A Critical Review of Perception Based and Fact Based Peace Indicators and Indexes

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Introduction

The fact based Global Peace Index (GPI) annually rank orders 162 nation states in order of their 'peacefulness' using UN and Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) data. In 2013 the least peaceful state at 162 on this list was Afghanistan while the US came in at the 99th position (GPI 2013). However, using a perception based question WIN Gallup International (2013a) ranked the US at the top of their list of nation states that were 'the greatest threat to peace in the world today' from a sample of 65 nation states in their 2013 End of Year (EoY) survey.

In addition to being fact based and perceptions based a number of other elements contribute to these very different kinds of outcomes including, for example, the definitions of peace being tested and the associated questions being asked/addressed, the nation states being sampled, the demographics of the samples, the rational for the analysis and the availability of the relevant data. Critically, on this final point the World Bank *2011 World Development Report (WDR) on Conflict, Security and Development* notes that they were frequently only able to collect the data they required for conflict analysis using perception based surveys as fact based data was often unavailable (World Bank 2011).

For the establishment of the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) the UN note that 'Without peace, there can be no development' so finding the right indicators to monitor the Peace MDGs is of central importance to these objectives (UN 2013). This is particularly true for the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs) being established to monitor the G7+ New Deal for fragile states (G7plus 2011).

With all these points in mind this paper reviews the fact based Global Peace Index, Positive Peace Index and Global Terrorism Index alongside the available perceptions based indicators including the Gallup World Poll, WIN Gallup International End of Year (EoY) surveys, Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index and peace polls People's Peace Index (PPI) pilots as well as the hybrid fact and perceptions based indicators proposed to monitor the G7+ New Deal fragile states. These indicators and indexes are also examined in terms of their efficacy to monitor conditions of peace and violence in the context of violence and the problems associated with such violence. Quite simply are they asking the right questions with the right demographics?

Fact and perceptions state peace index questions

In their 2013 End of Year (EoY) poll WIN Gallup International attempted to rank order the countries of the world in what amounts to a form of 'Peace Index'. This was done by asking the question *'Which country do you think is the greatest threat to peace in the world today?'* Table 1 gives the results for their global sample and also the results for their samples from India, the US and UK. At 24 per cent of their global sample the US came out on top of this survey which is perhaps not surprising as most people are probably going to focus on a super power and/or threatening neighbour and with the large populations in China and India skewing the results in their direction Pakistan came in second at 8 per cent, China third at 6 per cent then North Korea, Israel and Iran at 5 per cent each. This pattern was repeated in India where Pakistan was first, and Iran first in the US and UK where the US was second, fourth and second again respectively (WIN Gallup International 2013a, b).

Table 1. WIN Gallup International 2013 EoY poll per cent response to the question:
'Which country do you think is the greatest threat to peace in the world today?'

Rank	Global Sample		India		US		UK	
1	US	24	Pakistan	25	Iran	20	Iran	15
2	Pakistan	8	US	19	Afghanistan	14	US	15
3	China	6	India	12	North Korea	13	North Korea	12
4	North Korea	5	Afghanistan	8	US	13	China	7
5	Israel	5	China	5	Iraq	6	Syria	6
6	Iran	5	Australia	3	Syria	5	Afghanistan	5
7			UK	1	China	5	Iraq	5
8			Syria	1	Russia	3	Russia	3
9			Saudi Arabia	1	Pakistan	1	Pakistan	3
10			Iran	1	Israel	1	Israel	3

When the equivalent question was piloted for the People's Peace Index (PPI) - *'Which country is the greatest threat to world peace?'* – the results were very similar for India with Pakistan first on their list, Iran first on the US list but the US first on the UK list (not second) and Iran joint third (Table 2) which may be due to these polls being run about a year apart. But the PPI also ran questions on *'Which country does the most for world peace?'* (Table 3), *'Which country is your countries strongest ally?'* (Table 4) and *'Which country is the greatest threat to peace in your country?'* (Table 5). Not at all surprisingly India, the US and UK all place themselves as doing the most for world peace but less surprisingly and most interestingly the US is second on this list for both India and the UK (Irwin and Deshmukh 2013). So the US it would seem, as the world's policeman, has acquired a sort of 'good cop - bad cop' persona and the EoY results should be understood in this context.

Table 2. PPI/C Voter/Google pilot per cent response to the question:
Q 3.2. 'Which country is the greatest threat to world peace?'

Rank	India (C Voter)		US (Google)		UK (Google)	
1	Pakistan	37.9	Iran	32.5	US	26.5
2	Can't say	31.6	North Korea	12.5	North Korea	12.0
3	China	11.5	USA	11.0	China	8.5
4	USA	10.3	China	7.5	Iran	8.5
5	Afghanistan	4.0	Iraq	3.5	Iraq	3.5
6	Gulf country	1.1	Israel	2.5	Korea [North]	3.5
7	Iraq	1.1	DK	2.0	Afghanistan	2.5
8	India	0.6			UK	2.5
9	Iran	0.6			Israel	2.0
10	Israel	0.6				

Table 3. PPI/C Voter/Google pilot per cent response to the question:
Q 3.1. 'Which country does the most for world peace?'

