are not a party member, when they do not see you at meetings, you have to strategise and justify the reasons for your absence,’ one woman said. Her friend added: ‘You just attend all the party meetings and rallies but deep inside you know that you are not affiliated to any political party. You first assess which party dominates in your area, and follow the party that dominates.’ A very large group of unemployed and (self)employed youth complies with ZANU PF rules, even when they support the opposition: they obtain a membership card and attend political meetings, primarily to avoid any potential harm and allegations of supporting the opposition. People also want to keep the possibility open that they might benefit at some point, although the majority is deeply sceptical that this will actually happen. Thus, while some would avoid any political meeting to stay safe, others felt they had to attend all ZANU PF meetings for the same reason.

Most small entrepreneurs and people working in shops in Murehwa centre feel they have to comply with ZANU PF practices and attend party meetings when they occur. ZANU PF people usually instruct them to close their shops and attend. Although many of them complained that closing the business for a day is costly, they feel that not attending would single them out and expose them to rumours and allegations. Only a few felt strong enough to close the shop and go home as a modest act of resistance. For unemployed people, on the other hand, it was relatively easy to ‘hide at home’ if they did not want to attend.

In the light of recent factionalism and splits from political parties, young men and women had to reassess how to relate to political parties. ZANU PF leaders seemed to have intensified their practice of scrutinising young people for having the right ‘credentials’, as this boy said: ‘The headman thinks that we are using our money or even helping other youths from the community to mobilise youths to take part in MDC.’ A number of young entrepreneurs

explained that 'party swapping' was a strategy, carefully assessing the risks involved in liaising with a faction and balancing this with how to maintain a clientele. One MDC supporter, who had been a chairperson of the youth wing for five years and called himself an 'activist', said:

As far as I can see things are not well in the party that is why I am no longer interested. I just need to concentrate on something that benefits me. Some people in the party are really benefiting. [...] The ruling party have started harassing those supporting MDC [because of the 2017 elections], making a list of names. That is the other reason we are pulling out of politics.

5.5.3 Support

Respondents who openly supported ZANU PF and support the party out of their free will did not feel that attending political meetings and rallies was problematic. They can approach local political leaders more easily and feel that they are on good terms with them. Although the party might not offer them jobs, there are many ways in which it can help loyal supporters in the form of loans or donations, poultry projects and other forms of assistance to small businesses. Among our participants who support ZANU PF, a number indicated that they have at least once benefited from such assistance. Generally, these were the relatively active members. A group of female vendors selling clothes at the local flea market is associated with ZANU PF. One of the members indicated that she had participated in catering for the celebration of MPs. She said: 'We have a good relationship and if they order me to do something I do it wholeheartedly, and in return if I need assistance they are very quick to react.' Another woman from this group of vendors had acted as a treasurer of the party in her ward. She said: 'Our relationship [with ZANU PF] is good and at times these friends of mine who are in politics help me with money when I am stranded. In return I support them in whatever they do, including party activities.' This woman had asked the ZANU PF chairwoman in her ward for support to start poultry projects. The woman subsequently managed to organise a bus from the party to take a group of women to South Africa to shop for their businesses. Thus, being part of the ZANU PF network is beneficial to the businesses of these women, and support extends into safety networks in times of need.

However, among other ZANU PF members a sense of disaffection and disillusionment prevailed, for self-employed and unemployed youth alike, even among those who had performed functions in the youth wing:

I joined the ZANU PF party in 2008. The major reason [for joining the party] was to benefit from resources through the party. The promises which were made motivated us to join. Personally, I joined the party because I hoped to acquire funds to start my own project. It was all talk without any action. I was the youth secretary for a very long time. We were promised many projects as youths and we even established ward groups in preparation of those projects. We are promised a lot of things but nothing is fulfilled for us youths, while we fulfilled our duty to support the party.

(Participant 1)

I was a ZANU PF affiliate but I did not hold any position. Things were really tough and we were encouraged to join ZANU PF to alleviate our tough situations. We were promised projects and other benefits but as time went on, nothing came to us. Because of that, I no longer invested much of my time in the party but started concentrating on my business. Promises made to youths were never fulfilled. We cannot even question it. It just ends with elders and the authorities within the party.

