Linkages Between Large-Scale Infrastructure Development and Conflict Dynamics in East Africa

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Abstract
With the rapid increase in the number of mega-infrastructure projects underway across East Africa, understanding how the social, economic, political and environmental repercussions of these projects intersect with ongoing conflict dynamics, is a poorly understood topic. Although recent interest in large-scale land acquisitions has led to a number of detailed investigations into specific projects and trends, there has not yet been a broad, systematic review of how large-scale infrastructure developments in East Africa interact with previous, on-going and potential conflict in their areas of operation. The objective of this article is to report on an analysis of 26 mega-infrastructure projects across Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Uganda, with an explicit focus on the common tension points that contribute to security dynamics. The methodology used involved two composite indicators of risk—a conflict risk score, and a project impact score. The study found seven common tensions across all projects: in-migration, population displacement and relocation, a negative history of community relations with previous or follow-on developments, 4) land rights, securitization, environmental degradation, and expectations of the local population relative to benefits delivered by the project. The study recommends increased attention on prior assessments that focus on the broader and more interconnected impacts in addition to those confined to the immediate project location, as well as in-depth examination of possible mitigation measures.

1. Introduction
The East African region is currently experiencing significant levels of foreign direct investment. National governments are eager to advance large-scale infrastructure developments that will drive economic growth, reduce reliance on foreign aid, and provide stable revenue sources and employment. Apart from the national desire for infrastructure development, recent growth in large-scale infrastructure investments throughout the region has been encouraged by loans and technical support from the African Development Bank and the World Bank, as well as increased investment interest from China.

While the proposed national and regional benefits of large-scale infrastructure projects are clear, (e.g., Calderon and Serven 2008; Calderon 2009) the investments are frequently implemented in rural areas that have limited interaction with outside actors, laws and institutions (national and international). The arrival of international investors, government administrators and migrant workers, along with permanent changes to the physical landscape in these peripheral areas can have significant impact on local populations. The potential for unforeseen developments, challenges and project failures are especially high in situations where investors and government ac-
tors are unaware of the nature of pre-existing complex and historically-rooted tensions in project areas. And because infrastructure projects can extend across large areas within and between regions occupied by local communities, this unawareness can aggravate these tensions, with significant repercussions on the projects themselves. In this context, infrastructure investment can result in negative outcomes from both the investor/government perspective and the local community perspective—significantly influencing the success of a project in terms of implementation and realization of project benefits. Impacts on investments can include delaying or cancelling decisions to invest in a particular project, area, or country due to concerns about insecurity, or negative reactions of communities to projects. Investor attempts to acquire the ‘social license’\(^1\) to operate can be a significant challenge, with investors largely unable to cost out the risks associated with insecurity. While the donor mandated 'Environmental and Social Impact Assessments' (ESIAs), 'Resettlement Action Plans' (RAPs), and efforts to work within local contexts are essential to adapting projects to local conditions and mitigating negative socio-political and environmental consequences of investments, the level to which such safeguards are implemented and enforced varies widely within and between states and actors. ESIA and RAP reports are often completed simply as a step in the process towards implementation, rather than as a rigorous and critical study of how to minimize negative impacts while maximizing economic output—and there is significant room for improvement. Understanding the common tension and conflict dynamics that occur between local, national, and international actors across infrastructure project types is essential for facilitating investments that will allow East Africa to grow economically, while also mitigating negative impacts on local communities and reducing conflict and insecurity. Of particular concern is how regional level security dynamics (separatist movements, insurgent activities, population-wide grievances) interact with local tensions and grievances brought on by infrastructure project development. The concern of course is that such project-related tensions and grievances can feed into pre-existing political, historical, ethnic, religious and separatist movements and then create destabilizing repercussions, resulting in profoundly negative impacts on the implementation and operation of infrastructure projects as well as civil society and governance (e.g., World Bank 2011; Menkhaus 2015). While the focus of this article is on the policy relevant findings, the theoretical framework operates within what Schilling et al (2018) describe as the ‘local to global perspective on resource governance and conflict’. This approach brings together three related frameworks (the resource curse, environmental security, and large-scale land acquisitions) to examine and describe resource governance and conflict relationships across scales. This cross-level analysis looks at how the local level influences the sub-national, national and international levels and how these then influence the local level. Important in this framework is the focus on the local level as a starting point to examine the global - local inter-linkages. This article describes the initial findings of an assessment that was carried out on 26 large-scale infrastructure projects in East Africa in order to determine what the primary common project-related, local level tensions are that could aggravate the more regional-scale security dynamics. The assessment was conducted with two broad purposes in mind. First, to create a regional macro-level understanding regarding how large-scale infrastructure investment projects interact with local populations and regional security dynamics. And second, to raise awareness and generate dialogue about impacts on local populations inherent to large-scale infrastructure pro-

