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Gender and Urban (In)Security in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States

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by

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Abstract

In light of rapid urbanization and its associated development opportunities in fragile and conflict-affected states, the challenge of creating sustainable urban security is becoming increasingly important to policy-makers and practitioners alike. The gendered aspects of urban security are a crucial but still largely neglected area of attention. In order to begin to fill this gap in knowledge and policy analysis, this paper analyzes security understandings and local needs from a gender-sensitive perspective and explores what security means for urban populations. By looking at issues such as sexual violence, victimization processes, fear, and livelihood security, and through the unmasking of diverse masculinities and femininities, it explores and analyzes the complexities of local security perceptions. Additionally, it identifies policy options for engaging with urban insecurity from a gender-sensitive perspective and provides guidance on how to integrate gender into research, urban planning, and security programming.

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Introduction

In recent years, urban security in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) has become a widely discussed topic in policy and academic discourses. The issue, along with concerns about urbanization, urban violence, and urban poverty, is not a new one. But unprecedented urbanization in the 21st century—across the globe and specifically in fragile states, where violent conflict is a main driver of urban growth—has raised particular interest in what Robert Muggah recently named the “urban dilemma”: with 600 urban centres generating roughly 60 per cent of global gross domestic product, urbanization is the primary force for development (Muggah 2012). However, growth in urban areas typically occurs in the low-income parts and slums where violence is a major threat to safety (Muggah 2012, 30; Frost and Nowak 2011, 3). Therefore, just as it is a global development force, urbanization creates a risk—or exacerbates existing risks—of insecurity for people living in congested urban areas (UN-HABITAT 2008a, X; Muggah 2012, vi).

Drawing on 15 case studies, Jo Beall, Tom Goodfellow, and Dennis Rodgers argue that a new form of conflict is on the rise globally and especially in FCAS. Their research indicates that rapid urbanization without the provision of basic services, employment, and housing is very likely to result in “civic conflict.” As they understand it, this type of conflict is essentially urban in nature and associated with urban features like population density, diversity, and inequality, and unique characteristics and interactions created by the confined space of a city (Beall, Goodfellow, Rodgers 2011; Rodgers 2010). Beall, Goodfellow, and Rodgers (2011, 7) argue that violent civic conflict:

- a) is generally linked to state failures to provide security, growth and welfare in urban areas;
- b) consists of violent events that may be isolated or connected by a sustained organised campaign or set of political demands;
- c) rarely involves an attempt to take permanent control of the state, even in part; and
- d) is consequently less ‘all or nothing’ or ‘indivisible’ . . . than sovereign and civil conflict and thus, in theory, more amenable to resolution.

Their comprehensive analysis demonstrates both the complexity and direness of the security situations in many urban regions of FCAS. Engagement with increasingly important urban issues in both research and policy-making is necessary not only because recent and future global security demands in light of the “urban turn”¹ require it

¹. The “urban turn” refers to the year 2008, when for the first time in history more than 50 per cent of the world’s population was living in cities; it highlights the growing global importance of urban areas and challenges faced by fragile states (Butsch, Etzold, and Sakdapolrak 2009, 2).

(Muggah 2012, 21), but also for the sake of millions of urban inhabitants who are trapped in insecure and rapidly growing cities. When it comes to the poverty reduction, it seems that “urban growth has done more to reduce rural poverty than to reduce urban poverty” (UN DESA 2011, 5). With regard to the impact of urbanization on security, few benefit and much remains to be done.

There is growing concern about the possible disconnect between national and local governments’ security policies and urban inhabitants’ daily experiences of urban insecurity and associated demands for improved services (Muggah 2012, ix; De Boeck 2011, 74). In response, an expanding research program is being undertaken to improve knowledge of local security needs and develop strategies to successfully connect them to social and security programming (see UN-HABITAT 2008a, XX; IDRC 2012). Recent research, however, largely fails to integrate a gender perspective.

In order to begin to address this omission, in this paper, I use a broad gender perspective to trace my analysis of gendered security understandings, perceptions, and local needs in urban regions of FCAS. My review of the existing knowledge base finds it fragmented, with important gaps in understanding and analysis. Because my gender analysis looks beyond women to concentrate on femininities and masculinities, it reveals the complexity and structures of gender and security issues in urban settings. After assessing the “urban dilemma,” defining key terms, and outlining its analytical stance, I survey the existing literature and highlight experiential accounts of urban inhabitants on the topics of safety (sexual violence, victimization, and fear) and security (specifically livelihood security). I reflect on structure, multiple identities, and agency while searching for connections to masculinities and femininities. I then consider how to engage with specific insecurities to integrate a gender-sensitive perspective in urban planning and security programming. I conclude with policy recommendations regarding response mechanisms and suggestions for future inquiry.

The “Urban Dilemma” and Gender

As dangerous and inevitable as the “urban dilemma” appears, it is not a dilemma between underdevelopment and urban suffering. There are ways to engage with the challenges at hand. Recent research and programs that tackle rapid urbanization in FCAS outline some options.

Drawing on research on urban gang violence, social anthropologist Dennis Rodgers (2010) shows that violence, a major source of insecurity, is not always a feature of cities. He criticizes influential work conducted by the Chicago School of Sociology dating to the 1920s, which claims that urban(izing) areas fall prey to social

disorganization. In his classic 1938 article “Urbanism as a Way of Life,” Louis Wirth, a proponent of the Chicago School, theorizes “that cities are large, dense settlements of socially heterogeneous individuals and that, as a result, they promote high levels of violence, insecurity, and disorder, insofar as large numbers lead to impersonal social contact, high density produces increased competition, and heterogeneity induces differentiation and stratification” (Rodgers 2010, 1). Rodgers argues that reality differs from this theory and urban violence cannot be naturalized as such, not even in cases of rapid urbanization. By focusing on political economies of conflict and how gangs emerge according to concerns about access to, control over, and the distribution of resources within cities, Rodgers convincingly shows that other factors need to be taken into account (Rodgers 2010, 1). Still, the Chicago School’s theory remains relevant and is reflected in thinking about the “urban dilemma.” Muggah warns that the combination of extreme density in rapidly growing cities, severe inequalities, and high rates of violence, crime, and repression is likely to result in further decline of social cohesion and unwillingness to engage in collective action. Urban violence in socio-economically unequal and densely populated fragile cities often results in the formation of gated communities and overall fragmentation (Muggah 2012, 33–35).

Rapid urbanization is not the only challenge that national and local governments in conflict-affected and fragile states face. They must concern themselves with *how* cities grow. The way that cities grow creates a particular problem for urban and peri-urban areas. A common phenomenon in developing countries is peripherization, also known as urban sprawl. Peripherization occurs when growth mainly affects a city’s peripheral areas, where mostly poor people build informal and unplanned extensions of the city. In some cities, middle- and high-income people also move to gated communities in peripheral areas, thereby reinforcing urban divides (UN-HABITAT 2008a, 10–11). Furthermore, in FCAS, a large proportion of refugees and internally displaced persons move to cities. Muggah notes that there is a lack of data in this regard, but two examples of urban growth driven by conflict suggest that cities experience significant impacts: Kabul in Afghanistan almost doubled its population from 1.78 million in 1999 to more than 2.9 million in 2009, many of them fleeing armed conflict, while Sudan’s capital Khartoum purportedly absorbed 1.7 million refugees and internally displaced persons in the past decade (Muggah 2012, 32–33). Given these challenges, it is crucial to equally focus on urban insecurity alongside security at the national level, particularly from a gender-sensitive perspective.

Academic and policy debates on urbanization and urban (in)security often touch on the gender implications of urban violence. In general, discussions about the “urban dilemma” and gender centre on women and how they are affected by violence. Issues such as sexual and gender-based violence, domestic violence, and fear are typically

addressed and comparisons of sex-disaggregated violence and/or crime statistics are frequent. A common finding is that men are more likely to become victims of homicide, physical assault, and robbery, while women suffer more often from sexual assault and domestic violence (Taylor 2011, 12; Muggah 2012, 30). Although much has been published about urbanization, urban (in)security, and gender, a sophisticated, systematic review of the dynamics among them is absent: either gender implications are noted in the margins, the focus is on the comparison of a small number of case studies, or attention is given only to women and direct physical violence.

