

TRUST BEYOND TRIBE:  
THE DYNAMICS OF PUBLIC GOODS PROVISION IN MULTI-ETHNIC  
COMMUNITIES ACROSS AFRICA

by

ANN PAWLIK KRYZANEK

(Under the direction of Markus M.L. Crepaz)

ABSTRACT

Why are some multi-ethnic communities able to achieve mutually beneficial collective action while others remain trapped in social dilemmas? Across a wide variety of settings, scholars have demonstrated that ethnic diversity tends to undermine the local provision of public goods. However, recent empirical studies have found exceptions to this rule. In some diverse communities the hindrances to collective action are less challenging, as individuals of different ethnicities are willing to work together to manage public resources or supply supplementary public goods. This dissertation addresses when and why we observe local goods provision in multi-ethnic localities across Africa, identifying inter-ethnic trust as a causal mechanism enabling individuals to contribute to their community's well-being despite its diversity. Building on constructivist scholarship, this dissertation explores the micro-foundational link between identity and trust as well as the institutional and demographic factors that shape patterns of inter-ethnic trust in diverse communities, ultimately linking these factors to individual participation in public goods provision. I argue that multi-ethnic communities will be able to resolve their collective action problems and pro-

vide public goods locally in those areas where the saliency of ethnicity has been tempered by contextual variables and inter-ethnic trust has been given space to germinate. To test my hypotheses, I use public opinion surveys from the Afrobarometer project, country-level measures of ethnic fragmentation, and original data collected in ethnically heterogeneous neighborhoods across Cape Town, South Africa to conduct statistical, large-n analyses of identity, trust, and participation across Africa as well as an in-depth case study of local goods provision in Cape Town. The dissertation reveals two main findings. First, the degree to which individuals trust non-coethnics depends on the strength of their ethnic identification. Secondly, in contexts of both ethnic homogeneity and heterogeneity, individuals who are trusting of non-coethnics are more likely to contribute to goods provision. My results bolster constructivist scholarship on the context-dependent effects of ethnicity and highlight the conditions under which collective action can be sustained in diverse societies. The dissertation offers cross-disciplinary implications for scholarship and policy in the development field.

INDEX WORDS: public goods provision, ethnicity, identity, trust, participation, institutions, Africa, South Africa, Cape Town.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

This dissertation seeks to explain why some multi-ethnic communities in Africa are better able to provide local public goods than others. In some diverse communities across the continent, residents cooperate to implement night patrols, working together to police their own neighborhoods. In other multi-ethnic villages, neighbors struggle to maintain and repair community wells that provide safe drinking water to the community. This dissertation asks a simple question: what explains why diverse communities differ in their capacity to govern their own commons?

Ethnic diversity appears to pose intractable problems for societies in every corner of the globe. Scholars have found that, in many heterogeneous societies, ethnic groups are polarized. As a result, inter-ethnic cooperation rarely manifests and sound public policies are often eschewed. Many political scientists consider ethnic diversity to be a source of long-run stagnation, democratic instability, and other suboptimal political and economic outcomes (Easterly and Levine 1997; Collier 2010).

Fundamentally, ethnic diversity has been found to undermine that which is essential to functioning societies, namely the provision of public goods. From rural villages in East Africa to populous suburbs in Maryland, empirical scholarship has demonstrated that multi-

ethnic societies experience lower levels of public goods provision (Vigdor 2004; Miguel and Gugerty 2005). At the state level, scholars have found that shares of public spending on education, roads, and garbage collection are lower in multi-ethnic localities than in more homogeneous ones (Alesina, Baqir, and Easterly 1999). At the local level, scholars have observed ethnically heterogeneous communities struggling to raise money in school fundraisers and manage shared irrigation channels (Miguel and Gugerty 2005).

In many respects, this relationship is unsurprising. Providing public goods, beyond those afforded by the state, requires cooperation on the part of individuals in communities. In order to enjoy the benefits of public roads and irrigation channels, members of communities need to work together to keep these forms of public infrastructure from degrading. But cooperation is difficult to engender and sustain in multiethnic communities. The obstacles to collective action are often too great to overcome in a community of people unlike one another, leaving these areas in a kind of social and economic trap.

This trap is particularly problematic in developing countries. The state in the developing world is characteristically weak. Its capacity is circumscribed by the limited resources it accumulates from a meager tax base.<sup>1</sup> States are, therefore, unable to provide an adequate supply of public goods. With anemic government institutions, local communities are often left to support themselves in providing public services like waste management, well maintenance, and security. Habyarimana and his coauthors describe the importance of and difficulty with local goods provision in one multi-ethnic area in the heart of Kampala, Uganda:

The biggest hardship for the area's residents comes not from the plainness of their houses or the absence of amenities like electric lights and indoor toilets, but from rainy season flooding, which transforms the neighborhoods unpaved streets into rivers of mud, submerges houses in filth, and leaves putrid standing water that breeds cholera, malaria, and other diseases. Drainage channels

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<sup>1</sup>Moreover, the state's role in societies of the developing world has been circumscribed in the past two decades, due to the requisites of neoliberal aid and lending programs (e.g. "Structural Adjustment").

designed to carry away the excess rainwater snake throughout the area, but the government has not maintained them for years, and they are too choked with garbage and debris to be of any use. So when the rains come, the floodwaters rise. (Habyarimana et al. 2009, 1)

Even where the government does provide essential services, communities are often called upon to provide supplementary public goods. While governments may provide teacher salaries across Kenya, for instance, school materials and physical infrastructure is funded through contributions made by the local community (Miguel and Gugerty 2005). In short, where the state is weak, community provision of goods and services becomes even more essential to the well-being of residents. And the impediments to collective action brought on by ethnic heterogeneity are even more troubling.

But behind this diversity trap, lies a puzzle. While scholarship has demonstrated that ethnic heterogeneity undermines public goods provision, recent empirical studies illustrate that this relationship is far from axiomatic. In some diverse communities of the developing world, the hindrances to collective action are fewer. People of different ethnicities are able to work together amicably to provide public goods or manage a common pool resource. For instance, Vedeld (2000) examined the management of village-based common property regimes in ethnically heterogeneous, stratified communities of Mali. His analysis shows little direct evidence that heterogeneity hindered the success of these communities in public resource management, noting that these ethnically diverse villages were capable of finding solutions to collective action problems. In a similar study, Somanathan, Prabhakar, and Mehta (2007) examined the effects of diversity on local initiatives to protect forest resources in villages across India. They found that neither of their measures of heterogeneity had a significant effect on the ability of those communities to hire a watchman or, more broadly, manage their forest resources.

Miguel's (2004) comparative analysis of public goods provision in rural Kenya and Tanzania imparts more contrary evidence. Miguel studied two rural villages—located across

the Kenyan-Tanzanian border from each other—with comparable socio-economic characteristics and similar levels of ethnic heterogeneity. He found that while ethnic diversity appeared to lower individual contributions to education funding in Busia, Kenya, diversity had little effect on fundraising efforts in Meatu, Tanzania. This multi-ethnic community in rural Tanzania was able to achieve significantly better outcomes in public goods provision than a similarly composed village just across the border.

Finally, Lemon's (2008) case study of school transformation in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa highlights puzzling variation in local goods provision across multi-ethnic localities.<sup>2</sup> Since the fall of Apartheid, many former Indian schools in Pietermaritzburg have desegregated and now comprise a significant percentage of Black African students. Many of these schools are cash-strapped and derive a sizable portion of their income from voluntary fundraising efforts. Some multi-ethnic schools in Pietermaritzburg have floundered in their attempts to raise additional monies for textbooks, computers, worksheets, phones, and the maintenance of buildings and grounds. But other diverse schools have achieved considerable success with fundraising initiatives. The Heather Secondary School, for example, held a debutante ball in order to fund a second computer room. Considering that many African students commute to Heather School and incur transportation costs on top of institutional fees, their fundraising efforts are an impressive achievement.

These studies provide cases that contradict our expectations as well as the findings of broad-based research on the relationship between ethnic diversity and public goods provision. It appears that, in some settings, inter-ethnic cooperation at the community level can be sustained. What accounts for this cooperative capacity? What enables some individuals to contribute to improving the welfare of their neighbors, when those neighbors speak different languages and practice customs that are foreign to them? Why do some diverse

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<sup>2</sup>Pietermaritzburg is the capital and second largest city in the province of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa. It is home to one of the largest populations of Indian South Africans in the country. Approximately, 29 percent of the population is Indian, according to the 2001 South African census.

communities remain trapped in their collective action problems, while others confront their shared challenges? These questions not only represent a difficult analytical issue in comparative theory, but also an important practical problem that demands attention. Finding a cogent solution to these puzzling questions has important implications for both scholarship and policy.

## **1.1 The Argument in Brief**

In this dissertation, I argue that variations in environments of inter-ethnic trust explain why some multi-ethnic communities are able to provide public goods locally and others are not. To achieve welfare-improving ends, a community must develop a capacity for cooperative behavior that reconciles self-interest and collective benefits. Trust is central to establishing this capacity. It reduces the uncertainty involved in social exchange and ameliorates fears of exploitation. As such, trust enables individuals to cooperate because it encompasses a belief that others will engage in reciprocal behavior. In diverse societies, however, the resolution of collective action problems requires foundations of inter-ethnic trust, in which individuals' trust is extended to ethnically different people. Inter-ethnic trust helps to bind non-coethnics into mutually reciprocal relationships that help them converge on mutually beneficial outcomes.

But whether or not inter-ethnic trust materializes in diverse communities will depend upon contextual factors. Inter-ethnic interaction takes place in varied social, political, and institutional contexts. In some diverse communities, ethnic cleavages are politically relevant and ethnic identities socially salient. Ethnicity, then, is expressed and invoked in social life, structuring patterns of trust therein. In others, cleavages remain dormant, maintaining little relevance in social arenas. Essentially, these community prototypes possess different foundations for the development of inter-ethnic trust. And as a result, they will experience

different outcomes with respect to local goods provision—some will be able to resolve their collective dilemmas, while others will remain trapped in them. In short, I argue that, across multi-ethnic communities, the dynamics of inter-ethnic trust will vary with the relevancy of ethnic cleavages and the saliency of ethnic identities. It these patterns of trust—shaped by varied social, political and institutional contexts—that condition the capacity of these communities to confront their shared problems.

This study builds an explanation from the inside out. First, I explore the micro-foundations of both ethnic identity and trust. In doing so, I provide a framework for understanding how ethnicity impacts collective action by parsing out how ethnic identity shapes individual behavior. Secondly, I examine the macro-level variables that structure inter-ethnic interaction, highlighting the varied and contingent effects of ethnicity. In doing so, I account for variation in social and political outcomes across multi-ethnic societies, particularly local goods provision.

Among the contributions of this projects, the dissertation adds nuance to a literature that has underspecified variations in the shape, intensity, and outcomes of ethnic divisions. As such, it has left us without the necessary tools to understand why diverse communities differ in their capacity to achieve mutually beneficial collective action. This dissertation attempts to fill this gap. It is not meant to provide an all encompassing explanation of public goods provision in multi-ethnic communities. Rather, my purpose is to develop a framework that clearly explicates the role of ethnicity in collective action, so that we may better understand when and where ethnic diversity will undermine economic development or democratic consolidation and when it will not.

## 1.2 A Roadmap of the Chapters Ahead

This dissertation uses Sub-Saharan Africa as a setting to test this argument. I examine how inter-ethnic trust impacts the success of local goods provision in multi-ethnic communities by analyzing data on patterns of trust and participatory behavior in African countries. Public opinion surveys from the Afrobarometer survey are used to tap individual attitudes about trust and one's willingness to contribute to community development projects. In addition, I use these survey data to examine the links between ethnic identity and trust attitudes. In doing so, I provide insight into how the saliency of ethnic cleavages impacts the development of inter-ethnic trust in heterogeneous localities. Finally, I use original data collected in Cape Town, South Africa to examine the role that ethnic identities play in shaping trust patterns in heterogeneous neighborhoods throughout the city and how such dynamics impact the capacity for these communities to provide public goods locally. It is important to note that, although I employ data specific to Africa, my dissertation findings are broadly generalizable. In this way, my findings advance comparative theory, while providing insight into political behavior on the African continent.

This dissertation proceeds as follows. In the next chapter, I examine social science literature on public goods, collective action, and ethnicity. I first address why the provision of public goods remains a quintessential collective action problem and, then, examine scholarship on what factors help to resolve these social dilemmas. Next, I explore literature on the impact of ethnic heterogeneity on the provision of public goods and the various mechanisms that lead diverse communities to experience collective action failures. Ultimately, this chapter provides insight into what political scientists, sociologists, and economists have learned about diversity and public goods provision and what gaps remain in the literature. Chapter Three lays out the theoretical framework that guides this dissertation. It argues that trust is an essential ingredient in the successful provision of local goods in diverse locali-

ties. It leverages recent scholarship on trust and ethnicity, to build an explanation of why some multi-ethnic communities are better able to achieve mutually beneficial collective action than others.

Chapters Four, Five, and Six delve into empirical analysis. In Chapter Four, I demonstrate how the salience of ethnic identity shapes individual willingness to trust non-coethnics. In Chapter Five, I elucidate the link between trust and local goods provision, demonstrating that higher levels of out-group trust are associated with increased levels of participation in community development projects. I show that this relationship holds in both ethnically homogeneous and ethnically heterogeneous contexts. Together, these chapters provide a systematic, cross-national analysis of the relationship between ethnicity, trust, and local goods provision throughout Africa. In Chapter Six, I test my argument in a specific community context. I present a comparative analysis of local neighborhood watches and community policing efforts in two multi-ethnic Cape Town neighborhoods. Finally, Chapter Seven presents concluding thoughts, including implications for scholarship and policy as well as directions for future research.

