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RESOLVE

NETWORK

From Self-Defense to Vigilantism

A Typology Framework of
Community-Based Armed
Groups

Dr. Lauren Van Metre



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ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report was written and researched by Dr. Lauren Van Metre. Several members of the RESOLVE Network Secretariat contributed to this report's development, including Ms. Bethany McGann, Research & Project Manager; Ms. Boglarka Bozsogi, Research and Communications Coordinator; Ms. Kateira Aryaeinejad, Research and Project Manager; and Ms. Leanne Erdberg, Interim Executive Director. RESOLVE would like to thank the reviewers of this report and the members of the RESOLVE Network Research Advisory Council who lent their support and guidance. Finally, RESOLVE would like to thank the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Africa Bureau for its generous support for this report and RESOLVE's research initiative on Community-Based Armed Groups in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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From Self-Defense to Vigilantism is part of the RESOLVE Network's Community-Based Armed Groups research series, an initiative investigating the dynamics of community-based armed groups and the contexts they operate in to identify potential approaches to engage, manage, and transform them.

For more information about RESOLVE, its network of experts, and its research projects and activities, please visit our website at www.resolvenet.org and follow the discussion on Twitter via [@resolvenet](https://twitter.com/resolvenet).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

In conflicts across Sub-Saharan Africa, community-based armed groups (CBAGs) are a fixture in the security landscape, presenting a complex challenge to communities, governments, development implementers, and security providers. Community-based armed groups are a subset of non-state armed groups (NSAGs), defined by their relationship to the state and local communities and the ways they exercise power. While NSAGs, such as insurgent or terrorist groups, seek to disrupt or undermine the state to take it over or establish an alternative political system, CBAGs can be aligned with, or complementary to, the state, or they can operate in gray areas with minimal state presence. They do not typically pursue large political ambitions and strategies; rather, they advance the local ambitions of their stakeholders.

Given the influential and growing presence and diversity of CBAGs in conflict-affected states, it is critical to develop analytical frameworks and typologies to support international, state, and community actors interacting with armed groups as political and security actors. Two key questions are (1) how CBAGs can be engaged, managed, or transformed to play constructive roles in local communities in weak, fragile, or conflict-affected states; and (2) how their operations can exacerbate fragility and violence by, for example, preying on communities or aligning with other non-state armed groups. As attention increases on state fragility and predation as the root causes of intrastate violence and the emergence of violent extremism, it is critical to include CBAGs in any analysis of the informal political and security networks that dominate fragile states in the absence of formal state institutions.

This report develops a typology framework to enhance the understanding of these groups and their roles in informal political and security networks. To elucidate CBAG operations, particularly the use of force, this report identifies key internal functions that anchor the position of CBAGs within state-society relations. Further, the report denotes external factors that drive CBAG transformations from one type of armed group to another.

The study hopes to help community, state, and international actors to better monitor these groups, to contribute to a deeper analysis of informal elite power pacts in fragile states, and to identify moments when other actors might engage, manage, or transform CBAGs and the ways to create those moments. Understanding the conditions under which a CBAG may transition from a more positive community role to a more predatory one, or vice versa, is critical for community security and development, as well as for local political stability.

Typology Framework

The typology framework builds on a series of studies exploring links between the external operational environments of armed groups and armed groups' internal functions. External factors—negotiated relations with the state and the community, resources, social norms, the threat environment, and inter-

national actors—influence the internal functions of the group—leadership structures, discipline, and recruitment processes. In turn, internal functions determine the fundamental characteristics of CBAGs: how they exercise violence and against whom. The two defining factors of CBAG identity are **external** in terms of state-community relations and **internal** in terms of how and if the groups exercise violence. The typology informs a dynamic model linking CBAG organization and operations to environmental factors, and it identifies evidence of CBAG transformations due to shifts in these interrelated factors.

CORE CHARACTERISTICS

Exercise of violence. The core factors defining CBAG identity are its relationship with the state and with its local community, and whether that relationship is negotiated with shared norms and determinations around CBAG activities and duties or coercive entailing violence, predation, or extortion. These core relationships influence the internal functions of the group, which, in turn, determine its first core characteristic: how it exercises violence.

As state-community relations, the exercise of violence can be coercive or negotiated.

- **Coercive violence** is more offensive, conflictive, and indiscriminate, targeting the state or the community, and violating local social norms around violence. A neighborhood gang that extorts funds from local businesses and engages in retributive violence against competitors is an example of a group that exercises coercive violence.
- **Negotiated violence** is more defensive or protective of the community or the state, discriminating, directed against external threats, and more aligned with social norms around violence and a negotiated relationship with the community or state to use violence for political or social goals. A tribal militia that patrols the community perimeter and organizes reconnaissance missions at the behest of tribal elders is an example of a group in a negotiated relationship.

Communities can also authorize the use of coercive violence against others, for example, when a militia is directed to attack state security forces or neighboring militias. How a CBAG exercises violence will define its identity, the purpose it fills in the security environment, and the reasons that a state or community might leverage, coopt, or initially mandate the creation of the group.

Fluidity. Fluidity is a secondary core characteristic of CBAGs. In response to shifting external factors, CBAGs transform their identity and operations to remain viable and relevant. CBAGs operate similarly to other social and political organizations in that they are constrained in their operations from without and from within. This report presents a dynamic model that links CBAG organization to environmental factors and links CBAG transformations to shifts in these factors. As predatory state security actors enter a region, CBAGs may respond to the external threat environment by expanding their organizations and operations, eventually transitioning to an insurgency, as with Boko Haram in Nigeria. In addition, community and government structures and norms can shift in conflict-affected and fragile states as they recover from or fall into violence or undergo political transitions. In these cases, CBAGs, while maintaining the same relative functions, can find themselves in a different relationship between the state and communi-

ties because the surrounding environment has shifted. For example, a hunter group that easily operates across national borders may be perceived by the state as an alien presence when a state begins promoting a purist ethnic identity, as happened with the Dozo hunters' groups of Côte d'Ivoire.

Conclusions

In the final section of this report, the external and internal factors and their dynamic inter-relationships are tested using two historical case studies: the South Africa's People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD), an urban community protection group that morphed into a vigilante and then a terrorist-labeled group; and Cote d'Ivoire's Dozos, which evolved from rural hunting groups to community and government-sanctioned private security groups, and then to an ethnic militia when the government turned against them. The case studies could confirm several hypotheses for this out-of-category transformation:

- If a CBAG grows in size and influence, has significant access to natural resources, and is threatening the state/enters into direct mutual conflict with the state, the CBAG may transition to an NSAG.
- If a CBAG has a strong, historical negotiated relationship of trust with the local community, relies on community resources for its operations, and has mutually-agreed social norms of community protection, it may adopt additional local governance roles beyond security provision, such as dispute resolution.
- If a CBAG exercises violence in ways that violate community and state norms of social order and loses access to patronage and funding by the state or community, it may transition to an autonomous group that exercises coercive violence, such as a gang, vigilante, or criminal group.

For international organizations working in an environment with CBAGs or local civil society groups working within a community impacted by or supporting a group, it is critical to understand CBAG shifts, especially if there is the possibility that CBAGs may change to more pernicious types of organizations based on dynamic external changes. There may be an ideal type of CBAG ripe for engagement: a group rooted in community norms and values, protective, and exercising internal discipline and order. However, these groups may be unique but easily transform in negative ways if factors in their external environment change, such as funding and threat levels.

Holistic monitoring and engagement strategies for CBAGs are key for identifying routes to create defensive, noncoercive hybrid security systems. Strategies must consider the entirety of their existence: norms of social order that may legitimize types of CBAG violence, endorsement by the state, and legitimacy rooted in communities. CBAGs differ greatly, yet engagement policies are often similar. Engagement strategies also need to consider internal characteristics—such as sources of legitimacy and loyalty, leadership capacities, recruitment pools, and institutional structures. As CBAGs are manifestations of local elite pacts, analyzing how they exercise violence and against whom gives international actors key insights into the informal political processes central to fragile state governance

International actors need to recognize that they themselves influence the external factors within which CBAGs operate and can expect responses in internal CBAG functions. For example, if the international community supplies increased resources to a CBAG, then it may attract a wider base of opportunistic recruits who may wield violence indiscriminately and abandon community-based norms. Similarly, the international community may appear as a threat in a CBAG's environment, thereby institutionalizing the CBAG's roles and making it a more disciplined, effective fighting force.

INTRODUCTION

Defining Community-Based Armed Groups

“New” wars—intrastate wars perpetrated by non-state actors—have come to dominate the conflicts of the past 30 years.¹ With their rise, international, state, and community actors increasingly operate in environments infused with numerous armed groups. Armed groups have varying goals and strategies but influence the course of violent conflict—whether protecting communities from predatory security forces, expressing local grievances and embodying community empowerment, spoiling peace agreements, or disrupting humanitarian and state-building operations.

In conflicts across Sub-Saharan Africa, community-based armed groups have become a visible fixture in the security landscape; they present a challenge to communities, governments, development implementers, and security providers. Given the influential and growing presence and diversity of community-based armed groups in conflict-affected states, developing analytical frameworks and typologies is critical to support international, state, and community actors to better understand and interact with armed groups. A key question is whether community-based armed groups can be engaged, managed, or transformed to play a constructive role in local communities in weak, fragile, or conflict-affected states; or whether their operations exacerbate fragility and violence by, for example, preying on communities or aligning with other non-state armed groups.

CBAGs are not a new phenomenon. However, with the increasing attention on state fragility and predation as root causes of intrastate violence, CBAGs are influential security actors. As major international intervention policies—such as the United States (US) U.S. government's Stabilization Assistance Review (SAR) and the United Kingdom (UK) government's Elite Pacts in Fragile States Review—elevate the centrality of engaging with fragile state political processes above institution building, CBAGs must be included as a manifestation of those politics. Therefore, security, development, humanitarian, and peacebuilding institutions need to consider their impact. This report develops a typology framework to enhance the understanding of these groups and the possibility of creating moments of hybrid security governance and more constructive elite pacts with their participation.

1 Mary Kaldor, “In Defence of New Wars,” *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 2, no. 1 (2013). doi:<http://doi.org/10.5334/sta.at>.

To understand the operations of CBAGs, particularly their use of force, this report identifies key internal functions that define their positions in the state-society nexus. Further, the report denotes external factors that affect CBAG transformations. The two defining factors of CBAG identity are the external factor of state-community relations and the internal function of the exercise of violence.

The study hopes to help local civil society, state, and international actors to better monitor these groups and to identify moments when other actors might engage, manage, or transform CBAGs and the ways to create those moments. Understanding how a CBAG may transition from a more positive community role to a more predatory one is critical for community security and development.

This report defines community-based armed groups (CBAGs) as a subset of non-state armed groups (NSAGs) defined by their relationship to the state and the host community and how they exercise power.² Although NSAGs, such as insurgent or terrorist groups, seek to disrupt or undermine the state in order to take it over or establish an alternative political system, the activities of CBAGs can be aligned with or complementary to the state or can occur in gray areas with minimal state institutional presence. CBAGs can be deputized by the state to provide local security or serve at the discretion of informal and formal local governance institutions. They are often deeply embedded³ in communities. They do not operate in support of large political ambitions and strategies; rather, they advance the localist ambitions of their stakeholders.⁴

Examples of CBAGs are youth groups in Kenya sponsored by local and national politicians to protect or project their economic interests, community defense forces in Nigeria that defend communities involved in pastoralist-agriculturalist conflicts, and community-sponsored protective forces in Kenya to combat criminal networks and gangs. Other types of CBAGs are not legitimized by governance officials or community institutions and are self-governed or autonomous. Gangs, criminal networks, and vigilante groups may have relationships with the state and be highly embedded within communities—however, these relationships with the state and the community are coerced rather than negotiated. These CBAGs use violence or the threat of violence to exercise control in areas where the state is largely absent.

How does research and analysis inform the development of a typology framework for CBAGs? Research by Jeremy M. Weinstein on the micropolitics of rebel groups and by Klaus Schlichte⁵ explored the strong link between armed group responses to factors in the external environment (for example, resource endowments, interaction with communities, and the presence of the state) and how a group operates, especially how it exercises violence.⁶ Armed group leaders make decisions or choices about how to

2 Moritz Schuberth, “The Challenge of Community-Based Armed Groups: Towards a Conceptualization of Militias, Gangs, and Vigilantes,” *Contemporary Security Policy* 36, no. 2 (2015): 296–320.

3 Paul Stephen Staniland, “Explaining Cohesion, Fragmentation, and Control in Insurgent Groups” (PhD Thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2010).

4 Schuberth, “The Challenge of Community-Based Armed Groups.”

5 Klaus Schlichte, *In the Shadow of Violence: The Politics of Armed Groups* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2009), 85, 116, 144.