Debates on gender in related fields, such as international development and conflict studies, are already a few steps ahead. For example, Wendy Harcourt (2009, 13) points out that the gender focus in conflict studies has shifted from the consideration of women as victims of conflict to the consideration of post-conflict periods as windows of opportunity for change and “[building] more inclusive and gender balanced social, economic and political relations.” The lessons learned and insights from those debates could be used to further explore urban (in)security and gender. The complexity of gendered experiences with violence in post-conflict states such as the changed gender roles of female (ex-)fighters (Harcourt 2009, 13) and victimization of men with regard to sexual violence and rape (Greig and Edström 2012, 9; UN OCHA 2008) point to the diversity of femininities and masculinities that shape urban violence and its impacts.

One area that has not yet been comprehensively explored from a gender perspective is the fact that urban security is not solely defined by safety from physical violence and other obstacles and risks, which are more difficult to disentangle from each other and track, exist (Muggah 2012, 28; Taylor 2011, 6). For instance, inadequate access to social services, justice, and compensation can threaten the lives and well-being of urbanites. Recent security sector reform programs acknowledge this and have tried to apply a more holistic approach (Albrecht, Stepputat, and Andersen 2010, 78; Wulf 2011, 344–45), but the primary focus of these programs remains on security at the national level and state-run security institutions such as the police (see Naraghi-Anderlini 2008). The particular security needs and personal experiences of urban inhabitants are under-researched and important realities like the role of non-state actors in the provision of security seem to be overlooked (Lawrence 2012).

Notably, few authors explicitly define (in)security, violence, and FCAS. This “I know it when I see it” approach is problematic, but understandable. For decades, (in)security, violence, fragility, and conflict were assessed from a state-centric perspective and the shift toward investigating individual security and bottom-up solutions is relatively recent (Carment, Prest, and Samy 2010, 14–16). Urban planners and policy-makers are just beginning to realize how complex securing cities is (Moser and Rodgers 2012, 1).

Adequately defining terms is complicated by the lack of knowledge about what security means to urbanites, what people perceive as conflict and violence, and how gender plays a role.

In this paper I use the following definitions for key concepts, noting that they point to underlying theoretical implications of this research and shed some light on my perspective. Regarding FCAS, I use the definition used by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. These states are characterized by “[having] weak capacity to carry out basic functions of governing their population and territory . . . [or] [lacking] the ability to develop mutually constructive and reinforcing relations with society” (OECD 2011, 1). For the purpose of this research, defining the terms “urban” and “city” is necessary. Muggah’s (2012, 15) insight into how to grapple with “urbanity” points out that there is no single, unequivocal definition: urban spaces are related to the concepts of cities and towns and “include demarcated geographic zones of dense human habitation and a degree of physical separation from rural areas.” A “city” is an “inhabited central place differentiated from a town or a village by its greater size and the range of activities practiced within its boundaries” (Wirth 1938, 8, cited in Muggah 2012, 15). An “urban space” includes areas such as slums, which may be found in or around a city, and peri-urban areas, which share aspects of both urban and rural spaces.²

Deciding what constitutes “(in)security” and “violence” is much more complicated. For each term, the debates about definitions are vast and many definitions are either too narrow or too broad to be useful here. With a state-centric perspective on security that prioritizes national sovereignty over territory and by conceiving of violence as only being direct physical force, the risk of missing important locally perceived issues is large. Other definitions are so inclusive that they lose their applicability. The United Nations Development Programme’s definition of “human security” (for explanation and analysis of the concept, see UNDP 1994 and Bajpai 2000, respectively) and Johan Galtung’s division of “violence” into personal, structural, and cultural violence (see Galtung 1990, 292–94) are examples of definitions that are too broad.

Given its exploratory purpose, this paper works with a straightforward definition of safety and a flexible continuum between insecurity and security. By defining safety as “the condition of being protected from or unlikely to cause danger, risk, or injury,”³ the term can be applied with relative ease in order to grasp threats to individual security such as murder, rape, criminal assault, and forms of domestic violence. But quantitative

². For a comprehensive definition of slums, see UN-HABITAT (2010, 108–09).

³. *Oxford Dictionaries*, s.v. “safety,” accessed January 24, 2013, <http://oxforddictionaries.com/>.

indicators like homicide rates can be unreliable, especially in FCAS and with regard to disaggregation of sexes (Frost and Nowak 2011, 2). Qualitative analysis is a valuable complementary method. In general, safety that is related to issues which do not imply direct physical force, like poor access to health-care or justice services, could be grasped within the concept of security. Yet, a closed definition of “security” might blind the analysis of security understandings to marginalized groups’ issues and perceptions. Instead, I choose to look for perceived security risks and explain how gender interacts with them. If a situation, place, or behaviour is understood to be impinging on safety, the definition of “security” can vary because “security” is based on personal experience and subjective interpretation.

In this paper, I analyze urban inhabitants’ understandings of security from a broader gender or gender-sensitive perspective. Gender has become increasingly important in international, regional, and national security discourses and politics. The term “gender” refers to the different but interrelated social(ly ascribed) roles, behaviours, practices, and identities of people which are perceived as feminine or masculine, whereas the term “sex” refers to the biological and physiological attributes that constitute men and women (Bastick 2008, 3–4). Due to the feminist roots of the debate about gender, the focus of gender work in general and particularly in security politics remains on the support, empowerment, and protection of women. Recently, however, there has been a shift toward a broader and more differentiated application of the gender concept, even among feminist researchers (e.g., Connell 2012, 11; Schäfer 2012; Greig and Edström 2012; Hentschel and Krämer 2011; Sjoberg and Via 2010, 4; UN OCHA 2008, 3; Greig, Kimmel, and Lang 2000, 1–6). I apply that differentiation here, too. The gender perspective is an analytical perspective that helps analyze societal processes and structures. It unmasks (unequal) power relations and biases that shape discrimination or drive marginalization in society and provides insight into the varying security needs of different groups of individuals. Addressing gender issues can be a powerful tool in the promotion of more sensitive, inclusive, and democratic governance of security issues. Gender is not the only social category that can prompt discrimination and oppression, however.

Intersectionality is an analytical perspective that pays sufficient attention to the complexity of reality. Intersectionality acknowledges that a combination of different factors (gender, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, class, religion, etc.) causes markedly different experiences of oppression and privilege (Harders and Clasen 2011, 326; Weldon 2008; Davis 2008; Symington 2004; Crenshaw 1989, 149). In this paper I combine the gender perspective and intersectionality to create an applicable gender-sensitive perspective. This perspective integrates the systematic perception, recognition and consideration of diverse circumstances, experiences, needs, and desires of all

people, regardless of sex or gender, bearing in mind socially constructed gender roles. I want to emphasize that men and boys and the complex connections between femininities and masculinities must be taken into account as well (see Greig, Kimmel, and Lang 2000, 6).

To that end, I seek out specific experiences of different femininities and masculinities and different gender identities in various social groups. My analysis is driven by questions such as: how do informal traders in several urban contexts experience safety and security risks in comparison to upper-class women in Latin American cities, ex-combatants in African slums, or youth gang members? Due to the fact that accounts in the literature are limited as well as space constraints, I only cover a small selection of social groups and highlight qualitative research based on individual accounts and to identify possible gender-sensitive responses to urban insecurity.

Gender and Urban (In)Security in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States

This section investigates the role of gender in the safety and security experiences, understandings, needs, and demands of urban inhabitants. I use Cathy McIlwaine and Caroline Moser's (2012) theoretical model for understanding urban violence because of its usefulness in explaining how violence emerges and how violence results in livelihood insecurity. Livelihood security has proven to be the second most important issue for urban inhabitants with regard to security behind safety from direct physical violence. A key finding in this section is the identification of many different forms of masculinities and femininities that have vital impacts on urbanites' varying experiences of violence and insecurity.

Safety in Cities

Violence is a major problem in urban areas and a severe risk to the personal safety of urban inhabitants. Although other safety risks exist, such as traffic accidents, health problems caused by pollution, and natural disasters, I concentrate in this subsection on the analysis of direct physical violence because I believe that violence is one of the most pressing issues with regard to safety and security. In extreme cases, the levels of lethal violence, rape, and (sexual) assault in fragile cities of fragile countries that are officially at peace exceed the levels of violence in conflict-affected or war-torn countries. At the moment, the most violent cities can be found in Latin America and the Caribbean, with others in South Africa and the United States (Koonings 2012, 14). In this subsection, I explore how the construction and prevalence of gender roles play a part in

different experiences of safety among different (groups of) men and women. I consider personal accounts and explore how different masculinities and femininities are involved. I ask the question: What are important categories that shape gender roles and result in different experiences and perceptions of violence and, consequently, safety?