Rank	India (C Voter)		US (Google)		UK (Google)	
1	India	39.1	USA	56.2	UK	27.9
2	Can't say	30.5	Switzerland	5.5	US	14.4
3	USA	23.0	None	4.0	None	5.5
4	Russia	2.3	Canada	3.0	Switzerland	4.5
5	Australia	1.7	DK	2.5	Sweden	3.5
6	China	1.1	Sweden	2.5	France	3.0
7	Saudi Arabia	0.6	UK	2.0	Israel	2.5
8	New Zealand	0.6				
9	Israel	0.6				
10	England	0.6				

Table 4. PPI/C Voter/Google pilot per cent response to the question:
Q 3.3. 'Which country is your countries strongest ally?'

Rank	India (C Voter)		US (Google)		UK (Google)	
1	Can't say	43.7	UK	45.3	US	53.2
2	Russia	24.7	Canada	13.4	UK	14.9
3	USA	23.6	USA	7.5	DK	1.5
4	China	3.4	Israel	7.0	Germany	1.5
5	Japan	1.1	China	4.0	Scotland	1.5
6	Africa	0.6	DK	3.5	Brazil	1.0
7	Bangladesh	0.6	Mexico	3.0	Canada	1.0
8	England	0.6			China	1.0
9	No one	0.6			France	1.0
10	Pakistan	0.6				

Table 5. PPI/C Voter/Google pilot per cent response to the question:
Q 3.4. 'Which country is the greatest threat to peace in your country?'

Rank	India (C Voter)		US (Google)		UK (Google)	
1	Pakistan	46.6	Iran	17.9	US	21.3
2	Can't say	27.6	USA	15.9	Iran	9.9
3	China	19.0	North Korea	7.0	UK	5.4
4	USA	6.3	China	5.5	Afghanistan	4.0
5	Germany	0.6	Afghanistan	5.0	None	4.0
6			Iraq	5.0	Iraq	3.0
7			DK	3.0	Israel	3.0
8					DK	2.5
9					North Korea	2.5
10						

Table 6. Index results for Institute of Economics and Peace (IEP): 2014 Global Peace Index
(GPI), 2013 Positive Peace Index (PPI), 2012 Global Terrorism Index (GTI).

Rank	2014 IEP/GPI	Index	Rank	2013 IEP/PPI	Index	Rank	2012 IEP/GTI	Index
1	Iceland	1.189	1	Denmark	1.25	1	Iraq	9.556
2	Denmark	1.193	2	Norway	1.28	2	Pakistan	9.049
3	Austria	1.200	3	Finland	1.30	3	Afghanistan	8.669
4	New Zealand	1.236	4	Switzerland	1.32	4	India	8.147
5	Switzerland	1.258	5	Netherlands	1.35	5	Yemen	7.305
101	US	2.137	19	US	1.83	41	US	3.566
158	Somalia	3.368	122	Nigeria	3.85	69	Austria	1.408
159	Iraq	3.377	123	C. A. R.	3.93	77	Denmark	1.129
160	South Sudan	3.397	124	Yemen	4.00	104	New Zealand	0.079
161	Afghanistan	3.416	125	Chad	4.09	110	Switzerland	0.059
162	Syria	3.650	126	D. R. C.	4.27	116	Iceland	0

The results for the various fact based peace indexes are also very different because the
questions being asked or rather addressed are very different. The 2014 Global Peace Index
places Iceland first on their list of 'most peaceful' countries followed by Denmark, Austria,
New Zealand and Switzerland (GPI 2014). Out of 162 countries listed the US is down at 101
and Syria, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Iraq and Somalia are at the bottom at 162, 161, 160,
159 and 158 respectively (Table 6). Similarly, in 2013 the Positive Peace Index placed
Denmark, Norway and Finland first, second and third out of a list of 121 countries (PPI
2013). The US was now doing better ranked at nineteenth while the Democratic Republic of
Congo came in at the bottom of this index followed by Chad and Yemen (Table 6).
Conversely the 2012 Global Terrorism Index (GTI) places Iraq at the top of their list that year
followed by Pakistan and Afghanistan (GTI 2012). Iceland scored '0' in this index with a
number of other countries that were all placed jointly at the bottom of this list at position 116
(Table 6). Similarly the Pew Research Centre's index of social hostilities (Table 7) places
Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Somalia and Israel at the top of their list in what they term their
'Very High' range while Iceland is in the 'Low' range along with other countries notably
many Pacific islands with the exception of Fiji that is in the 'Moderate' range along with the
US (Pew 2014).

Table 7. Pew Research Center Social Hostilities Index (Very High, Medium, Low)

Rank	Pew	Index
1	Pakistan	VH
2	Afghanistan	VH
3	India	VH
4	Somalia	VH
5	Israel	VH
104	US	M
115	Fiji	M
194	San Marino	L
195	Cape Verde	L
196	Federated States of Micronesia	L
197	Marshal Islands	L
198	Sao Tone and Principe	L

These fact-based indexes clearly paint a very different picture of the world to the perceptions-based indexes. Not only because the criteria for the questions asked and/or addressed are very different but also because the results for the perceptions-based surveys are weighted by the populations of large countries (India, China) and/or groups of countries such as the Middle East. The fact-based indexes all track the ranking of the countries they survey to determine if, by the criteria they are monitoring, peacefulness, terrorist activity or religious hostility are increasing or declining. Perceptions-based indexes can also do this. In the case of the US, which regularly monitors its own perceived standing in the world, the State Department stopped publishing the results of these surveys during the Bush Presidency because the results were so bad. However, they started to publish them again during the Obama Presidency when their ratings started to recover to pre-Bush levels (Moynihan 2013).