## **Chapter 2**

# **Public Goods, Collective Action, and Ethnicity**

### **2.1 Social Dilemmas**

Public goods are essential to functioning and healthy societies. For the poor communities of the developing world, collective resources are even more valuable. In such settings, water wells, irrigation channels, latrines, and primary schools provide benefits that greatly enhance the welfare of citizens. However, the properties of these goods can lead to their under-provision. Public goods are types of resources that are non-rivalrous and non-excludable (Samuelson 1954). In other words, an individual's consumption of a public good does not subtract from any other persons consumption of it; moreover, no one person can be excluded from using these resources. While public goods produce positive externalities for the public at large, their provision is not remunerated. As such, they become subject to pervasive free-rider problems.

Therefore, eliciting participation in the provision of public goods embodies a standard collective action problem. Social dilemmas plague political and social life in every corner

of the globe and their origins and solutions have occupied the attention of political theorists, social scientists, and policy practitioners alike.<sup>1</sup> They describe situations in which groups of interdependent actors, each acting rationally and in their own self-interest, fail to undertake an action that would benefit everyone involved. The familiar, game-theoretic tool of the prisoner's dilemma illustrates this problem. In a two-person game, *noncooperation* becomes an optimal strategy for its players. While cooperating would improve the outcome of the interaction for both parties, neither person can be assured of the other's commitment to the effort. The game's equilibrium demonstrates the great divide between individual rationality and collective interests.

In his seminal *Logic of Collective Action*, Olson (1965) provided a parsimonious theory explaining this pattern of social life. Grounding his work in rationalist assumptions of human behavior, Olson describes how incentive structures prevent individuals from acting collectively to provide non-excludable and non-rivalrous public goods. An individual's decision to participate in a joint, group endeavor may be influenced by incentives to "free ride" on the contributions of other group members. She recognizes that the cost of her participation is great; in many cases, it involves time, money, and other risks. The benefits she receives from her contribution, however, are diffuse and uncertain. Olson argued that an individual will be motivated to participate only when inducements (in the form of rewards) or coercion (in the form of sanctions) are used. He explains, "Only a separate and selective incentive will stimulate a rational individual in a latent group to act in a group-oriented way" (Olson 1965, 51). Therefore, voluntary collective action in the public arena will only come to fruition in small groups, in which the outcome of individual contributions can be easily discerned.<sup>2</sup> Using Olsonian logic, one would be fairly pessimistic about persons volunteering their time or personal income towards public goods projects in their

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<sup>1</sup>As early as the 17th century, Thomas Hobbes questioned whether groups would voluntarily contribute to the provision of "social order" in his *Leviathan*.

<sup>2</sup>see (Poteete and Ostrom 2004) for further discussion of group size and collective action.

communities.

### **2.1.1 Institutional Solutions**

Expanding on Olson's foundational ideas, scholars have continued to explore the dynamics of collective action. Given our theoretical expectations, many have been puzzled by the frequency of cooperative behavior that we observe in the social world. There seems to be pervasive gap between the expected equilibriums of social interaction and actual observed behavior (see Ostrom (1998) for a review). If individuals indeed act rationally in their own self interest, what can explain a voluntary contribution to a public good, a large turnout of voters on election day, or a spirited political demonstration?

Scholars have attempted to account for cooperative behavior using these same rationalist frameworks. Axelrod and Hamilton's (1981) game theoretic simulations demonstrated one such solution. In his simulated games, the outcome of prisoner's dilemmas changed when the game was played repeatedly. His findings suggest that rational egoists are able to cooperate with one another if they are involved in repeated interactions and employ tit-for-tat reciprocal strategies.

This seminal study sparked the interest of institutionalist scholars in international relations, economics, and political science. Institutions, they insisted, could provide a setting for repeated interaction and, therefore, act as a mechanism for mitigating cooperative dilemmas. They tend to solve problems associated with information, cost structures and commitment, which are often recognized as crucial impediments to cooperation. Keohane (1984) argued that if parties lock themselves into institutions, these commitments can provide the time-extending environment that enables tit-for-tat behavior. In this way, institutions induce cooperation between parties by extending the "shadow of the future." Secondly, ideal-type institutions are "information gatherers" in that they increase the sym-

metry and quality of information that parties receive about one another. Thirdly, institutions may be able to modify incentive structures for individuals, as economic historian Douglass North has illustrated. In describing strategic voting among legislators, North explains: "... the institutional framework has altered the cost to the individual of expressing his or her convictions... the choices that were made were different than they would be if the individual bore the full cost that resulted from those actions" (North 1990, 385). Finally, institutions can prescribe coercion, which may alter an individual's incentive to free-ride on the contributions of others. Robert Bates explains, "By employing sanctions, institutions make it in the best interest of the players to choose strategies that enable to transcend collective dilemmas" (Bates 1988, 390). With a comprehensive array of theoretical and empirical work, new institutionalists have been able to demonstrate how these structures can mitigate the ill-effects of rationality and self-interest. In doing so, they help reconcile individual interests and collective welfare.

For some scholars, then, communal provision of public goods hinges on the proper design of institutions that can elicit participation. Expanding on developments in institutional economics, Ostrom (1991) examined the relationship between institutional rules and collective action at the local level. In her Nobel-prize winning work *Governing the Commons*, Ostrom tackled a lasting problem in political economy. How can a community manage common-pool resources, so as to prevent their over-consumption and subsequent degradation? Economists have assumed that such coordination could only be achieved through privatization efforts or state enforcement. Ostrom, however, argues that stable, decentralized institutions of self-government can be created in some communities in order to manage these resources. In keeping with rationalist postulations about individual incentives and constraints, she demonstrates that successful management institutions solved problems of supply, credibility, and monitoring. In short, Ostrom's work highlights that properly designed institutions can facilitate collective action and prevent "tragedies of the

commons” (Hardin 1968) from occurring. For institutionalist scholars, the communal provision of public goods in multi-ethnic communities hinges on institutions that can elicit participation in local projects.

## 2.1.2 Norms and Networks

While institutional theories of cooperation have gained prominence in social science, other scholars have cast doubt on these efficient explanations of social order. In an oft-cited essay, Bates (1988) questions the claims of new institutionalists, arguing that supplying institutions constitutes a collective action problem in and of itself.<sup>3</sup> If individuals indeed face incentives to free-ride on the contributions of others, institutions that induce cooperation between social partners should fail to materialize. Given this, some scholars have moved away from institutions in order to explore the social basis of collective action, highlighting relationships and “patterns of solidarity” as important foundations for cooperation (Lichbach 1996). It is “vehicles of culture”—norms, values, and identities— that provide the “cement of society” and facilitate collective action (Elster 1989, 248). Bates explains, “We... have an alternative theory of the origins of institutions. Rather than being founded on notions of contracting, coercion, and sanctions, this notion is instead based on concepts such as community, symbolism, and trust” (Bates 1988, 399).

These alternative explanations of cooperation underpin the expanding literature on the importance of social capital in economic, social, and political life (Coleman 1990; Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti 1994; Fukuyama 1995). Social capital, as Robert Putnam has defined it, is the “features of social life—networks, norms, trust—that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives” (Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti 1994, 665). Social capital theorists argue that social networks establish regular patterns of inter-

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<sup>3</sup>In *Governing the Commons*, Elinor Ostrom identifies this problem as a “second-order dilemma.”

action, thus making it easier for communities to engage in mutually beneficial collective action. These networks—and the norms, values, and belief systems that support them—lower transaction costs that serve as crucial impediments to collective action. In communities with dense networks or vibrant associational activity, we are likely to find “fabrics of trust” that enable groups to overcome the pitfalls of opportunism. We will find strong norms of reciprocity, a citizenry engaged in public discourse, and a general atmosphere of public-spiritedness. These scholars would argue that social capital facilitates the local provision of public goods, as it enables citizens to work together for the benefit of the community.

In fact, social capital has become an important variable in development studies, spawning a burgeoning literature on its role in economic growth and sustainability (Isham, Kelly, and Ramaswamy 2002; Grootaert and van Bastelaer 2002). Scholars have begun to examine how social cohesiveness can affect development outcomes in poor communities (see Woolcock and Narayan (2000) for discussion). In their study of irrigation systems in Sri Lanka, for example, Uphoff and Wijayaratna (2000) found that social capital resources have enabled farmers to optimally manage their community resources. And in her extensive research on local development activities in Northern India, Krishna (2002) found that villages with high levels of social capital outperformed those without such resources. Moreover, social integration at the village-level was associated with increased democratic participation and reduced conflict between religious, ethnic, and caste groups.

Social capital may produce positive externalities at the individual level as well. In his study of poor communities in Bolivia, Gray-Molina et al. (2001) and his coauthors demonstrated how social capital resources prevented some families from falling into poverty. Narayan and Pritchett’s (1999) survey research in Tanzania found a link between village-level social capital and household income.<sup>4</sup> It seems that, for both individuals and commu-

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<sup>4</sup>In their study, an increase in village social capital indicators was associated with a 20 percent increase in household expenditures.

nities, social capital can provide solutions to dilemmas in the context of poorly functioning or absent markets. Since financial and human capital are scarcely available in many rural communities of the developing world, social capital is a valuable asset. As such, it has become an important predictor of individual welfare or development outcomes.<sup>5</sup> In sum, because developing societies operate within scarce institutional environments, it is essential to consider social capital as an alternative solution to collective action problems.<sup>6</sup>

The literature on collective action has provided insight on the dilemma of public goods provision and the conditions that mitigate these problems. Across a multitude of settings, we have learned that individuals indeed act rationally and in their own self-interest. We have also learned that individuals are embedded in institutional and communal environments that can help groups overcome moral hazards. The challenge for social scientists is to determine in which contexts these solutions succeed or fail.

## **2.2 Ethnic Heterogeneity and Public Goods Provision**

Over the past decade, a great deal of theoretical and empirical scholarship has questioned whether the solutions to social dilemmas fall short in ethnically heterogeneous communities. In fact, ethnic diversity has been shown to impede social cooperation across different settings. Using survey data gathered across U.S. localities, Alesina and La Ferrara (2000) show that participation in communal group activities is significantly lower in ethnically diverse areas. Using comparable data, Alesina, Baqir, and Easterly (1999) found that public spending on education, roads, waste management and other shared goods was inversely related to a municipality's ethnic fragmentation. It seems that public resources are often un-

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<sup>5</sup>Gray-Molina identifies social capital as a risk-smoothing institutions for the poor; Narayan and Pritchett discuss how these resources as as informal safety nets in developing societies.

<sup>6</sup>In her 1998 APSA address, Ostrom (1998) argues that within institutionally dearth settings we are especially likely to observe the use of norms, reciprocity, and cognitive learning in cooperative endeavors.

derfunded in communities composed of polarized ethnic constituencies. Voters, they argue, tend to value benefits exclusively accrued to group members, and their political representatives act accordingly. Similarly, Vigdor (2004) found that racial and ethnic heterogeneity was associated with lower response rates to the 2000 U.S. Census, which is used to secure federal grants for the community.

Other scholars have demonstrated how ethnic diversity hinders collective action and public goods provision in non-Western settings. According to Ahuja's (1998) study on agricultural resource management in Cote D'Ivoire, land degradation appears significantly worse in more ethnically heterogeneous villages. Banerjee, Iyer, and Somanathan (2005) discuss how social heterogeneity, rooted in the Hindu caste system, has undermined access to public goods in many rural Indian villages. And in Northern Pakistan, Khwaja (2009) found that diverse localities performed poorly with respect to communal infrastructure maintenance. These collective action failures suggest that ethnic identity has a profound effect on social, economic, and political outcomes. In the next section, I will explore theories of ethnic identity before moving on to discuss the literature on heterogeneity and social dilemmas.

### **2.2.1 Theories of Ethnic Identity**

Ethnicity has been causally linked to a number of macro-political outcomes, including commons dilemmas (Wade 1994), party formation (Chandra 2004), democratic destabilization (Lijphart 1991), communal violence (Varshney 2003) and civil war (Huntington 1992). In many political communities across the globe, ethnicity structures social life, economic markets, and political organization. While most scholars agree that ethnic identity poses a great challenge to political order in many corners of the globe, they disagree on how it emerges and what motivates its use in politics.

Primordialists contend that ethnic identities are fixed and immutable. They argue that individuals are born into kinship groups and share objective cultural attributes with other members of these groups, including language, religion, traditions, and even dress (Geertz and Others 1963). Clifford Geertz writes, “These congruities of blood, speech, custom, and so on, are seen to have an ineffable, and at times, overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves” (Geertz 1973, 259). Primordialists believe that ethnicity plays a pivotal role in politics because of the solidarity that is naturally shared between group members, rooted in a sense of common ancestry, historical memory, and shared culture (Smith 1971). Moreover, many of these scholars place emphasis on the psychological benefits of group identity and the emotional satisfaction that one receives from belonging to a group (Rex 1995).