A common finding in the literature on the gender implications of urban violence and violence in FCAS is that men and women indeed experience and perceive violence, protection, and safety differently.⁴ In general, men are the main perpetrators of violence, since they are often in positions of power working as policemen, bus drivers, factory owners, and key decision makers, or involved in criminal activities (Taylor 2011, 12). This situation endures despite the growing proportion of women holding positions of (potential) power in police forces, prisons, and political offices, in many FCAS especially in Africa.⁵ Victims of violence are both men and women; men seem to more often be victims of lethal and non-sexual violence, while women seem much more likely to be victims of sexual violence (Muggah 2012, 30; Taylor 2011; Mobekk 2010, 283; OECD 2009, 2).⁶ These trends paint a simple picture that does not capture the complexity of what actually happens in daily urban life. That complexity can be captured through in-depth analysis of people's narrative accounts or through detailed statistical comparisons (see McIlwaine 2012, 21; Geneva Declaration Secretariat 2011, 113–38).

McIlwaine and Moser's theoretical model for understanding urban violence makes seeing beyond the sex division of perpetrators and victims easier. As McIlwaine notes, "[it] is now acknowledged that the causes of urban violence must be viewed from a multi-disciplinary and multi-scalar perspective." She emphasizes the importance of showing these causes to be constructed from a variety of sources that have roots in interrelating structural, institutional, interpersonal, and individual levels. A model that succeeds in demonstrating such construction "identifies various contributory factors relating to psychological, social and familial, economic, cultural, political and institutional issues" (McIlwaine 2012, 19).

⁴. For the urban context, see Taylor (2011, 12). For violence in FCAS, see Salahub and Nerland (2010, 264).

⁵. The women who obtain these positions often face discrimination and many challenges that reduce their power. Sometimes women are hired or elected to meet quotas or politically save face. However, these women tend to increase their influence and power over time. This reflects a general phenomenon that social power does not evenly translate to individual power and varies from situation to situation (Kimmel 2012; Lorentzen 2011, 114). For analyses of West African security sectors, see Holvikivi and Valasek (2011) and World Bank (2011, 59–69).

⁶. I use the term sexual violence as opposed to sexual and gender-based violence. The latter term can be very useful since it encompasses more forms of violence than sexual violence. But because of its inclusivity, the term's boundaries are unclear, especially when it is combined with a broad definition of "security," such as the one used in this paper. In order to maintain analytical accuracy, I use the World Health Organization's definition of sexual violence: "any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work" (Krug et al. 2002, 149).

McIlwaine and Moser's model maps the causality of urban violence, essentially showing why violence occurs. Structure, multiple identities, and agency are identified as causal factors, implicating different gender roles and complex femininities and masculinities in fear, insecurity, and violence. Structure refers to the contexts in which people live, which shape their experiences of or engagement in violence. Structures like political and socio-economic power relations, social institutions, and material circumstances are subsumed under this factor. It includes, for example, security sector and welfare institutions, different approaches to policing, phenomena like impunity or corruption, and infrastructure such as roads and street lights. Multiple identities refer to differences—shaped by gender, age, ethnicity, race, and so on—among individuals that result in varying exposure to violence or violent behaviour. Constructions of specific masculinities and femininities are examples of such differences. Agency refers to different ways of reacting in situations and, through connections to the structures and identities, problem-solving and objective-formulation abilities (McIlwaine 2012, 19–20; Moser and McIlwaine 2005, 96–98).

Using this model, I want to come back to analyzing the situation in fragile and conflict-affected cities. I concentrate on a few issues drawn from the literature that seem to suggest answers to my original question. Therefore, I focus on deconstructing sexual violence, processes of victimization and their connection to masculinities, and fear.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is a significant threat to safety for many urban inhabitants in most FCAS and a form of violence that is enormously shaped by gender roles. The statistics below provide an indication of how widespread sexual violence in urban spaces is, though they are most likely inaccurate due to under-reporting and social stigmas (Kangas, Haider, Fraser 2012, 18; Wilding 2010, 635). In Brazil, sexual violence and violence in intimate partnerships is all too common. It is, as Polly Wilding (2010, 635) puts it, “a regular facet of women’s lives.” Rare research focusing on men’s experiences validates this claim: 17.2 per cent of 749 men (aged 15–60) interviewed in Rio de Janeiro used sexual violence, 25.4 per cent used physical violence against their female partner, and 38.8 per cent used insults, humiliation, or threats at least once in their relationship. A similar study in Recife bears similar results: 25 per cent of 170 new army recruits agreed with the statement that “[there are] times when a woman deserves a beating,” a further 18 per cent replied “maybe,” and 18 per cent admitted that they “had physically abused a woman” (Medrado and Lyra 2003, 2). Sexual violence is commonly identified by women as one of the main risks that they face. The prevalence and patterns of sexual violence vary, but the issue is not limited to a certain country or region (see, for example, Taylor 2011 and WICI 2010).

In an attempt to explain the fact that in Brazil victims of sexual violence were predominantly female and perpetrators predominantly male, Benedito Medrado and Jorge Lyra point to prevailing social acceptance and normalization of violence and sexual violence. They argue that the core problem lies in the construction of a violent form of masculinity, a socially constructed norm of what it means to be a man.

Whatever the place, brutality is repeatedly used as an instrument in the process of becoming a man. This is because violence is frequently seen to be a typical male trait in resolving conflicts. Men are, in general, socialized to repress their emotions, so that anger, and even physical violence, are socially acceptable ways of expressing emotion for men. The fact that these ways of expressing emotion are not only accepted but often encouraged by society may lead to serious acts of violence, including the murder of women and of other men. (Mendrado and Lyra 2003, 2–3)⁷

In line with McIlwaine and Moser's theoretical model, a certain identity, the social construction of an inherently aggressive masculinity, seems to aid and abet sexual violence. There is a risk of oversimplification by focusing on one causal factor. Agency, structure, and other identities play roles as well (Lorentzen 2011, 112–13). To fully understand the mechanisms of sexual violence in an urban setting, it is imperative to find out how people create and interact with aggressive masculinity. The simplification and essentialization of men as perpetrators and women as victims, as is often done by the public and in the media, is dangerous because such accounts not only reproduce gender stereotypes (aggressive men and weak women) that are often inaccurate, but also ignore the volatility and fluidity of individual roles in society—being/becoming a victim or perpetrator are malleable qualities that are not mutually exclusive (Wilding 2010, 733–34; Lorentzen 2011; Kangas, Haider, and Fraser 2012, 40). Alan Greig (2000, 29) argues that reproducing “good girl, bad boy” stereotypes deprives both women and men of their agency, their plurality, and their realities, and “averts our gaze from the contexts within which gendered oppressions live, namely transnational capitalism and post-colonial relations which create complex alignments of community and conflict within and between the genders.”

Noting that the question of responsibility for sexual violence gets complicated when the “structures, cultures and histories of violence that both men and women have produced and reproduced” are considered, Alan Greig, Michael Kimmel, and James Lang suggest an analysis of the violence that is included in masculinity's hierarchy of difference, which privileges the masculine over the feminine, and how concepts like misogyny,

⁷ The role that features of cities such as close proximity and socio-economic stresses has in exacerbating or mitigating these processes is poorly understood. Further study in this area is needed.

homophobia, and racism are embedded in discourses of masculinity and the social structures they reproduce (Greig, Kimmel, and Lang 2000, 13).

However, the responsibility of sexual violence can play out in even more complicated ways than Greig, Kimmel and Lang explain. From the case of Santiago in Chile, we can learn how other structures—such as an exclusive neo-liberal socio-economic system—create room for sexual violence. In their research on urban violence in three parts of Santiago (low-income, middle-income, and high-income), Caroline Moser and Dennis Rodgers found that sexual violence occurs in all socio-economic classes and perpetrators and victims come from all socio-economic backgrounds. Yet, they found that the forms and patterns of violence had been unleashed by the city's neo-liberal governance principles (Moser and Rodgers 2012, 7–8).