6 Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 6–7.

recruit, organize, lead, mobilize, and resource their organizations, which environmental factors condition and constrain. Weinstein argues that armed groups in his research on insurgent groups operate similarly to other social and political organizations in that they are constrained in their operations from without and from within.⁷ As a subset of NSAGs with different objectives but similar environments, CBAGs also respond to external constraints.

Moritz Schuberth maintains that state absence or fragility conditions the existence of CBAGs.⁸ State fragility can define the existence of different types of CBAGs. For example, vigilante groups are associated with ungoverned spaces, militia groups with new wars conducted in fragile states, and criminal networks with states that fail to manage societal greed and grievances.⁹ CBAGs can shift among different ideal types when their environments change, as when an ungoverned space populated by vigilante groups becomes the battleground for armed clashes with the state, and militias emerge.

This report expands on Schuberth's categorization by state fragility factors, arguing that it is not the nature of fragility that defines CBAGs, but whether the group's relationships with the state and communities are negotiated or coerced in nature. In a negotiated relationship, a CBAG uses violence as one of several approaches—such as dialogue, deterrence, or confidence building measures (CBMs)—to leverage its strategies and goals as agreed with the state or community. In a coerced relationship, the CBAG's primary activity is the exercise of violence to force the state or community to bend or accede to its ambitions.

This report adopts previous research in several ways. Weinstein and Schlichte focus primarily on two external factors that condition CBAG operations: the threat environment and natural resources. First, the emergence of a threat influences CBAG growth and the formalization and institutionalization of group roles. Second, the availability of natural resources conditions recruitment and group discipline. This study identifies additional external factors that condition CBAG internal functions and operations.

The external factors the report analyzes are the relationship of CBAGs to the state and communities, the threat environment, access to resources, norms of social order, and international actors—diaspora groups, other states, and other CBAGs. These external factors condition internal group functions: the leadership structure, group discipline, and recruitment of CBAGs.

Two core factors define CBAG identity: (1) its relationship with the state and the local community, and (2), whether that relationship is negotiated with shared norms and determinations around CBAG activities, or coercive to advance CBAG ambitions at the expense of the state or community. These core relationships influence the internal functions of the group, which determines its fundamental characteristic: how it exercises violence.

7 Ibid., 51.

8 Schuberth, "The Challenge of Community-Based Armed Groups," 304.

9 Ibid.

Exercise of violence. The exercise of violence can be characterized as coercive or negotiated. **Coercive violence** would be more offensive, conflictive, and indiscriminate, targeted against the state or the community, and disregarding local social norms around violence to serve CBAG goals and objectives. **Negotiated violence** would be more defensive or protective toward the community or the state, discriminate, directed against external threats, and align more with social norms around violence, and state and community social and political goals. How a CBAG exercises violence at its essence will define its identity.

Fluidity. Fluidity is another central characteristic of CBAGs. In response to shifting external factors, CBAGs often transform their identity and operations to remain viable and relevant. For instance, the Funga File, a neighborhood watch group in Kisumu, Kenya, turned into a vigilante group, when, having secured the community, the citizens stopped paying for the group's services. In Côte d'Ivoire, Dozo hunters' groups that contributed to the local game meat economy took on the mandate of protecting farmers from cattle rustlers when the levels of big game declined from overhunting. In some conflict environments, CBAGs have been observed to shift rapidly from one group type to another, such as civil society-like organizations, or, at the other end of the spectrum, to align themselves with or incorporate into non-state armed groups, such as violent extremist organizations. The fluidity of these groups in response to changing dynamics makes them particularly complex security actors.

The final section of this report tests the utility of the typology in identifying the impact of changing external and internal factors and their dynamic interrelationships through two historical case studies: South Africa's People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD), an urban community protection group that morphed into a vigilante and then a terrorist-labeled group, and Côte d'Ivoire's Dozos, which evolved from rural hunting groups to community and government-sanctioned private security groups to ethnic militia when the government turned against them. The case studies were selected for their maximum comparative value. Both PAGAD and the Dozos began as community protection groups, but they followed very different trajectories in group identity, allowing the identification and validation of intervening variables.

Methodology

The research identified the core factors that determine CBAG behavior through an extensive literature review and comparative analysis of different examples of CBAGs in Sub-Saharan Africa and around the world. Subsequently, the external and internal factors identified in the literature were validated through the two historical case studies of this report, in Côte d'Ivoire and South Africa. The author employed inductive methods to theorize a typology framework for CBAGs, creating hypotheses that can be tested against historical cases of group operation and transformation. In this way, practical examples support both the construction of the theoretical framework and the testing of the resulting hypotheses, creating a dynamic typology rooted in on-the-ground realities. The external and internal factors listed were selected based on their significance in the case studies reviewed during the desk research process.

The critical role of the state in defining how and against whom CBAGs exercise violence is evidenced in several cases, including the Senegal Islamic Militia¹⁰ and Côte d'Ivoire's Dozos in the 1990s.¹¹ CBAGs that operate in grey zones of governance in lieu of a state security presence can adopt state governance practices, such as taxation¹² and the exercise of public authority, as in the Democratic Republic of Congo,¹³ and security provision, as in Borno state, Nigeria, where the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) organized to protect communities from violent extremist groups, mainly Boko Haram.¹⁴

Community collective action, protection, and vulnerability in Colombia informs theories regarding community relations, including how CBAGs negotiate power with local communities,¹⁵ act as agents of coercion when it comes to community engagement,¹⁶ and adopt or reflect norms of violence from the communities with which they interact.¹⁷ The CJTF has a mixed reputation in Nigeria, but aspects of its activities in the communities in Borno include constructive governance and civil society roles, such as bringing together community members across ethnic and tribal divides, providing health and justice services, and administering dispute resolution¹⁸—activities similar to the Tatmadaw militias in Myanmar.¹⁹

State influence is consequential even for CBAGs that operate autonomously from any state or community institution, such as gangs, criminal networks, or drug cartels. In urban communities in South and Central America, violence has become normalized through the historical legacy of sustained state repression,²⁰ allowing autonomous CBAGs to exercise violence coercively against citizens and state. This desensitization to violence facilitates recruitment and characterizes operations and command and control for gangs

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- 10 Alassane Ndao, "L'informalisation de la Violence Physique Légitime: Le Sénégal à l'épreuve des Milices Islamiques." *Lien Social et Politiques* 76 (2016): 96–113.
 - 11 Thomas Bassett, "Dangerous Pursuits: Hunter Associations (Donzo Ton) and National Politics in Cote D'Ivoire," *Africa* 73, no. 1 (2003).
 - 12 Kasper Hoffman, Koen Vlassenroot, and Gauthier Marchais, "Taxation, Stateness and Armed Groups: Public Authority and Resource Extraction in Eastern Congo," *Development and Change* (2016): 1197–1456.
 - 13 Kasper Hoffmann and Koen Vlassenroot, "Armed Groups and the Exercise of Public Authority: The Cases Of the Mayi-Mayi and Raya Mutomboki in Kalehe, South Kivu," *Peacebuilding* 2, no. 2 (2014): 202–20.
 - 14 Chitra Nagaranjan, *Civilian Perceptions of the Yan Gora (CJTF) in Borno State, Nigeria* (Washington, DC: Center for Civilians in Conflict, 2018), https://civiliansinconflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2018.06.CJTF-Report.Africa-Program.Web_.pdf.
 - 15 Vladimir Caraballo Acuña, "Órdenes Locales, Acuerdos de Paz y Presencia Diferenciada del Estado. Negociación con las Milicias Populares de Medellín" ["Local Orders, Peace Agreements and Differentiated Presence of the State. Negotiation with Urban Militias in Medellín"], *Colombia Internacional* 77 (2013): 241–70.
 - 16 Margarita Gafaro, Ana Maria Ibáñez, and Patricia Justino, *Collective Action and Armed Group Presence in Colombia* (Bogota: Documento CEDE, 2014).
 - 17 Oliver Kaplan, "Nudging Armed Groups: How Civilians Transmit Norms of Protection," *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 2, no. 3 (2013): 1-18..
 - 18 "Civilian Perceptions of the Yan Gora (CJTF) in Borno State, Nigeria," *Center for Civilians in Conflict* (2018), https://civiliansinconflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2018.06.CJTF-Report.Africa-Program.Web_.pdf.
 - 19 John Buchanan, "Myanmar and Its Militias," *Asia Foundation Weekly Analysis*, November 2, 2016, <https://asiafoundation.org/2016/11/02/myanmar-and-its-militias/>.
 - 20 Ailsa Winton, "Urban Violence: A Guide to the Literature," *Environment and Urbanization* 16, no. 2 (2004): 165–84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/095624780401600208>

and criminal groups.²¹ The group, state, and community relationship creates a feedback loop where violence is normalized, rather than deviant, by social norms.

The influence of international actors in the form of funding, diaspora links, ideological influence, or political pressure is also present in several cases. Somali militias in the 1990s flourished on diaspora funding,²² while PAGAD in South Africa adopted foreign ideologies in their affinity for the spread of the Iranian Revolution in Africa.²³ The United States placed pressure on the regime in Côte d'Ivoire to apply international human rights norms after abuses by the Dozo hunters' group, just as Human Rights Watch did in Mali regarding abuses by ethnic militias.²⁴

Social norms of violence were salient in a comparative research study of communities in Syria and Colombia by Oliver Kaplan. The study found that the production of violence by armed groups adheres to local "logics of appropriateness" that arise within communities and influence the chances of the community influencing the behavior of armed groups.²⁵ Another case study on the Dozos of Côte d'Ivoire discusses their adherence to a spiritual belief system and how that system affects recruitment, mission orientation, and community perception.²⁶

Finally, the theses on CBAG fluidity are taken from multiple sources and cases, including Mali, where Bambara and Dogon self-defense groups used the fight against armed Islamist groups to force another ethnic group, the Puehl, from their land. What began as protection against violent extremism evolved into identity-based vigilantism.²⁷ In Kenya, the Funga File shifted from a community protection group to a vigilante group when citizens withdrew their payments because they viewed the original security threat as resolved.²⁸

Relevance

A typology of CBAGs and of the external factors that constrain and support their functions and operations helps to elucidate the roles that they play in communities. This understanding is critical for any

21 Ailsa Winton, "Youth, Gangs and Violence: Analysing the Social and Spatial Mobility of Young People in Guatemala City," *Children's Geographies* 3, no. 2 (2005): 167–84, doi:10.1080/14733280500161537.

22 Ken Menkhaus, *Somalia and the Horn of Africa*, (Washington, DC: World Bank, April 2011), <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/494981468303085454/pdf/632040WP00WDR0009B0Somalia00PUB.LICO.pdf>.

23 Josh Lefkowitz, "Terror's South African Front," *The National Interest*, August 18, 2004, <https://nationalinterest.org/article/terrors-south-african-front-2742>.

24 "Dangerous Upsurge in Abuse by Ethnic Militias: Protect Civilians, Disarm Self-Defense Groups," *Human Rights Watch*, December 7, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/12/07/mali-dangerous-upsurge-abuse-ethnic-militias#>.

25 Oliver Kaplan, *Resisting War: How Communities Protect Themselves* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

26 Joseph Hellweg, "Hunters, Ritual, and Freedom: Dozo Sacrifice as a Technology of the Self in the Benkadi Movement of Côte d'Ivoire," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15, no. 1 (2009): 41. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9655.2008.01529.x>.

27 Corinne Dufka, *We Used to Be Brothers: Self Defense Group Abuses in Central Mali* (Washington, DC: Human Rights Watch, 2018) <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/12/07/we-used-be-brothers/self-defense-group-abuses-central-mali>.

28 Lauren Van Metre, *Community Resilience to Violent Extremism in Kenya* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, September 2016).

community assessment to determine whether CBAG operations contribute to community resilience or vulnerability, and to identify the role these groups might play in the co-creation of defensive, non-coercive hybrid security systems. Further, a more thorough understanding of how shifts in external factors affect CBAG transformations allows community, state, and international actors to better monitor and identify entry points for engagement, management, and transformation (EMT).²⁹ EMT embraces the applicability of intervention strategies beyond conventional, standard technical approaches common to security sector reform programming; it also appreciates the fluidity of CBAGs and their responsiveness to changes as security dynamics evolve.