Constructivist scholars, however, reject the notion that ethnic identities are an immutable phenomenon. While they recognize that ethnicity can be a powerful force in many environments, they place emphasis on other causal variables that evoke these identifications. In doing so, constructivists illustrate how ethnic groups are, “... fluid and endogenous to a set of social, economic, and political processes” (Chandra 2001, 7). One variant of this school of thought espouses a materialist explanation for ethnic group behavior. Bates (1973) argues that ethnic identification may not be valued in and of itself, but rather as a means to achieve desired goods. Groups like the Kikuyu of Kenya and the Baganda of Uganda, he explains, were established in the context of modern political competition, whereby interest groups jockey for the resources that accompany modernization. In this sense, ethnic solidarities are linked to the distribution of resources in society and not a function of “objective cultural differences” (Hechter 1974).<sup>7</sup>

Another variant of constructivism places emphasis on political entrepreneurs who acti-

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<sup>7</sup>Hechter argues that groups in general—whether they be ethnic, religious, or class-based—exist in order to supply their members with some desired good. Groups emerge, essentially, because of a “shared interest in the consumption of some joint good” (Hechter 1987, 33).

vate ethnic identities in public arenas.<sup>8</sup> These instrumentalists argue that it is political actors who help to imbue identities with meanings they may not otherwise contain. For these scholars ethnicity is little more than a construction “... of elites, who draw upon, distort, and sometimes fabricate materials from the cultures of the groups they wish to represent in order to protect their well-being or existence or to gain political and economic advantage for their groups as well as for themselves” (Brass 1991, 8). Constructivist understandings of ethnic identity have become hegemonic in social science, as they seem to account for the variation in ethnic solidarity, cooperation, and conflict that we observe across time and space.

### 2.2.2 Explaining Failure

While these theories of ethnic identity have informed our understandings of a range of political behaviors in heterogeneous settings, my specific interest lies with local goods provision in diverse communities. Various explanations have been put forward to explain why diversity often impedes a community’s ability to act collectively for public benefit. Some scholarship highlights the prevalence of in-group favoritism in social environments. Grounding their work in social identity theory, these scholars maintain that individuals tend to care more about the welfare of their own ethnic group members (e.g. Horowitz, 1985).<sup>9</sup> In fact, experimental research has demonstrated that individuals value membership in groups and often display a particular bias towards members of their own group (Tajfel et al. 1971).<sup>10</sup>

Group bias, therefore, has become an important causal variable in ethnic studies. Alesina

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<sup>8</sup>The term “political entrepreneurs” was coined by Charles Tilly in his 2003 book *The Politics of Collective Violence*.

<sup>9</sup>Social identity theory is an umbrella term for research on groups, coming out of the field of social psychology.

<sup>10</sup>In some experiments individuals displayed bias toward out-group members even in randomly-assigned groupings (see Muzafer 1966)

and Glaeser (2004) argue that racial discrimination can partially explain the divergence in welfare spending between the U.S. and Europe. They explain, “This history of American redistribution makes it quite clear that hostility to welfare derives in part from the fact that welfare spending in the United States goes disproportionately to minorities” (Alesina and Glaeser 2004, 247). Some scholars have even incorporated findings from sociobiology into their research on group bias, latching onto the controversial theory of “ethnic nepotism” (Salter 2004).<sup>11</sup> In their study of ethnic Russians, Moldovans, and Roma, Butovskaya et al. (2000) describe an “innate propensity” to display group favoritism and engage in selective altruism. In diverse societies, they explain, ethnic “... members tend to feel nepotistically about their descent groups, directing familial-type altruism toward them” (Butovskaya et al. 2000, 158). Similarly, Salter’s (2004) edited volume *Welfare, Ethnicity, and Altruism* examines how diversity impacts cross-ethnic charitableness in both industrialized societies and communities of the developing world. The authors find an inverse relationship between levels of ethnic heterogeneity and redistributive behaviors and policies. According to these scholars, mutually beneficial collective action in heterogeneous communities becomes problematic because individuals predominantly value benefits that are accrued to members of their own ethnic groups. As such, they may not be willing to bear the costs of providing goods that will be shared with other groups.

Other scholars have put forth alternative explanations for the seemingly inverse relationship between diversity and public goods provision. One group of scholarship places emphasis on a divergence of preferences between groups in society. For historical or institutional reasons, ethnic groups may have dissimilar preferences with respect to the allocation of resources. Bates’s (1973) work, “Ethnic Competition and Modernization in Africa” illustrates this idea. Colonial rule in Africa produced a geographic concentration

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<sup>11</sup>This theory was developed by Belgian sociologist, Berghe (1981), who drew parallels between ethnic groups and large families. He posited that co-ethnics cooperate because of a distinct sense of altruism felt for one’s kin members.

of tribal groups, in which many political constituencies are dominated by members of one ethnic group. Political competition in these localities, therefore, is characterized by relatively cohesive groups, with common interests in the benefits of modernity (education, employment, etc.), vying for a share of public resources. In a more recent study, Alesina, Baqir, and Easterly (1999) suspect that heterogeneity decreases public spending on shared resources because ethnic groups often disagree on which types of public goods should be produced with tax revenues. Using language instruction in Oakland, California as an illustrative example, they explain:

“Language is an issue for blacks in Oakland, as witness the recent furor over the proposal by the Oakland School Board that black English be recognized as a separate language (“Ebonics”). Although far from consensus on the Ebonics extreme, many blacks feel that inner city black children speaking nonstandard English have a right to programs that meet their needs. Many Hispanic parents complain of insufficient public resources for their children to get English as a second language classes or bilingual education. Many Hispanics reacted with hostility to the ill-fated ebonics proposal as a “thinly veiled effort to grab bilingual funds.” Black parents responded that bilingual education has diverted resources away from addressing the special needs of *their* children... For their part, many whites have objected to the diversion of *any* resources to any non-standard English instruction. If *all* ethnic groups are dissatisfied, this may be a good indication of polarized groups who have wound up at an unhappy position in the middle (Alesina, Baqir, and Easterly 1999, 1252).”

As a consequence of these divergent preferences, they argue, the school district will spend less on language instruction (and public education in general) than it would have in the absence of such polarization. In sum, this literature assumes that ethnic groups share

preferences over public resources and that these preferences often stand in contrast to those of other ethnic groups in society. In the absence of similar preferences, collective action will be more difficult to achieve.

In linking ethnic diversity to public goods provision, both of these groups of literature focus primarily on preference mechanisms. Other scholars, however, explore how ethnic heterogeneity affects human behavior in a strategic environment (as opposed to how it alters preferences). Habyarimana et al.'s (2009) compelling research on public goods provision in the ethnically diverse slums of Kampala, Uganda identify certain “technology” and “strategy selection” mechanisms that help to explain how coethnicity facilitates cooperation. First, co-ethnics may have an advantage in accomplishing collective tasks because they are better able to communicate and, thus, are able to function more efficiently with one another. Members of the same ethnic group are able to take advantage of common cultural materials (e.g. language) that can facilitate coordination.<sup>12</sup> Secondly, an individual may be better able to “read” a co-ethnic’s behavioral cues, improving the likelihood that she will engage in cooperative activities with them (Bacharach and Gambetta 2001).<sup>13</sup> Habyarimana et al. explain, “... knowing whether a potential partner is dedicated or smart may make an enormous difference in an individual’s willingness to cooperate. Coethnics may be better able to pick up on these unobservable characteristics, perhaps because some observable traits carry signs that coethnics are more adept at deciphering” (Habyarimana et al. 2009, 90).

In this view, ethnicity is primarily a signaling mechanism, influencing a player’s *strategic* behavior. In an experimental study, two economists undertook a series of “trust” and “dictator” games with a population of Israelis (Fershtman and Gneezy 2001). They found

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<sup>12</sup>Coethnics may even prefer working together. Alesina and La Ferrara (2000) have documented the tendency for ethnic and racial groups to self-segregate. In general, they suggest, individuals prefer interacting with people who are like them.

<sup>13</sup>The argument holds whether individuals may be better able to read co-ethnics or whether they *think* they are better able to read co-ethnics.

that Jews of Ashkenazic origin were less willing to cooperate with Jews of Sephardic descent, mainly because of mistaken stereotypes. Their choice of strategy reflected misperceptions about the future behavior of Eastern-origin Jews, as opposed to any “taste for discrimination” against them (Becker 1957). Some argue that ethnic discrimination derives from individuals innately favoring their own group. These scholars demonstrate that discrimination is, rather, an “outcome of ethnic stereotyping that affects the players’ assessment regarding their game partners’ strategic responses or relevant characteristics” (Fershtman and Gneezy 2001, 352).

Finally, networks may be the most important causal mechanism in explaining why homogenous communities maintain an advantage in local goods provision. Ethnic groups are often bound together in dense social networks, interacting more frequently with each other than with members of other groups. As Axelrod and Hamilton (1981) have demonstrated, collective action is more likely to come to fruition when parties expect to work together in the future. It appears that sustained interaction can increase the long-term advantages of cooperation relative to the short-term gains of defection. For these reasons, we can presume that ethnic networks facilitate collective action. Habyarimana et al. explain, “Homogenous groups might be better able to mount joint activities because members are reasonably confident that they will find themselves contemplating collective activities with others on a regular basis in the future” (Habyarimana et al. 2009, 10).

Moreover, ethnic networks provide a mechanism for sanctioning members who fail to contribute. As Ostrom (1991) has indicated, effective sanctioning procedures for “free riders” are essential to the success of common pool resource management. In fact, sanctions are a common explanation for the problem of social order at large (Hechter 1987). Many scholars assume that people will act in a socially responsible way only if they are punished for failing to do so (or, conversely, rewarded.) We have learned, however, that sanctions are applied more effectively within ethnic groups than between them. Miguel and Gugerty’s

(2005) research on primary school fundraising in rural Kenya attests to this, as school officials in more diverse communities were found to have greater difficulty imposing sanctions on non-contributing parents. In the absence of deterrents, ethnically diverse communities will face more extensive free-riding problems and, subsequently, lower goods provision.

Finally, ethnic networks can be used to gain information about potential cooperating partners. For instance, economists researching new immigrant communities in the U.S. and U.K. have documented the existence of pervasive intra-ethnic trade networks (see Bowles and Gintis (2004); Fisman (2003) for discussion). Such networks persist because of the informational benefits traders receive from them and not because of any favorable sentiments among group members. It seems these networks channel information about the trustworthiness of potential business partners, as new clients come recommended by members of their community (Fafchamps 2003).

Interestingly, Habyarimana et. al uncovered a different type of mechanism in experimental games with a representative sample of residents in Kampala's urban slums. They found evidence suggesting that players adhered to an in-group reciprocity norm, supported by expectations that individual free-riding will be sanctioned by members of the ethnic community. They conclude, "...the positive impact of ethnic homogeneity on collective action stems directly from the ability of ethnic ties to induce more cooperative behavior among those individuals who, absent the social connection provided by ethnicity, would be least likely to cooperate" (Habyarimana et al. 2007, 724). Each of these technology and strategy mechanisms illustrate how ethnic homogeneity enables cooperation by lowering those transaction costs that serve as barriers to collective action.

## 2.3 Conclusion

Empirical research suggests that while homogenous populations enjoy an advantage in cooperative endeavors, diverse communities seem doomed to remain trapped in social dilemmas. However, we have sufficient empirical evidence to assume that ethnic heterogeneity does not “pre-ordain failures in collective action” (Poteete and Ostrom 2004). Scholars have documented successful public goods provision in multi-ethnic communities, chronicling the collective efforts of diverse peoples (e.g. Vedeld (2000); Miguel and Gugerty (2005); Krishna (2007)).

In many respects, political science literatures have failed to adequately account for inter-ethnic cooperation.<sup>14</sup> Scholars have found an empirical link between diversity and failures in collective action and have begun to uncover the causal mechanisms behind this relationship. But they have not adequately addressed the limitations of their models. As such, they have failed to explain *when* and *why* cooperation succeeds in the presence of diversity. Essentially, the literature has underspecified variations in outcomes of ethnic diversity, thus presenting overly pessimistic prospects for multi-ethnic societies.

I introduce trust as an essential ingredient in successful public goods provision in Africa’s multi-ethnic communities. As a societal resource, trust facilitates cooperation among citizens. It enables individuals to participate in projects that benefit their communities. Bridging trust—a facet of trust that encompasses both in-group and out-group members—facilitates and sustains cooperation within a community of people unlike one another.

Some scholars are skeptical about the possibility of inter-ethnic cooperation in Africa’s multi-ethnic societies. Entrenched ethnic solidarities seem to distinguish the continent. Ethnicity, after all, is a source of trust across Africa. This creates challenges for diverse

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<sup>14</sup>(Fearon and Laitin 1996) highlight this gap in their study of the roots of inter-ethnic peace.

communities attempting to address shared problems. The boundaries erected between ethnic groups can impede wide-spread cooperation, leaving these communities in a development trap. However, this dissertation underscores the significance of variations in the saliency of ethnicity across institutional and social contexts. By highlighting this variation, I illustrate how some environments foster the development of bridging trust between non-coethnics. And bridging trust, I argue, helps to resolve collective action problems in multi-ethnic communities. In the next chapter, I lay out a theoretical framework linking trust and individual participation in local goods provision in Africa's diverse communities. My theory explores both the micro-foundations of trust and ethnicity as well as the contextual, macro-level variables that structure these foundations and shape eventual outcomes.