The BBC/Pipa/Globescan annual poll sampled 24 countries in 2014, including the US, with the question *'Please tell me if you think each of the following countries is having a manly positive or mainly negative influence in the world?'* (Table 8). Critically these results are not weighted to the size of country populations but simply averaged across the 24 countries sampled irrespective of size. Using this methodology Germany, Canada and the UK take the top three places in terms of positive image while Iran, Pakistan and North Korea are perceived to be most negative with the US in the middle (BBC 2014). Interestingly this outcome more closely reflects the results of the fact-based indexes for this particular selection of 24 states.

While the various fact-based peace indexes have achieved a significant degree of international acceptance and relevance by being methodologically consistent the various attempts to produce equivalent perceptions-based peace indexes have not. Clearly a number of measures can now be taken to resolve this deficiency:

1. The perceptions-based peace indexes should use both positive and negative concepts of peace as a basis for their questions in both global and local state contexts.
2. The perceptions-based peace indexes should sample as many states as possible to capture as much of the global population as possible.
3. The analysis should compare and contrast a variety of methodologies that focuses on both states and their populations at both the global and state levels of analysis.

4. Given the increasing importance of non-state actors in conflicts one simple question could also be added to the four state People's Peace Index questions to create a perception's based equivalent of the Global Terrorism Index as follows:

Q 3.5. And finally which non-state organisation (militant, paramilitary or terrorist) is the greatest threat to peace in your country?

Table 8. Views of different countries' influence from the 2014 BBC/Pipa/Globescan 24 country survey with positive and negative change in position noted for 17 countries from their 2013 poll using the question: *'Please tell me if you think each of the following countries is having a mainly positive or mainly negative influence in the world?'* (BBC 2014)

Rank	Country	Mainly Positive	Mainly Negative	Positive Change	Negative Change
1	Germany	60	18	+1	+3
2	Canada	57	15	+1	+1
3	UK	56	21	+1	+2
4	France	50	22	+2	-1
5	Japan	49	30	-2	+2
6	EU	47	27	-2	+2
7	Brazil	45	26	+1	+3
8	USA	42	39	-3	+4
9	China	42	42	+2	0
10	South Africa	39	31	+5	-1
11	South Korea	38	34	+2	+2
12	India	38	36	+4	-1
13	Russia	31	45	+1	+4
14	Israel	24	50	+3	-2
15	North Korea	19	58	+1	+1
16	Pakistan	16	58	+1	+1
17	Iran	16	60	+1	+1

Fact and perceptions intensity of conflict questions

The various fact-based global indexes are able to track changes in their state rank orders year on year by simply maintaining a standard methodology in terms of data used and method of calculating the state index. For example in their 2014 report (Table 9) the GPI highlights the top five 'risers' – Georgia up 28 places, Cote d'Ivoire up 11 places, Libya up 14 places, Burundi up 13 places and Mongolia up 25 places. And the top five 'fallers' – South Sudan down 16 places, Egypt down 31 places, Central African Republic down 3 places, Ukraine down 30 places and Syria down 1 place to the very bottom of the index at 162 (GPI 2014).

Table 9. Top five 2014 Global Peace Index (GPI) 'Risers' and 'Fallers'.

Top 5 Risers				Top 5 Fallers			
Index Change	Country	2014 Rank	Position Change	Index Change	Country	2014 Rank	Position Change
-0.272	Georgia	111	+28	+0.795	South Sudan	160	-6
-0.212	Cote D'Ivoire	140	+11	+0.314	Egypt	143	-13
-0.204	Libya	133	+14	+0.313	Central African Republic	156	-3
-0.175	Burundi	130	+13	+0.295	Ukraine	141	-30
-0.170	Mongolia	41	+25	+0.244	Syria	162	-1

Similarly the Pew Research Centre's index of social hostilities draws attention to 11 countries with 'large' increases in their score namely Mali, Libya, Mexico, Tunisia, Syria, Guinea, Netherlands, Madagascar, Lebanon, Afghanistan and Malawi in their 2014 report. And 7 countries that had 'moderate' decreases: Timor-Leste, Ivory Coast, Serbia, Ethiopia, Cyprus, Romania and Cambodia. Significantly, over all, the 2014 trend in social hostility was up to reach a six-year high (Pew 2014).

The International Crisis Group (ICG) also track change for the states they are monitoring in their monthly *Crisis Watch* bulletin. In May 2014 they were tracking the potential for violent conflict in 71 states. For 65 states the situation remained 'unchanged' but for 5 states: Kenya, Libya, South China Sea, Thailand and Yemen the situation was 'deteriorating' and for only one state, Guinea-Bissau, the situation was 'improving' (ICG 2014a). But these reports and assessments are not based on the calculation of an index from a standardised set of data but rather on a risk analysis undertaken by the researcher team and operatives in the relevant countries.

Table 10. 2013 Transparency International 177 State Index and 107 State Barometer with results for their public sector 1 to 5 scale index and percent of those who have paid a bribe.