Furthermore, the types and fears of violence varied depending on the income group. In the low-income group, violence resulted from exclusion and a lack of opportunities and sexual violence was closely connected to drug problems as well as to patriarchal gender relations. In the middle-income neighbourhood, violence occurred within households that suffered from high stress and family breakdown resulting from attempts to advance economically. Violence against women within couples was a huge problem and was explained in structural terms as a result of “the pressure of the capitalist system.” For the high-income group, Moser and Rodgers did not discover any specific importance of sexual violence. But they point out that people in rich neighbourhoods mostly fear economic violence like assault, burglaries, and theft. Although sexual violence was seemingly not the biggest issue for Santiago's wealthy, they (re)produce exclusive structures through an “intolerance towards diversity and a fear of the ‘other’ as different, poor, and violent, [which] created powerful feelings of insecurity, and a perception that the community was unsafe” (Moser and Rodgers 2012, 7–8).

“Othering” and essentialization can be important contributing factors to urban violence in general and thus also to sexual violence in particular. Structures, agency, and identities have to be deconstructed in theory and in practice to increase safety in societies.

Processes of Victimization and Connections to Masculinities

I will begin to deconstruct structures, identities, and agency by analyzing processes of victimization and their connections to masculinities. The common way to analyze victimization processes is to focus on women or, less often, femininities. Undoubtedly, women are considerably more likely to suffer from sexual violence. In many cases, women find getting justice for the violence that they experience difficult, if they can get

their complaints heard at all. Many accounts document the barriers they face (Taylor 2011; Tacoli 2012; WICI 2010; Wilding 2010; Kangas, Haider, and Fraser 2012). However, given my strong desire to avoid reducing this discussion's focus solely to women as victims and men as perpetrators, the following questions are pertinent. When gender roles change after a war or through a women's empowerment initiative, does this change have an impact on victimization processes? What are the roles of changing femininities and masculinities in victimization processes? When and to what extent are men victims of sexual and gender-based violence other than in instances of lethal violence and burglary? Much can be learned by analyzing victimization processes and their connections to masculinities.

I found two points from the literature to be particularly salient. First, victimization is comprised of complex and ongoing social processes that deserve further study. Records from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, indicate an increase in the frequency and intensity of violence against economically successful and empowered women (Taylor 2011, 32). As Cecilia Tacoli points out, the general understanding is that gender inequalities get reduced and gender norms become more flexible in cities. When that happens, patriarchal structures, traditional masculinities, and femininities are challenged. This in turn can result in higher rates of violence against women. Tacoli also argues that women who take the lead in decision making in the household experience violence more often. Moreover, women living in cities have greater access to economic resources than those living in rural areas, which often results in a "backlash of male violence" (Tacoli 2012, 27–28). However, when looking at intimate partner violence, studies from South Africa and Bangladesh suggest female empowerment does not always result in higher male violence rates (Vyas and Watts 2009; Tacoli 2012). It remains unclear when and why changing femininities challenge masculinities in ways that elicit violent responses. It is important to note that masculinities are not stable and they can be challenged (Lorentzen 2011, 115), which opens up social relations and spaces for negotiation. While negotiation is not necessarily always a peaceful process, it can change the ways people are victimized and possibly reduce victimization significantly.

Second, the lack of accounts of sexual and domestic violence against men is a global problem that is just starting to become part of discourses on urban violence and gender. I want to say a few things on the latter and then try to make the connection to processes of victimization and connections to masculinities. Little is known about sexual and domestic violence against men for a variety of reasons, including lack of international awareness, lack of diligent investigation, social stigmas, and under-reporting (Sivakumaran 2007, 2010; Kangas, Haider, and Fraser 2012, 40, 86; Ochako, Wawire, and Fotso 2011, 1). Statistics seldom exist and when studies are conducted, under-

reporting is high due to issues like the severe “double stigma”⁸ and legal consequences for victims associated with cultural and societal masculinity norms, such as men raped by other men facing the possibility of being convicted of a crime in countries where homosexuality is criminalized (Sivakumaran 2007, 255–58; Ochako, Wawire, and Fotso 2011, 1).

Furthermore, it is unclear to what extent women are perpetrators of or bystanders to sexual and domestic violence. The lack of data on the issue, especially in urban contexts, should be addressed. Female perpetrators likely exist: by looking at categories like class (e.g., women have been known to commit violence against their poor, uneducated female and male employees) and how violent education and care can be (e.g., mothers, relatives, and teachers sometimes commit violence against children and the elderly), it appears that women are occasionally violent.⁹ Relationships between male (ex-)combatants or disabled veterans and their empowered wives following the former’s postwar return could be violent, as could the behaviour of female police officers in prisons. There are many imaginable situations in which women may take an active part in beating, abusing, or even killing men or women. Sandesh Sivakumaran suggests that sexual violence against men (by men or women) is invisible because it tends to be documented as torture (Sivakumaran 2007, 254). Accounts exist and awareness of them—through scandals like Abu Ghraib—is rising (Sivakumaran 2010, 260). Figures from FCAS reinforce the importance of the issue: one study found that in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 23.6 per cent of men from 998 households reported being victims of sexual violence, while a similar survey in Liberia that covered 1,666 households found that 32.6 per cent of male combatants and 7.4 per cent of male non-combatants also reported being victims (Solangon and Patel 2012, 420).

Charli Carpenter rightly states that “the exclusion of the gender-specific victimization of civilian men and boys from both the discourse and the programmatic realities of [the gender and security] agenda is problematic, serving neither to protect the civilian population nor to promote gender mainstreaming as a policy” (Carpenter 2006, 88). Although she discusses conflict situations, similar mechanisms and logics which exclude male victims of gender based violence likely exist in cases of violence in cities of FCAS. Carpenter describes which forms of sexual and gender-based violence are prevalent and in which cases sexual and gender-based violence occur during conflict. She also highlights overlooked forms of violence such as forced rape (e.g., a man being

⁸ The double stigma refers to the stigma of being both a victim of sexual violence and homosexual, both seen as non-conforming to the norm of (heterosexual) masculinity.

⁹ The complexity of violence is statistically clearer in developed countries. Changes in social norms and behaviours resulted in significant increases in reporting of domestic violence against men in the United States and United Kingdom and in a higher conviction rate of women who engaged in domestic violence in the United Kingdom (Graham-Kevan 2011).

forced to rape his wife, female or male relatives, etc.) and explains how being forced to watch the rape or violent abuse of, for example, female relatives can inflict lasting trauma (Carpenter 2006). These are forms of gender-based violence that must be taken into account when conceptualizing victimization.

In order to change the simplification of victimization processes, it is first of all essential to deconstruct the structural causes of violence (see Moser and McIlwaine 2012). Structures like economic systems, political regimes, public discourses, norms, and problems like impunity and corruption can produce masculinities that are themselves structures and models for identities. These masculinities are then consumed, reproduced, and performed by both men and women (Sedgwick 1995, 13; Greig, Kimmel, and Lang 2000, 6). In cities of FCAS, typical notions of the ideal masculinity are characterized by personal power, dominance, and high socio-economic status. Specific attributes of the ideal masculinity in particular cultures vary significantly depending on contexts and possibly include certain conceptualizations of race, class, sexuality, citizenship, age, and so on. (see Greig, Kimmel, Lang 2000, 5). One important factor contributing to violence is the existence of a nearly unreachable ideal masculinity, which often resembles traditional rural masculinities: a strong, dominant, sole male breadwinner. This form of an ideal masculinity needs constant performance by men and is challenged when identities change and socio-economic difficulties in urban contexts increase. If the structures that produce this form of ideal masculinity and the values attached to it are not extensively problematized within society, the fragility of the ideal masculinity can result in men's personal struggles that have the potential to create both a seeming need and justification for violence (Connell 2003, 17–18; Greig, Kimmel, and Lang 2000, 4–5; 17–18; Greig 2000, 30).

Secondly, as well as structures, individual identities and agency must be deconstructed. Greig (2000) criticizes the concept of one clearly bounded identity by showing how a person's readiness to engage in violent behaviour depends on relations with other people. He cites an interview about homophobia in which a man's response to the question "If a guy at a bar made some kind of overture to you, what would you do?" is that it depends on who is around. If a woman was there, he would be worried about humiliation. If his male friends were there, he would have to threaten the guy. And if he was alone, the overture would be all right and they could just drink a beer together (Wypijewski 1999, 74, cited in Greig 2000, 31). By acknowledging how multiple identities, different masculinities (and femininities), and relations with other people influence men (and women) to use violence, strategies to reduce the high prevalence of violence could be much more effective.

