



Be the change



# When does employment matter? Understanding employment and youth participation in violence in Africa

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# Understanding When Employment Matters

Discrete, short episodes of violence, where there is strong evidence of elite handouts, youth employment/economic livelihood programs should reduce youth propensity to participate in violence (Kenya, Zimbabwe)

Where youth were abducted into long, intractable conflicts, youth employment programs should have minimal effects on reducing youth propensity to participate in violence (Uganda-LRA, Liberia)

# Understanding When Employment Matters



Where the primary motivator for violence is injustice/revenge, youth economic interventions should have minimal effects on reducing youth propensity to participate in violence (Somalia)

## THEORY 1

### Employment and Income Generation:

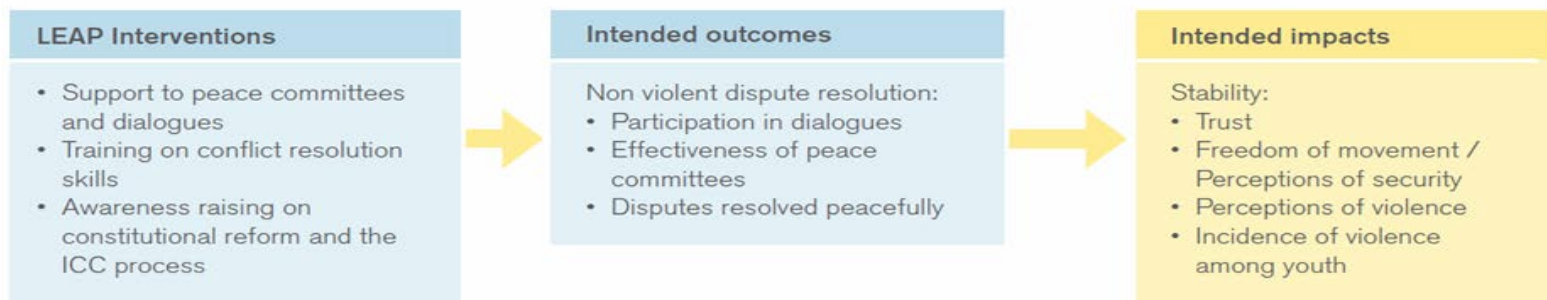
If young people are (meaningfully) employed, then they will be less likely to join violent movements for economic gain.



## THEORY 2

### Conflict Management and Peacebuilding Skills:

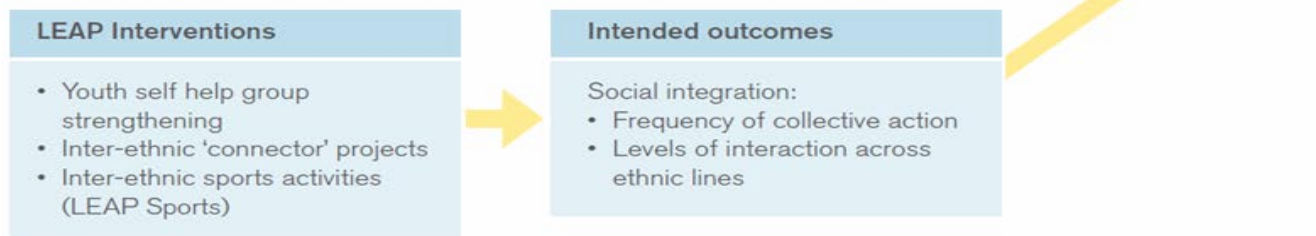
If youth have the skills and forums to discuss difficult issues, then they will be less likely to use violence to solve problems.



## THEORY 3

### Youth-to-Youth Connections Across Lines of Division:

If youth are socially integrated, then they will be less susceptible to manipulation by political elites and violent groups, thus increasing stability.



# Methodology for Kenya and Liberia studies

## Data sources:

- Mercy Corps program surveys
- Afrobarometer surveys (Round 4 – 2008)
- KIIs with youth and youth development experts in Kenya

## Data analysis methods:

- Regression analyses to identify predictors
- Other correlation tests of between group differences
- Triangulation with qualitative and secondary data