177 State Index			107 State Barometer		
Rank	Country	Score	Change	Pubic Sector Index	Per cent Bribed
1	Denmark	91	No Change	2.2	1
2	New Zealand	91	Increase	2.8	3
3	Finland	89	No Change	2.8	1
4	Sweden	86	-	-	-
5	Singapore	86	-	-	-
19	US	73	Increase	3.6	7
173	South Sudan	14	Decrease	3.3	39
174	Sudan	11	Decrease	3.8	17
175	Afghanistan	8	Increase	3.3	46
175	Korea (North)	8	-	-	-
175	Somalia	8	-	-	-

With a focus on one of the causes of conflict, as an element of social, economic and political dysfunction, Transparency International monitor and track corruption. Significantly they do this using both fact-based and perceptions-based indicators to produce both an index of states and a barometer of change. Their 2013 Corruptions Perceptions Index lists 177 countries and territories which places Denmark, New Zealand, Finland, Sweden and Norway in the top five and Somalia last then North Korea, Afghanistan, Sudan, South Sudan and Libya in the bottom five (Transparency International 2013a). The US comes in at the 19th position on this list (Table 10). Transparency International (2013b) also run a global poll, which covered 107 countries in 2013 and the issue of change in levels of corruption was addressed with the following question:

Q1. Over the past two years, how has the level of corruption in this country changed?
1 – Decreased a lot, 2 – Decreased a little, 3 – Stayed the same, 4 – Increased a little,
5 – Increased a lot

Using this question most countries surveyed reported an increase while Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Malaysia, Norway and Switzerland reported no change. Azerbaijan, Belgium, Cambodia, Fiji, Georgia, Philippines, Rwanda, Serbia, South Sudan, Sudan and Taiwan reported decreased corruption.

The second question in their survey then asks to what extent corruption is a problem as follows:

Q2. To what extent do you believe corruption is a problem in the public sector in your country? By public sector we mean all institutions and services which are owned and/or run by the government. Please answer on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'not a problem at all' and 5 is 'a very serious problem'.

And this question was then followed by a number of socio-metric questions that measure the informant's experience of corruption (see Table 10). The PPI pilot used similar questions to measure conditions of peace and conflict as follows:

Q 2.1. How would you rate the condition of peace and conflict in your country as of today? Please rate on a 1 to 10 scale where '1' means 'Fully Peaceful' and '10' means 'Extreme Conflict' in your country? [1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10]

Q 2.2. 1s there or has there recently been a violent conflict in your country?
YES or NO (If NO go to next question [3] if YES go to question [2.3] below)

Q 2.3. And do you think the situation regarding violent conflict in your country is getting 'worse', or is the situation getting 'better', or perhaps you think there is 'no change'?
[Much Worse - Worse - No Change - Better - Much Better]

When question 2.1 was run in the UK using Google Consumer Surveys (Table 11) Northern Ireland scored the highest index at 5.8 followed by England and the UK as a whole at 4.0 then Scotland at 3.5 and Wales at 3.0 (Irwin and Deshmukh 2013). This seems to be consistent with the on-going conflict in Northern Ireland and associated activity of dissident groups, and higher levels of policing in the province when compared to the rest of the UK.

Table 11. People's Peace Index (PPI) UK pilot regional results for the question:
'Where 1 is 'Fully Peaceful' and 10 is 'Extreme Conflict' how would you rate the condition in your country today?'

State/region	Index
UK	4.0
England	4.0
Northern Ireland	5.8
Scotland	3.5
Wales	3.0

Interestingly using fact-based data the Institute of Economics and Peace (IEP) 2013 UK peace index agrees that Wales is the most peaceful province in the UK but it also rates Scotland and not Northern Ireland as the least peaceful as follows:

'Comparable data is available for all the home nations from 2006 onwards. Comparable data is available for homicide, violent crime, and the police officers employment rate... Scotland has the highest homicide rate of any of the four home nations, as well as the highest violent crime rate, at almost 1,600 violent crimes per 100,000 people, which is more than double the violent crime rate in Wales. Northern Ireland has the highest police officers rate, at almost 400 per 100,000. Wales is the most peaceful on all three comparable indicators, and if a composite index is created using just the comparable data, Wales is easily the most peaceful of the home nations, making it one of the most peaceful places in Europe.' (IEP 2013)

In this case the civil war in Northern Ireland known as the 'Troubles' would seem to be more accurately identified by perceptions rather than facts. Why is this? The answer is most likely the demographics of insurgencies in this case. The province of Northern Ireland only accounts for about 2 per cent of the UK population and surveys of the Northern Ireland population during the Troubles indicated that only about 1 per cent of this population actively supported armed conflict (Irwin, 2002). But such insurgencies, when organized, can inflict considerable social, economic and political harm. Homicide rates may be low but the spectra of violence, terrorism, can have a very significant impact on a society and how it functions or rather fails to do so.

Although the fact-based indexes can track changes in 'peacefulness' as a function of more or less violence definitions of peace that are derived from such concepts do not necessarily correspond to popular notions of peace that may take into account the spectra of violence and the effect it can have on a society (McGinty 2013). The fact-based indexes tend to be 'post-hoc' while perceptions-based indexes may be able to give a better indication of what is or could happen to the social fabric of a society. Such indexes can be derived from a number of question formats that monitor 'peacefulness' as it is locally understood, change in levels of peace and conflict, and socio-metric measures although these may be subject to the same difficulties as the fact-based indicators. Having said that the very obvious differences in the results for the purely perception-based questions and the socio-metric questions for the Transparency International Barometer (Table 10) suggests that a socio-metric question should be added to the PPI perhaps as follows:

Q 2.4. And as a result of the violent conflict please indicate if you or any member of your family has been the victim of:

Violent riots/protests... Yes/No
Violent attack... Yes/No
Damage and/or loss of property... Yes/No
Physical harm... Yes/No
Arrest... Yes/No
Imprisonment... Yes/No
Torture... Yes/No
Death... Yes/No

Fact and perceptions demographics

The Institute of Economics and Peace launched the Youth Development Index (YDI) as a global index of 170 countries and a sub-set of 51 Commonwealth countries in 2013 (YDI 2013). Australia, Canada, South Korea, Netherlands and Germany come in as the top five on this list with the African states of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Cote D'Ivoire, Chad and Mali the bottom five at 170, 169, 168, 167 and 166 respectively. The US came in at 8th on this list and the UK at 15th (Table 12). In the Commonwealth sub-set the top three were Australia, Canada and New Zealand and at the bottom of this list was Uganda.