Sukanya Podder argues that armed groups are ripe for engagement, if the following are in place:

- Community resource bases that create armed group dependency on local communities for a range of support, which encourages them to be more protective
- High levels of civilian support that lend authority and legitimacy to the armed group
- High internal and external leadership monitoring group member activities and discipline
- Diverse activities, including security and service delivery support.³⁰

Podder's analysis substantiates the need for a typology to strengthen the EMT framework. CBAGs exercise violence within communities in particular ways, depending on their structure and operations. Understanding the conditions under which a CBAG may transition from a community protection group to a criminal network is critical for community security. Similarly, identifying the conditions under which a CBAG may shift from an armed group to a civil society or political organization is critical for governance reform. Understanding the impacts of external factors on CBAGs could identify moments when community, state, or international actors could engage, manage, or transform CBAGs and could elucidate how those moments might be anticipated or shaped.³¹

The research also contributes to the growing attention on elite bargains—the hidden informal power structures that define peace and security in fragile states in which power is weakly institutionalized. Security in fragile states is an extension of politics and power at all levels from national to community. Understanding CBAGs as instruments of informal elite power pacts has important implications for security sector reform in fragile states. In addition, analyzing how these informal security networks are negotiated, legitimized and constrained can inform how international organizations working in these areas can support, leverage, or incentivize power dynamics to promote peace, development, and governance.

29 See Moritz Schuberth's report in this same RESOLVE Network Research Series: Moritz Schuberth, *Approaching Community-Based Armed Groups in Sub-Saharan Africa: Lessons Learned and Measures of Success* (Washington, DC: RESOLVE Network, 2019).

30 Sukanya Podder, "Non-State Armed Groups and Stability: Reconsidering Legitimacy and Inclusion," *Contemporary Security Policy* 34 (2013): 1, 16-39.

31 Claudia Hofmann and Ulrich Schneckener, "Engaging Non-State Armed Actors in State-Building and Peace-Building: Options and Strategies," *International Review of the Red Cross* 93, no. 883 (September 2011).

TYOLOGY FRAMEWORK

The typology framework builds on a series of studies that explore links between the external operational environment of armed groups and the internal functions of the armed groups, in particular, how they exercise violence. This is a dynamic model that links CBAG organization and operation to environmental factors and links CBAG transformations to shifts in these factors.

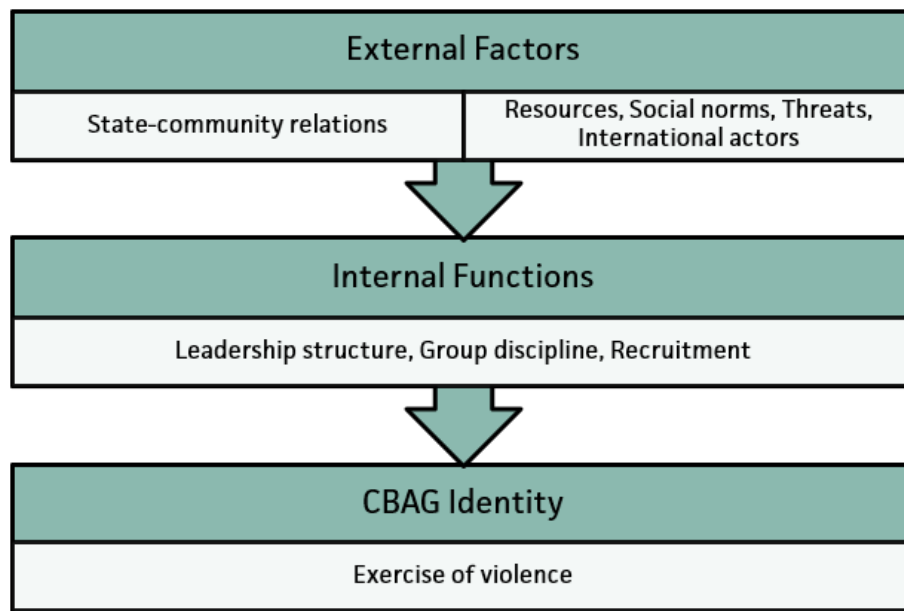
The first typifying factor for CBAGs is whether their relationship with the state or communities is coercive or negotiated. Coercive relationships entail violence, predation, or extortion; negotiated relationships include shared norms or determinations around CBAG activities and duties. Whether CBAGs use violence in support of, complementary to, or in conflict with state or local governance institutions, formal or informal, conditions their identity.

Second, building on the literature, this study explores how external, environmental factors condition CBAG internal operations, specifically how they exercise violence—its target, level, and alignment with the norms of social order. Coercive violent behavior denotes offensive, indiscriminate use of force; negotiated norms around violence signal more protective, discriminate practices. For example, national political entities might deputize a local CBAG to police a community or territory in conjunction with the national police or to fill a security gap. Community protection groups often operate with the authority of formal or informal community leaders to prevent or reduce crime or deter external threats. Other CBAGs are autonomous and exercise self-governance, for example, raider groups, criminal networks, or gangs. They often exercise violence coercively to control their environment, deter competitors, and dominate their communities or state representatives.

Other external factors modify their exercise of violence: international actors, access to resources, the threat environments, and socially accepted norms around violence. Internal functions, as conditioned externally, will influence how CBAGs exercise violence and modify group characteristics. These factors modify the relationship to the state and their communities, pushing and pulling the CBAGs along vectors that explain how they choose to exercise violence.

For example, the rise of a significant threat to a community could modify a community protection group's exercise of violence from defensive or protective to offensive or predatory. If a CBAG gains access to substantial resources, it might recruit more opportunistic members and expand its operations, possibly challenging state authority in a locale. In such a case, its exercise of violence could be more offensive and predatory.

Figure 1. Factors Defining the Identity of Community-Based Armed Groups



Source: Author.

External Factors

RELATIONSHIP TO THE STATE

The relationship of CBAGs to the state affects their internal organization and armed operations. In a negotiated relationship, violence is one of many ways of engagement to achieve goals; in a coercive relationship, violence is primarily a means to an end.

Negotiated Relationship: In negotiated relationships, the state can become the authority structure, and the CBAGs operate according to the state’s strategic security goals. An authoritative leadership dominating a community or a region—for example, a warlord, politician, or informal community leader—is more likely to direct operations to protect and secure the land or political power granted by the state or to cooperate with state security forces. CBAGs can also operate under state sanction to extend state control into localities. An example of a CBAG that gained the support of the government in power is the Naparama, a peasant militia created by a traditional healer that believed that its members were invulnerable to bullets. In the Mozambique civil war, the Naparama recaptured most of the northern territory held by Renamo insurgents. The governing party, Frelimo, tolerated and, at times, actively supported Naparama operations against Renamo.³²

³² Corinna Jentzsch, “Spiritual Power and the Dynamics of War in the Provinces of Nampula and Zambezia,” in *The War Within: New Perspectives on Civil War in Mozambique, 1976-1992*, eds. Eric Morier-Genoud, Michel Cahen, and Domingos M. do Rosário (Suffolk: James Currey): 75–99.

Coercive Relationship: If the group authority is in a coercive or coopted relationship with the state through threats, personal ties, or greed, the community may perceive CBAGs as corrupted by the state and thus as illegitimate. Case studies indicate that state-coopted CBAGs are more likely to respond violently to community opposition. In addition, such CBAGs are organized to protect the state from political rivals, inviting potential violence on the communities within which the CBAG operates. In many cases, CBAGs may operate in tandem with state security forces that predate on the communities to maintain their local power.

Some examples of how a state may use CBAGs in coercive relationships at the community level come from Pakistan. In 1971, the Pakistan Army colluded with armed Islamist militants of the Jamaat-e-Islami's student wing to commit violence in East Pakistan, with both groups in opposition to the establishment of a secular state. In the Pakistani province of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, beginning in 2002, a number of local factions made deals with the Pakistani state to act as local stabilizers in areas of unrest, in exchange for the state's noninterference in their operations.³³ This policy changed in 2018 when the Pakistan government reasserted its control over the Federally Administered Tribal Areas.³⁴

Autonomous CBAGs that have coopted state officials can operate with greater impunity in communities than those that must depend on protection and legitimacy from the communities in which they are embedded. For example, a criminal network that bribes local and national security officials is less dependent on the acquiescence of the community for its operations, and, therefore, less careful in how it exercises violence. Gangs or criminal networks that have not coopted the state may exist through coopted or coerced relationships with their communities. In such cases, an autonomous group may treat the communities as safe havens and conduct its activities outside of its home base.

Finally, CBAGs targeted by the state for threatening national security or government officials and posing a threat to state authority face a stark choice: disband or transform. In many cases, the CBAGs will disband, go underground, or retreat. However, others may transform into or ally with non-state armed groups, such as violent extremist groups, insurgents, or armed separatists. The classic case of state suppression forcing a group to go underground and then emerge as a nonstate actor group is Boko Haram. As Boko Haram camps and schools grew and were perceived as a threat, police pressure increased. In 2004, Boko Haram began attacks on local police, resulting in a Nigerian military operation against the compound of its leader, Muhammad Yusuf, in 2009. Yusuf and more than a hundred of his followers were killed. The attack sent Boko Haram underground, although many assumed that the group was defunct. In 2010, it reemerged after a spectacular prison break and resumed operations as a non-state armed group.³⁵

RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMUNITY

Negotiated relationships with the community build on shared norms and mandates governing the activities, duties, and responsibilities of CBAGs. Often, in traditional societies, these long-established norms

33 Paul Staniland, "Militias, Ideology, and the State," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59, no. 5 (2015): 786.

34 Ben Farmer, "Pakistan's Tribal Areas Are Still Awaiting Justice as Army Tightens Grip," *The New York Times*, June 11, 2019.

35 David Cook, "The Rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria," *Combatting Terrorism Center Sentinel* 4, no. 9 (September 2011).

create not only reservoirs of social trust but also a shared culture and values. These long-standing symbiotic relationships facilitate recruitment from local populations. With a shared system of values and culture, recruits are easily indoctrinated and gain status in the larger communities as a result of being a CBAG member. The community-CBAG negotiated relationship is especially strong when the community funds the CBAG and community leaders provide guidance. In such cases, CBAGs are institutionalized as security actors at the community level.³⁶

Oliver Kaplan, in his research on armed groups and civilian protection in Syria and Colombia, finds that civilians have agency and influence over CBAGs, even in highly insecure, violent environments. Kaplan asserts that, even in situations where CBAGs can exercise coercive violence against communities, civilians have significant influence and can transmit “norms of protection, good conduct, and responsibility.”³⁷ Communities do this when they organize collectively and negotiate with coercive armed groups around protective norms. These negotiations often create fissures within the CBAG organizations, empowering fighters less inclined to attacking civilians to challenge those more prone to exercise violence indiscriminately to control the civilian population.³⁸

There is another factor that can determine CBAGs’ exercise of coercive violence. Communities that have been exposed to high levels of violence that destroyed community trust and intercommunal networks of support (as members flee and are displaced) are not able to mount the types of collective action that can control CBAG operations.³⁹ In addition, communities in which violence has become normalized are also more vulnerable to CBAG’s exercise of coercive violence, such as in Latin American cities where state-sponsored violence has allowed gang and illicit criminal networks to take root.⁴⁰

RESOURCES

A CBAG’s resource endowment is a significant external constraint on its identity and operations. It drives membership recruitment, operations, and, ultimately, how a group exercises violence. Beyond an organization’s resource wealth is how it mobilizes and disposes of resources. Lootable resources are easily extracted and transported; a related factor is how easily they are obstructed. Drugs, diamonds, and agricultural products are highly lootable and disposable. Drugs and diamonds are also hard to obstruct by the state or competitors and therefore provide easier access to funding.⁴¹

Groups with access to significant resources—through extensive illicit criminal networks, political rents, or control of a local natural resource base—have more opportunistic recruits.⁴² These groups attract low-commitment individuals, who gain short-term material benefits from their participation in the group. Because the reward for participation is monetary, these organizations have less control over their mem-

36 As illustrated by the Côte d’Ivoire dozo case study presented in this report.

37 Kaplan, “Nudging Armed Groups.”

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 Winton, “Youth, Gangs and Violence.”

41 Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*, 48.

42 Ibid., 7.

bers, who are likely to engage in violence against citizens.⁴³ In contrast, groups with fewer resources are more likely to attract high-commitment individuals motivated by the norms and principles of the group and the affirmation they receive from upholding them. With a stronger control structure, individuals in these groups self-police and are less likely to engage in willful violence against civilians.⁴⁴

The nature of the resources available to CBAGs also impacts their relationships with local communities. CBAGs with access to significant economic endowments, such as mines and agriculture, can behave in a more coercive fashion to their communities because they need compliant community members to extract or harvest the resources. If the resources are easily accessed or are already part of local economies, CBAGs might choose taxation and theft over citizen suppression.

SOCIAL NORMS

CBAGs can symbolize communities' local sovereignty and independence from the state, governance practices, and aspects of community identity.⁴⁵ CBAGs have a long history in regions where the state has not consolidated its monopoly over security. They also flourish where politicians or customary rulers encourage non-state security groups to deter challenges to their authority. Informal hunter, tribal, youth, and ethnic armed groups, in the absence of the state, play historical roles in providing community security and social order. They also play important symbolic and identity roles, as representatives of communities' strength, purpose, and sovereignty.