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1 ‘Social license’ refers to the approval or acceptance of a company and it’s activities by a local community, which exists outside of formal regulatory processes.
2. Methodology

To provide a thorough yet manageable analysis of the various large-scale infrastructure projects in the region, 26 projects were selected that cover a range of types: hydroelectric power plants, petroleum and gas extraction, wind power generation, transmission lines, ports and economic zones, coal fired power plants, and railways. Two core criteria were used to determine the inclusion of projects, whilst keeping in mind the need to represent the variety of project types that exist. The first was a minimum project investment value of approximately USD 1 billion. The second is that all projects needed to be recent investments that (at the time of writing) were either in the planning phases, under construction, or have recently become operational. Expansions of former infrastructure projects or existing infrastructures were excluded. A wide-ranging review of all available documentation for each selected project was conducted in order to establish the project status, the measures investors and governments are taking to mitigate negative impacts, and to establish the existence of pre-existing security dynamics as well as investment-related tensions. In order to evaluate projects in a standardized manner, the research team developed an assessment methodology for analyzing the risk of large-scale infrastructure projects based on two composite indicators of risk. These include a Conflict Risk Score and a Project Impact Score. The elements comprising the Conflict Risk Score include: profile, causes, actors, dynamics, and a population multiplier which together comprise the ‘risk rating index’. The Project Impact Score comprises: environmental, social, economic, political, and mitigation elements to derive the project impact index. The methodology builds off of the approach described in, 'An Introduction to Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding' (IA 2004), and the approach used by the 'Conflict Sensitive Business Practice' guidelines (IA 2005). These approaches are the result of efforts by multi-organization programs to arrive at comprehensive methodologies. Following the review and scoring of each project, an analysis of common issues, tension-points, conflict dynamics and risks for each of the seven infrastructure investment types selected was conducted, together with a broader analysis of conflict risks common to all large-scale infrastructure projects. While a full elaboration of the assessment is not possible in a single article, we focus here on a descriptive approach to look at the primary sources of tension, grievance and conflict associated with the projects which impact local communities, and which provide significant connection with regional conflict dynamics. Subsequent to a brief overview of the most important regional security dynamics in Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda, the paper focuses on how the seven project related tensions develop to become significantly acute grievances which are vulnerable to attachment to regional security dynamics. While confidentiality issues prevent the description of individual projects (or the presentation of data or information that could reveal them) the tension sources described here are common to all 26 projects assessed.

3. Local and Regional Security Dynamics

3.1 The security geography of large-scale investments in East Africa

A primary regional security issue is the peripheral, marginalized and neglected location of many infrastructure projects. Mega-infrastructure projects are often situated in vast, remote areas that have limited historical formal state presence or extensive interaction with outsiders (Agade 2015). Previously of limited interest to the central state, the onset of significant changes in politi-
cal and economic priorities that occur with the establishment of infrastructure projects, interact with ongoing local grievances, tensions, livelihoods and aspirations, in addition to any regional security dynamics (Menkhaus 2015; Agade 2015). Such dynamics extend beyond political boundaries, often merging, overlapping, and fuelling each other. In reference to conflicts in the Horn of Africa region, Love (2009) notes that,

“[m]ost of these conflicts have had spillover effects beyond their national boundary – through the flight of refugees, encouragement of illegal arms trade, scope for foreign support of opposition groups, closure of borders, increased public expenditure on the military in neighbouring countries for border controls, or diversion of regional aid budgets.” (Love 2009).

Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Ethiopia have individual historical legacies of insecurity. All four countries currently have at least one active separatist or insurgent movement to contend with and most of these employ violence to express grievances and gain political attention. At the sub-national level, significant portions of East Africa’s arid and semi-arid rangelands are inhabited by mobile pastoralist groups that often clash with agriculturalists over access to pasture and water, with these conflicts often crossing political boundaries (Kubania 2017). The section below briefly describes the regional security concerns in the countries in which the assessment took place, in order to provide context for the subsequent discussion of the local and regional tension-to-security dynamics.

3.2 Regional security concerns within countries

3.2.1 Tanzania

In Tanzania, political differences between mainland and coastal populations have resulted in violence in both historical and contemporary periods. The political goals of one group, the Mombasa Republican Council (MRC), center on self-determination for the East African coastal strip (Economist 2012). The MRC is vocal about historical grievances associated with land ownership, political representation, and political agreements made regarding the governance of the coast in 1895 and 1963 (Goldsmith 2011). While the MRC is most active in Kenya, its message and political goals resonate strongly with the Tanzanian coastal and Zanzibari/Pemban political movements that are opposed to a union with mainland Tanzania. Whether or not separation is politically feasible, such agendas provide common mobilizing messages surrounding religious and political identity based on historical grievances and marginalization (Economist 2012).

3.2.2 Ethiopia

The Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) is a long-lived insurgent and political movement that has resisted much of the Ethiopian government's efforts in the Oromia region and other southern areas. The Oromo are the majority ethnic group in Ethiopia, making up 25 million of the country's total population of 99 million. Protests against the Government are common among the Oromo and government responses are often heavy-handed and violent. Amnesty International has described "sweeping repression in the Oromia region of Ethiopia", and indicated that at least 5,000 Oromo were arrested between 2011 and 2014 on the basis of suspected opposition to the government (AI 2014). The OLF has issued a number of reports and public announcements denouncing land grabs it sees as emanating from the central government. Given the historical repression in Oromia and the frequent student protests and resulting military response, the OLF and associated grievances could pose a significant risk to infrastructure projects in parts of central and southern Ethiopia. In the east of the country Somali Region has been histor-
ically neglected and can become significantly restive when injustices are perceived as current events connect to historical grievances. The extremely porous border between Ethiopia and Somalia allow for a great deal of informal movement to and from both countries.

3.2.3 Kenya
Kenya’s northeastern areas have come under threat of violent extremism from al Shabaab and other groups operating from Somalia. In response, the Kenyan military has operated inside Somalia in pursuit of al Shabab. In addition, Kenya’s coastal areas, particularly between Mombasa and Lamu, have seen a number of security incidents in recent years connected to the Mombasa Republican Council, described above for Tanzania.

Kenya’s vast northern frontier also presents a number of security risks. The area hosts two large, unwieldy refugee camps (Kakuma and Dadaab) located within reasonable reach of a number of large-scale infrastructure projects. Both the camps and the projects have attracted many non-refugee individuals in search of income and employment. The populations of the refugee camps and their host-communities equal the size of some Kenyan cities, and have developed their own economies and political dimensions. The employment of local, versus refugee individuals in the projects has been a contentious issue, and has particularly affected the Dadaab Refugee camp. Insecurity in and around both camps, but particularly Dadaab, has resulted in the need for armed military security escorts and strict curfews. In addition, humanitarian workers have become the target of strategic kidnapping incidents in the area, which provide certain groups with political and financial leverage. The security of these refugee camps, employment related host-community grievances, and mobile populations moving in and out of the camp areas provide potential concern for infrastructure-project contexts (Agade 2015; Love 2009).

3.2.4 Uganda
In Uganda, the northern areas of the country are affected by many of the same problems as northern Kenya, especially in terms of mobile populations, competition for scarce resources, and readily available small arms due to porous border areas with conflict-affected neighbours. The Karamojong Cluster, comprising the border areas of Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Sudan, has long been a restive conflict-prone area, frequently experiencing violence between groups as well as by states versus certain groups.

The Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) has lost significant ground in the country, but has historically threatened security in areas that are not well protected. Recently the west of the country has had security challenges from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), which has subjected the Albertine Rift area bordering the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to unpredictable, often violent events (Cullen 2017).