## Chapter 3

# Trust and Public Goods Provision in Multi-Ethnic Communities

The previous chapter examined the different theoretical paradigms that have been brought to bear on the dilemma of collective action in multi-ethnic communities. I now turn to my original puzzle, which demonstrated the unexpected observation that *some* diverse communities have been able to overcome these dilemmas. In some heterogeneous communities across Africa, the hindrances to collective action are less, as individuals of different ethnicities are willing to work together to manage public resources or supply supplementary public goods. What has enabled these individuals to contribute to their community's well-being, despite its high levels of diversity? I introduce trust as a vital ingredient in the dynamics of local goods provision across Africa. In this chapter, I illustrate the links between ethnicity, trust, and participation in community projects, highlighting variation in the saliency of ethnic identity across institutional and demographic contexts. As such, the chapter explores both the micro-foundations of trust and ethnicity as well as the contextual, macro-level variables that structure these foundations and shape outcomes of diversity on the continent.

### 3.1 Trust in Multi-Ethnic Societies

Trust is central to explaining why some individuals contribute their time or labor to local public goods projects. In its simplest form, trust can be conceived as “faith” in people. It is a belief in the moral commitment of others and encompasses an expectation that others will fulfill their promises. Those who are trusting, therefore, believe that they will not be exploited in their transactions. Consequently, trust can help an individual take a “leap of faith” and engage in cooperative activities, because they believe others will reciprocate such acts.

Trust, therefore, is a societal resource that citizens can harness for mutual benefit. It allows people to engage with one another in social interaction, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be viable (Coleman 1990; Crepaz 2008). It is not surprising that scholars view trust, and social capital in general, as a valuable asset to society. On an individual level, empirical evidence has demonstrated that people who feel that others in society can be trusted are more likely to be optimistic about their circumstances and have more positive views of government institutions (Robert 2000). On a macro level, more trusting societies tend to have better functioning democracies, less crime and corruption, and higher rates of economic growth (Inglehart 1989; Rothstein and Uslaner 2005; Knack and Keefer 1997).<sup>1</sup> These positive externalities have made trust an important subject of inquiry in social science research.

I apply the concept of trust within the context of local public goods provision. As the previous chapter explained, individuals often face incentives to free-ride on the public contributions of other community members. In this way, rationality and self-interest on the part of individuals lead to sub-optimal outcomes in society at large. Schools may be left without textbooks, neighborhood watches may fail to materialize, and drainage channels may

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<sup>1</sup>See Nannestad (2008) for a comprehensive review of this literature.

become crowded with waste. Trust helps communities avoid these outcomes by forging reciprocal relationships and, thus, facilitating cooperative behavior among citizens. But can trust sustain cooperation among a community of people unlike one another? I argue that it can. While engendering the cooperation that produces collective benefits has proven to be a difficult challenge in multi-ethnic societies, collective action problems are not intractable in such places. This dissertation is guided by the notion that “bridging trust”—a facet of trust that encompasses both in-group and out-group members—underpins local goods provision in diverse localities. Bridging trust brings together diverse ethnicities, elicits participation in public goods provision and, therefore, helps communities of self-interested individuals converge on mutually beneficial outcomes.

In the remainder of this section, I describe the mechanisms of trust and its role in resolving collective action problems. I then explore how ethnicity impacts the foundations of trust and, sometimes, weakens the basis for cooperation in multi-ethnic communities. Later in the chapter, I discuss how certain institutional and demographic settings nurture the development of inter-ethnic trust in multi-ethnic communities and how these bridges, in turn, help some communities conquer the social dilemmas that have plagued others.

### **3.1.1 The Mechanisms of Trust**

In many respects, one’s trust of another is grounded in expectations about future behavior (Hardin 2002). Many forms of social interaction involve risk-taking, in which there are observable costs and incalculable benefits for the persons involved. In such settings, individuals tend to be uncertain about the intentions of their potential partners, and are, therefore, uncertain about the outcome of their interaction (Heimer 2001). Without the ability to predict outcomes, the transaction costs of cooperating become prohibitively high. Consider an illustrative example. Two classmates, Robert and Mary, choose to form a study

group in preparation for a final exam. Robert is unsure whether Mary will contribute a fair share of notes and other study materials for the exam; she may use his materials without providing anything in return. He naturally asks himself, “Will I be exploited in this transaction? Will she act in a way that is entirely self-interested or will she act in a manner that is beneficial to me?” Robert’s uncertainty serves to hinder cooperation between these two classmates.

This outcome may change, however, if Robert views Mary as trustworthy and expects that she will contribute to the effort. His trust of Mary ameliorates concerns about opportunism and enables his cooperation. But from where do Robert’s beliefs about Mary’s trustworthiness come? Many scholars would argue that information provides the foundation of trust. Our doubts about the intentions or competence of others lead us to search for information that can inform us about their trustworthiness (Yamagishi 2001). Individuals engage in a kind of Bayesian process, in which they update their expectations about another’s behavior with each new encounter. Once an individual has gathered enough information about their potential partner, they have a kind of shortcut to future decision-making. Eric Uslaner explains, “...when we trust other people, we don’t have to face every opportunity to cooperate as a new decision” (Uslaner 2002, 2). In short, experiences provide information that helps to establish trust between persons, as it gives reason for individuals to believe that others will act beneficially (or at least innocuously) before knowing the outcome of their behavior (Foddy and Yamagishi 2009).<sup>2</sup> Robert’s past experiences with Mary engenders his trust, mitigates his risk, and leads to his cooperation. We can be confident that, aside from concrete institutional solutions, trust between persons can resolve those collective dilemmas that plague political and social life. The challenge, then, is to decipher how diversity, and ethnic identity in general, shape such a process.

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<sup>2</sup>Put differently, Misztal writes, “To trust is to believe that the results of somebody’s intended action will be appropriate from our point of view” (Misztal 1996, 9).

### 3.1.2 The Role of Ethnicity

In many different environments, ethnic identity serves as an important source of information that increases trust between persons and helps to resolve collective action dilemmas. But before addressing this link, we must first unpack the concept of ethnic identity and understand the role it plays in social environments. Identity can be described as one's sense of self in relation to the external world. Because individuals inhabit a world of immense complexity, they use identity points to organize their social environment. Henry Hale explains, "It is useful to treat the notion of identity as the set of points of personal reference on which people rely to navigate the social world they inhabit, to make sense of the myriad constellations of social relationships that they encounter, to discern one's place in these constellations, and to understand the opportunities for action in this context" (Hale 2004, 463). In other words, identities provide information that help to define one's social role in relation to others. As such, they function as a means for interpreting possibilities and constraints in social interaction.

Ethnicity, like class or gender, is a type of identity. In her annual review piece, Chandra explains, "Ethnic identities are a subset of identity categories in which eligibility for membership is determined by attributes associated with, or believed to be associated with, descent" (Chandra 2006, 398). An individual is invested with an ethnic identity if she is characterized by certain ascriptive markers acquired genetically or through "cultural and historical inheritance."<sup>3</sup> Her ethnic identity will become infused with normative and symbolic importance, if she is embedded in an environment where it forms the basis for continually realizing her goals. If individuals continuously interact in terms of ethnicity and ongoing social relationships are structured by ethnicity (as opposed to other identity

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<sup>3</sup>Chandra (2006) notes that genetic attributes include skin color, gender, hair type, eye color, height, or physical features. Culturally or historically inherited attributes include name, language, place of birth, origin of ancestors, or tribal markings.

points), one's ethnic identity will become "socially validated" and existentially salient, thus producing corresponding attitudes and behaviors (Mozaffar 1995, 56). In other words, ethnicity becomes a prominent identity point in the process of navigating social relationships.

As a subset of identity, then, ethnicity serves as a type of "social radar" (Hale 2004). The empirical markers of ethnicity provide individuals with low-cost information about others. For instance, in the process of social exchange an individual may use markers of dress or dialect to elicit information about another person. He, in turn, uses that information to generate expectations about their behavior. In fact, much empirical research in political science and economics illustrates how ethnic identity functions as an informational shortcut in decision-making processes. In a seminal study, economist Akerlof (1970) discusses how firms have used race as a proxy for job candidates' potential capabilities, social background and standards of schooling. More recently, Chandra (2004) argues that ethnic identity influences voting preferences in patronage democracies because it provides crucial details about candidates in such information-dearth political arenas. In these types of democracies, voters use the informational content contained in ethnic markers (e.g. speech, dress, language, names) to classify candidates according to ethnic group and, subsequently, to make predictions about their future pattern of patronage distribution. Posner (2005) draws a similar link between the informational content of ethnic cues and voting behavior in Zambia.

In many types of arenas, the identification of a coethnic renders highly relevant information. In fact, recent experimental research illustrates that shared ethnicity enhances the perceived predictability of behavior. Habyarimana et al. (2009) conducted a series of experimental games with randomly chosen subjects from the heterogeneous slums of Kampala, Uganda. In the course of their research, the scholars found that a majority of subjects believed that cooperation with coethnics would be reciprocated. Conversely, fewer subjects expected reciprocation from non-coethnics and played accordingly. The scholars were able to identify a specific coethnic norm at work—one that encouraged reciprocity for coeth-

tics and sanctioning for those in breach of this convention. These norms functioned as shortcuts, helping individuals bypass the need to collect personal information about others' intentions or competence (see Foddy and Yamagishi (2009)). An individual believes a coethnic, "... will take the right action because he or she knows that the trustee will be violating a norm if he or she does not, a violation that could come at a cost to the violator (Habyarimana et al. 2009, 51)." Other experimental studies have observed similar coethnic norms in operation across a wide variety of settings and have identified their informational function (Fershtman and Gneezy 2001; Barr 2003; Karlan 2005). As these studies demonstrate, shared ethnic membership has proven to reduce uncertainty in social interactions.<sup>4</sup>

Because shared ethnicity reduces uncertainty in social exchange, it serves as a powerful source of trust. Recall that trust, to some extent, is grounded in a person's expectations of another's future behavior. Individuals may be more willing to place their trust in a coethnic, having extrapolated about their intentions on the basis of group membership. In this way, ethnic identity acts as a signal of trustworthiness. A vast array of literature contends that shared group membership provides a basis for trust between persons (Foddy and Yamagishi 2009; Landa 1994). "Trust," Crepez notes, "is aided by identification with fellow citizens (Crepez 2008, 94)." Margaret Brewer elaborates, "Shared membership in a social category can serve as a rule for defining the boundaries of low risk interpersonal trust that bypasses the need for personal knowledge and the costs of negotiating reciprocity (Brewer 1981, 356)."<sup>5</sup> Experimental studies and survey data have corroborated the link between coethnicity and trust. Across a range of settings, scholars have observed that people are more likely to trust members of their own ethnic groups (Barr 2003; Uslander 2008; Kasara 2011).

Because shared ethnicity increases trust between individuals, it facilitates coopera-

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<sup>4</sup>For instance, an Afrikaner in Cape Town may hire a building contractor without checking many references, basing his decision on the information that the contractor's Afrikaner surname provides.

<sup>5</sup>As quoted in (Foddy and Yamagishi 2009, 18).

tion. Trust between coethnics encompasses a belief that in-group members will keep their promises, refrain from acting exploitatively, and engage in reciprocity. These expectations, therefore, mitigate the inherent risks of joint action. Simply put, intra-ethnic trust reduces the transaction costs that impede cooperative behavior. Returning to the issue of local public goods, trust that is engendered by shared ethnicity can facilitate their provision. Individuals may be more willing to contribute their time to a garbage clean-up if they are sharing this responsibility with other coethnics whom they perceive as likely to reciprocate this act of civic behavior. This argument suggests that more homogeneous communities may be better able to address local challenges because there will be higher levels of trust between members of the community. This trust, in turn, allows them to work together for the betterment of their neighborhoods.

If shared ethnicity provides a foundation for mutually beneficial collective action, diversity could be a recipe for development failures. Collective action problems often remain unresolved in multi-ethnic communities. These localities tend to be fragmented, with ethnic groups socially or spatially partitioned from one another. Often, group boundaries are actively maintained in political, economic, and social arenas. Subsequently, relationships of trust fall within and not across these boundaries. These types of communities create fruitful environments for the development of bonding or particularized trust, in which individuals place their faith *only* in members of their in-group (Putnam 2002; Uslaner 2002) and attribute negative characteristics to out-group members. Without trust between persons of different ethnicities, there will little basis for community-wide cooperation in diverse localities. Individuals may believe that non-coethnics will abscond on their civic duties, fail to contribute to local projects, and exploit their own valued time and labor. In this way, distrust among members of different ethnic groups results in an under-provision of public goods. Inter-ethnic distrust may be particularly troubling in the multi-ethnic communities of Africa, where low state capacity necessitates decentralized, community-based solutions

to goods provision. Moreover, distrust may be commonplace in these communities, as intra-ethnic solidarity prevails across the continent. In the next section, I discuss the roots of ethnic solidarity in contemporary Africa and their implications for patterns of trust there.