Table 12. Institute of Economics and peace 2013 Youth Development Index

Rank	Country	YDI Score	YD Category
1	Australia	0.86	High
2	Canada	0.82	High
3	South Korea	0.81	High
4	Netherlands	0.8	High
5	Germany	0.8	High
6	New Zealand	0.8	High
7	Switzerland	0.8	High
8	United States	0.8	High
9	Japan	0.79	High
10	Slovenia	0.79	High
11	Cuba	0.79	High
12	Norway	0.78	High
13	Austria	0.77	High
14	Malta	0.77	High
15	United Kingdom	0.77	High
143	Uganda	0.38	Low
165	Guinea-Bissau	0.26	Low
166	Mali	0.24	Low
167	Chad	0.24	Low
168	Cote D'Ivoire	0.23	Low
169	Congo, Dem Rep.	0.23	Low

Significantly, at the launch of this index at the Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, London on 19 September 2013, the ranking received considerable criticism as it was pointed out that the prospects for the youth of Australia, Canada and New Zealand were very different for the native people's of those countries when compared to the prospects for the white majority. The same would be true for the black minorities in both the US and UK and it was suggested that these rankings should include an ethnic breakdown. Additionally the Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General, Mrs Mmasekgoa Masire-Mwamba from Botswana, pointed out that she would also like to see a gender break down of the statistics noting that the prospects for young women in her country were very different to the prospects for young men. These observations led in turn to a discussion about the availability of such data and it was noted that these statistics were often not collected and recorded even in the official statistics of these countries including many developed states (Commonwealth Secretariat 2013).

From the perspective of conflict analysis these omissions amount to a fatal flaw as conflicts are most frequently the result of tensions between ethnic, religious and racial groups both between states and within states where significant differences between groups may be further aggravated by urban, rural and regional differences. Critically then peace indexes cannot be expected to function effectively without relevant demographic breakdowns. This is very difficult for the fact-based indexes to do as the World Bank notes that such data is frequently unavailable (World Bank, 2011).

Another factor that makes this problem of analysis even more acute are levels of analysis or scale. In the case of Northern Ireland, and in many ways it is quite typical of insurgencies, they represent only 2 per cent of the total UK population while, on the other hand, terrorism associated with various radicalised groups can also transcend state boundaries to include neighbouring states and their region and on some occasions, in the age of globalisation, such phenomena can develop a global dimension to include significant percentages of the total world population.

The Pew Research Centre consolidate their social hostilities sate statistics for global religions using the categories: Christians, Muslims, Jews, 'Others', Folk religionists, Hindus and Buddhists (Pew 2014) but in terms of understanding the conflict in Northern Ireland, for example, Catholic and Protestant are the critical group categories to monitor and across the Middle East (and possibly further) Sunni and Shia are critical groups. The 'bottom line' to all of this is that only perceptions-based indexes with extensive purpose built demographic data sets can effectively analyse conditions of peace and conflict and this requires both booster samples collected at the sub-state level and the consolidation of categories at the transnational level.

Transparency International does collect some demographics to accompany their very excellent questions on the subject of corruption. These include: rural/urban, district/province, city/town/village, sex, age, total household income before taxes, education - highest attained and employment (Transparency International 2013b). Critically this list does not include ethnicity, race and religion across which one would expect to see considerable differences where there is conflict. The various regional and global barometers do systematically collect these critical demographic data as does the Gallup World Poll but they do not always sample critical sub-populations that may be essential for monitoring and understanding a given conflict in a given state and, more significantly, unlike Transparency International, they frequently avoid the most sensitive topics required for the analysis of conflict and peace.

Fact and perceptions conflict analysis questions

The PPI uses a question designed to rank order the most common causes of conflict by combining the top 'problems' from the peace polls undertaken in Northern Ireland, Macedonia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, Israel, Palestine and Sudan (Irwin 2012) as follows:

Q 1.2. Now with regards to violent conflict in general I will read you a list of problems that have to be dealt with in different parts of the world. For each problem can you please tell me if it is 'Very Significant', 'Significant, 'Of Some Significance', 'Of Little Significance' or 'Of No Significance At All' in your country?

Problems	*Very Significant*	*Significant*	*Of Some Significance*	*Of Little Significance*	*Of No Significance At All*
1 Poor economy and unemployment					
2 Low standards of education					
3 Poor health care, roads and electrical supply					
4 Lack of food and clean water					
5 Corrupt Government					
6 Corruption and criminality in general					
7 Lack of free press and media					
8 Media that insights hatred					
9 Elections not free and fair					
10 Lack of democratic accountability					
11 Discrimination and sectarianism					
12 Prejudice and personal safety					
13 Lack of language and cultural rights					
14 UN resolutions and human rights violations					
15 Poor political leadership					
16 No political solution to end conflict					
17 No effective negotiations to end conflict					
18 So many killed and displaced by violence					
19 No justice and reconciliation					
20 The actions of the police					
21 The actions of the army					
22 The actions of terrorists and militants					
23 The actions of rebels and freedom fighters					
24 The military actions of foreign forces					
25 The government's foreign military engagements					

(Irwin and Deshmukh 2013)