In traditional societies, norms of order and violence and the CBAG's role in upholding them are accepted and expected. What may look like outbursts or cycles of violence to outsiders may be community-accepted practices. It is when CBAGs violate community norms around violence and order that their identity, and thus relationship to the community, might shift.

THREAT ENVIRONMENT

CBAGs can form in response to a threat or arm themselves to protect relationships and equities. If the threat environment remains stable, CBAGs can focus on consolidating their internal functions and operations. Changes to the threat environment, however, can impact the organization of CBAGs. The emergence of a new threat or the escalation of an existing threat might increase recruitment levels, expand membership, increase mandate or mission roles, affect leadership structures, or establish a new CBAG.

For example, in 2013, the rise in violent extremism caused the Kenyan government to establish a new community policing system called Nyumba Kumi, dividing neighborhoods nationwide into blocks to monitor and report on suspicious activities.⁴⁶ Similarly, the disappearance of a threat can undercut the legitimacy and resources of CABGs, and the response may entail a transition to an autonomous criminal group

43 Ibid., 204–206.

44 Ibid., 204–205.

45 Melissa Leach, "Introduction to Special Issue: Security, Socioecology, Polity: Mande Hunters, Civil Society, and Nation States in Contemporary West Africa," *Africa Today* 50, no. 4 (Summer 2004): viii.

46 "Community Policing," Government of Kenya, <http://www.communitypolicing.go.ke/about.html>.

to fund and continue operations. For example, when the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan, many local militias, previously funded by the United States, turned to drug production and trafficking.

INTERNATIONAL ACTORS

International actors can have amplifying or modifying effects on the external factors in CBAGs' environments that condition their existence. These actors can provide resources through development assistance, diaspora remittances, cross-border financial flows, illicit trade, or natural resources. International actors can provide social resources—a worldview or moral framework—such as a revolutionary ideology or traditional value systems. In some cases, international actors are threats, such as al-Shabaab in Kenya, al-Qaeda in Yemen, or French forces in Mali, that can coopt or target local armed groups. Outside actors can also influence CBAG-state relations. For example, the United States, in the wake of 9/11, pressured South Africa to categorize the People Against Gangsters and Drugs (PAGAD) as an international terrorist organization for its long-held sympathies to Qibla, the ideology of the Iranian revolution.⁴⁷

Internal Functions

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES

One of the most critical factors is whether an authority or authoritative group governs and directs a CBAG, defining its mission and purpose. CBAGs can be either autonomous or subject to an authority, for example, a warlord, community council, or politician. Autonomous CBAGs—gangs, criminal and vigilante groups, and hunters' groups—are self-governed and self-serving, creating their own rules, principles, and ways of organizing.

Four types of authority structures can, in general, dominate CBAGs:

- **Community-based:** Community leaders and members manage CBAGs either because the state is not present in these areas (whether urban or rural) or because the community needs protection from the state as a conflict actor.
- **Political entrepreneur:** CBAGs answer to a para-state or local political power that is not connected with the state and may serve as a governance actor for a community or region, for example, a warlord or tribal or ethnic leader.
- **Politician:** CBAGs serve national or local politicians to protect their personal political and economic interests.
- **State:** State authorities coopt CBAGs to perform security functions, in conjunction with or in lieu of national security services.

47 Rachel Monaghan, "'One Merchant, One Bullet': The Rise and Fall of PAGAD," *Low Intensity Conflict & Law Enforcement* 12, no. 1 (2004): 1-19

How CBAGs organize for violence depends greatly on the parochial political and security interests of their governance authority, the legitimacy of that authority within their communities, and their relationship with the state. CBAG authorities who have consolidated their legitimacy within the community and have clear negotiated relationships with the state might exercise violence judiciously and predictably to maintain control of their parochial political interests. They might maintain control over the violence and order exercised by their members, prohibiting violence against the groups that extend legitimacy to them. They might act as quasi-governing authorities, relying on rules and norms for maintaining power within the community and exercising violence only against those who challenge their position.

CBAG authorities who have not consolidated their power with their communities and relationships with the state can use violence to demonstrate their desire and capability to dominate. Unconsolidated CBAG authorities can exercise violence strategically and symbolically as part of a broader negotiated process to assert legitimacy and authority, including to establish political alliances, buy loyalty, and terrorize non-loyalists. Paul Staniland argues that social embeddedness—the density of an armed groups networks in the local community and the more they recruit and interact with those networks—is the key characteristic for explaining armed group cohesion and control, more than ideology, provision of services, and popularity.⁴⁸

Communities with little to no state institutional presence and weak local authority structures might see CBAGs emerge that are self-sufficient and extractive—autonomous groups that survive and enrich themselves through illicit activities and take advantage of community weaknesses. Thus, the source of CBAG authority largely directs its mission and exercise of violence; the objectives of these authorities typically fall into three interrelated categories: political, security, and economic.⁴⁹

GROUP DISCIPLINE

How well the leadership of CBAGs can exercise group discipline is a critical factor in the level and types of violence the groups employ. The key to group discipline is institutionalization, the acceptance of norms, roles, and processes defined by CBAGs as an institution. In groups that have no established formalized command and control processes or principles that govern their armed operations, violence may be reactive or indiscriminate and not predetermined, that is, personal, opportunistic, or vengeful. To predict patterns of violence, it is critical to understand when and how institutionalization happens, what it looks like, and what external factors influence it.

Institutionalization primarily occurs to manage growth and security. As CBAGs secure their legitimacy within communities and with states, they may take on new roles and grow in operations and size. They are also likely to grow in response to threats to their territory or groups. Autonomous CBAGs that have not consolidated their autonomy and power may use organizational discipline and secrecy to prevent threats, infiltration, and outside monitoring. Therefore, external factors, such as the level and nature of threats, could have an impact on CBAGs' command and control.

48 Staniland, "Explaining Cohesion, Fragmentation and Control in Insurgent Groups."

49 Schuberth, *Approaching Community-Based Armed Groups in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

Organizational growth and security present the leadership of these groups with the management challenge of controlling subordinate units. Most units operate with decentralized command and control, and so communications in the areas where CBAGs deploy are often challenging. Furthermore, CBAGs can suffer from defections—individuals who are primarily interested in their own self-interest can undermine group cohesion and goals by avoiding security operations, targeting civilians indiscriminately, or seeking personal gain.

To institute mechanisms of command and control and to ensure organizational cohesion, the leadership can adopt several strategies:

- An inculcation regimen that includes training, mentoring, or a rite of passage that transmits operational standards and shared beliefs
- An organizational environment that reinforces operational and social norms through codes of conduct, monitoring systems, and incentive structures, such as promotion and punishment
- A shared system of organizational belief systems and social norms that all members, including leadership, submit to.⁵⁰

Formalization—the institutionalization of command and control structures to ensure better coordination and recurring rules that are legitimated within the group—can take many forms. Often, group norms are drawn from the culture of its members—from their communities or previous organizational affiliations, such as military or tribal.⁵¹ Formalized command and control structures are often based on patrimony or bureaucratization, depending on dominant social norms.

When patrimonialism is the mechanism of institutionalization, the command and control chain is normalized but personalized, revolving around the top leader.⁵² In such cases, leadership legitimacy depends on the leader’s reputation to fight, forge alliances, and extend clientelist political rents. The patrimonial relationship is replicated throughout the institution with subordinate leaders mimicking the credentials and fealties of the leader or drawing legitimacy from familial or ethnic relationships. A good example of a patrimonial system is the warlord of Afghanistan, Abdurrashid Dostum, who centralized commands and violence through clientelist networks that advanced his political ambitions.⁵³ In clientelist systems, leaders punish members who defect or subvert harshly and violently, as a warning to others of the dangers of insubordination.

Another form of institutionalization is depersonalized power tied to a position. As CBAGs grow, diversify tasks, or illicit activities become more complex, a degree of formalization of roles and responsibilities

50 Ibid., 137–138.

51 Schlichte, *In the Shadow of Violence*, 164.

52 Ibid., 168.

53 Ibid.

occurs that exceeds the control of one leader.⁵⁴ For example, as a drug cartel expands, it diversifies its business and institutionalizes its operations. Armed groups that are decentralized often have more effective levels of internal discipline. In contrast, centralization may be a response to higher levels of indiscipline both in terms of group control and the exercise of violence.⁵⁵

RECRUITMENT

A group's resources influence options for recruitment and exercise of violence. The recruitment process shapes how CBAGs can respond to organizational challenges and the external factors that influence them. Groups with significant or highly accessible and disposable resources—with primarily economic endowments—can deliver benefits to members immediately and reduce the costs of participation to members by supplying weapons, uniforms, and food. However, this ease of participation for recruits affects the levels of trust and make it difficult to establish when the basis for membership is transactional. Low commitment recruits are more expensive for an organization, less loyal, and prone to ignoring or re-interpreting group mandates. Recruits in materially resourced organization can be freeloaders,⁵⁶ but they can also be mobilized quickly and in large numbers.

CBAGs also have what Weinstein calls “social endowments”: distinctive identities and dense interpersonal networks that can be readily mobilized to provide sustenance and support.⁵⁷ These group identities and norms shared with their communities provide CBAGs with access to recruits and logistical support based on communal identities and values. Social endowments can take different forms, such as lower transaction costs with recruits or communities because of a long-standing reciprocal relationships; shared identities and interests; and horizontal linkages among CBAGs and other groups, such as clans, tribes, or ethnic or kinship groups.⁵⁸ Finally, CBAGs may offer community members an alternative process for political and social agency and collective action as a social good.

Organizations founded on social endowments are more adept at institutionalizing the commitment of their members by building an environment of cooperation and control. Resource-poor groups tend to attract members committed to the group who will sacrifice or postpone individual reward for the success and survival of the group. Strong moral, social, historical, or political identities provide rationales for group purpose and the conduct of operations, a selective recruitment process, and rules for punishing defectors. Resource-poor groups attract members willing and able to cooperate long-term. Their members are more likely to follow leadership orders and remain disciplined in the conduct of their operations.⁵⁹ However, organizations that recruit based on long-term commitments and social endowments do not do so with high levels of success. Their recruits are committed to the organizations, rather than themselves, but they are fewer in number.

54 Ibid., 175.

55 Weinstein, 158.

56 Ibid., 102.

57 Ibid., 49.

58 Ibid., 49.

59 Ibid., 139.

The core characteristics defining CBAGs are their embeddedness with national and local political networks; state power structures, such as political elite or security forces; and local power structures, such as tribal and local government leaders. Whether their exercise of violence on behalf of or outside of these power networks is based on relationships that are negotiated or in the process of consolidation further defines these groups. External factors—such as access to resources, international actors, shifting social norms regarding violence, and the stability of the threat environment—may disturb or disrupt those relationships, and, in turn, how groups exercise violence.

A Typology of Community-Based Armed Groups

Table 1 helps analyze any given CBAG at any point in terms of its external and internal characteristics to identify potential points of leverage to engage, manage, or transform it. Case studies and future conceptual research can use these factors to think about CBAGs and analyze them on a case-by-case basis, in cross-comparison, or by tracing the evolution of one group across these dimensions. While the factors do not capture the entirety of the complex characteristics of CBAGs and their operational contexts, they provide a comprehensive overview of the key drivers to elucidate the understanding of CBAGs’ behavior and inform the design of potential intervention strategies.

Table 1. Analyzing CBAG Internal and External Functions

INTERNAL FUNCTIONS				EXTERNAL FUNCTIONS				
LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE	DISCIPLINE	RECRUITMENT	EXERCISE OF VIOLENCE	STATE RELATIONS	COMMUNITY RELATIONS	RESOURCES	NORMS	THREAT ENVIRONMENT
AUTONOMOUS/ AUTHORITY	COHERENT/ DECENTRALIZED	TRANSACTIONAL/ PRINCIPLED	NEGOTIATED/ COERCED	NEGOTIATED/ COERCED	NEGOTIATED/ COERCED	RESOURCE RICH/POOR	PREDATORY/ PROTECTIVE	STABLE/ UNSTABLE

Source: Author.