### **3.1.3 Ethnicity and Trust in an African Context**

A vast majority of countries in contemporary Africa contain multi-ethnic societies, comprised of several small ethnopolitical groups. Within Africa's plural societies, boundaries have developed between these ethnopolitical groups, helping to foster intra-group solidarity. Constructivist scholars have illustrated that patterns of ethnic solidarity across Africa are rooted in socio-political processes. Many ethnopolitical groups in Africa emerged during colonial rule, when imperial regimes sought to facilitate low-cost administration by aggregating small-scale organizations (clans, tribes, kinship groups, etc.) into larger, heterogeneous units. The politicization of these groups, however, can be attributed to post-independence modernization across the continent and the institutional arrangements of state-society relations that have animated these processes. In the context of political battles over representation, power and resources granted by the state (Bates 1973), actors in Africa faced incentives to construct composite ethnopolitical identities that "assimilate and differentiate individuals into distinct ethnopolitical groups and invest them with normative significance and political salience" (Mozaffar and Scarritt 2002). These identities served as a cost-effective method of interest definition and political mobilization. And once constructed, entrepreneurs found it in their best interest to actively maintain these identities and promote the corporate interest of the group in order to access the state and the valued resources it supplies.

In this way, ethnicity came to function as a strategic resource within African political arenas. Consequently, politics in contemporary Africa has become tightly organized

around ethnic groups. Ethnicity has shaped the macro-institutional dynamics of political competition, as cleavages have manifested in the structure of party systems. But it has also defined the micro-institutional dynamics of resource distribution. Because the state monopolizes access to scarce resources, an individual's access to jobs, services, or other material goods is often dependent on his relationship to a state patron, through which benefits are distributed in exchange for votes. The practice of clientelism is commonplace throughout Africa, compensating for a "Lame Leviathan" that has failed to meet popular expectations of basic need service (Wantchekon 2003). In many African nations ethnicity anchors this system, as patron-client linkages are commonly structured along ethnic lines (Bratton and van de Walle 1994). Consequently, a mutually reinforcing system of ethnic favoritism has emerged across Africa's political landscape.<sup>6</sup> Voters tend to favor candidates from their own ethnic group, forming their preferences on a belief that co-ethnics will facilitate their access to material resources (Posner 2005). Assuming that individuals indeed vote along ethnic lines, elites continue to siphon revenue and disburse rewards to ethnic constituencies. In this kind of environment, ethnicity assumes a political relevancy that is unparalleled in other regions of the globe.

From this political relevancy, ethnicity's social saliency has emerged. In communities across the continent, ethnicity has acquired import in social life. The politics of resource distribution has solidified ethnopolitical identities across the region, encouraging individuals to invest in intra-ethnic networks that facilitate patronage transactions (see Chandra (2004)). These networks, in turn, provide forms of social capital that help to mitigate risk in the context of Africa's poorly developed and ill-functioning markets. For instance, many individuals turn to ethnic networks to mobilize material or financial support. Coethnics assist families with food and housing acquisition, help individuals find job opportunities, and

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<sup>6</sup>See Chandra's (2004) work on the "self-enforcing and self-reinforcing" political outcomes that result from ethnic categorization in patronage democracies characterized by limited information." (64)

act as informal loan institutions (Tostensen, Tvedten, and vaa 2001; Banerjee and Duflo 2007). As we can see, ethnicity organizes the quotidian interactions of social actors, and so forms the basis for realizing material, social, political and symbolic goals (Mozaffar 1995). Because it is expressed in both social arenas and political domains, ethnicity has become a cornerstone of contemporary African societies.

Given its saliency, we can posit that ethnicity ostensibly shapes the mechanisms of trust across the continent. Because ethnic identity structures social relationships in many parts of the region, it serves as a powerful source of trust. Throughout Africa, one's ethnic identity renders highly relevant information and is frequently invoked for the purpose of assessing others' trustworthiness. Public opinion research in Africa has established that circles of trust tend to be narrow, precluding members of other ethnic tribes. For instance, respondents across eighteen democracies were surveyed in the Afrobarometer project and asked to what extent they trusted coethnics. 26 percent of the pooled respondents indicated that they trusted coethnics "a lot", while only 16 percent said the same of non-coethnics.<sup>7</sup> It is clear that the boundaries between in-groups and out-groups are drawn sharply across the continent, producing fertile soil for ethnically-based bonding trust.

We would expect that an environment of strong ties and bonding trust would hinder the local provision of public goods across Africa's multiethnic communities. How then are we able to explain why some diverse communities in Africa are able to overcome these social dilemmas? Why have the paths of Busia, Kenya and Meatu, Tanzania diverged? Why are individuals in Meatu willing to raise funds for pupils of other ethnic tribes, while community members in Busia are quick to avoid the *harambee*? Deciphering these questions requires us to understand what enables some individuals to trust non-coethnics and work alongside them for the betterment of their communities. This demands a focus on the contextual nature of ethnic identity, its institutional origins, and its varied impact on

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<sup>7</sup>These results are based on the pooled data of the Afrobarometer's Round 3 survey.

patterns of trust across the continent. Only then can we begin to understand how broader types of trust—those that are less tied to shared group membership—develop in contexts of diversity and how they can facilitate cooperation among a community of people unlike one another.

## **3.2 Ethnicity, Generalized Trust, and Participation in Public Goods Provision**

### **3.2.1 Contextualizing Ethnic Identity**

There is broad agreement across disciplines that ethnic identities shape human behavior. However, more political scientists are beginning to recognize the complexities of this relationship. As the previous chapter highlighted, constructivist scholars have illustrated the contextual nature of ethnic identity. It is neither a static characteristic nor a “preexisting condition” that unconditionally affects political outcomes (Calhoun 1991). Its activation in politics varies across time and space and is dependent on the strategic context that structures processes of identity formation, identity choice, and collective political action (Posner 2005). In one arena, ethnicity may form a useful basis for political organization; in another, alternative identities may provide a more advantageous foundation for interest definition and mobilization. The political saliency of ethnicity in these arenas will, thus, differ, as will its effects on political behavior. Many assume that contemporary Africa is defined by ethnic politics and the intractable conflicts that have, at times, emerged from it. In reality, there is significant spatial-temporal variation in the expression of ethnicity in political and social life. Recognizing variation in the *expression* of ethnicity is key to understanding variation in *outcomes* of ethnic diversity, including local public goods provision.

There are a number of background, contextual variables that determine the extent to

which ethnicity is meaningfully expressed in society, including institutional arrangements and ethnic demographics. Institutions are sets of rules that shape human interaction and exchange (North 1990). New institutionalist scholars in political science have argued that institutions are dynamic actors in politics; they define the strategic context of political interactions and, consequently, shape political outcomes (March and Olsen 1984; Hall and Taylor 1996). Once institutions are created they influence the choices, strategies, and actions of rational individuals with political objectives, by configuring arenas of contestation, establishing boundaries of social action, and structuring incentives. In the context of ethnic politics, institutional rules structure political competition in such a way as to make ethnic identities either advantageous or detrimental to groups of actors in pursuit of state benefits. Posner's (2005) scholarship on Zambian politics provides an illustrative example. In deciphering why specific types of cleavages dominate Zambia's political landscape, Posner points to the role that institutions have played in structuring the bases of political mobilization and interest articulation. Zambia's institutional rules have influenced the "menu" of options available to political actors as they attempt to build minimum winning coalitions and ascend to positions of power. Historical administrative structures have formed the cleavage dimensions of modern-day Zambia and contemporary institutions have configured its electoral districts. Institutions, then, have shaped "... the repertoires of potentially mobilizable ethnic identities" (Posner 2005, 3). Political entrepreneurs found it beneficial to exploit tribal and linguistic identities in Zambia during the processes of coalition building. Therefore, tribe and language—as opposed to other axes of identity—have been institutionalized as politically salient variables in the country.

Interestingly, spatial-temporal variations in institutional arrangements account for variations in the saliency of ethnic identity across space, time, and level of political contestation. Using Hispanic identity in the U.S., Mozaffar describes this variance in institutionally delineated ethnopolitical identities at different levels of aggregation. He explains:

“In the United States, census categories reconstitute the culturally distinct identities of Puerto Ricans Cubans, and Mexicans into a broader Hispanic identity. But the political salience of this identity varies with the varied configuration of American political institutions. While Hispanic identity shapes the expression of common political demands of broadly defined Spanish-speaking peoples in the polity, especially at the national level, the culturally distinct Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Mexican identities encourage separate affiliations and foster political competition among Hispanic actors in local communities” (Mozaffar 1995, 52).

It appears that institutions structure the way Hispanic identity is expressed in the United States. In addition, Varshney (2003) describes how different institutional contexts have led to different patterns of ethnic conflict and civic life in Indian communities. The Indian city of Aligarh is defined by the institutional and social segregation of Hindus and Muslims, in part because of the influence of the ethnically polarizing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). By contrast, in Calicut, Muslims and Hindus are well-integrated. The ethnically-based Muslim League in Calicut has been unable to polarize these groups (for their own political benefit) because institutional politics in Calicut is dominated by prior intra-Hindu cleavages. Essentially, the saliency of the Hindu-Muslim divide bears less import in Calicut and, in turn, this community experiences fewer outbreaks of decentralized inter-ethnic violence. Finally, Posner (2005) traces how institutional change shifted the axis of identity around which collective political action formed in Zambia. While linguistic cleavages established the axis of coalition-building during multi-party democracy in the 1960s, tribal identities became a more advantageous foundation for political mobilization under the one-party regime of Kenneth Kuanda. Institutional change had shifted the locus of political competition in Zambia, altering the types of cleavages that dominated the political landscape. As a result,

the tribal attachments of political actors became more salient than their linguistic identities.

The cumulative research on the institutional origins of ethnic identities sheds light on the diffuse and varied role of ethnicity in African politics. Ethnicity has become institutionalized as a salient political variable in some but not all regions of the continent. For instance, while ethnicity has assumed paramount relevancy in the political landscapes of Kenya and Rwanda, it is far less consequential in Tanzanian politics. Miguel (2004) has argued that, once in office, Julius Nyerere instituted a series of institutional changes that served to curb the formation of ethnopolitical identities in Tanzania. Nyerere's village councils weakened the power of tribal chiefs, and federally mandated Swahili programs helped to diminish attachment to ethnic languages. These institutional policies helped to forge a national political culture in Tanzania, tempering the saliency of ethnicity in this diverse society. Moreover, Posner (2004*b*) highlights the discrepancies in the politicization of ethnicity in his study of the Chewa-Tumbuku cleavage in Malawi and Zambia. He argues that while this ethnic divide is contentious in Malawi, it has little relevance in Zambia because neither community is large enough to constitute a significant base of electoral support. Therefore, political actors in Zambia have refrained from mobilizing these ethnic groups, leaving this cleavage relatively dormant in political and social life there.

Posner's study illustrates the relevance of another contextual variable in this story: ethnic demography. While institutions structure the politicization of cleavages, ethnic configurations both constrain and facilitate this process. Eifert and his coauthors explain that the "... salience of ethnic divisions in a country will depend on the relative sizes of ethnic and other identity groups and the incentives this generates for individuals to embrace ethnic (or other) groups memberships as a means of securing admission into advantageous political coalitions (Eifert, Miguel, and Posner 2010, 4)." Essentially, ethnic demographics interact with institutions in meaningful ways, dictating the conditions for inter-ethnic cooperation at the elite level and, subsequently, either moderating or intensifying ethnic divisions. For

instance, it has been suggested that cleavages are likely to be most intense in countries where two equally-sized groups compete for power (?). In highly diverse societies no one ethnic group enjoys a numerical advantage and, therefore, incentives emerge for cooperation across ethnic lines (see Miguel, Posner, and Bannon (2004) and Ferree (2010)).

Ethnic configurations affect the saliency of ethnicity in other ways as well. In some countries throughout Africa, the presence of sub-ethnic heterogeneity and cross-cutting identities tempers the importance of cleavages in these regions by diluting the unity of ethnic groups. Sub-group fractionalization is largely an historical by-product of the political and administrative strategies of colonial governments. In some instances, these regimes amalgamated various social groups—each characterized by distinct ethnic markers—to construct large heterogeneous ethnic blocs and, thereby, reducing the high costs of governing disparate, village-based tribes. By contrast, colonial governments also prohibited the formation of large, inclusive groups, by privileging markers like ancestral village over religion in administration and, thereby, creating fragmented ethnic identities (see Mozaffar and Scarritt (2002)). The legacies of these colonial practices persist in contemporary Africa, as many countries are characterized by considerable inter-ethnic heterogeneity *as well as* politically salient *intra*-ethnic heterogeneity. Essentially, ethnic groups are internally divided by other markers of identity—tribal differences cut across sub-groups, sectarian differences distinguish religious communities, dialects divide linguistic groups. In many cases, intra-group heterogeneity produces cross-cutting cleavages that inhibit the bisection of communities. Cross-cutting cleavages are “dimensions of identity or interest along which members of the same ethnic group may have diverse allegiances” (Dunning and Harrison 2010).<sup>8</sup> In general, such cleavage patterns tend to moderate the intensity of cleavages and, subsequently, the salience of any one identity point. As we can see, differentiation in ethnic configuration as well as spatial-temporal variation in institutional arrangements leads to

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<sup>8</sup>See Lipset and Rokkan’s (1967) original work on cross-cutting cleavages; also, (Dahl 1982).

variation in the saliency of ethnicity, and by extension, in its expression across social and political arenas.