Fear

Having analyzed sexual violence, processes of victimization, and their connections to masculinities, I now turn to fear, an issue importantly related to safety and the (re)production and performance of certain femininities (see WICI 2010, 113–14). A comparative study by Alice Taylor of ActionAid on women and urban insecurity found that women's fears have distinct impacts on how they live their lives, such as sharply reducing their mobility. In its case study on Brazilian cities, Taylor finds that fear felt by both women and men grows when rates of violence increase, although women are more likely to feel insecure. In three cities in the state of Pernambuco, increasing rates of sexual violence caused an increase in fear, but the perception of higher danger also played an important part. Fears vary according to sex: men are afraid of being killed and robbed, while women have similar fears but they also fear rape, sometimes more than death (Taylor 2011, 8, 17–19). Moreover, these fears have a greater impact on women than men: women in Pernambuco reported that they actively reduce their mobility and leisure time more than in any other case (Taylor 2011, 23–24).

What attracted my attention was that there are several accounts in the literature that identify a contrast between the prevalence of direct physical violence (often measured by official crime statistics) and levels of fear. This disconnection is especially real for women (Rodríguez, Saborido, and Segovia 2012, 23–24; Paul 2011, 419–22; Koselka 1997). In Santiago, for instance, 29.5 per cent of urban homes had one person who was a victim of crime, according to official 2010 data. At the same time, the range of the urban population that felt unsafe depended highly on district and sex. It differed from 33.3 per cent to 34.2 per cent of men in middle-income to high-income districts to 66.6 per cent of women in the low-income district. In general, the rate of fear of women was about 15 per cent higher than the men's rate in all three researched districts. Also, fear was more common among the elderly and people at low and middle socio-economic levels (Rodríguez, Saborido, and Segovia 2012, 23–24). In her research on women in urban India, specifically Mumbai and Calcutta, Tanusree Paul noticed the same phenomenon. The highest rate of fear is among poor, uneducated, young women living in slums, and although domestic violence is statistically a bigger threat, women tend to be more afraid of urban public spaces (Paul 2011, 419–20, 426). An explanation for this observation points to the importance of gender roles and construction of femininities: there is a strong cultural norm in India that permits women to legitimately enter a public space only if they have a specific purpose. If women move around for leisure or without a purpose, they risk being physically assaulted, losing or damaging their reputations,

being blamed if they are attacked or harassed, and losing the privilege to enter public spaces (Phadke 2007, in Paul 2011, 420).¹⁰

Evidently, the construction of a femininity that implies women are weak and easily dominated by men in urban public spaces and that seeks to restrict their freedom is not supported by a careful interpretation of statistics on sources of threats. This femininity is part of a social exercise to exert power over and oppress women to hold them back. Women are not the only victims of such processes. Other marginalized groups, such as people who identify as transgender, are also likely to fear entering and moving around in urban public spaces because they are sometimes ostracized and harassed, even by the police (WICI 2010, 57). Returning to Moser & McIlwaine's analytical framework, structure, multiple identities, and agency all have crucial roles in these cases. Fear is not only a problem for people because it diminishes their quality of life (Rodríguez, Saborido, and Segovia 2012, 25–26), but also because it creates new safety risks. As fewer non-violent people use urban public spaces and women and men engage in social roles characterized by weakness in the former and emotional insecurity in the latter, more opportunities for violence are created. Strategies to reduce fear must equally include addressing structures, identities, and agency. This has important implications for escaping the urban dilemma, which I discuss below.

Other Security Issues in Cities

Risks to personal and family livelihoods also compromise the security of urban inhabitants in FCAS. Again, gender roles play central roles in shaping experiences with insecurity. This subsection focuses on poor and marginalized people in cities because they face the biggest challenges in securing their livelihoods and, more broadly, lives. Socio-economic status is a key category that intersects with gender, which is clear in the literature on urban security. First, I will explain the connections between gender, on one hand, and poverty, marginalization, and (in)security on the other. I then analyze different gender and security implications of selected livelihood issues and illustrate the varying membership possibilities for urban informal traders as an example of the complexity of experiences and variety of gendered challenges.

¹⁰. Reecha Upadhyay explains that the severity of mobility restrictions depends on family and community assessments of women's rights. In general, urban areas account for fewer restrictions for women relative to rural areas because norms are usually modernized in cities. In urban India, there are many mobility restrictions because sexual violence against women in cities is framed as an enormous threat. For example, the National Crime Records Bureau claims that every 29 minutes a woman gets raped in Delhi. Impunity is also a serious problem (Upadhyay 2010, 3, 6–7). Documentation and research that compare rates of fear with actual incidents is virtually non-existent, however. This is an important topic for future study.

Connections to Poverty and Marginalization

Urban inhabitants who are poor and marginalized because, for example, they are migrants or politically/socially excluded due to race or disability, increase security challenges for other urbanites in FCAS, but also have security needs of their own. Poor and marginalized people are most likely to lack the resources needed to fulfill basic needs and the capacities needed to avoid exposure to violence and insecurity (WICI 2010, 9; UN-HABITAT 2008a, XXII; Myers 2011, 11–14). There is a body of research that is preoccupied with questions about whether poverty and exclusion lead to violence (see, for instance, Sen 2008). There seems to be much support for the argument that they do, though causal connections, especially with regard to urban spaces, remain poorly understood and under-theorized (Muggah 2012, 26–27). Moser and Rodgers recently challenged the argument and linked violence by poor and marginalized people to inclusion in violent political struggles and “othering,” rather than to poverty and exclusion. They find that young, predominantly male poor people who are commonly used as “scapegoats” for the cause of urban insecurity also become instrumentally involved in violence as a consequence of being manipulated. For example, in Nairobi (Kenya) and Dili (East Timor), street youth gangs were used by influential politicians and political parties to exert violence for a political purpose (Moser and Rodgers 2012, 11). This debate about violence and socio-economic status, age and gender (poor young men as perpetrators) highlights the complexity of intersecting categories and these categories’ roles in creating insecurity.

This complexity and the specific security needs of poor and marginalized urban inhabitants, especially with regard to gender, deserve attention in strategies to reduce insecurity in cities. Stephen Commins illustrates the high vulnerability of poor urban populations in comparison to rural populations. He explains that the challenges of urban people affected by poverty are often underestimated.

National poverty lines are often defined as household consumption under \$1 or \$2 a day. Yet these thresholds do not take into account a wide range of costs and hazards that urban residents face. For example, while rural residents can typically collect fuels, building materials, some foods, water, and so forth from their environs, urban residents must pay for almost all of these.

Vulnerability in urban areas is further exacerbated because of higher rates of violence and generally weaker community ties. Moreover, social safety nets, whether they come from neighbors and relatives or programs

implemented by governments or non-governmental organizations, tend to be less present in urban settings. (Commins 2011, 4)

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) acknowledges the vulnerability of poor urban inhabitants and explains that people living in poor urban areas have a higher risk of disease, injury, and exposure to the effects of crime. Poor people have the least chance of accessing adequate health-care services, meaning that the risk of contracting diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, is high (UN-HABITAT 2012, 6). Another group particularly affected by security risks is migrants who voluntarily or involuntarily moved to a city in a fragile or conflict-affected state.¹¹ Taylor (2011, 12) identifies a wide range of security risks to migrants in cities, including forced eviction, livelihood insecurity pollution and related illnesses, environmental disasters, racism, xenophobia, weak infrastructure, and the absence of basic amenities and services.

Gender has important connections to and intersects with poverty and marginalization with regard to (in)security. Certain groups within poor and marginalized populations are particularly affected by security risks because they identify with or are considered to hold certain gender roles. Like socio-economic status, gender is a category that results in discrimination, oppression, and high frequencies of victimization (see WICI 2010, 117). Looking at livelihood risks and how they are experienced differently by men and women not only identifies crucial information about the security needs of poor and marginalized urban inhabitants, but also helps to unpack the femininities and masculinities that are key to formulating effective strategies that address these needs but which have been largely overlooked.

Livelihood Security

For urbanites, “security” primarily means being safe or protected from violence, but also includes the possibility of creating and maintaining a livelihood (Commins 2011, 5). Livelihood security refers to access to good quality housing, infrastructure, transportation systems, health care, education, and services like courts. UN-HABITAT (2012, 4) suggests the term also refers to the ability to have a political voice. In urban spaces, poor and marginalized people face the greatest risks to their livelihoods (Ochako, Wawire, and Fotso 2011, 2). Living in FCAS, which often lack social security systems, exacerbates risks:

In countries without reliable social security systems, citizens have no safety net when their source of income fails. For households in poverty, maintaining a sustainable livelihood is a day-to-day struggle, especially

¹¹. Typical reasons for migration include the search for work, conflict, and climate change (Bakewell 2011).

when faced with barriers that reduce earning capacity, including caring duties, lack of education and poor infrastructure (UN-HABITAT 2012, 5).