These 'problems' seem to cover many of the major areas of concern identified for the G7+ New Deal fragile states project with its focus on five Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs) as follows:

1. Legitimate Politics - Foster inclusive political settlements and conflict resolution
2. Security - Establish and strengthen people's security

3. Justice - Address injustices and increase people's access to justice
4. Economic Foundations - Generate employment and improve livelihoods
5. Revenues & Services - Manage revenue and build capacity for accountable and fair service delivery (G7Plus 2011)

Similarly the various regional and global barometers do the same with a variety of more complex questions. Critically, however, the most important questions for conflict analysis frequently get deleted from these surveys, as the states involved do not want the most sensitive issues in their countries addressed. For example Myanmar in the Asia Barometer surveys (AsiaBarometer 2007). The Gallup World Poll also removes sensitive questions from their surveys when states do not want them run but Transparency International with their single focus on corruption do not make such deletions.

With all these points in mind the way forward would seem to be to follow the Transparency International example and ask a simple battery of questions on all the most sensitive issues critical to an understanding of conflict and then, when a problem is identified, recommend more detailed research as may be required. Allowing states to be the sole arbiter of what questions do or do not get asked does not seem to be a workable option.

The Appendix lists a selection of crisis problems from G7+ New Deal fragile states (G7plus 2013) along with the proposed types of perception-based questions designed to address such issues (International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding 2013), the respective PPI 'problems' list questions and the numbers of the equivalent questions from the 2007 Asia Barometer, which included Myanmar.

Clearly the 'shopping list' proposed for the PPI can never be complete or accurate in all circumstances for all states. In an effort to deal with this difficulty the PPI starts with an open-ended question as follows:

Q 1.1. We are conducting a survey of all the countries in the world to better understand the causes of violent conflict and how to resolve them. But every place is different so first of all can you please tell me what you think is the most serious problem that has to be dealt with in your country?

Write in……….

When this question was asked in the US the most common response was 'gun control', in the UK it was 'immigration' (Irwin and Deshmukh 2013). Neither of these items was on the PPI 'shopping list' but in India the top response to the open-ended question was 'corruption' and this was on the list. In practice then, if the open-ended question continues to identify an important issue globally then it should be added to the 'shopping list' question and if an item on that list proves to be 'exceptional' in some way then it should be deleted. When required the open-ended question will still pick it up.

Discussion and Conclusion

Perceptions-based indicators and indexes have several advantages over their fact-based equivalents particularly with regards to group demographics (ethnicity, religion and race); levels of analysis above and below the level of the state (province, region and global); subtleties of and sensitivity to changes in levels of threat; flexibility with respect to identifying particular sources of threat at a local level of analysis; and the comparison of both positive and negative indexes at the regional and global level of analysis. But to take full advantage of these perception-based conflict analysis features a perception-based index needs to address each of these characteristics by including:

1. A comprehensive set of demographic questions that will facilitate conflict group analysis at the local/provincial, state, regional and global levels of analysis.
2. Questions that capture local changes in perceived levels of violent conflict/threat.
3. Questions that capture local experience of violent conflict.
4. Questions that capture the role of states in terms of both 'negative' violent conflict and 'positive' peace in both local/regional and global terms.
5. Questions that capture the role of non-state actors/agencies in violent conflict.
6. Questions that capture both specific local causes of conflict (open-ended) as well as general comparative causes of conflict (shopping list).
7. State level samples that include boosters/oversamples for critical minorities at risk or engaged in violent conflict.
8. State level samples that include sufficient numbers of world states to facilitate analysis using both aggregated and disaggregated populations (people based) as well as regional and global aggregations of states (state based).

Given the demographics of conflicts which can, on the one hand, be the focus of minority ethnic/religious groups within states while, on the other hand, also be the focus of trans-national ethnic/religious groups between and across states perceptions based indicators and indexes are required to effectively monitor and track these kinds of violence for both the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs). Additionally, these indicators need to monitor the most sensitive issues central to an understanding of violence (corruption, discrimination, injustice, state violence and terrorism, etc.) in order to be effective. Anything less will prejudice the value of such research and the associated investments made by the international community to stabilise fragile states and achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Public opinion polls were first used as an instrument of strategic conflict analysis to assess the reception US and allied forces would receive when they landed in Italy during World War II (Smith 2012). In this context ORB International has been conducting polls in Mali since 2008 prior to insurgent rebel groups, such as Al-Quida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), taking control of large areas of northern Mali in 2012. These polls indicated that the majority of Malians believed their own forces were not capable of dealing with this insurgency and they would welcome foreign intervention that arrived in the form of French forces in 2013 (ORB International 2013). Similarly D3 Systems monitored events in Iraq between 2012 and 2014 and noted that the conditions for civil war were present in a report posted on their website in January 2014 and that the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), which were largely Shia,

did not enjoy the support of the Sunni population in May prior to the Sunni insurgency ISIS, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, taking control of much of northern Iraq in June (D3 Systems, 2014ab).

For all the reasons reviewed in this paper perceptions-based indicators are very good at collecting this kind of data before the tipping point of increased hostilities is reached. The June 1st, 2014 International Crisis Group, *Crisis Watch* report No. 130, for example, did not classify Iraq as being a conflict that was 'deteriorating' or was on their Conflict Alerts *Watchlist* prior to the collapse of the ISF when confronted by ISIS (ICG 2014a). This error was only corrected after these events took place in their Iraq report of June 20th (ICG 2014b) and *Crisis Watch* report No. 131 (ICG 2014c) published on July 1st, the day after ISIS changed their name to Islamic State (IS) by declaring the creation of a caliphate that extended for 400 miles across the borders of Northern Syria and Iraq.