Such variation has considerable implications for the micro-dynamics of ethnic politics in local African communities. Because the saliency of ethnicity varies with macro-level institutional landscapes and demographic configurations across regions, the expression of ethnicity will vary in micro-level social action in local communities. In settings where ethnicity has been institutionalized as a politically salient variable or where moderating variables are absent, ethnic identity takes on great importance to an individual. It structures resource distribution, networks, and other features of everyday life and, so, becomes the basis of achieving one's political, economic, and social goals. In these contexts, ethnicity is more likely to be invoked in social situations. The very value of ethnic identity impels its activation in the social field of action (Mozaffar 1995). However, in settings where ethnicity has not been institutionalized as politically relevant or where cross-cutting cleavages moderate its saliency, one's commitment to their ethnic identity will be considerably weaker. When social actors are less dependent on the expression of ethnicity to realize their goals, they are less likely to activate these identities in the course of daily interactions.

Scholarship on the microfoundations of ethnicity lend credence to this argument. Constructivists, for instance, argue that the activation of ethnicity in social life is, indeed, *context dependent* (e.g., (Chandra 2004; Hale 2004; Brass 1997)). Individuals use identities to navigate interactions and understand the contours of social exchange. Ethnicity may factor into this process, but it does not have to (Barth 1969). Undoubtedly, it serves as an empirical marker in social interactions across a range of environments. But ethnicity is little more than data, the meaning of which is endowed subjectively. It can act as a "rule of thumb" for generating expectations about another's behavior or intentions, but alternative characteristics may serve this purpose as effectively (Hale 2004). The extent to which ethnicity serves as a "rule of thumb" depends on the context of the interaction.

Constructivists claim that identity is neither fixed nor immutable; rather, it is situational. Chandra notes that, “[Markers] and [membership] are changeable, according to the context, knowledge, and interpretive frameworks of the observer” (Chandra 2004, 63). Hale continues, “... identity itself changes as a person’s environment changes because environmental change forces a reevaluation of the person’s relationship to that environment, at least on a minimal level” (Hale 2004, 466). While I may think of myself as a woman when interacting with female colleagues, I may consider myself a scholar when interacting with both genders. When interacting with my new neighbors in Georgia, I may consider myself a Yankee; when I visit my hometown in New England, I may consider myself a newly-minted Southerner. Innovative experimental research has found support for the notion that identity is fluid and contextual in nature. Hale (2004) describes one such study:

“Kurzban, Tooby, and Cosmides (2001) show that by altering a situation in the right way, Americans, whose culture is steeped in racial consciousness, can be made to stop thinking even unconsciously in terms of race. When participants were shown a dispute involving people of different racial appearances, patterns of mistaken recollection revealed that the participants did (at least unconsciously) use the category of race as a shorthand for remembering who was on what side when no clear alternative was available. This was true even when the fit of racial categories was far from perfect. But when experimenters introduced a fully arbitrary but visible distinction (differently colored shirts) that did correspond well to sides in the dispute, the participants almost entirely dropped race as a categorization, even on an unconscious level...” (Hale 2004, 472).

This literature has illustrated that ethnicity exerts a conditional influence on behavior, as opposed to a causal one. It is important to recognize that individuals may use alternative

schemes of social categorization (e.g. class, gender, sub-tribe) in social interaction, in place of ethnic indices. The extent to which ethnic schemes are used depends on the observer, the context of the interaction, and the environment in which the exchange takes place. In fact, we are more likely to observe the use of alternative schemes of categorization in areas where the macro-level variables mentioned earlier have moderated the depth of ethnic cleavages. Eifert, Miguel, and Posner's (2010) recent study corroborates the notion that explicitly political variables influence whether Africans internalize ethnic identities or alternative ones. The authors found that ethnic identification increases with exposure to political competition, while occupational and class identities become less salient.<sup>9</sup>

Other scholars have likewise demonstrated that the effects of ethnicity on political behavior in Africa are varied, nuanced, and conditioned by other factors. Conducting a randomized field experiment in Benin, Wantchekon found that clientelist and ethnic appeals were far less credible among female voters, and that "types of platforms" and "methods of voter mobilization" were as important to voting behavior as ethnic affiliation in some regions of the country (Wantchekon 2003, 419). Using survey evidence from Ghana, Lindberg and Morrison (2008) found that patterns of ethnic voting were prevalent in highly competitive electoral districts. However, "evaluative voting rationales" were far more common among Ghanaian voters than expected. And Norris and Mattes (2003) found that while ethnicity remains an important predictor of individual support for political parties in power, there is significant cross-national variation in the strength of this relationship.

Once we understand the contextual nature of ethnic identity, its institutional origins, and the variance of its expression across regions, we will begin to see that the effects of ethnic diversity on individual and collective behavior vary across different social contexts. In the next section, I draw out the implications for the development of social capital and

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<sup>9</sup>Exposure to political competition is measured by temporal proximity to competitive presidential elections.

patterns of trust in Africa's multi-ethnic communities.

### **3.2.2 Generalized Trust and Participation**

As we refine our theories of identity, we see that ethnicity works in different ways, for different people, in different contexts. As such, ethnicity will affect patterns of trust in the same varied and conditional way. As noted earlier, in regions with prominent ethnopolitical cleavages, ethnic identity is continuously expressed in social fields of action. In these environments, an individual's attachment to their ethnic identity may be strong. This type of milieu fosters the development of bonding, or particularized, trust, in which an individual's trust is solely reserved for other coethnics. Out-group members, then, are restricted from this individual's moral community. However, in regions where cross-cutting identities moderate the importance of ethnicity or where ethnicity has not assumed a high level of political relevancy, its social saliency is attenuated. Individual identification with ethnic categories may be weak and ethnicity may be less frequently activated in social life. In these circumstances, we are likely to observe that individuals circles of trust are broader, encompassing both coethnics and noncoethnics alike. One's expectations about another's future behavior or beliefs about their intentions may be less tied to ethnic identity or shared group membership.

Essentially, these contexts encourage the development of inter-ethnic social capital. If one's social environment is not encapsulated by their ethnic identity, they will be more likely to form ties with individuals of different ethnicities. Given the dense co-ethnic networks that characterize African societies, these ties may only be casual. Nonetheless, they are consequential. Granovetter (1973) has famously explicated on the "strength" of such "weak ties." Weak ties yield social cohesion, if they function as a bridge between groups and not within them. When weak ties link different clusters of individuals together, com-

munities become integrated. And in integrated communities, generalized trust (Putnam 2002; Uslaner 2002; Hooghe and Stolle 2003) is given space to germinate.

Conceptually, generalized trust differs from particularized trust, as it represents an abstract preparedness to place one's faith in others (Stolle 2001). We know that social exchange is made possible through trust, the mechanisms of which can be purely cognitive, calculative and grounded in information. An individual may assess another's trustworthiness, based on evidence she gleans from experience or from certain empirical markers that serve as a kind of commitment mechanism (e.g. ethnicity). But not all interactions forged on trust involve this particular form of it. Social exchange can also be established on the basis of general reciprocity, rather than sequences of quid pro quo exchange. These exchanges are forged on generalized trust, which extends beyond face-to-face interaction and encompasses people that one does not know personally. Generalized trust does not depend on iterated interactions that help an individual develop stable expectations about the behavior of a potential partner. Rather, it represents a person's general sense of trust in other member's of society and, therefore, transcends delineated relationships, specific persons, and particular contexts. In many ways, trust is a multi-dimensional concept. Recognizing its various dimensions is as important to the puzzle of collective action amongst diversity as understanding the contextual role of ethnicity.<sup>10</sup>

In every population, there are subsets of people who are characterized by high levels of generalized trust (Uslaner 2002). These trusters tend to *presume* that other people are trustworthy and share similar values. Jack Knight explains that generalized trusters hold, "...general beliefs about the willingness of others to cooperate in mutually beneficial ways (Knight 2001, 360)." As such, they tend to maintain more positive views of both in-group and out-group members and, therefore, can more easily transcend their narrow "circle" of

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<sup>10</sup>See (Crepaz et al. N.d.) for a discussion on the dimensionality of trust, and the implications of observing systematically different outcomes depending on which type of trust one takes into consideration.

identity (Crepaz 2008). They believe that others, regardless of their ethnic membership, share their own values of reciprocity.

Individuals endowed with high levels of generalized trust may be more likely to participate in collective efforts across Africa's communities, even in the face of diversity. Bridging trusters are more able to take a "leap of faith" and engage in action with others because they believe that they will not be exploited by either co-ethnics or non-coethnics in cooperating first. Essentially, these types of individuals maintain broader identities and a more inclusive moral community. They perceive a "shared fate" with a broader section of society (Uslaner 2002). Bridging trusters define the groups to which they belong widely, and so are able to place their trust in out-group members because they do not view such individuals as fundamentally different from them. Elster elaborates, "If an individual thinks of himself as somehow representative or typical of a certain group, he will tend to argue that if I act in a certain way, others like me are likely to behave similarly (Elster 1985, 366) as quoted in (Lichbach 1996)." In other words he believes that village residents, regardless of their ethnic membership, will reciprocate his own contributive acts. For this bridging truster, the hurdles that prevent his contribution to public goods provision are less high.

I argue that generalized trust resolves collective action dilemmas in multi-ethnic localities, enabling communities to confront their shared challenges. It provides a crucial foundation for inter-ethnic cooperation and, therefore, facilitates local public goods provision in diverse communities. On an individual level, we can surmise that a person's participation in community projects is dependent on their trust of fellow community members. In order to volunteer time and labor to clearing a drainage channel or keeping a night-watch, a person must trust that others will do their part for the village. In multi-ethnic communities, distrust between non-coethnics may result in an under-provision of public goods. Facing diversity, individuals may "pull in like turtles" and refrain from participating in collective efforts (Putnam 2007, 149). Barriers of self-interest would, thus, remain standing, and col-

lective benefits would fail to materialize. However, broad circles of trust ameliorate fears of exploitation and enable individuals to contribute to improving their community regardless of its ethnic makeup.

In sum, where collective action succeeds in Africa's multi-ethnic communities, it will have been facilitated by a broader, more generalized type of trust among a subset of committed community members. Generalized trust binds non-coethnics together, builds relationships, and generates commitments to reciprocity. On a macro-level, we observe that some social contexts create environments of bridging trust between non-coethnics, helping communities reap the benefits of development by "bring[ing] together people who are unlike one another" (Putnam 2002, 11). In this way, both macro-level contextual factors and the micro-level patterns of trust they shape provide solutions to the collective action problems that often plague multi-ethnic societies.

As we can see, social capital is a key ingredient in explaining the puzzling occurrence of successful goods provision in diverse communities of the developing world. At this point, it is valuable to return to Granovetter's (1973) seminal work on the "strength of weak ties." In his analysis Granovetter illustrates how *some* communities fail to organize on behalf of common goals. Collective action founders, he argues, when communities are fractured and partitioned into "cliques", with each individual tied to their own group and no persons tied to other ones. Granovetter explains that, as a result of these network structures, "Enthusiasm for an organization in one clique, then, would not spread to others but would have to develop independently in *each one* [emphasis in original] to insure success (Granovetter 1973, 1374)." But bridging ties, sustained by relationships of trust, enable groups to work together in the interest of everyone involved.<sup>11</sup> In this way, trust is capital. And investments in social capital are as important to successful development outcomes in multi-ethnic com-

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<sup>11</sup>In a similar fashion, Charles Tilly explains how American democracy was strengthened in the 19th century by the "integration of previously segregated trust networks" (Tilly 2007, 83).

munities as physical and human capital, as they help groups of self-interested individuals converge on mutually beneficial outcomes.

### **3.3 Reevaluating Outcomes of Ethnic Diversity in Africa**

Scholars claim that ethnic heterogeneity in Africa diminishes hope for “community-driven” (Casey, Glennerster, and Miguel 2012) economic development across the continent. Facing diversity, they argue, people tend to forgo participating in collective efforts within their communities. As such, these scholars often present overly pessimistic prospects for multi-ethnic societies (Putnam 2007; Collier 2010). However, when we recognize the context-dependent effects of ethnicity, the multidimensionality of trust, and heterogeneity in human behavior, we begin to see that diversity does not “...pre-ordain failures in collective action (Poteete and Ostrom 2004, 454).”

Contemporary Africa is indeed characterized by an array of multiethnic societies; diversity, however, may not condemn these societies to unyielding development traps. For one, the political relevancy and social saliency of ethnicity varies across institutional contexts and ethnic configurations. Therefore, we will see variation in the types of multi-ethnic societies produced and, ultimately, the outcomes of their diversity. As I explained earlier, the institutional arrangements of state-society relations in contemporary Africa have incentivized the solidification of ethnopolitical identities, encouraging the erection of boundaries between cultural groups. In some countries, salient inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic divisions create complex ethnic configurations, in which substantial numbers of relatively small ethnopolitical groups find themselves unable to achieve political majorities on their own. This kind of demography creates opportunities for cooperation across ethnic lines, and subsequently, moderates the saliency of ethnicity in public arenas. And when the saliency of ethnicity is attenuated, it becomes less consequential in the micro-dynamics of commu-

nal life. In such contexts, heterogeneous communities may harbor the capacity to resolve their collective dilemmas and supply public goods locally. However, in other countries, institutional dynamics and ethnic configurations have provided incentives for political entrepreneurs to aggregate heterogeneous, locally-based ethnic groups, suppress their internal differences through symbolic manipulation, and create homogenous ethnic identities (Mozaffar and Scarritt 2002; Vail 1989; Brass 1997).<sup>12</sup> This can produce polarized environments, in which two internally cohesive groups are inexorably opposed to one another. In these deeply divided societies, the prospects for inter-ethnic cooperation at the community-level are, indeed, dim. In sum, careful consideration of ethnic morphology in Africa demonstrates that not all multi-ethnic societies are deeply divided. Understanding the varied effects of ethnic diversity on the continent requires us to distinguish Africa's divided societies from its plural ones.