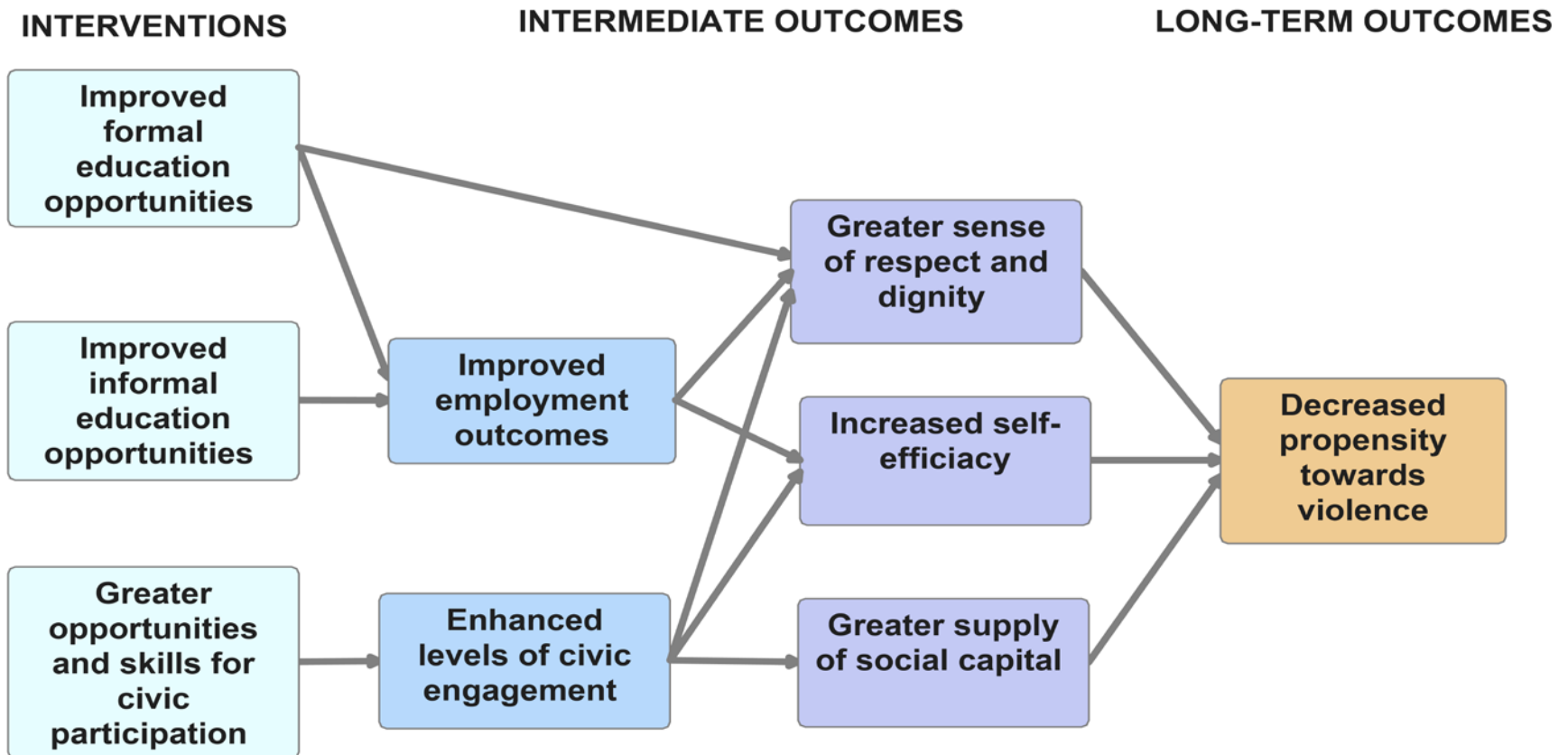
# Predictors: Economic Independence Kenya and Liberia

Factor	In Kenya?	In Liberia?
Employment status	Yes	No
Ability to satisfy basic needs	Yes	No
Perceived economic equality	No	No
Average incomes / living conditions	No	No

# Predictors: Social and Political Factors Kenya and Liberia

Factor	In Kenya?	In Liberia?
Social identity	Yes	Yes
Perceptions of political equality	Yes	No
Levels of civic engagement	Yes	Yes
Contact with local leaders	No	Yes
Perceptions of corruption among government officials	No	Yes

# Somalia Theories of Change Tested





# Methodology for Somalia studies

## Data sources:

- Mercy Corps program household surveys
- 1,089 youth (549 in school and 540 out of school youth) in Somaliland and Puntland
- The survey was conducted between February 29 and April 18, 2012 as part of the SYLI baseline study.

## Data analysis methods:

- Multivariate regression to identify the factors that significantly predict youth's attitudes and behaviors towards political violence

# Somalia Study Results

Explanatory factors	Outcome variables	
	Behaviors: Have used force or violence for a political cause	Attitudes: Believe that violence is sometimes necessary for a just cause
Being in school	No significant relationship	No significant relationship
Participated in skills training	Less likely	More likely
Being economically active	No significant relationship	No significant relationship
Optimistic about economic prospects	More likely	More likely
Experienced discrimination	More likely	More likely
Greater self-efficacy	More likely	More likely
Greater civic engagement	More likely	Less likely

# Implications

## Overall

- Importance of conflict assessments when designing programs that use employment to increase stability
- Ensuring matching skill building to opportunities
- Increasing young people's ability to cope with frustration through productive communication, anger management and self-control.
- Jobs are more than income—a route to status

# Implications

## When financial incentives used

- Balancing short-term employment and long-term employment

## When forcibly recruited

- Use employment as a way to reintegrate youth into their communities & strengthen ties

# Implications

## When revenge/injustice are primary motivators

- Increased employment and voice are still important
- Use of roles models/examples non-violent change
- Reduce discrimination embedded in hiring and employment opportunities