Table 2 provides an illustration of ideal types of CBAG, based on the nature of their relationship with the state and the community and the function their exercise of violence fulfils (security, political, or economic), conditioning group identity.⁶⁰

60 See Schuberth, *Approaching Community-Based Armed Groups (CBAGs) in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

Table 2. A Typology of Community-based Armed Groups Based on Their Relationship with the State and the Community and the Function of Violence

FUNCTION/TYPE OF VIOLENCE	RELATIONSHIP	<i>...WITH THE STATE</i>	<i>...WITH THE COMMUNITY</i>
SECURITY	NEGOTIATED	PARAMILITARY, WARLORD, HUNTER, GOVERNMENT-DEPUTIZED	COMMUNITY PROTECTION, HUNTER, NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH, ANTI-CRIME, COUNTERINSURGENCY
	COERCED	WARLORD, PARASTATE, MILITIA	VIGILANTE, PARAMILITARY, TRIBAL/ETHNIC MILITIA
POLITICAL	NEGOTIATED	PARAMILITARY, PRIVATE SECURITY, PATRONAGE	TRIBAL/ETHNIC SELF-DEFENSE
	COERCED	ARMED POLITICAL WING, MILITIA	POLITICAL WING OF VIGILANTES/HUNTERS, CLIENTELISM, PATRONAGE
ECONOMIC	NEGOTIATED	CARTELS, STATE CAPTURE, OLIGARCHY, CLIENTELISM	RESOURCE COMPETITION, ARMED LABOR/OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS, CATTLE PROTECTORS, HUNTERS
	COERCED	GANGS, SMUGGLERS, TRAFFICKERS	BANDITS, ROBBERS, CATTLE-RUSTLERS, TRAFFICKERS, ORGANIZED CRIME

Source: Author.

For example, a CBAG with a weak command and control structure due to quick growth resulting from threats or resource booms, many opportunistic recruits, exposure to high-level violence, and a leadership structure with no negotiated relationship with the community may exercise violence against the community offensively and coercively. In contrast, a CBAG with social norms of community protection and service, institutionalized command and control structure, and negotiated leadership relations with the community will operate as a community protection group, exercising violence defensively and discriminately to prevent threats from entering or impacting the community.

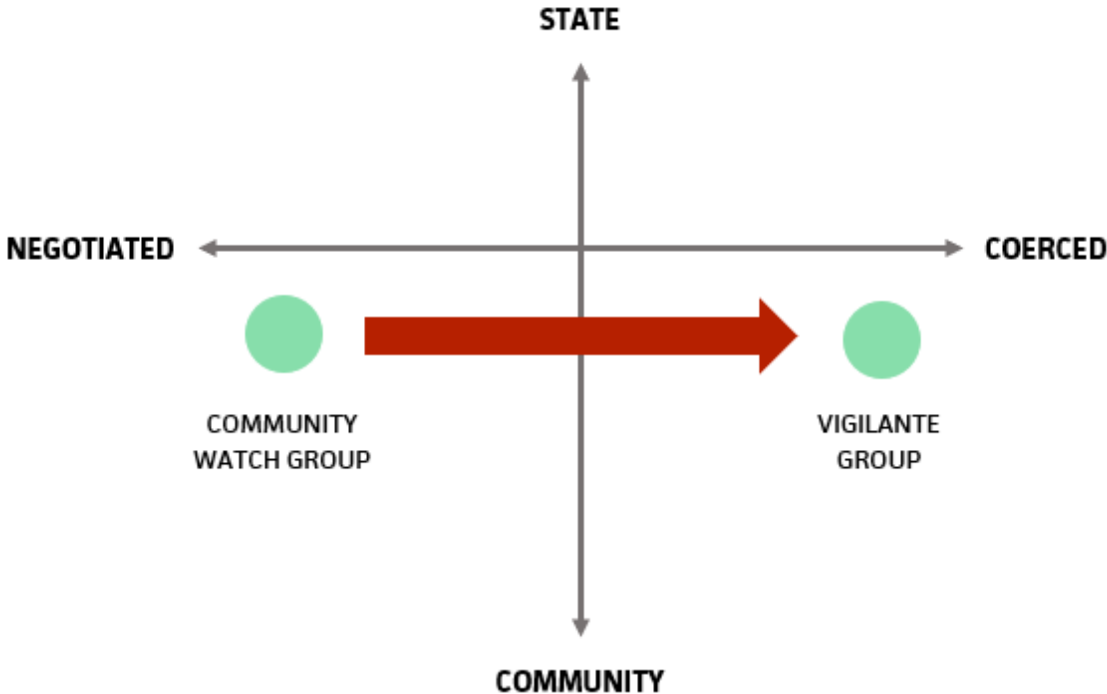
Fluidity

CBAGs are fluid organizations that shift identities among different types; changes in external dynamics drive these shifts. Changes in resources, international influence, threat environment, and norms of social order force CBAGs to modify their recruitment practices and their command and control and leadership

structures. When these functions change, they can drive CBAGs to different organizational forms, for example, from a gang to a politician-sponsored security group, or from a community protection group to a state-deputized police force. In these cases, how CBAGs exercise violence—negotiated, coercive/discriminate, indiscriminate— may fundamentally shift.

Figure 1 tracks a shift that the author discovered in previous research in Kisumu, Kenya. The community paid a community protection group to exercise limited violence against violent criminal gangs, deploying a social order protection norm. When the community stopped paying for the CBAG’s protection services because it had successfully eradicated the threat, the shift in its resource endowment forced the group to seek other sources of funding. The group offered its services to local politicians and criminal networks to protect their clientelist political and economic agenda. In some cases, that meant targeting community members who challenged or competed with the politician’s political ambitions or a criminal network’s territory; accordingly, the group’s exercise of violence moved from protective to predatory. With more resources, the CBAG began to recruit more youth, some of whom were more opportunistic rather than committed to principles of community service and protection. Less able to exercise disciplined command and control, the CBAG members exercised violence on a more ad hoc basis, sometimes indiscriminately, based on personal vendettas. Thus, a shift in resources and community-state relations changed the CBAG’s exercise of violence and thus its identity from a community protection group to a clientelist vigilante.

Figure 2. CBAG Transformation in the Exercise of Violence in Kisumu, Kenya



Source: Author.

In sum, this research presents two main discoveries on the CBAGs typology conceptual framework.

- First, CBAGs can be categorized based on their relationship with the state and the communities in which they are embedded and their use of violence.
- Second, how CBAGs exercise violence is determined by the execution of their internal functions (leadership, command and control, recruitment), which, in turn, is constrained by external factors in its environment (state and community relations, threat environment, societal norms of violence, international actors, and resources).

Shifts in external factors force CBAGs to change how they function to remain relevant. These internal changes can redefine their identities. Through these two discoveries, scholars and practitioners can monitor and assess their potential transitional points, aiding in identifying opportunities to engage, manage, and transform their behavior or the state-community ecosystem in which they operate. The next section tests these discoveries in two historical case studies for validation.

CASE STUDIES

Applying this dynamic typology framework on CBAG transitions to two historical case studies will test the validity of the findings and the interactive effects of external forces on internal functions. What do CBAG operations and their exercise of violence look like under the influence of multiple intervening variables? For example, how does a CBAG recruit, exercise command and control, and use violence when it has legitimacy from the state and community, enjoys access to significant resources, and faces a rising threat? How does a CBAG exercise its functions (recruitment, command and control) and use violence when it is autonomous, coopted by the state, poorly resourced, and rejected by the community?

The two case studies offer a comparative analysis. On the one hand, the People Against Gangs and Drugs (PAGAD) emerged as an urban citizen-led protection group in response to rising criminality in the predominantly Muslim neighborhood of West Cape, South Africa. PAGAD transformed several times during its existence from an unarmed community organization to a vigilante group to a nationally and internationally designated terrorist organization.⁶¹

On the other hand, the Dozo hunters of Côte d'Ivoire and the Benkadi movement also went through multiple transitions from the 1990s to 2010. They started as branches of game hunters in Guinea, Mali, and Sierra Leone, united by a mystical relationship to the god-like Manmory. Precipitous declines in big game

61 Because community based armed groups often play controversial roles in a community or state, this report is careful to indicate when these roles are disputed. In the case of PAGAD, as a predominantly Muslim organization that carried out a series of attacks against South African government officials in the 9/11 timeframe, they came to the attention of the United States. Whether those attacks were retaliatory, meant to push back on a concerted effort by the state to shut PAGAD down, or whether PAGAD intended to overthrow the South African government is a contentious issue.

simultaneous with a country-wide rise in violent crime saw the Dozos in Côte d'Ivoire transition to a nationwide private security force that also engaged in restorative justice in the north. Later, caught up in the violent contestations for political power at the national level, some Dozos joined insurgency groups; most, however, were contained within their homeland in the north, where they were at times labeled an ethnic militia. They operated primarily in the bush to maintain peace and security in communities where state security forces did not reach.⁶²

Côte d'Ivoire: The Dozo and the Benkadi Movements

INTRODUCTION

From the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, a nationwide crime wave washed over Côte d'Ivoire, caused by a tangling of economic factors: recession, high unemployment, and declining public sector spending.⁶³ The police force, weakened by the administration's austerity programs, could not control the situation, and criminal networks came to dominate swaths of territory.⁶⁴ In the north, these networks controlled a major transport artery and committed acts of highway robbery.⁶⁵ At the same time, the status of Dozo big game hunters in Côte d'Ivoire was declining in tandem with the overhunting of big game.⁶⁶ In response to the growing insecurity, the Dozo living in the farthest northwest, bordering Mali and Guinea, organized security patrols and helped community members to achieve justice. These two forces—the decline in resources occurring at the same time as a national state of emergency—transformed a decentralized network of local, traditional hunting groups into a national security institution that rivaled state institutions.⁶⁷ The transformation of the Dozo analyzed through the framework highlights the external factors that influenced changes in the organizational functions.

ORIGINS AND TRANSFORMATION

Côte d'Ivoire's Dozo hunters' groups inhabit the areas of the north where a Mande diaspora has settled, as in other countries, such as Burkina Faso, Guinea, Liberia, Niger, Senegal, and Sierra Leone.⁶⁸ During the 1990s, many of these Mande hunter societies across the West African region transformed as state and aid donors sought their services to fight crime, secure borders, and protect environmental assets.⁶⁹ In Sierra Leone, Mande hunters served alongside government troops in the civil war; in Burkina Faso, Guinea, and Mali, they were deputized as conservation agents in environmentally protected areas.⁷⁰ A discrete class of hunters, the Dozo are a brotherhood of Mande-speakers distinguished by their mystical power of healing and protecting. They believe that their patron Manimory will only protect them if they

62 Christian K. Hojbjerg, "Review of Hunting the Ethical State: The Benkadi Movement of Cote d'Ivoire", *Ethnos* 77, no. 4 (2012): 564.

63 Thomas J. Bassett, "Dangerous Pursuits: Hunter Associations (Donzo Ton) and National Politics in Cote d'Ivoire," *Africa* 73, no. 1 (2003): 9.

64 Ibid.

65 Hellweg, "Hunters, Ritual, and Freedom," 38.

66 Thomas J. Bassett, "Card Carrying Hunters, Rural Poverty and Wildlife Decline in Northern Cote d'Ivoire," *The Geographical Journal* 171, no. 1 (March 2005).

67 Hojbjerg, "Review of Hunting the Ethical State," 564.

68 Bassett, "Card Carrying Hunters, Rural Poverty and Wildlife Decline in Northern Cote d'Ivoire," 24.

69 Bassett, "Dangerous Pursuits," 9.

70 Ibid.

follow the ethical rules of the group. The Dozo have always held a special societal role beyond game hunting; the communities they live in believe the protective powers of Dozos keep evil away.⁷¹

Requests from citizens and states for Dozo protection came from their right to bear arms, their affinity with immigrants, and their principled (not self-interested) way of operating and interacting with citizens and communities. In Côte d'Ivoire, these communal values were inculcated into their volunteer recruits through a lengthy, three-year initiation that included mentoring by senior hunters.⁷² The Dozo were highly decentralized and headed by the most senior member at the village level. Hunters' groups relied on the inculcation of the hunter culture and morals for discipline and organization. They carried their moral code of reciprocity through the shift in their group identity to community security providers, protecting citizens from what they perceived as the Ivorian state's immoral abandonment of the poor to crime. The Dozo saw their new policing and private security tasks as analogous to hunting; criminal activity degraded their communal ideals and justified their protective operations. It was a model of legitimate violence for social good.⁷³

By the early 1990s, with the decline in big game, hunter associations expanded functionally in the north in two ways that highlighted the absence of the state: as administering justice and as auxiliary to the police. Local farmers often called the Dozo to mediate crop damage disputes with local herders, tracking the cattle that had caused the damage and negotiating settlements with the appropriate cattle owners. The farmers compensated the Dozo for their time and expenses. Their efforts at restorative justice improved food security in northern rural communities, as farmers received compensation for their losses and were able to maintain food production.⁷⁴

STATE RELATIONS

Originating in the Odiénne region of northern Côte d'Ivoire, the Dozo also organized a chapter of Benkadi—a hunters' association movement that began in Mali and spread to neighboring countries, such as Burkina Faso. As crime spread rapidly throughout Côte d'Ivoire, government officials in the north began to deputize hunters' associations established originally by the Dozo to patrol streets, maintain roadblocks, and secure thoroughfares. Crime rates declined.⁷⁵ As a result, requests poured in from across Côte d'Ivoire for Benkadi security services, including from border towns and even the south. The effort to transform the Dozo into a government-sanctioned, anti-crime movement had transformative effects on the organization's recruiting and operational functions. The national government under President Felix Boigny recognized the north's regional security success and the trust in Dozo-rooted Benkadi hunters' groups. The government sanctioned Dozo assistance to the police in fighting crime, which allowed hunters' association members to carry arms without penalties if they carried official membership cards.