(Participant 2)

(Focus group discussion, young men, 3 February 2016)

There is a strong awareness that, even if one is a member of ZANU PF, the party leadership will first distribute benefits and resources to the inner circle and their relatives. As this woman indicated: 'The problem is that only a fraction of the party members benefit whilst the rest within the party are sidelined. You should at least see the benefit of your sweat.' In some cases, young people were asked to pay a registration fee when they asked leaders and youth officers if they could be listed and apply for loans or jobs; when nothing materialised, their sentiments were exacerbated. One young man said that he needed a letter confirming his ZANU PF membership when he applied for a job in a security company. The councillor charged him US\$25 for the letter, without giving reasons for the charge, much to the young man's frustration. We encountered many examples like this, and a large group of young people who felt disgruntled due to the empty promises, the lack of any benefit in return for their efforts, and the nepotism within the party.

It is not surprising that MDC supporters in Murehwa do not believe that the environment is conducive to their employment and business opportunities. Most of our working participants have not even tried asking the local youth officers and councillors to access loans, knowing they will be turned down for political reasons. Those who are more open about their political allegiance tend to rely on each other for support, economic transactions and clientele. One of the entrepreneurs commented: 'I have learnt one thing – once you are in, you cannot go back,' which illustrates that it may be difficult to go back to a neutral stance once one is known as an opposition supporter. A number of (self)employed youth know they must climb the hierarchy before they can reap any benefit. One builder explains:

I need to be aware of politics to keep my business running. There are certain rules I need to stick to: being active and attending most of the meetings so that you are familiar and known in the party. It will be easier to ask for help if you are an active member. Many of my customers are into politics and we support the same party, MDC-Renewal. [...] I got involved with them, because I work with most of them since they are also builders. When it comes to politicians from the ruling party, we are water and oil. Our party is still new, our leaders said they do not have much to offer at the moment, but they help us link up with job opportunities.

Also among MDC-T supporters a sense of disillusionment with the leadership prevailed, although some still hoped this would change if MDC-T wins the presidential elections. Several of them changed to or considered supporting the PDP, for Tendai Biti's presence and his enterprise.

5.5.4 Resistance

In this context where ZANU PF dominates the political landscape, acts of resistance are mainly targeted at ZANU PF. We did not come across forms of resistance against the opposition, other than that some MDC-T members are changing their affiliation to new opposition parties.

The few who choose to resist having to comply with the order and informal rules set by ZANU PF mainly use tactics of passive resistance: not showing up for rallies and political meetings, and making up excuses for their absence. They might boycott shops and farms that are run by people they know as active ZANU PF members. We only came across a handful of cases of people who dared to be more vocal, although not in a way that was very confrontational. Two examples illustrate this. A female entrepreneur who sells sugar explained she sometimes ran into problems when she went to the wholesale store to buy supplies, and is asked for her ZANU PF membership card. At some point she thought it was better to buy a membership card, while she prefers to stay out of 'politics' and just votes for the opposition. She said she managed to be 'bold' and tell the sellers 'I do not exercise politics and there is no political party I support. I just pray for good governance from God.' One barber man explained that he is 'marked': locally he is thought of as an opposition

supporter. He claims that he is not openly associated with any political party and likes to keep things to himself. On the other hand, he says he is outspoken and openly resists some of the party practices. When ZANU PF calls meetings, for instance, he refuses to close his shop and does not participate since they are 'a waste of time'. When confronted he will tell people that 'it is a matter of survival' to keep the barber shop open. For this, ZANU PF youth are not supposed to get their haircut there and the youth officer does not like him. His clientele is mainly from the opposition, which confirms the rumours that he supports the opposition himself.