4. The Development of Project-Related Tensions Relevant to Security Dynamics
The research identified seven security-related tensions common to all of the infrastructure projects assessed, which have a high potential to significantly aggravate existing security dynamics. These include: 1) in-migration, 2) population displacement and relocation, 3) a negative history of community relations with previous or follow-on developments, 4) land rights, 5) security-
zation, 6) environmental degradation, and 7) expectations of the local population relative to benefits delivered by the project. This section expands on these common tensions.

4.1 In-migration

All of the projects examined draw significant numbers of migrants to the local project areas as non-locals learn about project implementation (or its planning) and seek employment and other economic or livelihood opportunities not available in their areas of origin. All migrants and project workers then require housing, often land and associated agronomic, water and fuelwood resource access. While in-migration can be beneficial to migrants and their families (Ratha 2011), they place significant disruptive pressure on local populations, institutions, and land resources and cause land values to rise in wide areas adjacent to the project; which in turn attracts more migrants along with speculators. Migrants (particularly if their numbers are large, e.g., squatter camps) are usually outside of the governing apparatus of local customary community structures, and thus are not beholden to local rules, punishments, or decisions (Kabudi 2005). The increase in uncertainty and confusion over land (re)allocations and tenure security allows migrants to make claims to lands in local community areas based on a variety of approaches, including threats or violence (Kabudi 2005). The use and extraction of natural resources on customary, tribal, ethnic or lineage-held lands becomes very difficult to control during this time of confusion and can significantly aggravate local security dynamics. As migrants fail to follow local community rules concerning land and natural resource use, community managerial practices erode, and customary or tribal administrators and enforcement mechanisms are unable to cope with the additional pressure (Bruce 1994). As a result, access to land and other natural resources becomes much less secure for local communities as the project develops, and this leads to numerous confrontations. With community institutions unable to manage the influx of migrants and their claims to land and use of resources, a resort to violence is can be seen as a viable alternative.

Since such in-migration is uncontrolled, it can generate significant animosity against projects and project management who may have little ability and/or significant reluctance to manage the negative impacts outside their direct areas of control. Combined with widespread local negative feelings towards the in-coming migrant community, such scenarios are easily leveraged by opportunistic political and extremist elements. When combined with simmering historical grievances, low education levels, local unemployment, availability of small arms, and possible ideological, cultural and religious differences between project personnel, migrants and the local population, these issues can foment strong political opposition within project-affected communities. And, when local populations are faced with limited hope for improved livelihoods or income, yet encounter the equipment, workers, and infrastructure of large projects on a daily basis - the social and political license to operate the project may become strained or come to an end. Finally, the prospect of migrants bringing with them a demand for illegal (e.g., prostitution, bush meant, drugs) and/or culturally offensive elements (e.g., alcohol, modes of dress) can further aggravate the security dynamic (CCE 2015).

4.2 Displacement and relocation

Displacement of local communities occurs in most infrastructure projects and can be complicated in areas characterized by multiple interdependent livelihoods. Many local livelihoods produce shadow economies involving marketing, processing and transport of commodities, along with
manufacture, repair, and equipment and service provision (CC 2015). These evolve to align with the constraints and opportunities of specific landscapes. However displacement and relocation are often treated as a single process that treats all individuals the same regardless of the variation in livelihood. Finding land in an area that has been selected for relocation that can accommodate multiple livelihoods as the area of origin did, can be extremely difficult and complicated—risking marginalization of previously employed segments of relocated communities (Stanley 2004). Given that suitable areas are often already occupied or claimed, resettling displaced populations in such areas requires another round of negotiations and compensation with communities that are already there (Unruh 2008). And while forms of compensation can be provided for both those who are dislocated and for communities who host them (Unruh 2008), such compensation can lead to the emergence of a very large number of claims regarding residence that can be extremely difficult to verify (MediaMax 2015). In addition, forms of compensation must be monitored in order to ascertain if they no longer appear to be viable for those being compensated. For example, while alternative housing can be provided to those that are dislocated, if they are not able to afford to live in such housing or the necessary agricultural or employment opportunities are not close by, then such compensation would not be viable.