71 Katharina Heitz Tokpa, "Territorial Power without Sovereignty: Hunters and the State on Côte d'Ivoire's Northern Margins," in *Spatial Practices: Territory Border and Infrastructure in Africa*, ed. Ulf Engel, Matt Boeckler, and Detlef Müller, Mann (Boston: Brill, 2018), 100.

72 Bassett, "Card Carrying Hunters," 24.

73 Hojberg, "Review of Hunting the Ethical State," 565.

74 Bassett, "Card Carrying Hunters, Rural Poverty, and Wildlife Decline in Northern Côte d'Ivoire," 24.

75 Bassett, T., "Dangerous Pursuits," 11.

Membership in the Benkadi movement grew rapidly for several reasons: the ability to own a gun to provide food for poorer households and payment for security services, such as community patrols and road blocks. Other ethnic groups joined the security employment bandwagon (for example, Baoule, Bete, Guere, Gourou, and Yacouba), traveling to the north to join the Benkadi movement.⁷⁶ A local Benkadi chapter in Korhogo took the movement to the national level by establishing the Hunter Association of the Great North and opening the ranks to any individuals who wanted to fight crime.⁷⁷

At that point, the Dozo multiyear initiation process was abandoned. New recruits received some training, and in a nod to Dozo culture, they took an oath of good behavior to an amulet they agreed to carry.⁷⁸ The institutionalization of the Dozo within the Benkadi movement resulted in cleavages within the group as it transformed from an informal network of local hunters' groups to a centralized organization. As Ivorite national leaders initiated systematic discrimination of ethnic groups from the north, questions arose on the role that hunters played in the increasingly violent national political arena.

As the Benkadi movement grew and dispersed throughout Côte d'Ivoire to provide community security, it transformed into a transactional organization, established a bureaucratic command structure, and became enmeshed in national politics. In the 1995 Presidential elections, the President of the Hunters Association of the North, Edouard Coulibaly, announced that the Dozo had entered the national political scene. Rumors spread that Coulibaly had taken money from the *Partie Democratique de Côte d'Ivoire* (PDCI) to support Interim President Bedie's candidacy.⁷⁹ His manipulation of the Dozo, which at the time supported many different political parties, led to later suspicions by politicians that the Benkadi were a threat to the holders of political power.⁸⁰ The manipulation, however, was mutual, as politicians competed for Dozo support to boost their electoral ratings.

Unable to coopt the Dozo, Bedie began to fear that they were a threat to his administration and the PDCI party; his rival, Alassane Ouattara, drew his strongest support from the north, the geographic base of the Dozo. The Dozo declared their official stance as apolitical, noting that they worked for their employers' security, regardless of political affiliation. However, their public statements held little sway with the Bedie government, which moved to restrict the Dozo to eleven departments in the north, rather than grant them the legitimate private security organization status that the hunters' association had requested.⁸¹ This meant that the Dozo were no longer to carry arms or work as guards in the south and were restricted to a culturally defined region in the north.⁸² Non-Ivorian citizens were prohibited from joining the hunters' association, and members were stripped of modern weapons. The containment was not simply a political move to weaken the influence of northerners throughout the country and opposition

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid.

79 Thomas J. Bassett, "Containing the Donzow: The Politics of Scale in Côte d'Ivoire," *Africa Today* 50, no. 4 (Summer 2004): 31-49.

80 Bassett, "Dangerous Pursuits," 11.

81 Ibid., 15.

82 Topka, "Territorial Power without Sovereignty," 101.

leader Ouattara's standing in the upcoming 2000 presidential elections.⁸³ It was intended to strengthen Ivoirite, the policy of manipulating ethnic identities to maintain political control by reducing the Mande diaspora's influence in Côte d'Ivoire.⁸⁴ The Dozo were not only caught up in politics at the national level; they also became a focal point for the politics of ethnicization ravaging Cote d'Ivoire.

In 1999, a coup against Bedie brought the military to power, led by General Guei, who relied on Dozo support symbolically and militarily. The General reinstated the Dozo as an auxiliary security force, guarding checkpoints throughout the country as well as public places in Abidjan.⁸⁵ The Dozo leadership of Abidjan reportedly met with the general to pledge their loyalty and reaffirm their nonpartisanship. The President of the Benkadi movement wrote to the general to express the movement's desire to support the police force on all levels in the service of the people of Côte d'Ivoire.⁸⁶ However, in a remarkable repetition of large-scale ethnicization of Ivorian politics, Guei reinforced Ivoirite to eliminate Ouattara in the presidential elections he now wanted to win. The Supreme Court backed Guei's exclusionary efforts, preventing any candidate from the north from running in the elections.

Guei's attempts to steal the elections ignited massive protests by his competitor's supporters in the Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI) party. Guei fled in response; Laurent Gbagbo, the opposition leader who had run against Guei, seized the presidency. Ouattara's Rally of the Republicans (RDR) followers refused to recognize his legitimacy, calling for immediate fair elections. As the north, an RDR stronghold, pushed back, requesting Gbagbo officials to leave amid demonstrations, the Dozo protected demonstrators from pro-government gendarmes. As violence and unrest spiraled, pro-Gbagbo forces painted the Dozo as a guerilla arm of Ouattara's RDR.⁸⁷ Gbagbo sought regional opposition to the Dozo at a meeting of the Western African Entente Council. West African foreign ministers committed themselves to controlling illegal immigration (the movement of Dozo groups between states) and disarming Dozo groups considered a threat to the security of states in the region.⁸⁸ These actions fed into Gbagbo's polemic against the Dozo as infiltrated by foreigners, which, in turn, fed into Ivoirite exclusionary dogma. As the Dozo were removed from security provision in the south, the Benkadi movement began to fracture. Some Dozo sided with soldiers of northern origin, who instigated an insurgency against the Gbagbo government. Others acted as an auxiliary force that protected citizens in the north from state gendarme and police. Still others retreated from the violence.⁸⁹

In 2010, Ouattara won the presidential election. When Gbagbo refused to yield office, the international community organized a military intervention, including the United Nations and the French military and the Côte d'Ivoire insurgency forces. During the intervention, the Dozo participated in a massacre in Duekoue in the west. The international community pressured Ouattara to respond; in turn, he outlawed all

83 Ibid.

84 Bassett, "Dangerous Pursuits," 15.

85 Topka, "Territorial Power without Sovereignty," 101.

86 Bassett, "Dangerous Pursuits," 19.

87 Ibid., 24.

88 Ibid., 25.

89 Topka, "Territorial Power without Sovereignty," 101.

state-sponsored private security forces. Despite his criminalization decree, the Dozo continued to play a public role in the north, providing security in areas where the state was not present. They protected communities in the bush, acted as border guards, and guarded village entrances. They coexisted with local state officials, inhabiting urban areas and maintaining the social order in the north.⁹⁰

CONCLUSIONS

The Dozo case study validates the external factors selected for this framework. Natural resource declines drove the group to shift from traditional hunters' groups to private and community-based security forces. State-sanctioned, they migrated throughout Côte d'Ivoire at the request of citizens to protect them from the nationwide crime spree. Legitimized by both the state and citizens, the Dozo institutionalized the Benkadi movement of hunters' associations and expanded rapidly. As a result of the transformation in state and society relations, the Dozo organizational functions changed. First, the groups changed from a dispersed, networked organization embedded in communities to entities with centralized authority in negotiated relationships with the state. Second, the Dozo expanded their ranks to include other ethnic groups and reduced the initiation processes. As a result, when the state began to exercise violence against the Dozo under the Gbagbo regime, the hunters' associations began to fragment into insurgents, auxiliary protectors of northern populations against police and gendarmes, and they returned to their traditional role of community protectors. The Dozo became less restrained in their exercise of violence, committing atrocities against citizens.

Hellwig argued that these "morally dubious choices" of indiscriminate violence should be understood as part of the Dozo culture of sacrifice and community protection.⁹¹ They may seem illegitimate to outsiders but were legitimate within the Benkadi movement that actively reviewed its actions in the context of Dozo spirituality and protective powers. Hunters' groups likely committed acts of violence that violated Dozo principles due to changes in internal organizational functions. Higher recruitment levels, absent the extensive, traditional initiation period, resulted in more opportunistic individuals joining and less institutional discipline in abiding by the norms of Dozo order. New recruits did not join for Dozo lifestyle and values but because the government allowed them to carry guns and because private security service paid.

That said, the strong Dozo value system may explain how the group managed to weather political manipulations and attacks by the state. Many Dozo joined the insurgency and committed large-scale atrocities. However, even after decades of state repression, many Dozo retreated rather than turning into a major insurgency, even when they had the national presence and legitimacy to challenge the state and press for northern political power. The Dozo's instinct was to turn inward to its cultural and spiritual roots.

Figure 3 shows how external factors drove the Dozo to first shift the negotiated relationship from the communities to the state. Then, as the state turned against the Dozo and established a more coercive relationship with them, some Dozo groups responded to attack the state. However, the bulk of the Dozo

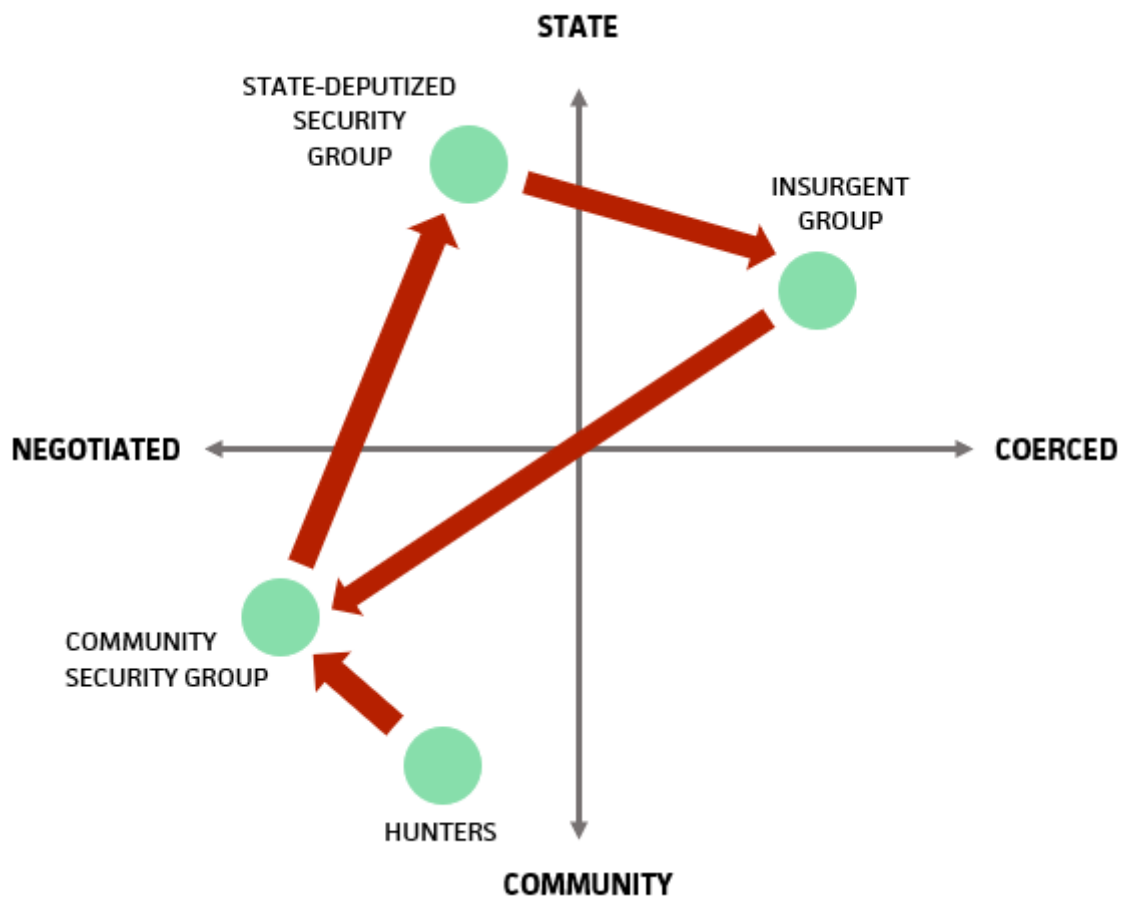
⁹⁰ Ibid., 102.

⁹¹ Hellweg, "Hunters, Ritual and Freedom," 56.

returned or remained in the north and recommitted to their role of providing security and protection to their communities.