A number of young people were known to be 'opposition activists' in their areas. This meant that they openly support the opposition and have had to deal with threats from ZANU PF members. Some of them had relatives who had supported the opposition for a long time and had been raised with ideas about political freedoms. Others had witnessed or experienced acts of political violence in the past, even when they were not active in the opposition. In 2008, large numbers of people who had complied with ZANU PF's informal rules were also the victims of political violence. For a number of young activists this was what made them 'defect' from ZANU PF, while it compelled many others to opt for avoidance strategies. The opposition activists we spoke to were all self-employed as shop-owners, barbers and builders. More than once these entrepreneurs have had to deal with threats, such as letters pinned to their shops. Being an activist and entrepreneur in this context thus meant that they had to maintain a network of suppliers and buyers who either also supported the opposition, or were ambivalent about their party affiliation. Their acts of resistance entailed challenging instances of intimidation, for instance, reporting these to the police even though they knew that the police could do very little. Another shopkeeper said that he and some of his customers had been harassed by unknown men in a vehicle, whom he thought were intelligence officers. He said he had reported this to a foreign radio station where he had contacts and the incident was on the news the next day. These acts make the informal and 'hidden' intimidation tactics perpetuated by the regime public and visible. This contributes to delegitimising the ruling party, especially in the light of the worsening economic situation of the country and the inability of the government to reverse the trend.

5.6 Dimension III: Youth identities and work

For both young men and women having an income matters for a sense of self-esteem, in particular for being able to make contributions to the family and gain respect from others. Becoming financially independent is an important marker of the transition into adulthood. Earning an income enables young people to meet the expectations of society about what it means to be a 'good man' or a 'good woman': to provide for the family and often others, to participate in social institutions in the community, to dress well. Generally, earning an income is associated with earning respect; a connotation that prevailed in narratives of both unemployed and (self)employed people. That said, there were clear hierarchies in the types of jobs, with certain hustling jobs being looked down upon.

In the absence of sustained forms of (self)employment, young people will look for short-term opportunities that can at least help them attain some of these social expectations, as this boy illustrates: 'I do piece jobs sometimes because I do not want to wait for my parents to do everything for me. You cannot be like a broiler which is fed and does nothing else.' Another boy stated: 'I compensate [for unemployment] by doing piece jobs and these enable me to buy myself nice clothes, hence build self-esteem and get respect. It enables me to buy neat clothes for church.'

The piece jobs that young unemployed women can do, such as gardening, sewing and cleaning, usually pay less than some of the building activities young men can engage in. Female unemployment needs to be compensated with domestic work, while employed women will still need to meet expectations about having an organised and tidy home, and

well looked after children. This therefore gives them less time to look for and do piece jobs. These women explained:

If you don't go to work you are downtrodden and regarded as a non-entity. [...] An ideal woman does not walk aimlessly in the community. People will label you as an uncouth woman if you just move around aimlessly. An ideal woman works hard. If you do domestic work like sweeping, doing the dishes, doing the washing and working in the field, you won't be regarded as a non-entity.

(Interview with unemployed woman, 27 January 2016)

[An income] is important because it raises your status in society. You won't be a liability and someone who always asks for help. [...] You can at least provide for your child, and buy stationery when going to school. The child will feel like an orphan if you are unable to provide for him/her as a parent.

(Interview with unemployed woman, 27 January 2016)

All participants agreed that earning an income has a strong influence on aspects of their local social life, and the extent to which earning an income enabled their social participation. Important in the local set-up are savings groups ('round tables') and church groups. Savings groups can be set up in church, with youth and adults together, and among (self)employed people. Apart from saving, the group also offers mechanisms for peer-learning about doing business and other activities. Members of one women's group of a church, for instance, teach each other how to sew and to sell what they make. One member used the funds from the savings group, which are distributed monthly to one individual on a rotating basis, to buy her materials and she is slowly accumulating work. Self-employed young people in the centre of Murehwa (the 'growth point') formed savings groups:

We formed our society at the growth point. We contribute US\$20 for each individual per week. The society mostly comprises of fellow tuck shop owners in the area, hairdressers and those who work in grinding mills. It is just a diverse group. We just accommodate everyone who is interested in joining the society. That is what we do in our community. Again, we share ideas on running our businesses. We even share ideas concerning the products on demands so that we maintain our clientele.

(Focus group discussion, young men, 3 February 2016)

Some of the older youth who have work and are responsible for their families, siblings and other dependants often are too busy to be active in groups. That said, they often participate in the networks of their church that cross over to their businesses. One builder has a relatively successful building enterprise. He often receives orders from his church and fellow church members, and for larger projects he will hire church members.