In order to explain how gender roles play a part in urban livelihood (in)security, I concentrate on the issues of housing, transport, and health . These issues can help to demonstrate how crime can threaten livelihood security even without high rates of violence.

Access to a secure home is one of the basic factors in creating and maintaining a livelihood. Securing such access is a major challenge for urbanites and their families, especially for poor people who cannot afford to own or rent a home. Homelessness results from several causes. Forced eviction is one cause that disproportionately affects women, itinerant households, migrants, and indigenous people. Forced evictions often happen in contexts of “urban renewal processes” and are likely to be accompanied by violence (such as coercion, intimidation, beatings, and rape). Women are more likely to be victimized by violence during forced evictions (UN-HABITAT 2012, 7).

Research on urban slums in India identified gender implications of the lack of adequate housing in urban spaces. It found that experiences of homelessness differ between men and women: “proportionally, more men than women live on the streets. There are a growing number of street children in many places, the majority of whom are boys aged ten to fourteen. Women are more likely to experience ‘hidden homelessness’ than men” (UN-HABITAT 2012, 7). “Hidden homelessness” refers to a situation in which a person does not have a home but stays in provisional and often privately owned shelters (for example of friends and relatives) or public shelters where her or his homelessness becomes almost invisible. Men and boys are more likely to live on the streets with poor prospects and an unstable safety net. The masculinity norm of being an autonomous provider may make a man or boy reluctant to ask for help or for other community members to take him in. Looking at the situation of women in India, UN-HABITAT (2012, 7) explains that women decide “to put up with unsafe or unhealthy living conditions in order to avoid losing children to government officials and to protect them from further poverty and distress.” Again, the gender implication of the phenomenon of “hidden homelessness” is striking: in the Indian context, femininity ideals like motherhood and the caretaking of children result in precarious situations for women. “Hidden homelessness” often implies not only severe security risks for women and their children due to social structures and their reduced control over their housing and daily activities, but also the likelihood of being overlooked by policy-makers and urban planners since they are not visible living on the streets. The example of India shows how masculinities and femininities create different challenges to livelihood security. Challenges to livelihood security in other cultural contexts could be different from these.

A crucial factor in the maintenance of livelihoods is access to adequate and reliable services such as transportation and health care (UN-HABITAT 2009, 14). With regard to transportation, personal safety risks such as fast driving, irregular pavement, narrow roads, harassment (for example, from bus personnel or passengers), and restriction of personal mobility are the main issues named by poor urban inhabitants in various African countries, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, India, and Russia (UN-HABITAT 2012, 11; Taylor 2011, 23; WICI 2010, 114). Studies have found that poor people are disproportionately affected. For poor urbanites, UN-HABITAT found that gender is an important category that determines what form of transport is used around the world (UN-HABITAT 2012, 11). In Brazil, Taylor (2011, 13) found that mothers accompanied by children as well as elderly women and men are particularly affected by transportation infrastructure deficits. When acceptable transportation options are not available, urban inhabitants—especially poor women—forgo trips to schools and health-care centres (UN-HABITAT 2012, 11). This has negative implications for education and health, two other important factors in livelihood security.

The importance of health care for personal security is obvious in the case of garment workers in Cambodia. For the mostly young, single, female Cambodian garment workers who often have migrated from rural areas, health risks are the second highest risk they face after sexual violence. Frequent and expected overtime hours make eating and drinking properly difficult, resulting in significantly aggravated health risks and illnesses. Moreover, these women struggle with accessing health services because service centres are far away, transportation is expensive, and they tend to be illiterate. They are in precarious positions and many of their day-to-day challenges are premised on an underlying weak and defenceless femininity that makes harassment and oppression by factory owners and local authorities easy. Moreover, too little attention is paid by national ministries of labour and gender and by labour unions to the plight of these women (Taylor 2011, 28–30).

Indeed, livelihood security is a fundamental security need of urban inhabitants. Given the precarious situation that poor and marginalized people face in fragile cities, especially the combination of dependence on income and few opportunities to meet basic needs, it seems that livelihood security is almost as important for poor urbanites as personal safety.

Different Visibilities of Security Needs: The Case of Informal Traders

In practice, identifying different security needs can be difficult, particularly because of informality, a phenomenon growing alongside urbanization.¹² In African cities, there seems to be a strong agreement among researchers that both the rate of informal activity and the number of informal activities are increasing. Additionally, not only are informal settlements growing, but also formal settlements are increasingly deforming (Myers 2011, 73).

Some interesting conclusions about varying gender roles and security can be deduced from the case of informal traders. Understanding the gender implications of informality is crucial because informal employment, though hard to measure, makes up roughly 60 per cent of employment in urban Africa and India. Over 95 per cent of non-agricultural female workers are found in the informal sector. Street traders are the second largest group in this sector, second only to home-based workers, and women comprise a large proportion of total street traders (Brown and Lyons 2010, 33). In certain cases, such as Addis Ababa, there is little substantial knowledge on the obstacles that informal traders face, how security challenges affect them, and how gender roles affect these dynamics (Taylor 2011, 31).

Alison Brown and Michael Lyons studied informal traders and their associations in Johannesburg and Durban (South Africa), Accra (Ghana), Dakar (Senegal), Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), and Kathmandu (Nepal) and offer insights into the realities of poor urban inhabitants while demonstrating the cross-national complexity of gender roles. Although informal traders are a relevant group in cities given their size, they are deprived and marginalized when it comes to their rights and political participation. In fact, informal traders are often seen as threats to “formal” citizens’ safety: in Johannesburg and Durban, for example, the alienation and “othering” of informal traders creates fear because informal workers are perceived to be sources of crime and disorder (see Brown and Lyons 2010, 36–37). Alienation and “othering” tend to reinforce marginalization and, I suggest, accusations may become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

From a gender-sensitive perspective, the comparison of informal traders’ associations is interesting because that their structures and membership differ greatly. In Senegal and other parts of West Africa, the influence of Islam frequently leads to fraternal organizations with male membership (Brown and Lyons 2010, 39–40), whereas in

¹². As Garth Myers points out, informality is not a new phenomenon in African cities. Informality has a long history with links to colonial politics. It cannot be generalized as “bad” since its manifestation ranges from informal but functioning social systems to informal, insecure slums (Myers 2011, 73–74).

Ghana, prevalent matrilineal family structures and Christianity result in many specialized organizations nominally and effectively led by women. Ethnicity also plays a role in these specialized trader associations (Brown and Lyons 2010, 40–41). In all cases, informal traders that are very poor are excluded from these organizations, which removes any opportunity for them to gain at least some protection. In Senegal, non-Muslim and new migrant traders are totally excluded. While associations may not always be powerful, at the very least they offer some protection and a means to give political voice to members.

By taking informal traders' organizations and the safety nets they provide into account, it becomes clear that looking at informal traders' sex alone does not identify and clarify different vulnerabilities. Even within the socio-economic category of informal traders, varying vulnerabilities exist, and the security needs of those who are not included in associations run the risk of not being seen or heard at all. Vulnerabilities and their visibility are evidently shaped by structures, multiple identities, and agency, in conjunction with diverse gender roles that are in turn shaped by categories like religion, race, ethnicity, economic status, citizenship, ability, and so on.

Ways Out of the “Dilemma”

What are possible ways out of Muggah's “urban dilemma,” given that urbanization is unlikely to slow down in the near future? Policy-makers should intensively engage with rural populations to improve their living conditions not only because it is their ethical duty, but also in order to curb migration to cities. At the same time, improving the safety and security situations of urban inhabitants is vital. From a gender perspective, two major issues must be considered. First, masculinities and femininities must be taken into account when engaging with urban inhabitants on the issues of safety and security. Second, local responses to the “urban dilemma” have to be inclusive and non-discriminatory.

Working with Masculinities and Femininities

Applying a gender perspective to urban inhabitants' experiences of safety and security means responding to complex realities and looking beyond men and women. Working with varying masculinities and femininities is necessary because it allows different experiences with insecurity and thus different security needs to be identified and understood. As Moser and McIlwaine demonstrate, violence and livelihood insecurity are shaped by structures, multiple identities, and agency. Understanding masculinities and femininities enables researchers and policy-makers to deconstruct and trace the causality of violence because, as I point out in section 3, masculinities and femininities

shape (and are continuously shaped by) structures, identities, and agency. I propose two main strategies to work with masculinities and femininities: intensified research using the gender-sensitive perspective and reform of practical engagement in urban planning and security programming.