Other external factors that appear to have influenced the Dozo and the organizational changes are the international community, which put pressure on Ouattero to disband them, and community expectations of social order, which contributed to Dozo legitimacy. Local communities throughout Côte d'Ivoire respected the integrity of the traditional role of hunters to protect their host communities.

Figure 3. Dozo Identity Shifts according to Their Use of Violence



Source: Author.

South Africa: People Against Gangsterism and Drugs

INTRODUCTION

The main dynamic behind the rise and transformation of the People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD) in South Africa is the struggle of a community to manage the effects of the transition from apartheid to democracy. The Cape Flats are located outside Cape Town in South Africa's Western Cape

Province, inhabited by the province's colored community; more than half of the 4.5 million people were colored and predominantly Muslim.⁹² In the 1960s, the apartheid government relocated colored communities from downtown Cape Town to the Western Cape Province. These deportations tore communities apart, in particular, "the informal networks of communal welfare and social control" established around the imams and mosques.⁹³ The removals broke the infrastructure of community care and protection and gangs became prevalent. Citizens in the six districts that made up the Western Cape (Mitchells Plain, Manenberg, Phillipe, Bishop Lavis, Belville South, and Elsies River) frequently organized neighborhood watches to push back against violence and drugs. However, the authoritarian apartheid government suppressed them under the Riotous Assembly Act.⁹⁴

To understand how and why PAGAD formed, it is important to understand the cultural, political, and social transformations in the Western Cape and South Africa after the fall of the apartheid. Throughout South Africa, the privatization of security was common, as the government sought to scale down administrative apartheid.⁹⁵ At the same time, new forms of private security existed, with a long historical and cultural tradition of communities policing themselves and political and religious organizations organizing around social order and restraint.⁹⁶ The new African National Congress (ANC) government also attempted to reform the police, introducing a community policing system at a time when communities in the townships had not yet forgiven the police for their apartheid-era abuse. There still existed a "culture of mutual defiance"; people often did not consent to be policed, and the police still operated with old conceptions of the people as the threat.⁹⁷

At the time, colored communities in Western Cape voted consistently and largely for the opposition to the ANC, the National Party/Democratic Alliance (NP/DA), to resist the dangers of majority black rule. As a result, the Western Cape was the only province where the provincial government provided an institutional home for the political opposition. The tensions between the NP/DA opposition and the national government, dominated by the ANC, played into the state's response to PAGAD.⁹⁸ Mobilization of security became caught in a partisan political contest in a highly contested constituency, the Western Cape. The ANC viewed community mobilized security movements and groups not only as a security issue, but also as a political problem the opposition could exploit.⁹⁹ All this occurred while the ANC was beginning to crack down on all political opponents.

Meanwhile, the political legacy of the apartheid-era—where the police and the government forged relationships with gangsters to control the townships—later combined with well-documented cooperation between gangsters and liberation movements in the run-up to the 1994 elections, created suspicion on

92 Monaghan, "'One Merchant, One Bullet,'" 2.

93 Bill Dixon and Lisa-Marie Johns, "Gangs, Pagad and the State: Vigilantism and Revenge Violence in the Western Cape," *Violence and Transition Series 2* (May 2001): 11.

94 Monaghan, "'One Merchant, One Bullet,'" 2.

95 Laurent Fourchard, "The Politics of Mobilization for Security In South African Townships," *African Affairs* 110, no. 441 (2011): 609.

96 *Ibid.*, 611.

97 *Ibid.*, p 612–14.

98 Dixon and Johns, "Gangs, Pagad, and the State," 13.

99 Fourchard, "The Politics of Mobilization for Security," 621.

the part of PAGAD and its constituents that the ANC and the police were not really interested in solving the gangster problem.¹⁰⁰ There was a growing alienation by large segments of the population to the ANC's liberal democracy that claimed a human rights agenda but became increasingly corrupt, holding the political elite to different laws.¹⁰¹

Finally, the other tectonic shift occurring in the Western Cape in the 1990s was the decades-long struggle between progressive and conservative Islam and the declining influence of progressive Islam.¹⁰² People in the Western Cape saw PAGAD as the epicenter for the struggle for the soul of South African Islam. Muslim groups in the Western Cape community valued liberal democracy and fought valiantly in the liberation struggle for a democratic state—a struggle that had little to do with religion but everything to do with being a South African citizen. Other Muslim groups felt that Muslims should not participate in politics until they had consolidated their religious position as a faith that could, from a position of unity, advocate from a Muslim religious perspective.¹⁰³ Some of the more conservative elements followed Qibla, a Muslim movement formed in Cape Town in the late 1970s and 1980s that promoted the Iranian Revolution and advocated for South African Muslims to adopt the strict Islamic principles associated with it. Qibla played a militant role in the anti-apartheid movement.¹⁰⁴

ORIGINS AND TRANSFORMATION

PAGAD, which operated primarily in the Western Cape between 1996 and 2001, developed within the community's long-held tradition of neighborhood watches.¹⁰⁵ PAGAD began as a grassroots community response in the new post-apartheid South Africa to a resurgence of crime, drug abuse, and gangsterism in the colored communities of the Cape Flats.¹⁰⁶ Its organizational development was organic. The community recognized that it could not fight the gangs at the street and neighborhood levels. The gangs were too numerous and strong and would retaliate with violence. Communities had to develop a critical mass of popular support that would make it uncomfortable for drug dealers and gang leaders to live in their area.¹⁰⁷ The leaders of PAGAD launched an intensive awareness campaign in churches, mosques, and civic groups. They held vigils and distributed pamphlets, and PAGAD grew from a small group of community organizers to a populist movement of public meetings and protests. In addition to community education, PAGAD engaged the government. The group delivered an ultimatum to Minister of Justice Dullah Omar to take action against drug lords and gangs within 60 days by such measures as implementing the death penalty, confiscating gang and criminal assets, denying bail to drug dealers, and imposing severe penalties for first-time offenders.¹⁰⁸

100 Dixon and Johns, "Gangs, Pagad, and the State."

101 Esack, "PAGAD and Islamic Radicalism: Taking on the State?" 9.

102 Ibid., 9.

103 Dixon and Johns, "Gangs, Pagad, and the State."

104 Monaghan, "'One Merchant, One Bullet,'" 5.

105 Fourchard, "The Politics of Mobilization for Security," 617.

106 Monaghan, "'One Merchant, One Bullet,'" 3.

107 Dixon and Johns, "Gangs, Pagad, and the State," 11.

108 Monaghan, "'One Merchant, One Bullet,'" 6.

In addition to engaging the government, PAGAD became more confrontational with gang leaders and drug lords in the Western Cape, marching in great numbers to their homes and demanding that they leave the community within 24 hours.¹⁰⁹ In August 1996, these clashes escalated; in a showdown at the house of drug dealer Rashaad Staggie, the crowds lost control, beat him to death, and burned his body. Publicly, the attack looked like the old apartheid tactics of necklacing, placing a burning tire around the necks of accused collaborators.¹¹⁰ At that point, the criminal groups began to fight back, organizing among themselves and launching attacks on PAGAD members and local Muslim citizens, including business dealers and religious leaders. Citizen support began to decline, partly due to public disapproval of PAGAD's extreme tactics, but also due to threats to public safety and the launch of a full-blown conflict between PAGAD and the gangs, which raged from 1996–98. Civil society groups that had initially worked with PAGAD as a neighborhood watch group split with the organization because of its hardline stance on negotiations and reconciliations with criminal. The civil society organizations adopted a more lenient, negotiated approach to engaging community gangs and drug dealers.¹¹¹

PAGAD's members were concerned about the increasingly violent resistance of drug dealers to PAGAD's tactics of public demonstration, exposing and confronting the dealers. There was also an increasing disillusionment with the state's ineffectual response to PAGAD's demands for tougher action as negotiations with the Ministry of Justice broke down.¹¹² These factors came together to drive a series of internal changes to PAGAD: new leadership, a tighter organizational structure, and the adoption of more robust tactics.¹¹³

In October–November 1996, a split occurred between the movement's populist-oriented moderates and the more fundamentalist and extremist faction associated with Qibla.¹¹⁴ The division was not only about the increasing ineffectiveness of PAGAD's tactics; differing views on the best strategy were factors as well. The populist leaders Farouk Jaffries, Nathmie Edries, and Ali Parker envisioned PAGAD as a way to restore community values through the construction of community rehabilitation centers and engagement with state authorities to advocate for the community's perspective. This strategy clashed with the Qibla faction's anti-state, pro-jihadist agenda. In the end, the populists (Jaffries, Edries, and Parker) were thrown out of the organization.¹¹⁵ Although PAGAD had always emphasized the power of the community over the power of any individual, there was a growing sense within the community that its populist leaders fancied themselves larger than the organization, engaging in self-promotion nationally and internationally.¹¹⁶

109 Ibid.

110 Dixon and Johns, "Gangs, Pagad, and the State," 21.

111 Ibid., 25.

112 Ibid., 5.

113 Ibid.

114 Monaghan, "'One Merchant, One Bullet,'" 5.

115 Henri Boshoff, Anneli Botha, and Martin Schonteich, "Fear in the City: Urban Terrorism in South Africa," *Institute for Security Studies Monograph* 63 (2001): 29.

116 Dixon and Johns, "Gangs, Pagad and the State," 21, 25.

With experience in the anti-apartheid struggle, Qibla leaders and members brought organizational savvy to PAGAD, institutionalizing it within the Western Cape and in satellite offices, for example, in KwaZulu Natal, Guateng, Port Elizabeth, Kimberley, and Johannesburg.¹¹⁷ The formation of Pagad United, its national organization, elevated PAGAD's local strategy to the national level. To deal more effectively with gangsters and drugs and to have greater influence over the government, PAGAD needed a stronger and larger front.¹¹⁸ PAGAD's national executive coordinated the activities of its satellite organizations, although none became as militant as the original branch in the West Cape.¹¹⁹ After the split in 1996, PAGAD began to develop more formal internal organizational structures:

- **Secretariat:** coordinated all activities within the organization and organized meetings, mass rallies, prayer meetings, conventions, and advertising and community notices
- **Legal:** handled bail, defense, and engagement with law enforcement agencies on behalf of accused members
- **Social welfare:** educated the communities about drugs and gangsterism in the schools and in factories and organized community recreation events, such as prayer meetings, outings, and sporting events; sponsored drug rehabilitation programs and rehabilitation for injured PAGAD member
- **Finance:** controlled and managed PAGAD finances, collected donations at public events, and, organized fundraising campaigns
- **Security:** operated in cell structures to protect the homes of PAGAD members; within the security unit was a special unit of the most disciplined and well-trained within each cell that formed a paramilitary arm of PAGAD, known as the Gun Force or G-Force.
- **Education:** developed syllabi on the subject of gangs and drugs and assisted educators in providing classes in biology, science, and mathematics.¹²⁰

The internal organization of PAGAD is controversial and not completely understood. Some analysts and intelligence members believe that the Qibla takeover was complete and that the populist and community activities were a convenient front for its increasingly militant operations. Others, however, feel that while ideologues may have dominated PAGAD in its leadership ranks, the grassroots membership remained only loosely committed to the fundamentalist agenda. The G-Force operated on its own initiatives independently of the mainstream organization.¹²¹

117 Ibid., 33.

118 Ibid.

119 Monaghan, "One Merchant, One Bullet," 5.

120 Ibid., 5.

121 Dixon and Johns, "Gangs, Pagad, and the State," 26.

STATE RELATIONS

If there were internal turning points within PAGAD, such as the confluence of retaliatory violence by the gangs and the lack of response by the state to PAGAD's negotiations, there were also turning points within the state. These were, in many ways, opportunities missed or misunderstood, as the post-apartheid government also underwent a substantial reformation of its institutions, especially the police. Throughout the fall of 1996, the government and PAGAD engaged in negotiations on a police and justice response to the growing threat of drugs and gangs in the West Cape townships. The Western Cape Attorney General suggested that, if PAGAD wanted to do something about drugs, it should focus on entry points. In December 1996, PAGAD organized a demonstration at Cape Town International Airport. The group applied for permission for the demonstration, but the Minister of Transport and the President's Office refused to grant it. PAGAD proceeded with the demonstration, but viewed the whole negotiation process as a set-up for a confrontation with the government. Following the demonstration, PAGAD increased its presence at Muslim international protests outside of the Israeli Embassy and against the arrival of British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Violence escalated between the PAGAD paramilitary forces and the gangs. In response, the government issued a statement in December 1996 that PAGAD was a threat to national security and as anti-state as the gangsters themselves.¹²²

With this statement, the government's position hardened considerably. It began to institute legal and security measures against PAGAD, such as prohibiting members from owning guns and prohibiting demonstrators from wearing masks. Both measures reduced overt popular support for PAGAD; its members and supporters would not challenge drug lords and gang members openly without the ability to remain anonymous or to defend themselves against retaliation.¹²³ The government's twin track of more rigorous enforcement and public condemnation pushed PAGAD further from a popular mass movement into a smaller, tighter, better organized—but also more homogeneous, isolated, and defensive—group.¹²⁴

PAGAD leaders felt that the state response was the ANC-led government's move to quash political dissent and opposition, because the government feared that PAGAD leadership was pushing an internationalist Muslim agenda and its grassroots members were supporting the NA/DP.¹²⁵ Either way, PAGAD was perceived as anti-ANC. PAGAD also cynically noted the ANC's cooperation with the gangs in the lead-up to the 1994 elections and its lack of response to the criminal elements in the West Cape.¹²⁶ The government's statements in December 1996 were an attempt to associate PAGAD with militant Islam and fed into a domestic and global panic over the growth of Islamic fundamentalism. In making this connection, the government attempted to strip PAGAD of its support from moderate Muslims and non-believers.¹²⁷

122 Ibid.

123 Gabeba Baderoon. "Regarding South African Images of Islam: From the Picturesque to Pagad and After," *South African Historical Journal* 6, no. 1 (2009): 109.