Several of our self-employed respondents indicated that they would probably stop being a member of their groups if they were to lose their income, not just because they cannot contribute but because they would lose social status in the group. Most young people without an income we spoke to would try to be part of a group if they could, but feel like they are 'inferior' members. This is probably even more the case in a small, rural location like Murehwa where people know more about each other's background. Speaking about inequalities in the groups and even within the churches generally, the young people indicated that people who have an income are listened to and are given responsibilities and influence, while they feel sidelined. This is particularly the case for women, for whom church groups are often the only institution they engage in outside the family. Since young women face social norms that hamper their participation in public affairs, unemployment can thus deepen existing forms of marginalisation:

I have nothing, I am unemployed, and because of that I can never be a lay leader in the church. Sometimes I won't even have money to pay my tithes whilst others bring

colossal amounts of money every week. In that scenario, how can a nobody like me be recognised for any leadership position when I have nothing? Poor people like us are only recognised when there is manual work to do at church but never considered in leadership positions. You will never see the financially stable participating in manual work. I once attended a different church in Harare and the church members were treated equally without any disparities.

(Focus group discussion, woman, 24 November 2015)

Employment status, income levels and the type of employment also matter in friendships. Both our male and female participants commented that it was better to make friends with other young people who are, in their words, 'at the same level' – with similar levels of income or also unemployed. Big differences are thought to create uneasiness and misunderstandings. As this young man said: 'It [unemployment] influences how I interact with friends because some would actually laugh at your situation and say you are not man enough (*hausi murume*).' Two respondents explained:

People usually create classes in the community. You automatically place yourself in your right class because there are some elite classes which you don't qualify to be. The elite hang out on their own and you won't be comfortable to be part of that group because of your lacking. I think it's better to mingle with people whom you are on the same level with.

(Focus group discussion, man, 24 November 2015)

Yes it is better to be in the company with the people of your class. You have to choose friends who suit your class. I spend most of my time at the garden and I can't be seen befriending a teacher from a nearby school because we have nothing in common.

(Focus group discussion, woman, 24 November 2015)

The self-employed young people whom we interviewed felt proud of helping others in need, although it is often also experienced as a burden since neighbours and relatives tend to expect them to have more money than they actually have. Some even referred to the risk that some of their old friends, who currently are not in jobs, might 'exploit' them and ask too much and therefore they felt it is better to have friends who also have some kind of business or income.

Finally, both men and women felt that earning an income was not sufficient but at least contributed towards having a voice in the community in relation to adults. Our female participants stressed that they would command respect from elders if they see a hard-working woman who cares for her house and family. Also young men emphasised that work generated respect and possibilities to take up leadership positions, and as a consequence they could become more influential locally. That said, young women generally felt that they had very little influence in community affairs and having an income would not be enough to overcome all other social barriers that limit their participation and influence.

6 Concluding remarks

Reflecting on the three dimensions of the framework, the pilot study has brought out the importance of investigating the politics of the local economy, which create the real environment in which young people assess their options. Political actors are mediators to loans and job opportunities, and have a strong influence on the freedom of self-employed youth to operate their businesses. As the pilot shows, ZANU PF actors control access to jobs in order to create a loyal party cadre and to undermine the political opposition. In many cases, political actors have the means to use violence and intimidation tactics to maintain control over their economic activities. Since Murehwa is a rural area and the centre is relatively small, it is relatively easy for ZANU PF agents to identify people's political party affiliation and to monitor compliance. Dynamics are likely to be different in urban, densely populated areas, which is important to consider in future research. Dynamics will also be different in areas where the opposition is relatively stronger, or areas where political power is even more contested.

The pilot shows how young people navigate the politics of the local economy in pursuit of economic opportunities to such an extent that political and economic agency is sometimes hard to distinguish. Young people navigate the real and the imagined future: how opportunities are currently mediated by political actors, and how future political configurations might develop – as the 'go with the wind' proverb so clearly illustrates. Among those who are actively pursuing opportunities, choices in relation to accessing loans, approaching potential employers, and working with suppliers and clientele are made partly based on the assessment of their political affiliation and potential risk. 'Situated agency' in this context is thus about how one is positioned in relation to the political 'camps'.