4.3 Prior and follow-on developments
In locations that have historical or ongoing grievances with government interventions or other large projects, new projects risk adding to pre-existing and overlapping tensions and grievances. This is particularly the case when there is a perception of inequality and/or injustice (for example dispute settlement between indigenous individuals and migrants) that were poorly handled by local authorities. Specifically, these can include: inequities between local communities, land conflict, prior poorly managed resettlement, perceived discrimination, neglect, exploitation or unrealized benefits.

Large infrastructure projects can frequently lead to the addition of other commercial projects that are drawn to the immediate area by opportunities created by the initial project - creating follow-on tensions over a wide area and involving many more people. For example, a hydroelectric dam with the purpose of providing electricity can lead to the nearby development of large irrigation projects (Ringler et al 2013), which can deprive local communities of land, water, and other resources and draw in additional migrants. Commercial endeavours that arrive in the area and seek to provide services to the projects and/or project employees or to populations of migrants can likewise create tensions with local communities due to land acquisition, competition, and discrimination.

4.4 Land rights
One of the more pervasive and problematic impacts for the infrastructure projects assessed, is the loss of land on the part of local populations, often combined with a loss or weakening of local livelihoods. Land speculation and land grabbing along with illicit activities associated with the acquisition of land titles is common and is frequently coupled with the reclassification of local community members as ‘squatters’ on their own land (due to their lack of title deeds, despite having customary rights) (Patey 2015). While national governments can assert that all land belongs to the state by way of statutory law, or that the entire national population abides by statutory law with regard to land rights, in reality customary groups have long ignored, resisted, and confronted such assertions, to the degree that in most cases the actual on-the-ground penetration of statu-
tory law begins to become patchy a short distance from national capitals and urban centres (Crewett et al 2008). As most infrastructure investments take place in the periphery, customary practices are dominant in nearly all cases. Investors who may not have a firm grasp of local land dynamics can take assertions of the dominance of statutory law to mean that all members of society understand and abide by such law, including land laws, sales, titles, registries, boundaries administered by the state, rules of exclusion, and court and ministerial decisions. When conflicts arise, the investor often turns to the state for enforcement of the law, further aggravating the conflict dynamic (Crewett et al 2008). In addition, follow-on developments associated with infrastructure projects often result in increases in land values and draw the attention of outsiders interested in acquiring such lands. The customary tenure systems of these areas together with assertions of the legal dominance of statutory land laws, make such areas very vulnerable to takeover by interests able to use state law. Patey (2015) notes for Ethiopia: "In 2005, before oil was discovered, Hoima district received only fourteen applications for land registration from the customary system. This number increased to 1,235 by 2008 after major discoveries of oil were made." (Crewett et al 2008, p35). Usually local communities are not made aware of such vulnerabilities during any consultation or negotiation phase of project planning, which instead focuses only on the direct project impacts and potential benefits (Dowden 2014). The loss of control over lands beyond the project area to those seen as outsiders then significantly aggravates the relationship between local communities and the infrastructure investment.

Corridor projects that traverse long distances (pipelines, transmission lines, roadways, railways) require that land be acquired as the project proceeds through a variety of communities, ethnic groups, land tenure systems, political jurisdictions and even countries (Eldem 2012). This makes negotiating multiple passage rights and multiple forms of social license with numerous groups quite complicated, to the degree that it is often neglected. For corridor projects, land is needed for the construction of the infrastructure (road, railway, pipeline) itself, along with wider zones for rights of way, security, drainage, vegetation clearance, the extraction of construction materials, establishment of construction camps, disposal of spoil materials, and storage and processing of construction materials (AKG 2016). While direct displacement occurs, squatter settlements usually spring up at certain locations along corridor infrastructure, along with 'ribbon developments' along portions of the corridor that seek to service different activities that take place along the corridor. These can take over large amounts of land and have significant impacts on local communities (CCE 2015). To a certain degree the routing of railways and other corridor infrastructure can be designed to avoid problematic or sensitive areas, but by and large the routing is governed by the nature of the terrain and the most direct route (CCE 2015). In addition there can be significant disruption of movement across corridor projects—however less so with roads and railways than above ground pipelines and infrastructure that require fencing or security zones. This disruption can make large areas inaccessible or less accessible for local communities. Livelihood access to farming, grazing and water resources, as well as economic and personal contact with kin, neighbors, markets and other communities can all be significantly compromised by corridor infrastructure if implemented poorly.
4.5 Securitization