124 Dixon and Johns, "Gangs, Pagad, and the State," 6.

125 Fourchard, "The Politics of Mobilization for Security," 617.

126 Dixon and Johns, "Gangs, Pagad, and the State," 25.

127 Ibid., 29.

As both PAGAD and the state positions hardened, the new head of PAGAD, Aslam Toefy, took a more instrumentalist approach in negotiations with the state, not seeking to transform citizen-state relations as previous negotiations had attempted. In 1998, PAGAD approached the government with a list of more than 100 gang and drug group members, identifying where they lived and the crimes they committed. The police responded that they could not pursue the gangsters because their resources were fully engaged in policing PAGAD. PAGAD agreed to stop its demonstrations for a month to allow the police to reallocate resources, but the group perceived very little police action during this time. The police noted that due to the new democratic processes it would take time to compile evidence and prepare for arrests. Soon, however, the police initiated Operation Good Hope, a special operation to arrest PAGAD members and fully undermine the organization. The operation was launched in response to a series of terrorist attacks on the city's soft targets, including restaurants, which the government attributed to PAGAD and which PAGAD denied organizing. PAGAD members believed that, having revealed their leadership team in the negotiations, the police used this information to target them.¹²⁸

The disjointed response by the police, engaging in negotiations while targeting PAGAD for arrest, was largely due to a growing split within the police force based on those who still adhered to apartheid techniques and perspectives and those who took a more nuanced view of PAGAD. The latter group felt that there was a pragmatic element within PAGAD with whom it could negotiate and engage.¹²⁹ That latter group eventually lost to the hardened state position and was itself investigated for its "sympathy" for PAGAD. As the state's position grew more repressive, PAGAD's core became more reactionary, defensive, and militant. In the end, the violence caused by the rise in gangs and drug networks that first led to PAGAD's formation continued unabated, with the state largely unsuccessful in its efforts to break up organized crime.

CONCLUSIONS

The PAGAD case study also confirms that the interplay of external factors identified in this study —community organization, the relationship with the state, international actors, and norms of violence—contributed significantly to PAGAD's original organization and to its transformations. This case demonstrates the complexity of CBAGs' existence in times of post-conflict transitions and democratic consolidations, as government reforms and norms of violence shift. It was difficult for both PAGAD and the government to see through the fog of transition and to understand their new positions and new contexts.

The lesson to be learned is the difficulty of engaging CBAGs in a time of transition. As Figure 4 shows, the shift in how PAGAD exercised violence is more the case that the accepted norms of the state and communities on violence shifted and less the case that PAGAD radically changed its armed operations. Shifts in societal norms regarding acceptable violence may radically affect a CBAG's legitimacy.

It is also clear from both case studies that state-CBAG relationships may not be defined as much by the absence of the state as by the government's perception of whether CBAGs are supportive or aligned

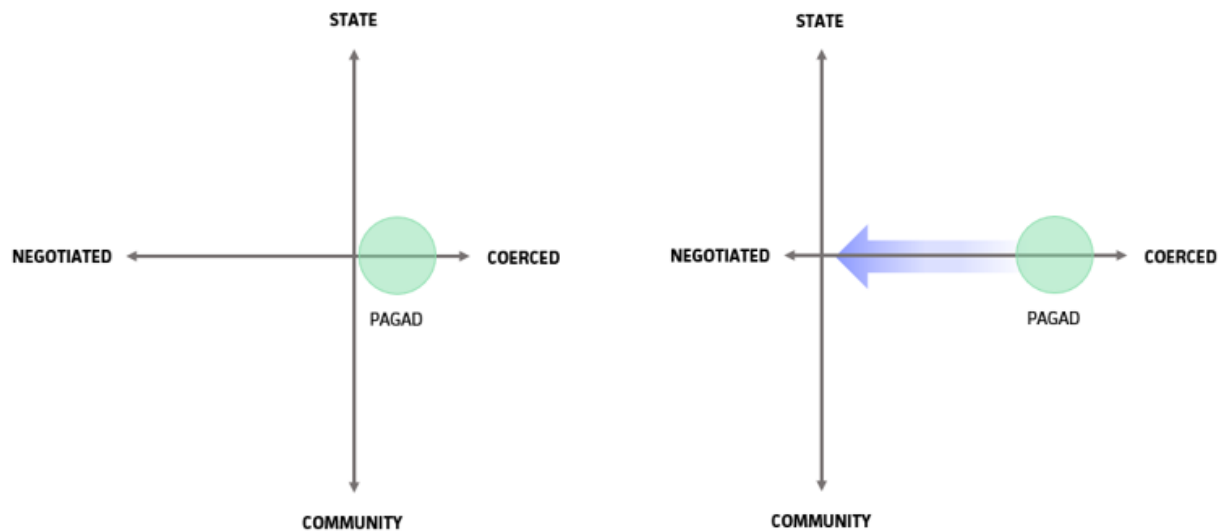
128 Dixon and Johns, "Gangs, Pagad, and the State," 24.

129 Ibid., 27.

with political opponents. Thus, the state can view CBAGs as political, not just, security actors. Whether CBAGs are, in fact, political actors is irrelevant to the state, which is more concerned with whether they could become political. Thus, there is the paradoxical aspect of the relationship; the state relies on CBAGs to enhance its legitimacy and allows them to operate and engage, until CBAGs present threats to the state.

Finally, in terms of the internal dynamics of CBAGs, comparisons of the PAGAD and Dozo organizations show that values matter. The Dozo, which had deep organizational values centered around community protection, retreated to the north rather than unleash national government security forces against their homeland. PAGAD, in contrast, wanted to transform an increasingly corrupt liberal democracy by focusing government officials on the needs of the people that it served. In challenging the state and publicly addressing its flaws, PAGAD valued political gains over community security—a position that invited a government response. Thus, external factors ultimately drive CBAG transitions, but internal factors are decisive in determining how well CBAGs navigate external changes.

Figure 4. Shift in State and Community Norms on Violence Increase Perceptions of PAGAD as Coercive



Source: Author.

CONCLUSION

This dynamic typology framework links the organization and operations of CBAGs to environmental factors and links CBAG transformations to shifts in these interrelated factors. External factors (relations with the state and the community, resources, social norms, threat environment, and international actors) influence the internal functions of the group (leadership structures, discipline, and recruitment processes). In turn, internal functions determine the fundamental characteristic of CBAGs: how they exercise violence.

At its core, two factors define CBAG identity: (1) the external factor of the group's relationships with the state and communities, and (2) the internal function of the group's exercise of violence. These two core typifying factors are interrelated and dynamically influence one another. Both state-community relations and the exercise of violence can be characterized as either coercive or negotiated; these two categories encompass diverse practices and meanings, but they demonstrate the underlying fluid sociopolitical and cultural relationships that create the identity.

The two CBAG cases in this report—PAGAD and Dozo—began as community protection groups but followed different trajectories. The comparative analysis of these different trajectories allows insights into the factors that drive the organizational and operational shifts.

The Role of the State

The historical, long-standing social protective norms practiced by the Dozo hunters helped them withstand the political pressures exerted by politicians to declare their loyalty to a political party. In contrast, the protective norms practiced by PAGAD quickly fell away under the pressure exerted by the state. South Africa experienced profound changes in how local communities perceived the new state and how the state implemented security, and community support for PAGAD diminished because of its violence against local drug lords. As the group's ties to community networks were broken and the state applied enormous pressure through police raids and incarcerations, PAGAD transitioned to a tight, hardliner group that committed violence against citizens and the state.

What state policies resulted in these divergent trajectories? At first, the Côte d'Ivoire government sought to contain the Dozo to the north, reduce their numbers, and partially disarm them. Later, when the Côte d'Ivoire government used security forces against the Dozo, some factions transitioned into ethnic militias and insurgent groups. The South African government implemented an escalatory option to eliminate PAGAD through police attacks, even as the group sought to negotiate with the government. The comparative analysis suggests that when the state seeks to eliminate CBAGs, they or their fractioned elements become non-state armed groups. However, when the state takes a more measured approach, even if the negotiations are coercive as in Côte d'Ivoire, CBAGs, such as the Dozo, morph into other types of CBAGs with more negotiated relationships to the state and communities.

Expanded Human Security Roles

Both groups began as community protective groups and quickly added additional community responsibilities that responded to a more expansive view of security: human security. These human security tasks, such as dispute resolution for the Dozo and community clinics and youth programs for PAGAD, suggest that CBAGs that have high rates of legitimacy in their communities. Legitimate forces for protection will see their functions expand to fulfill additional aspects of human security if the state is not present and able to do so.

Both groups had international affiliations that the state used to discredit their legitimacy and loyalty to the nation or the state. The Dozo had connections to foreign hunters' groups as the Ivoirian government was implementing a racial exclusionary policy. PAGAD's association with the Iranian revolutionary group Qibla supported the state labeling PAGAD as a terrorist group. Thus, political actors can and do manipulate the different identities of CBAGs to discredit them with their communities as a way to assert state control.

Managing Factions

Finally, shifts in CBAG identities and exercise of violence causes factionalization within the groups, indicating that not all members accept new modes of operating, especially if new norms challenge long-held organizational principles. In Cape Town, citizens increasingly distanced themselves from the more radical core of PAGAD, fearing the backlash of violence against communities by gangs and drug cartels. They remained focused on PAGAD's community service institutions. In Côte d'Ivoire, the Dozo split as certain groups began to fight the state. Thus, in these transition moments, CBAGS are vulnerable—they can split apart, while certain factions may harden to commit acts of violence. The government and international community should be poised to act in these transitional moments. International actors can seek to leverage different groups to control the increasingly hardened faction and further isolate and contain it as it attempts to consolidate and expand its organization.

If the external indicators and internal functions identified in the typology and in the historical case studies are further validated in current cases, it will enrich a typology for CBAGs based on the type and direction of their armed operations and describe how and why CBAGs shift to other entities. For international organizations working in environments with CBAGs or for local civil society groups working within communities, it is critical to understand these shifts, especially if there is a possibility that CBAGs will change to more pernicious types of organizations, based on dynamic external changes.

This report also establishes the importance of a holistic monitoring and engagement strategy for CBAGs. Their existence is conditioned by their relationship to the state and communities. Thus, initiatives to engage with CBAGs also need to consider the entirety of their existence: norms of social order that may legitimize types of violence, endorsement by the state, and legitimacy rooted in their communities. Any

engagement strategy for CBAGs needs to address the social norms of violence, the history of state or community management or manipulation of armed groups, and their legitimacy.

International actors also need to recognize how they influence the external factors for CBAGs and how to anticipate responses in CBAG operations. For example, if the international community supplies increased resources to a particular CBAG, then it may attract a wider base of opportunistic recruits who may wield violence indiscriminately and abandon community-based norms. Similarly, the international community may appear as a threat in the particular environment, thereby institutionalizing that CBAG's role and making it a more disciplined, effective fighting force. The international community's changes to the external environment have profound effects on the group's internal dynamics. Additional research is needed to more fully elucidate the effects of international and regional dynamics on CBAG operations.

Finally, CBAGs differ greatly, yet engagement policies are often similar. Engagement strategies need to take into consideration the internal characteristics, such as sources of legitimacy and loyalty, leadership capacities, recruiting pool, and institutional structures. A CBAG with extensive resources, whose members enjoy economic benefits, may be more attracted to employment-based or compensation-based transitions. CBAG members motivated by an internal set of principles and norms may be more attracted to transition programs that are more spiritual, intellectual, or rooted in community service, such as becoming an emergency response and rescue group. For example, does a negotiated, legitimate relationship with the state, which might moderate a group's use of violence, predominate when a CBAG has access to significant resources, which might encourage more opportunistic violence? Further research should study interactive effects, determining if some variables are more influential on CBAGs' functions than others.

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