Other identity elements like gender and social relationships to family members and peers proved to be significant for young people's agency. Cultural models and norms about gender roles strongly influenced how unemployment is experienced, and how young men and women need to compensate for this. Family and peers are important for the ways in which young people learn to anticipate political actors and movement in the politics of their local economy. For example, many had learnt the 'go with the grain' proverb from family members, and older family members advised about compliance with the powers that be, to avoid trouble. The pilot also showed that families and peers are not always helpful. For instance, young people needed to anticipate their relatives', neighbours' and friends' assumptions about their possible engagement in opposition politics, which was experienced as a burden.

Finally, the pilot confirms that both material and intangible aspects of work are important for young people's sense of identity and self-worth, and for their transition into adulthood (the process of social becoming). The findings show how work enables forms of social engagement in other community institutions, and there was overlap between party affiliation and forms of social organisation among workers, especially the self-employed.

In this context, young people who have work strongly feel that having an income does not make them independent from politics, or that financial independence offers them the space to express themselves freely. Those who had assistance from mediators to get their job thought that something might be asked in return, nearer election time. An awareness of the deeply political nature of the local economy should therefore shape thinking about interventions that seek to support youth employment. Currently, the more technical, vocational training approaches to youth employment ignore the politics in informal economies.

References

- Abbink, J. and Van Kessel, W.M.J. (eds) (2005) *Vanguard or Vandals: Youth, Politics and Conflict in Africa*, Leiden: Brill
- African Development Bank (2012) *African Economic Outlook 2012: Promoting Youth Employment*, www.youtheconomicopportunities.org/sites/default/files/uploads/resource/African%20Economic%20Outlook%202012.pdf (accessed 20 January 2016)
- Anderson, D. (2002) 'Vigilantes, Violence and the Politics of Public Order in Kenya', *African Affairs* 101: 531–55
- Andrae, G. and Beckman, B. (2013) 'Lagos Tailors, Trade Unions, and Organizations in the Informal Economy', *African Studies Review* 56.3: 191–208
- Bordonaro, L.I. and Payne, R. (2012) 'Ambiguous Agency: Critical Perspectives on Social Interventions with Children and Youth in Africa', *Children's Geographies* 10.4: 365–72
- Boudreaux, K.C. (2007) *State Power, Entrepreneurship, and Coffee: the Rwandan Experience*, Mercatus Policy Series Policy Comment 15, Arlington VA: Mercatus Center, George Mason University
- Bürge, M. (2011) 'Riding the Narrow Tracks of Moral Life: Commercial Motorbike Riders in Makeni, Sierra Leone', *Africa Today* 58.2: 58–95
- Castells, M. and Portes, A. (1989) 'World Underneath: the Origins, Dynamics, and Effects of the Informal Economy', in A. Portes, M. Castells and L. Benton (eds), *The Informal Economy*, Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press: 11–40
- Çelik, K. (2008) "'My State is My Father": Youth Unemployment Experiences under the Weak State Welfare Provisions of Turkey', *Journal of Youth Studies* 11.4: 429–44
- Chen, M. (2014) 'Informal Employment and Development: Patterns of Inclusion and Exclusion', *European Journal of Development Research* 26: 397–418
- Chen, M. (2012) *The Informal Economy: Definitions, Theories and Policies*, WIEGO Working Paper 1, Cambridge MA: Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO)
- Christensen, M. and Utas, M. (2008) 'Mercenaries of Democracy: The "Politricks" of Remobilized Combatants in the 2007 General Elections, Sierra Leone', *African Affairs* 107.429: 515–39
- Cincotta, R.P. (2008) 'How Democracies Grow Up: Countries with too Many Young People May Not Have a Fighting Chance at Freedom', *Foreign Policy*, March/April: 80–2
- Cramer, C. (2010) *Unemployment and Participation in Violence*, Background paper to *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development*, Washington DC: World Bank
- De Boeck, F. and Honwana, A. (2005) 'Introduction: Children and Youth in Africa', in F. De Boeck and A. Honwana (eds), *Makers and Breakers. Children and Youth in Postcolonial Africa*, Oxford: James Currey; Trenton NJ: Africa World Press; Dakar: Codesria: 1–18