The variation in the saliency and role of ethnicity in Africa has considerable implications for patterns of trust on the continent and, ultimately, the resolution of collective action problems. Because the political relevancy of ethnicity varies across Africa's multi-ethnic communities, we are likely to observe varying patterns of trust among these localities. Some environments, more than others, nurture the development of generalized trust. Varshney's (2003) study of Hindu-Muslim violence in cities across India provides an illustrative example. In Hyderabad Aligarh, institutional partitioning and de facto social segregation served to increase the saliency of the Hindu-Muslim cleavage. This fostered an environment of mistrust between groups that helped to foment frequent, localized conflict in these cities. However, the divide between these cultural groups was not institutionally reinforced in Calicut and Lucknow. As a result, contact and communication between Hindus and Muslims became commonplace and an environment of bridging trust was, over time, established. In Calicut and Lucknow, Hindus and Muslims work side by side, eat

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<sup>12</sup>Also, see literature on the Hutu-Tutsi cleavage in Rwanda and Burundi (e.g., Uvin 1999).

together, send their children to play in the streets with one another, and visit each other regularly. They are joined together in dense associational and economic relationships. The trust between these groups, cultivated by a history of inter-communal linkages, has proven essential to suppressing political tensions and containing ethnic violence.

As we can see, Varshney found variation in patterns of trust across India's multi-ethnic communities. His research implores us to recognize the dimensionality of trust as it relates to ethnic diversity. Empirical research has indeed demonstrated that coethnicity increases trust (Habyarimana et al. 2009). And scholars have documented the presence of high levels of bonding trust in multi-ethnic communities. In their study of associational behavior in the U.S., for instance, Alesina and La Ferrara find that levels of interpersonal trust as well as participation in community activities tend to be lower in diverse communities than in more homogeneous settings (Alesina and La Ferrara 2000; 2002). However, we become subject to fallacy when we conceptually equate multi-ethnicity with bonding trust. Heterogeneity does not nullify the presence of generalized trust in some communities. In fact, scholars have observed manifestations of bridging trust in diverse societies around the globe (Usulaner 2008; 2011). For example, Miguel found that, "...even though ethnic diversity is associated with lower community group membership rates in Meatu district and in Tanzania as a whole, it does not affect perceived community unity, self-expressed trust of others, village meeting attendance, or the ability to fund local public goods" (Miguel 2004, 36). Types of trust are often falsely treated as dichotomous or "zero-sum" in nature.<sup>13</sup> Many presume that where bonding trust is present, bridging trust is suppressed. And individuals who trust coethnics lack the capacity to trust non-coethnics. But while shared ethnicity can foster the development of particularized trust, it does not preclude the development of generalized trust (Putnam 2007).

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<sup>13</sup>This conceptualization of trust as it relates to heterogeneity is best exemplified by the divide between "contact" and "conflict" hypotheses. See Allport (1979); Dixon, Durrheim, and Tredoux (2005); Dovidio, Gaertner, and Kawakami (2003).

We can draw a clear link from the context-dependent effects of ethnicity and the dimensionality of trust to heterogeneity in behavior. Any explanation of the effects of ethnicity and trust on collective action must acknowledge fundamental variations in human behavior. Just as some people are characterized by more encompassing circles of trust, some individuals show greater willingness to cooperate with others. In her 1998 APSA address, Elinor Ostrom implores us to recognize that individuals respond in markedly different ways to the scenarios in which they find themselves. She argues that there will always be a subpopulation more trusting, more optimistic about others' reciprocation and, thus, more willing to voluntarily enter into joint activity. Ostrom explains, "While individuals vary in their propensity to use reciprocity, the evidence from experiments shows that a substantial proportion of the population drawn on by social science experiments has sufficient trust that others are reciprocators to cooperate with them even in one-shot, no-communication experiments" (Ostrom 1998, 12). I suspect that ethnic diversity will modify, but not fundamentally negate, this axiom.

When we recognize variations in human behavior, in patterns of trust, and in the effects of ethnicity, we begin to realize that collective action problems are not intractable in Africa's multi-ethnic communities. These diverse communities seem to have few of the "raw materials" that are needed to sustain communally-based goods provision. However, mutually beneficial collective action can be achieved in diverse settings when trust between community members elicits participation in collective efforts and when macro-level contextual factors provide a setting for this trust to materialize.

The next three chapters present empirical tests of this theoretical framework. Chapter 4 uses cross-national survey data to elucidate the relationship between ethnic identity and dimensions of trust. Using the same survey data, Chapter 5 establishes a link between various forms of trust and participation in public goods provision. Then, using country-level data on contextual factors, it explores this relationship in contexts of ethnic diversity.

Chapter 5 examines efforts in local goods provision in a specific community context, using original data collected in the heterogeneous neighborhoods of Cape Town, South Africa. I pay special attention to how macro-level variables shape the expression of ethnicity and patterns of trust in Cape Town. Ultimately, I demonstrate why collective action problems are resolved in some of the city's multi-ethnic communities and why they persist in others.

## **Chapter 4**

# **Ethnic Identity and Trust: An Empirical Test**

This dissertation examines the nexus between trust and public goods provision. Inter-ethnic trust, I argue, is an essential ingredient that helps resolve the collective action problems that plague diverse communities as they attempt to organize development. Trust binds non-coethnics together in mutual relationships and enables individuals to give their time or labor to projects in their communities. In the following chapters, I gather evidence from the African continent that elucidate my theoretical proposition and find support for my hypothesis. But before I establish an empirical link between trust and participation in public goods provision across Africa, I first parcel out the complex relationship between ethnicity and trust on the continent. In order to establish that trust facilitates mutually beneficial cooperation among ethnic groups, I must first demonstrate how and when ethnicity impacts the development of trust between them.

In Chapter Three I argued that some environments nurture the development of inter-ethnic trust more than others. Where the political importance and social salience of ethnicity is muted or restrained, I argue, trust between non-coethnics is given space to germinate.

At the community level, the relevance ascribed to ethnic identity in daily life should influence patterns of trust observed in diverse communities. The presence of intense cleavages will likely suppress the development of bridging trust between non-coethnics, while moderate or dormant cleavages may enable the formation of ties between members of different ethnic groups. But will this relationship manifest at the individual level? Does the importance that one ascribes to their ethnic identity affect their propensity to trust non-coethnics?

Recall that one's ethnicity renders important, low-cost information that others use to generate expectations about their behavior. Because it normalizes such expectations, *co*-ethnicity can reduce uncertainty in social interaction. As such, it can serve as a powerful source of trust. However, ethnicity does not invariably function in such a way. The importance ascribed to ethnicity as a navigational tool and, hence, as a source of trust between persons varies across contexts and across individuals. We can surmise, for instance, that an individual with a strong attachment to their ethnic identity will have more narrow circles of trust, as they will be more likely to exclusively place their confidence in members of their in-group. Conversely, those who weakly identify as an ethnic group member will be more likely to trust non-coethnics. Such persons will, thus, exhibit higher levels of bridging trust. This chapter puts this hypothesis to an empirical test, using survey data collected in 20 African nations. I first present a research design, laying out how I measure my outcome variable (trust) and my key explanatory variable (ethnic identification). I also introduce descriptive data on patterns of trust and ethnic identification across my sample. Finally, I present an empirical model, findings, and analysis. As my theory predicts, my results demonstrate contingency in the link between ethnicity and trust.

## 4.1 Data and Measurement

My empirical aim is to assess the impact of ethnic identities on trust attitudes throughout Africa. To do so I utilize survey data from the fourth round of the Afrobarometer project. The Afrobarometer is a series of public opinion surveys on democracy, governance, and society in Africa. It tracks public attitudes on political, economic, social, and international matters over time, with surveys widely conducted throughout the continent. For each of my models, I use pooled, cross-national data from 20 African nations.<sup>1</sup> Because the *raison d'être* of the Afrobarometer project is to garner public opinion in countries that have recently experienced economic and political reform, the spatial parameters of my analysis are limited to African democracies. And while there have been successive rounds of data collection, I limit my temporal parameters to Round 4 data gathered between 2008 and 2009.

### 4.1.1 Measuring Trust

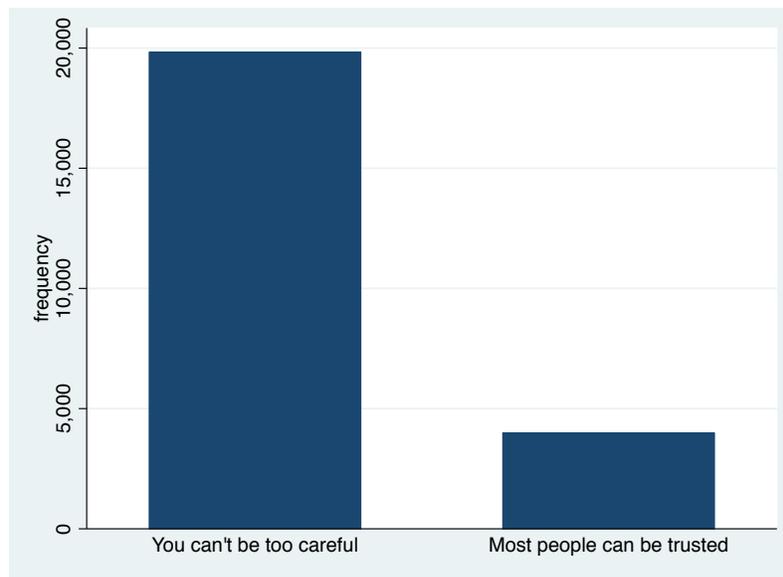
Trust is the outcome variable in my analysis; as a key concept, it requires proper operationalization and measurement. But trust has been a particularly difficult attitude to capture in empirical studies, partly because of its multidimensional form.<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, one indicator has remained the most commonly used measure of trust in political science literature. It is a question that can be found in many large-scale, cross-national social or political surveys and asks, “Generally speaking, do you think that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful?” While the measure is debated, many scholars feel that this question encapsulates people’s predisposition to regard others as trustworthy, regardless

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<sup>1</sup>Countries included in dataset: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

<sup>2</sup>Recall that in the preceding chapter I conceptually define trust as a belief that another person will act beneficially towards you. It is, in short, one’s “faith” in others.

of current social or political conditions that may provisionally influence one’s perception of their environment (Uslaner 2002). How trustworthy are Africans? Figure 4.1 displays the trust dispositions of Afrobarometer respondents (from Round 3 of the survey).<sup>3</sup> As the graph suggests, aggregate trust is low across the continent. Over 80 percent of the respondent sample felt skeptical about placing their confidence in others, while less than 20 percent felt comfortable declaring that most people can be trusted.<sup>4</sup> In the United States, by contrast, nearly 40 percent of respondents in a similar survey stated that they generally trust others.



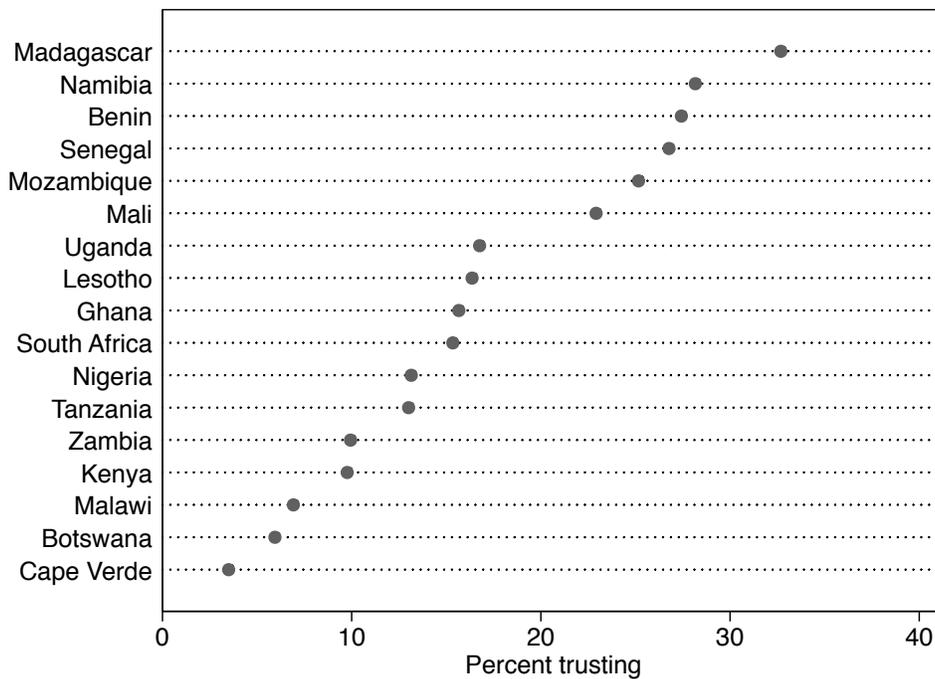
**Figure 4.1:** Trust attitudes throughout Africa

While the data imply that trust is scarce on the African continent, its presence appears to vary cross-nationally. Some African countries, it seems, have more trusting populations than others. Figure 4.2 displays the percentage of generalized trusters in each sampled

<sup>3</sup>The standard generalized trust question was omitted in the fourth round of the Afrobarometer survey. Round Three data was collected in 17 African countries between 2005 and 2006. See Afrobarometer.org for countries included in the third wave.