As I previously argued, research on gender and the “urban dilemma” is at a nascent stage, particularly with regard to dealing with femininities and masculinities. Although a lot has been learned already, there is still a bias toward women’s experiences and often a simplification of gender roles and connections between intersecting categories. Such bias and simplification should be addressed in future studies. Further use of the gender-sensitive perspective proposed in this paper would result in more in-depth knowledge about the relevant femininities and masculinities related to urban inhabitants’ safety and security. Given the complexity of societies and human life, not all causal factors can ever be identified. Still, it is important to improve knowledge of the connections between urban insecurity and peoples’ daily struggles by taking into account as many intersecting categories as possible.

With regard to research strategies, UN-HABITAT provides a wealth of insight into methods and lessons learned from research on women that are transferrable to research on urban insecurity (see UN HABITAT 2008b; UN HABITAT 2008c). These methods and lessons should increase the effectiveness of the gender-sensitive perspective. For example, one helpful lesson learned regards the benefits of engaging urban inhabitants in research projects through partnerships with locally active civil society organizations. With regard to masculinities, UN-HABITAT suggests collaboration with actors who are already actively working on engaging men and/or addressing men’s issues (and who are consistent with the broader feminist agenda to achieve gender equality and fight oppression). This type of engagement has already been done in some cities’ safety audits (UN-HABITAT 2008c, 16).

Apart from intensifying research, it is also crucial to reform practical engagement in programming on the ground (Lang 2003, 9–12). Social programs should try to actively engage diverse groups of urban inhabitants, with emphasis on men and boys. Raewyn Connell (2003, 4) sums up the central reasons for such an approach:

Research has repeatedly shown that patterns of gender inequality are interwoven with social definitions of masculinity and men’s gender identities. To move towards a gender-equal society often requires men and boys to think and act in new ways, to reconsider traditional images of manhood, and to reshape their relationships with women and girls. Changes of this kind are already happening in many parts of the world, but

not in all situations or with all men and boys. Men and boys are most likely to support change towards gender equality when they can see positive benefits for themselves and the people in their lives . . . Even when they cannot see personal benefits, however, men and boys have a responsibility in this area.

As Connell (2012, 15) explains further, the goal must not be to get rid of masculinities (or femininities), but rather to strengthen and empower masculinities (and femininities) that are peace- and equality-oriented. These peace and equality-oriented masculinities and femininities already exist, even in cities of FCAS, as many examples from practice show (see section 4.2 and Greig and Edström [2012, 91–100]).

Writing more broadly about achieving gender equality in the development process, James Lang suggests areas in which men and boys should be involved—these can also be applied to gender and security in urban spaces. He recommends: (1) working with men as decision-makers and service providers, (2) integrating men into the development process with a “gendered lens,” and (3) targeting groups of men and boys when and where they are vulnerable (see Lang 2003, 9–10). Following through on these recommendations is not easy or straightforward. Categories of oppression and exclusion other than gender, such as socio-economic status/poverty, should be considered (Greig, Kimmel, and Lang 2000, 6–10) and structural, organizational, and personal constraints must be kept in mind (see Lang 2003, 3–5). It is unlikely that policy responses can take all categories and every individual experience of insecurity into consideration. This means that researchers, urban planners, practitioners, security providers, policy-makers, and urban inhabitants should try to deconstruct, (re)build, provide, reform, and achieve what and where they can. Most importantly, a gender perspective should be kept in mind. Even a piecemeal approach can *support* new structures and identities, and thus agency, and result in peaceful conflict resolution, which would contribute to cities that are and feel more safe and secure.

Inclusive and Non-discriminatory Local Responses

Lessons learned during attempts to tackle the “urban dilemma” indicate that only inclusive and non-discriminatory local responses stand a chance to sustainably improve the security situation of urban inhabitants. State and non-state actors, or both in collaboration, can respond. There are examples where urban safety and security was effectively increased by each type of actor and collaboration between the two types. I contend that there is no one-size-fits-all model for fighting urban insecurity in line with a gender perspective. The complexity of the challenges necessitates multiple but related approaches. In any approach, certain general points should be borne in mind.

Engage communities in all parts of a city holistically

Many policy-makers do not prioritize inclusion in their attempts to reduce violence, but rather support the securitization of society and repressive policies that have the aim of increasing security. Different cases, such as Latin American cities with “iron fist,” or *mano dura*, politics, show that this approach actually increases the likelihood of violence (Moser and Rodgers 2012; Cano 2012). Moser and Rodgers (2012, 13) point out that such an approach also “generates new conflicts, leading to increased chances of urban conflict tipping into violence.” As the examples of the Indian city Patna and Brazil’s Rio de Janeiro suggest, violence reduction has to be inclusive and must benefit all people in order to be sustainable.

Different approaches were used in Patna and Rio de Janeiro to address high levels of violence. In Patna, the securitization of middle- and upper-class parts of the city was the top priority after the change of government in the Indian state Bihar in 2005. Intensive policing was used in an attempt to relocate violence to and contain violence in the poorer parts of the city, which led to an intensification of violence in Patna’s slums (Moser and Rodgers 2012, 7). In Rio de Janeiro, the city introduced a de-escalating and pacifying policing approach to tackle violence in 2008 after the previous militarized policing strategy from the mid-nineties ended in extremely aggravated violence. While the new approach has been much more holistic and successful, it suffers from the same short-sightedness as policies in Patna: the pacification approach is only applied in middle- and upper-class and tourist areas (Cano 2012, 45). Poorer areas are completely excluded, making sustainability very unlikely. The continuous inclusion of poor urban inhabitants in violent, insecure structures decreases the likelihood that violence will end and causes ongoing suffering for people living in poverty-stricken areas. Additionally, security can never be fully achieved for the inhabitants of protected urban areas because they cannot ignore unsafe communities within the city and the associated fear of “the other”—defined in reference to their own identities—even if crime statistics like the homicide rate go down in certain areas (see Moser and Rodgers 2012, 7–8). Poor urban inhabitants should, then, be included in discussions about security.

Interactions among different categories of oppression should not be forgotten in security discussions. For example, how gender and socio-economic class interact must be taken into consideration if poor areas of cities are to see improvement. Speaking about poor and marginalized people, Greig, Kimmel, and Lang explain that “the economic freedom to choose how they negotiate their distribution of productive and reproductive tasks” might be seriously limited. Some urban inhabitants simply cannot afford to actively renegotiate gender roles because of the risk of losing their livelihoods. Greig, Kimmel, and Lang’s suggestion that collective action at the community and societal levels is

needed in order to create change-friendly conditions should be heeded (Greig, Kimmel, and Lang 2000, 9).

Match security programming with urban planning and make both gender-sensitive

The focus of mainstream debates on urban violence and security in cities of FCAS is often policing. Policing plays a crucial role in improving the security situation for urban inhabitants, but, as I argued, people require more than the protection from physical harm to feel secure. Livelihood security, freedom from fear, and mobility within a city are broad examples of other security concerns that are vital to them. Obviously, no police service in the world could ensure that all these security concerns are addressed. The police, then, must be supported and complemented by other mechanisms (Moser and Rodgers 2012, 14). Security programming by the police has to be paired with effective urban planning (UN-HABITAT 2012, see also the Safer Cities Programme from UN-HABITAT [UN-HABITAT 2013]). Urban planning is the key to coherently and to comprehensively tackle security issues in urban spaces, not least because some challenges such as crime and violence are exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure (Locke 2012, 14–15; Boisteau 2006, 106). Both security programming and urban planning should be gender-sensitive.

The myriad ways to improve urban security through urban planning in conjunction with security programming are exhaustive and cannot be fully addressed in this paper. An excellent body of gender-sensitive literature exists on the matter and should be taken into account by researchers, policy-makers and practitioners alike.

On gender-sensitive urban planning, UN-HABITAT has published several exceptional reports (see UN-HABITAT 2008a, 2008b, 2012). Equally useful is the work of ActionAid (see Taylor 2011) and Women in Cities International (see WICI 2010). A good overview of existing programs, literature, and recommendations can be found in Erika Fraser's recent report on gender-inclusive urban planning (see Fraser 2012). With regard to security programming and issues such as policing, Bruce Baker provides an excellent analysis of different forms of non-state security providers in fragile African contexts, including informal mechanisms, state-tolerated providers, and hybrid forms like community policing or work associations (Baker 2007, 126–41). Based on Baker's analysis and the problems of some security provision mechanisms, I conclude that whatever the form of the security provider, a close collaboration between civil society and national and municipal governments is necessary. Without such collaboration, the provision of security that really addresses the entire population's (gendered) needs seems unlikely. This reinforces my contention that sustainable urban security will only

be achieved through developing gender-sensitive strategies, working with masculinities and femininities, and engaging men and women.