- De Certeau, M. (1984) *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall, Berkeley: University of California Press
- Dolan, C. and Rajak, D. (2016) 'Remaking Africa's Informal Economies: Youth, Entrepreneurship and the Promise of Inclusion at the Bottom of the Pyramid', *Journal of Developing Studies* 52.4: 514–29
- Dzmiri, P. (2014) 'The Responsibility to Protect and the Youth: A Case Study of the Youth Activism in Zimbabwe', *Anthropologist* 17.2: 441–54
- Fox, L.; Senbet, L.W. and Simbanegavi, W. (2016) 'Youth Employment in sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges, Constraints and Opportunities', *Journal of African Economies* 25 Suppl 1: i3–i15
- Frederiksen, B.F. and Munive, J. (2010) 'Young Men and Women in Africa: Conflicts, Enterprise and Aspiration', *Young* 18.3: 249–58
- Goodfellow, T. and Titeca, K. (2012) 'Presidential Intervention and the Changing "Politics of Survival" in Kampala's Informal Economy', *Cities* 29.4: 264–70
- Gore, C. and Pratten, D. (2003) 'The Politics of Plunder: The Rhetorics of Order and Disorder in Southern Nigeria', *African Affairs* 102.407: 211–40
- Gupte, J.; te Lintelo, D. and Barnett, I. (2014) *Understanding 'Urban Youth' and the Challenges they Face in Sub-Saharan Africa: Unemployment, Food Insecurity and Violent Crime*, IDS Evidence Report 81, Brighton: IDS
- Hansen, K.T. (2010) 'Changing Youth Dynamics in Lusaka's Informal Economy in the Context of Economic Liberalization', *African Studies Quarterly* 11.2–3: 11–27
- Hansen, T.B. (2006) 'Sounds of Freedom: Music, Taxis and Racial Imagination in Urban South Africa', *Public Culture* 18.1: 185–208
- Hardgrove, A.; Pells, K.; Boyden, J. and Dornan, P. (2014) *Youth Vulnerabilities in Life Course Transitions*, Occasional Paper, New York: UNDP Human Development Report Office
- Hartley, S. and Johnson, H. (2013) 'Learning to Co-operate: Youth Engagement with the Co-operative Revival in Africa', *European Journal of Development Research* 26.1: 55–70
- Hiralal, K. (2010) 'The "Invisible" Workers of the Informal Economy – A Case Study of Home-based Workers in Kwazulu/Natal, South Africa', *Journal of Social Science* 23.1: 29–37
- Honwana, A. (2011) *Youth and the Tunisian Revolution*, Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum
- Honwana, A. (2005) 'Innocent and Guilty. Child Soldiers as Interstitial and Tactical Agents', in F. De Boeck and A. Honwana (eds), *Makers and Breakers. Children and Youth in Postcolonial Africa*, Oxford: James Currey; Trenton NJ: Africa World Press; Dakar: Codesria: 31–52
- Ismail, O. (2016) 'What is in a Job? The Social Context of Youth Employment Issues in Africa', *Journal of African Economies* 25 Suppl 1: i37–i60
- Ismail, W. (2009) 'The Dialectics of Junctions and Bases: Youth, Livelihoods and the Crises of Order in Downtown Lagos', *Security Dialogue* 40.5: 463–87