Regrettably the perception-based researches and reports commissioned by western governments, their allies and agencies are limited by their strategic interests and are generally only put into the public domain after the tragic events of violent conflict, war, and associated humanitarian crisis have unfolded. Such publication is clearly too little too late. Although the responsible security services may be aware of many of these problems, as they unfold, it is a fact of life that they all too frequently only receive the attention they need when the public are also aware, share such concerns and have the problem enter the public discourse. Additionally public and peer group scrutiny would undoubtedly improve the quality and scope of such work.

We live in an increasingly globalized world. What the international community must now decide is do they want to continue to poll the countries of the world on the most important issues for the people of the world, peace and security, and keep that information confidential only sharing it selectively with allies and political elites. Or do they want to encourage the public generation and dissemination of such information with all the peoples of the world, proactively, and with the institutions that represent them, their governments, the UN 'family' of organizations and relevant national, regional and global NGOs in the hope that open discussion of such issues might help to bring about the sought for political and social change that private dissemination has so frequently failed to achieve.

To this end the UN are seeking a paradigm shift that will place the views of local people's at the center of all their peacekeeping and peacemaking activities (UN 2011, UNDPKO/NUPI 2013, UNDPKO 2013). Instead of selectively sampling what the peoples of the world think and want with a view to managing such perceptions to match the agendas of the states who commission such polls the time has come to sample the views of all the peoples of the world on peace and security issues with a view to achieving peace and security. Transparency International does this very well with regards to corruption, extending the scope of their questionnaire and states covered year on year. This paper suggests that this can now be done for violent conflict and peace.

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APPENDIX

Consolidated Fragility Spectrum - Crisis Problems for G7+ New Deal fragile states and associated proposed questions for the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs), People's Peace Index (PPI) questions and relevant Asia Barometer question numbers from their 2007 questionnaire (G7plus 2013, International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding 2013 and AsiaBarometer 2007)

PSG 1: Inclusive Politics

Political Settlement
- No political dialogue amongst factions;
- Factions are at war (not necessarily continuously);
- There is breach of agreements reached;
- Government might be forced to flee into exile;
- Marginalization, forced displacement of certain groups;
- Political and social and economic oppression;
- Arbitrary killings;
- Breakdown in centre-periphery/ capital-regional relations;
- Elections are not held;
- Power is based on force;
- The state is not present throughout the country;
- Traditional systems of governance have broken down;
- Traditional systems of governance are the only form of governance working;
- Lack of inclusive or agreed political settlement.

Political Processes and Institutions
- Majority of public community have no understanding of political processes;
- Majority of public community do not feel free to participate in all political processes;
- Basis for political, social and economic mobility often dependent on allegiances to an important figure rather than merit;
- Tribal conflicts and political crises may persist;
- Often there is the existence of external aggression;
- Total institutional collapse. Institutions may exist but are dysfunctional;
- No safe or open environment for political participation;
- Governance neither inclusive nor participatory;
- Parliament is dysfunctional and/or provisional.
- There are no checks and balances on the executive.
- Legislature and judiciary are not effective.
- The constitution is not adhered to, or does not exist.

Social Relationships
- Major political divisions and conflict amongst communities;
- Widespread mistrust and fear;
- Incidences of inter-tribal or political conflict;

- Militias based along tribal or political lines;
- Atrocities met with further atrocities. Civilian defence vigilante groups formed to fight rebels when state forces failed to do so;
- Absence of law and order;
- Efforts to reconcile are unsuccessful;
- Lack of strong civil society organization, which is largely dormant. Some international organisations and local CSOs engaged in emergency relief efforts.
- No press freedom or advocacy influence of civil society.

PSG 1 to 5	Data type	Level of disaggregation	PPI 'Problem'	Asia Barometer questions
PSG 1: LEGITIMATE POLITICS 1.2 *The population's level of satisfaction in the political system's inclusivity and effectiveness*.	Perception Survey	By gender, region and social group	* Corrupt Government * Lack of democratic accountability * Lack of free press and media * Elections not free and fair * Poor political leadership * No political solution to end conflict * No effective negotiations to end conflict	8l, 8m, 10-22, 10-23, 26-15, 26-16, 26, 21, 30a, 30b, 30f, 30g, 32b, 35b, 35c, 35f
1.6 *Assesses social cohesion, social capital, intergroup relationships and societal resilience*.	Experience Survey	By gender, region and social group	*Discrimination and sectarianism	22-1, 22-2, 23

PSG 2: Security

Security Conditions
- Large-scale and prevailing continuous conflict and non-governed spaces that the state cannot control;
- Gross and large-scale violations of human rights and atrocities committed against citizens;
- Political regime abuses their authority over the security forces;
- Restricted freedom of movement;
- Widespread civil militia;
- High levels of criminal activities, including stealing, raping and abductions;
- Bombardments or other major attacks;
- Food insecurity and famine prevalent;
- Blurred boundaries between political or military violence and civilian criminal violence;
- Prevalence of conflict at the border;

- Porous borders and instability in the border region;
- Repercussions of conflict across borders, such as through the inflow of arms and refugees;
- High prevalence of illegal economic activity (illegal mining, smuggling and other criminal economic activities).

Capacity and Accountability of Security Institutions
- Youth formed auxiliary armies and widespread militias;
- Size of the security institutions is huge, but resources are limited;
- Extensive privatisation of security services due to absence of state-provided security;
- Security sector recruitment is not based on merit;
- No civilian oversight over the security sector;
- Security sector is controlled either by unaccountable government or warring factions;
- International security forces in place.