Transport corridor infrastructure can open up expansive areas that previously had limited outside influence. One study warned that infrastructure installations associated with LAPSSET\(^3\) (CCE 2015), and similar projects situated across northern Kenya and East Africa’s rangelands, could become the target of sabotage at the hands of groups with acute grievances and specific ideologies. This can particularly be the case for groups who have access to small arms and who become strategically more mobile due to rapidly expanding transportation infrastructure associated with mega-projects (Goldsmith 2013). Such mobilization can mean that investments themselves, and the infrastructure that connects them to ports, cities and each other, can become soft targets for disenfranchised populations or other groups engaged in violent acts with the hope of gaining recognition for their grievances (Olopade 2013). Given the increased reliance on various mega-projects for national energy production, an aggression against any of the East African region’s emerging energy projects could have significant financial and political impacts on some projects directly, and can be a significant concern for future planned projects. In addition, the development of highways, transmission lines, and other corridors creates a widespread interconnected network of facilities that becomes easily located and identified. This in itself can make project installations more vulnerable to sabotage, destruction, and other risks, including opportunistic banditry (Olopade 2013). In order to address these security risks as well as local protests and unrest, the use of national police, the military or private security services is common (Farrel et al 2004). Often such management and response is heavy-handed, believing that strong, militarized enforcement will silence future unrest. The reality however is that such approaches often fuel further grievance and can result in more pronounced and longer-term unrest, as well as encouraging connections and affinity with larger and more distant political and security dynamics. Arguably, this kind of growing grievance, in response to both a heavy handed attempt by the state (and occasionally outside interests) to silence it, and opportunity created by state dysfunction (with the two being connected) are what sometimes has lead, in acute circumstances elsewhere, to the emergence of ‘affiliates’ for example, of ISIL, al-Qaeada and al-Shabab, all seeking to grow their constituencies.

In addition, large areas of arid and semi-arid rangelands in East Africa are inhabited by mobile pastoralist groups. Armed conflict between neighboring groups is a routine aspect of pastoralist resource competition in rangelands. Locations where water and grazing are present together during dry seasons and droughts are particularly valuable to pastoralists, often fought over, and are where infrastructure projects involving hydroelectric dams and roads that are part of economic development corridors are located. Such projects and their related activities often take over these lands and water resources, removing them from pastoralist access. Even in relatively developed areas of the East African rangelands, conflict over land, water, and grazing access rights between pastoralist groups, and between pastoralist groups and farmers, sometimes aggravated by political incitement and clientelism, has led to the frequent occurrence of violent incidents—as seen recently in Laikipia, Kenya (CG 2017). Pastoralist groups can be accustomed to the use of violence to assert access rights and defend land and resources, and this is often a reality that project developers are either unaware or unfamiliar with.

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3 LAPSSET: the Lamu Port, South Sudan, Ethiopia Transport Corridor
Finally, the lack of security and legitimate, functioning institutions in the neglected, peripheral areas of the regions where projects are located, creates a demand for the trade in arms in East Africa (CG 2017). Light weapons are readily available due to the wider regional instability and conflict-affected neighboring states, including South Sudan, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The process of one group arming themselves often results in competing groups doing the same in order to protect themselves against raids (Menkhaus 2015).

4.6 Pollution and environmental degradation
While infrastructure projects can optimally be compelled to mitigate environmental impacts they are directly responsible for, there are significant indirect impacts that local communities link directly to infrastructure projects. The pollution and environmental degradation impacts caused by migrants, off-site activities of project employees, follow-on commercial interests, and over use and competition for resources results can be significant. In addition there are forms of pollution and degradation that originate on-site, but that infrastructure projects are unable to mitigate (e.g., water contamination, air pollution, accidental chemical spills). All of these can compound livelihood difficulties for local communities, and aggravate grievances.