- Jeffrey, C. (2010) 'Timepass: Youth, Class, and Time among Unemployed Young Men in India', *American Ethnologist* 37.3: 465–81
- Jeffrey, C. (2008) "Generation Nowhere": Rethinking Youth through the Lens of Unemployed Young Men', *Progress in Human Geography* 32.6: 739–58
- Jeffrey, C. and Young, S. (2012) 'Waiting for Change: Youth, Caste and Politics in India', *Economy and Society* 41.4: 638–61
- Jeffrey, C.; Jeffery, P. and Jeffery, R. (2008) *Degrees without Freedom? Education, Masculinities and Unemployment in North India*, Palo Alto CA: Stanford University Press
- Johnston, H. (2012) 'State Violence and Oppositional Protest in High-Capacity Authoritarian Regimes', *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 6.1: 55–74
- Justino, P.; Brück, T. and Verwimp, P. (2013) 'Micro-Level Dynamics of Conflict, Violence, and Development: A New Analytical Framework', in P. Justino, T. Brück and P. Verwimp (eds), *A Micro-Level Perspective on the Dynamics of Conflict, Violence, and Development*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 3–25
- Kabeer, N.; Milward, K. and Sudarshan, S. (2013) *Organising Women Workers in the Informal Economy: Beyond the Weapons of the Weak*, London: Zed Press
- Kakore, N. (2014) 'Mash East Boots out Simbaneuta Mudarikwa', *The Herald*, 25 November, www.herald.co.zw/mash-east-boots-out-simbaneuta-mudarikwa/ (accessed 25 May 2016)
- Kaplan, R. (1994) 'The Coming Anarchy—How Scarcity, Crime, Overpopulation, Tribalism, and Disease Are Rapidly Destroying the Social Fabric of our Planet', *The Atlantic Monthly* 273.2: 44–76
- Konings, P. (2006) 'Solving Transportation Problems in African Cities: Innovative Responses by the Youth in Douala, Cameroon', *Africa Today* 58.2: 58–95
- Lahai, J.I. (2012) 'Youth Agency and Survival Strategies in Sierra Leone's Postwar Informal Economy', in M.O. Ensor (ed.), *African Childhoods. Education, Development, Peacebuilding, and the Youngest Continent*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan: 47–60
- Leahy, E. with Engelman, R.; Gibb Vogel, C.; Haddock, S. and Preston, T. (2007) *The Shape of Things to Come: Why Age Structure Matters to a Safer, More Equitable World*, Washington DC: Population Action International
- LeBas, A. (2006) 'Polarization as Craft: Party Formation and State Violence in Zimbabwe', *Comparative Politics* 38.4: 419–38
- Locke, C. and te Lintelo, D.J.H. (2012) 'Young Zambians "Waiting" for Opportunities and "Working Towards" Living Well: Lifecourse and Aspirations in Youth Transitions', *Journal of International Development* 24: 777–94
- Maconachie, R.; Binns, T. and Tengbe, P. (2012) 'Urban Farming Associations, Youth and Food Security in Post-war Freetown, Sierra Leone', *Cities* 29.3: 192–200
- Makau, J. (2011) "Like We Don't Have Enough on our Hands Already!": The Story of the Kenyan Slum Youth Federation', *Environment and Urbanization* 23.1: 203–6

- McGregor, J. (2013) 'Surveillance and the City: Patronage, Power-Sharing and the Politics of Urban Control in Zimbabwe', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 39.4: 783–805
- Meagher, K. (2014) 'Disempowerment from Below: Informal Enterprise Networks and the Limits of Political Voice in Nigeria', *Oxford Development Studies* 42.3: 419–38
- Meagher, K. (2010) 'The Empowerment Trap: Gender, Poverty and the Informal Economy in Sub-Saharan Africa', in S. Chant (ed.), *The International Handbook of Gender and Poverty: Concepts, Research, Policy*, Gloucester: Edward Edgar Publishing: 472–77
- Meagher, K. and Lindell, I. (2013) 'Introduction', *African Studies Review* 56.3: 57–76
- Menzel, A. (2011) 'Between Ex-Combatization and Opportunities for Peace: The Double-Edged Qualities of Motorcycle-Taxi Driving in Urban Postwar Sierra Leone', *Africa Today* 58.2: 96–127
- Mueller, S.D. (2011) 'Dying to Win: Elections, Political Violence, and Institutional Decay in Kenya', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 29.1: 99–117
- Munive, J. (2010) 'The Army of "Unemployed" Young People', *Young* 18.3: 321–38
- Nyambi, O. (2016) 'Of Weevils and Gamatox: Titles, Names and Nicknames in ZANU PF Succession Politics', *African Identities* 14.1: 59–73
- Oosterom, M.A. and Pswarayi, L. (2014) '*Being a Born-Free*'. *Violence and Youth Agency in Zimbabwe*, IDS Research Report 79, Brighton: IDS
- Parry, J.P. (1999) 'Two Cheers for Reservation: the Satnamis and the Steel Plant', in R. Guha and J.P. Parry (eds), *Institutions and Inequalities*, Delhi: Oxford University Press: 128–69
- Peters, K. (2011) 'The Crisis of Youth in Postwar Sierra Leone: Problem Solved?', *Africa Today* 58.2: 128–53
- Podder, S. (2015) 'The Power In-between: Youth's Subaltern Agency and the Post-conflict Everyday', *Peacebuilding* 3.1: 36–57
- Raeymaekers, T. (2013) 'Post-war Conflict and the Market for Protection: The Challenges to Congo's Hybrid Peace', *International Peacekeeping* 20.5: 600–17
- Raeymaekers, T. (2011) *Forced Displacement and Youth Employment in the Aftermath of the Congo War: From Making a Living to Making a Life*, MICROCON Research Working Paper 38, Brighton: MICROCON
- Richards, P. (ed.) (2005) *No Peace, No War: an Anthropology of Contemporary Armed Conflicts*, Oxford: James Currey
- Richards, P. (2002) 'Youth, Food and Peace: A Reflection on Some African Security Issues at the Millennium', in T. Zack-William, D. Frost and A. Thomson (eds), *Africa in Crisis: New Challenges and Possibilities*, London: Pluto: 179–95
- Richards, P. (1997) *Fighting for the Rain Forest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*, Oxford and Portsmouth: James Currey and Heinemann