Performance of Security Sector Institutions
- Lack of public confidence in the security institutions;
- Poor public perception of the security sector, army and police posing as rebels;
- Widespread human rights abuses by the security sector and complete impunity due to institutional weakness and political interference;
- High levels of police brutality and arbitrary fines;
- Endemic corruption across the security sector.

PSG 1 to 5	Data type	Level of disaggregation	PPI 'Problem'	Asia Barometer questions
PSG 2: SECURITY 2.4 *General perceptions of security and safety*.	Perception survey	By gender, region and social group	*Media that insights hatred *Prejudice and personal safety	26-13, 32e, 32h, 32i
2.6 *General satisfaction with the performance of security institutions. Theory of change: Assess whether the public expresses confidence in security institutions, their competence and integrity and their concern for the well-being of the community.*	Perception survey	By gender, region and social group	*The actions of the police *The actions of the army *The actions of the terrorists and militants *The actions of rebels and freedom fighters *The military actions of foreign forces *The government's foreign military engagements	26-4, 26-6, 30c, 30e

PSG 3: Justice

Justice Conditions
- Justice institutions only exist at national level;
- Selective and preferential justice: 'might is right';
- Lengthy justice processes, leading to long delays;
- Lack of access to justice;
- High levels of corruption within the justice system;
- Elites are not sanctioned even when they commit crimes or breach the law;
- Many human rights violation cases not being addressed by the state.

Capacity and Accountability of Security Sector Institutions
- The capacity of national justice personnel is still very low;
- Inadequate resourcing, skills and systems, no record keeping;
- The police and ministry of interior lack the qualifications and skills to adequately dispense justice;
- Counties lack judges, making access to justice difficult;
- Lack of infrastructure, particularly at the county level where there are not enough facilities;
- Corruption is rife.

PSG 1 to 5	Data type	Level of disaggregation	Peace Index 'Problem'	Asia Barometer questions
PSG 3: JUSTICE 3.1 *General satisfaction with the performance of justice institutions. Theory of change: Assess whether the public believes that the judicial system (both formal and customary) is accessible, affordable, fair and effective and respects individual rights.*	Perception survey	By gender, region and social group	*So many killed and displaced by violence *No justice and reconciliation	26-18, 30d
3.6 *The extent to which citizens are aware of their basic rights. Theory of change: Reflects citizen capacity to seek redress and actively engage in political, social and economic life.*	Knowledge survey, focus group discussions	By gender, region and social group	*Lack of language and cultural rights *UN resolutions and human rights violations	26-14, 32c, 40a, 40b, 40c, 40d, 40e, 40f

PSG 4: Economic Foundations

Economic Conditions
- Roads and power supplies either do not exist or are severely damaged;
- Very little formal economic activity, even at the central level.

Jobs, Livelihoods, and Private Sector Development
- Most formal employment opportunities provided through humanitarian NGOs;
- High reliance on expatriate labour;
- High dependence on food imports;
- Low agricultural productivity;
- Little investment due to insecurity.

Exploitation of Natural Resources
- Illegal or informal exploitation of natural resources;
- Limited formal exploitation of natural resources;
- Weak enforcement of regulations for natural resource management.

PSG 1 to 5	Data type	Level of disaggregation	Peace Index 'Problem'	Asia Barometer questions
PSG 4: ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS 4.6 *The population perception of whether the benefits of the state's natural resources are used equitably*.	Perception survey	By gender, region and social group	*Poor economy and unemployment *Discrimination and sectarianism	26-1, 26-2, 26-11, 29, 32a, 32d

PSG 5: Revenue and Services

Revenue Generation
- Government revenues are low or non-existent;
- Customs processes interrupted and non-functional;
- Absence of public institutions for collection of domestic revenues.

Public Administration
- Weak public finance management, including procurement systems;
- Limited skilled personnel or systems in place;
- Procedures not followed, no enforcement of guidelines;
- Lack of transparency and accountability;
- Lack of decentralization of Public Finance Management functions;
- Weak or non-existent capacity of public administration institutions;
- 'Personalisation' of government and its services undermines the state's ability to utilise resources and collect taxes.
- The state does not play a strong role in the provision of public services, with international organisations dominating this area;
- Widespread lack of access to necessary basic services;
- High inequalities exist;
- Systematic erosion of state institutions and systems of regulation through rent-seeking activities to en- sure regime survival;
- No proper regulatory frameworks for service delivery in place;
- Breakdown of law and order meant that even where policies were in place they were not enforced;
- Resources, skills and facilities required for effective service delivery were absent and very little worked;
- Most basic services that exist are concentrated in the capital city;
- Services largely delivered through patronage networks.

PSG 1 to 5	Data type	Level of disaggregation	Peace Index 'Problem'	Asia Barometer questions
PSG 5: REVENUES AND SERVICES 5.4 *Prevalence of petty corruption based on people's experience.*	Experience Survey	By gender, region and social group	*Corruption and criminality in general	26-15
5.6 *Public satisfaction with standard, performance and fairness of basic social service delivery.* *Theory of change: Assesses the level of well-being within a country and the confidence the public has in governments.*	Perception survey (Citizen evaluation/ scorecard)	By gender, region and social group	*Low standards of education *Poor health care, roads and electrical supply *Lack of food and clean water	26-10, 26-20, 30h, 30i, 32f, 32j