4.7 Elevated expectations relative to benefits delivered
Large-scale infrastructure projects often engage in limited involvement in local communities or civil society, particularly when project development is predicated on revenue generation rather than strong governance and public accountability. Narrow, often token, benefits for local communities, few and usually unskilled employment opportunities, and lack of energy benefits, are commonly noted issues in the infrastructure projects (Lyons 2015). This is often contrasted with high expectations of local benefits from the perspective of the community with the onset of project planning, consultations and initial implementation. These expectations frequently become unrealistic and, when not matched with the ultimate benefits actually delivered, can evolve into significant grievances leading to a variety of demands, reprisals, disputes, and direct and indirect actions against the project. Specifically, projects being implemented in remote and relatively underdeveloped areas can significantly embitter local residents on three fronts with regard to perceived benefits. First, by the fact that the employment opportunities usually do not benefit locals (Dowden 2014). Second, that development of the resource does not create any meaningful positive economic development at the community level. And third, by altering the face of local political representation to the extent that local voices are no longer heard in political discussion, debate, and distribution of resources through elected representation. These processes can have the effect of aggravating historical perceptions of marginality and discrimination, as opposed to simply creating new issues lacking in history—which is why a community response to perceived wrongs can seem out of proportion to the severity of the current issue from the perspective of the project. The delivery and diplomacy of a message regarding expectations, processes, and realistic local benefits can greatly reduce this risk, but may not eliminate it.

5. Conclusion
The overall intention of this study is to contribute to investments and business ventures to become successful. The variety of projects examined present different levels of risk to the investors, governments, and local communities involved in or impacted by the developments. At the lower risk end are projects such as railways, certain hydroelectric power plants, and wind power
projects. While such projects can be situated in low population areas or impact only a small area thus resulting in comparatively lower impact, they can also include projects that affect larger numbers of people and areas but that provide for robust mitigation programs. Conversely higher risk projects, such as certain dams and natural gas pipelines, have wide-ranging significant impacts which at present go unaddressed, with little indication that they will be attended to. Dams along important rivers in particular, with the large-scale impacts on downstream livelihoods, sometimes crossing international borders, are particularly problematic and present significantly high risks. Other projects, while demonstrating an aggregate level risk and impact scores that are modest or low, nevertheless have particular individual impacts that can be quite severe.

There is a great need for a more in-depth conflict sensitivity assessment of certain projects. Hydropower dam projects do not focus their impact assessments sufficiently on downstream users that are distant from the project, particularly if they exist in adjacent countries. Railway projects seemingly benign once installed, nonetheless create particular risks during construction phases when pastoralists and others who seek to cross them in order to gain access to land resources, are prevented from doing so—as they are in pipeline projects. As well, greater sensitivity analysis needs to be conducted on the highly problematic aspect of migration into and around project areas and the extensive disruptions and multiple risks this poses. Such risks are not addressed or mitigated by projects since the impacts are located well outside of designated project boundaries.

There is an acute need for greater conflict sensitivity analysis by both investors and governments in the region. The combination of the challenge of doing such assessments, together with the serious outcomes for investments if this is gotten wrong, combine to put significant priority on gaining a real understanding of the conflict, risk, and impact realities in and around project areas. There exists a broad literature on conflict risk assessment and conflict sensitive business practices from a variety of sources, such as the World Bank, international private sector organizations and NGOs, and INGOs.

Investors in particular, need to extend significantly their due diligence assessments well beyond what is presented to them in statutory law, promises of enforcement, definition of areas as ‘open’ or ‘unoccupied’, or statements that consultations have been conducted well, or at all. Investors need a much greater understanding of the large differences between groups within countries they are considering investing in—including differences between urban elites and rural inhabitants, and the comprehension that the former often does not speak for or have control over the latter.

Investors need a great deal more innovation on their part with regard to how to engage in effective stakeholder relations—from effective consultation strategies that need to be continual, to ongoing mitigation efforts, to forms of stakeholder participation in the success and monetary gain the investment experiences as it becomes successful. Such efforts would go a long way toward
obtaining (and keeping) the social license to operate. It would also provide for effective expectation management.

Both investors and government need to focus greater attention on transparency and accountability at the local level, to ensure that local community concerns are heard, dealt with fairly, and solutions actually carried out.

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