- Sachikonye, L. (2011) *When a State Turns on its Citizens. 60 Years of Institutionalised Violence in Zimbabwe*, Johannesburg: Jacana
- Seymour, C. (2014) 'Zero in the Court of Nine to One: Patronage and Tactical Weakness in Coping with Violence', *Children's Geographies* 12.3: 268–80
- Seymour, C. (2012) 'Ambiguous Agencies: Coping and Survival in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo', *Children's Geographies* 10.4: 373–84
- Singerman, D. (2007) *The Economic Imperatives of Marriage: Emerging Practices and Identities Among Youth in the Middle East*, Working Paper 6, Washington DC: Wolfensohn Center for Development; Dubai: Dubai School of Government
- Sommers, M. (2011) 'Governance, Security and Culture: Assessing Africa's Youth Bulge', *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 5.2: 292–303
- Sutter, C.J.; Webb, J.W.; Kistruck, G.M. and Bailey, A.V.G. (2013) 'Entrepreneurs' Responses to Semi-formal Illegitimate Institutional Arrangements', *Journal of Business Venturing* 28.6: 743–58
- Thieme, T. (2010) 'Youth, Waste and Work in Mathare: Whose Business and Whose Politics?', *Environment and Urbanization* 22.2: 333–52
- Tobias, J.M.; Mair, J. and Barbosa-Leiker, C. (2013) 'Toward a Theory of Transformative Entrepreneurship: Poverty Reduction and Conflict Resolution in Rwanda's Entrepreneurial Coffee Sector', *Journal of Business Venturing* 28: 728–42
- Tom, P. (2014) 'Youth-traditional Authorities' Relations in Post-war Sierra Leone', *Children's Geographies* 12.3: 327–38
- Ukeje, U. and Iwilade, A. (2012) 'A Farewell to Innocence? African Youth and Violence in the Twenty-First Century', *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 6.2: 338–50
- UNDP (2015) *Work for Human Development: The 2015 Human Development Report*, New York: United Nations Development Programme
- Utas, M. (2005) 'West-African Warscapes: Victimcy, Girlfriending, Soldiering: Tactic Agency in a Young Woman's Social Navigation of the Liberian War Zone', *Anthropological Quarterly* 78.2: 403–30
- Vigh, H. (2006) *Navigating Terrains of War: Youth and Soldiering in Guinea-Bissau*, Oxford: Berghan Books
- Williams, O.F. (2008) *Peace Through Commerce Responsible Corporate Citizenship and the Ideals of the United Nations Global Compact*, Paris: University of Notre Dame Press
- World Bank (2011) *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development*, Washington DC: World Bank
- Zimstat (2012) *National Report Census 2012*, Harare: Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency, www.zimstat.co.zw (accessed 27 November 2014)



Brighton BN1 9RE

T +44 (0)1273 606261

F +44 (0)1273 621202

E ids@ids.ac.uk

www.ids.ac.uk