Harnessing practitioners' input to identify successful examples of local initiatives

Very good examples of local responses to urban insecurity where masculinities and femininities have been acknowledged can be found in the work of Alan Greig and Jerker Edström. They present projects that deal with sexual and gender-based violence, an important factor in urban insecurity, and successfully engage men. Importantly, these projects adopted bottom-up approaches and some men's own initiatives. (see Greig and Edström 2012, 91–100). Examples of projects from India and Kenya help to demonstrate what successful projects entail and their results.

A project called “Mobilising Men to Challenge Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Institutions,” led by the local Centre for Health and Social Justice, in Pune, India's seventh largest city, included a campaign against sexual and gender-based violence on the campus of the University of Pune. This example is notable because sexual violence is common at higher education facilities in cities of FCAS (see Mirsky 2003 for an example of urban cases as well as the accounts of ActionAid in Liberia [Taylor 2011, 40–48]). Highly educated, successful women are a group particularly at risk of being victimized. Indian activist Sandeep Barve led the campaign. His initial assessment revealed widespread denial that sexual and gender-based violence posed a problem and only “on-paper commitment” to anti-harassment policies. Barve then began an intense phase of on- and off-campus campaigning against sexual and gender-based violence, which included discussions with students, raising awareness through information distribution, film screenings, rallies, one-on-one meetings, media outreach, capacity-building workshops for men, and meetings with important university decision-makers. He noticed that the key to success was having youth organizations be official and visible supporters of the campaign. Barve's efforts ultimately led to a transformation in the climate at the university from one of denial to one of concrete commitment—including financial resources—to ending sexual and gender-based violence (Greig and Edström 2012, 96–97).

Another instance in which men were successfully engaged is the example of Boda Boda—motorcycle and bicycle taxis—drivers in Nairobi. Boda Bodas are important means of transportation, especially in the outskirts and poorer parts of the city, where fewer buses operate. Transportation, as previously explained, is an important source of insecurity in cities of FCAS. In Nairobi, the transportation system is known for the problems of sexual violence and harassment, mostly against women and Boda Boda drivers are no exception to being perpetrators of sexual violence and harassment

(Greig, Edström 2012:99). Local activist network Men for Gender Equality Now (MEGEN), which includes male and female activists, started to work with Boda Boda drivers in Juja, a town on the periphery of Nairobi. MEGEN knew from students at the local university that the drivers there were harassing female students. In order to change that, the network reached out to two Boda Boda associations and found six drivers from the area who were willing to participate in a campaign against harassment. MEGEN teamed the drivers up with university students to develop skills and plan the campaign. An assessment phase led to centering the campaign around a code of conduct for Boda Boda drivers. The code would be a novelty in Kenya and “set an ‘institutional’ standard of practice that committed Boda Boda drivers to ensuring a safe travelling environment for their passengers.” In consultation with other Boda Boda drivers and stakeholders in the community and university, the group developed a Code of Conduct on Sexual and Gender-based Violence in line with the general Kenyan legal position on gender equality. The code was formally ratified and MEGEN now focuses on educating Boda Boda drivers about the importance of the code. The network and activist team have also successfully set up a Survivors Support Team in which Boda Boda drivers are actively involved (Greig and Edström 2012, 99–100).

These examples are just two possible ways of engaging people in fighting urban insecurity—many more exist. More practitioners’ input should be sought to identify successful examples of local initiatives. I use the two examples above to show that piecemeal approaches can support new structures and identities, and thus affect agency, and can lead to peaceful conflict resolution and increased security. Moreover, by addressing root causes of structures, identities, and agency, these local groups were able to effect positive change in the absence of government policy to improve policing, urban planning, or infrastructure.

Of course, in order to deal with rapid urbanization, programs and plans for whole cities are also needed. Due to the lack of comprehensive accounts of best-practise examples in FCAS that include a gender-sensitive perspective, outlining effective top-down approaches is difficult. An interesting example for further inquiry with regard to security programming is the “metropolitan miracle” in the Colombian cities Medellin and Bogota where violence has been impressively reduced since the 1990s (Gutiérrez Sanín et al. 2009; Merchán 2012). The limited success of appeasing parts of Rio de Janeiro by applying a form of de-escalating and pacifying policing approach (Cano 2012) is another example. Urban planning offers another model in successful governmental slum upgrading initiatives in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and Nairobi (UN-HABITAT 2011); these point to interesting subjects for further research from a gender-sensitive perspective. Research on those subjects should look at the whole city and investigate gender in

relation to other intersecting factors such as socio-economic status, age, education etc. and assess how security issues were combined with urban development.

Conclusion

Demographic projections and research show that rapid urbanization will continue in upcoming decades (UN-HABITAT 2008a, 5; UN DESA 2008, 1; Martine 2011, 6). There is a dire need to address the “urban dilemma,” but also to look beyond it. Taking a gender-sensitive perspective could help overcome the disconnect between urban politics and the realities faced by most urban inhabitants. The perspective holds great potential to improve urban security, even in the challenging cases of FCAS.

In this paper, I explored gendered security understandings, perceptions, and local needs in cities of fragile and conflict-affected states. I showed how a gender-sensitive perspective that concentrates on femininities and masculinities can identify the varying security needs of the poor and marginalized and trace the causal factors of urban violence. Structures, multiple identities, and agency create complex urban settings where people have diverse though shared experiences regarding sexual violence, victimization, fear, and livelihood insecurity. In conducting such analysis, simplified perpetrator-victim dichotomies must be overcome and the power of “othering” should be reflected. Discourses on sexual violence that reiterate the cliché that women are always victims and men are always perpetrators do a disservice to the complexity of victimization processes and may reinforce oppression and exclusion. In my analysis on fear, for instance, I used evidence from Chile, Brazil, and India to show how simplified discourses combined with powerful masculinities and femininities contribute to the exaggerated fear of victimization. That fear, in turn, results in (self-)exclusion from public life and needless suffering. Such discourses and behaviours also result in the silencing of male victims of sexual violence and can contribute to the normalization of violence.

I then investigated urban inhabitants’ perspectives on other security issues, such as livelihood security. In analyzing the literature on urban security, it became clear that socio-economic status is a key category that intersects with gender. Poor and marginalized people are particularly vulnerable in urban spaces due to higher dependency on income to meet their basic needs, relative to those people in rural areas who can often live off the land. Working in the informal sector is often the only opportunity these people have for survival. The example of informal traders showed how “othering” creates fear and could influence crime. Moreover, comparison of informal traders’ associations demonstrated that even within that group, gendered vulnerabilities differ greatly. With regard to livelihood security, I assessed housing,

transportation, and health care. Livelihood security seems to be as crucial for urban inhabitants as personal safety. In addition, I identified several issues, such as the “hidden homelessness” of men and women, where a gender perspective was useful in improving understandings of how people cope with urban insecurity.

Finally, I looked into policy recommendations to address the “urban dilemma.” In order to contribute to contemporary debates about issues like urban (in)security, violence, and urban development in FCAS, I give some general guidance for the integration of a gender-sensitive perspective into urban planning and urban security programming. In general, two major issues should be taken into account. First, masculinities and femininities should be integrated into all work urban safety and security, whether by researchers, policy-makers, or practitioners. Second, all local responses to the “urban dilemma” must be inclusive and non-discriminatory. Poor and marginalized people should be included in security discussions, security programming should be paired with urban planning, and practitioners’ input should be sought to identify successful examples of local initiatives. It is crucial to bear in mind the complexity of the issues we are dealing with in creating urban security. In my analysis, I shed light on that complexity by looking at different masculinities and femininities and other intersecting social categories. Yet, equally important is the fact that this complexity cannot be completely reflected by policy responses. By presenting successful examples from the praxis, I emphasize how local responses to urban insecurity that are gender sensitive but disjointed can still make a difference. It is vital to understand that even a piecemeal approach can support new structures and identities, and thus affect agency, and can lead to peaceful conflict resolution and, ultimately, increased urban security.

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