<sup>4</sup>Widner and Mundt (1998) suggest that a weak rule of law and the absence of consolidated institutions that serve as “arbiters of value” account for low trust in countries like Uganda (where their own surveys were administered).

country. Generalized trust ranges from its lowest level in Cape Verde (where only 3.4 percent of those sampled believe that most people can be trusted) to its highest level in Madagascar (where 32.8 percent of those sampled respond as such). Several macro-level factors may account for this cross-country variance, including corruption levels, inequality, institutional performance, or even historical legacies of slave raiding. In a novel study of the historical determinants of interpersonal trust in Africa, Nunn and Wantchekon (2011) find that trust levels are lowest among individuals whose ancestors were most adversely affected by the slave trade.<sup>5</sup> It is likely that levels of ethnic diversity influence self-reported trust across Africa as well, a topic I turn to in the next chapter.



**Figure 4.2:** Average trust across 17 African countries

While the standard trust question can be a useful gauge of one's general predisposition

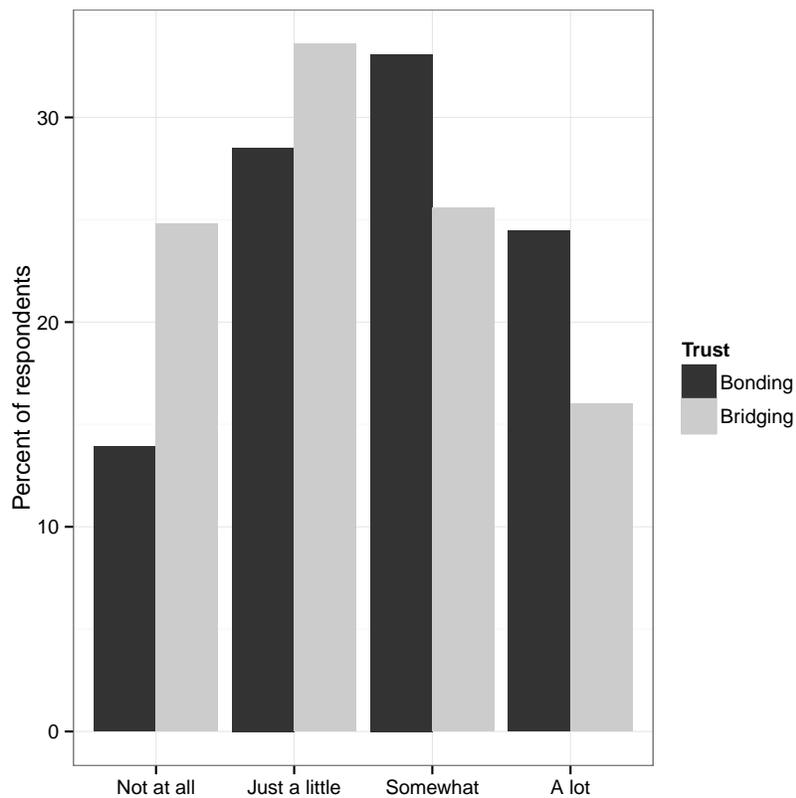
<sup>5</sup>The authors use historic and current distance from the coast as a measure of the severity of the slave trade.

to trust others, it suffers from some shortcomings. For one, its semantic ambiguity limits its applicability as a valid measure of trust. Because individuals may use different frames of reference, the interpretation of “most people” is likely to vary from one subject to another. For some, “most people” could refer to acquaintances or strangers; for others, it could refer to coethnics or a majority group in society (see Sturgis and Smith (2010); Delhey, Newton, and Welzel (2011)). More importantly, the question fails to measure what I intend to capture, namely *to whom* one’s trust is given. The question ignores important distinctions between types of trusters and, so, falls short in capturing the multi-dimensionality of this concept. We know that trust takes a variety of forms and is distributed unevenly between members of society. Recall that bonding trusters are more apt to place their faith in members of their in-group or in a circle of family members, neighbors, friends or acquaintances. Bridging trusters, however, are inclined to trust people not personally known to them, including individuals who are culturally distant from them. This may include people from other ethnic, linguistic, or religious groups. Conceptually parsing and properly operationalizing these dimensions of trust is vital for developing analytically sound theories and empirically valid tests of their effects on social and political life.

Both facets of trust can be measured with Afrobarometer survey data. Two questions in Round 4 appear to capture respondents’ circles of trust and are appropriate indicators of bonding and bridging, respectively. They ask “How much do you trust each of the following types of people?” The first question inquires about “other people you know”; the second about “other [Ghanians/Kenyans, etc.]” The responses to each question were coded on a four point scale, from “Not at all” to “I trust them a lot.” Essentially, these questions measure how far one’s trust extends, but they also gauge *to whom* one’s trust is given. Because African societies are characterized by structures of dense, kin-based networks, “other people” one knows are likely to be co-ethnics (although not exclusively so). As a broader category, however, one’s co-nationals will include non-coethnics. In this

sense, the questions serve as suitable proxies for in-group/out-group trust, and in particular, intra/inter-ethnic trust.

What are the patterns of trust on the African continent? Figure 4.3 displays Afrobarometer data on bonding and bridging trust, according to the percentage of respondents in each reply category. The graph's distribution demonstrates that, across Africa, the supply of bonding trust may be greater than the supply of bridging trust. Unsurprisingly, it appears easier for Africans to place their confidence in family, kin, or neighbors than in ethnically distant strangers. It is important to note that while these indicators measure distinctly dif-



**Figure 4.3:** Bridging and Bonding Trust throughout Africa

ferent concepts, bonding and bridging trust maintain a moderate positive correlation within

this sample.<sup>6</sup> In some respects, this correlation counters established expectations. Many scholars consider bonding trust and bridging trust to be mutually exclusive or axiomatically “zero-sum” concepts.<sup>7</sup> They assume that an individual with a high capacity for bonding trust must, therefore, maintain a low capacity for bridging trust. However, these data call into question this logic and suggest that some individuals may possess both types of trust (see Putnam (2007) for an extended discussion of this idea).<sup>8</sup> On the basis of these data, there seems to be an empirical reason to question the reflexive logic of an inverse relationship between in-group solidarity and out-group trust.

### **4.1.2 Capturing Ethnicity**

In addition to trust, ethnicity is a key concept in this chapter’s analysis. My hypothesis states that ethnic saliency will be a key predictor of trust patterns across Africa. At the individual level, I surmise that persons who weakly identify with their ethnic groups will exhibit higher levels of bridging trust. Using data from the fourth round of the Afrobarometer, I am able to measure the strength of individuals’ ethnic identification. Incidentally, the survey asks respondents several questions about the ethnic groups to which they belong. Respondents are first asked to identify their ethnic group or tribe. They are then asked a series of questions about their own perception of the group’s economic conditions, political influence, and government treatment. Finally, respondents are asked to what degree they identify themselves by their ethnicity. While each of these questions appropriately gauges in-group attachment, it is this latter question which best captures respondents’ self-defined identities and, hence, the strength of their ethnic identification. It reads, “Let us suppose

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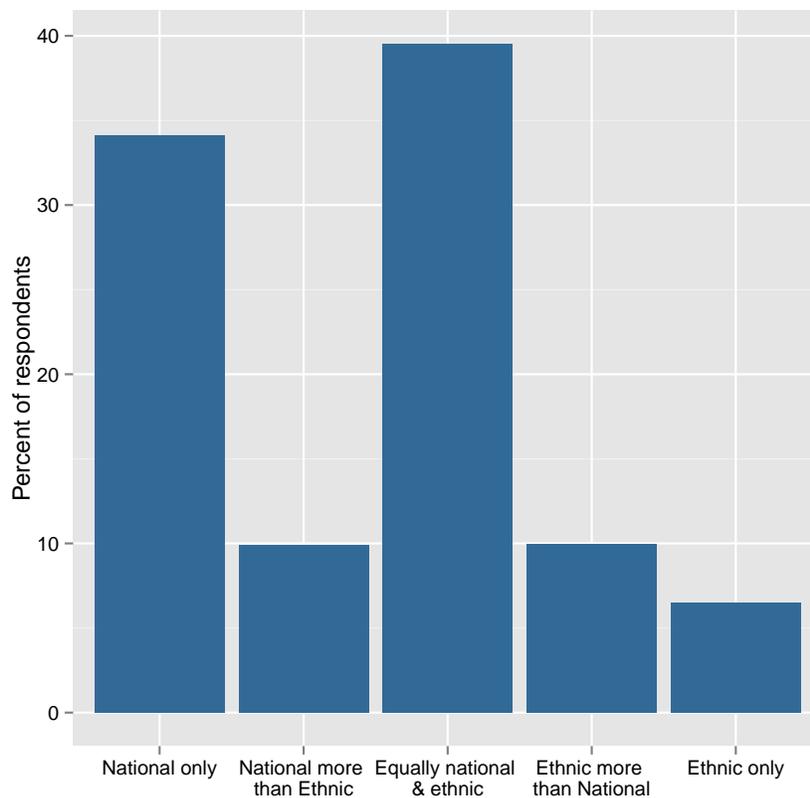
<sup>6</sup>Correlation=0.67

<sup>7</sup>The contact and conflict theory literatures have informed these viewpoints (see Dixon, Durrheim, and Tredoux 2005; Dovidio, Gaertner, and Kawakami 2003).

<sup>8</sup>Contrary to the beliefs of some, the opposite of bridging trust is not bonding trust, but rather anomie (Crepaz 2008). It is important to remember that bonding trusters do, indeed, trust others.

that you had to choose between being a [Ghanaian/Kenyan, etc.] and being [Respondent's ethnic group]. Which of the following best expresses your feelings?" The responses range from feelings of strong national identity—"I feel only Ghanaian/Kenyan, etc."—to feelings of strong ethnic identity—"I feel only [Respondent's ethnic group]."

What are the patterns of self identification throughout the African continent? Figure 4.4 displays the percentage of respondents who placed themselves in each identification category, across the 20 African nations that were sampled. As the graph demonstrates, compar-



**Figure 4.4:** Ethnic vs. National Self Identification throughout Africa

atively few respondents—6.5 percent of those sampled—identify themselves in exclusively ethnic terms. Conversely, nearly 35 percent exhibited strong attachment to a national identity. The largest proportion of respondents—nearly 40 percent—identify equally with both

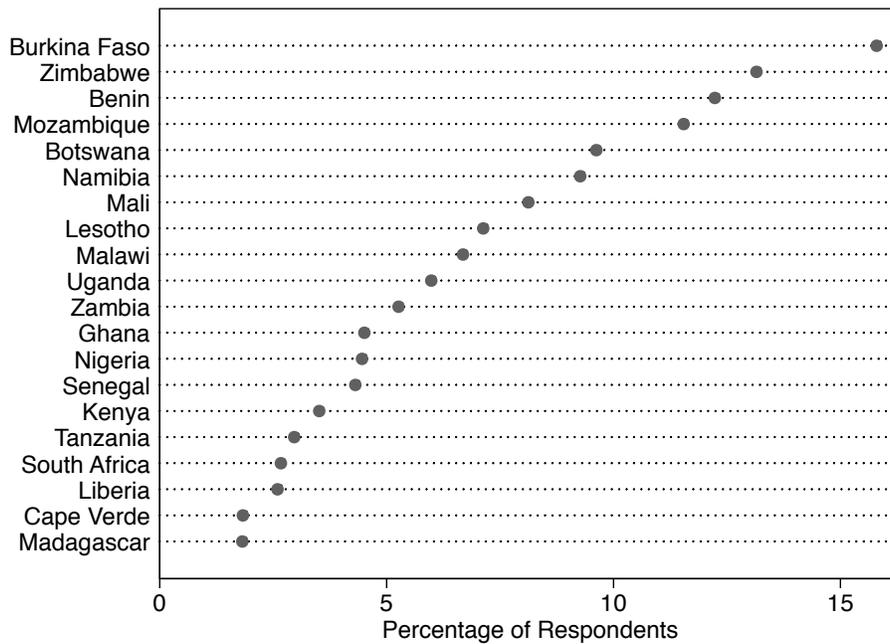
their ethnicity and their nationality. These data do much to dispel the entrenched impression among scholars that Africans are deeply attached to their ethnic roots and kinship loyalties. Within this sample, those with dominant ethnic identities are strongly outnumbered by those who exhibit at least some attachment to their nationality.

Interestingly, these data also reveal that Africans harbor multiple identities; they are, at once, members of ethnic groups *and* citizens of the state. That ethnic loyalty readily coexists with national identification belies the argument that ethnic solidarities are the most formidable impediment to nation-building across Africa (Young 2001; Daddieh and Fair 2002).<sup>9</sup> Moreover, these data corroborate the earlier work of Miguel, Posner, and Bannon (2004), in which surveys of tribal and sub-tribal identification in two Kenyan market towns revealed African's composite, and at times competing, identities. Ultimately, these data support constructivist understandings of identity on which I elaborate in the previous chapter. As we can see, identity in Africa, as elsewhere, is a complex and multi-layered phenomenon.

In examining the data by country, we can see that ethnic identity is also highly contextual in Africa. Figure 4.5 displays the percentage of respondents who identify most strongly with their ethnicity, for each of the 20 countries in the sample. The plot demonstrates that there is considerable cross-national variation in ethnic identification throughout Africa. The percentage of individuals who identify *exclusively* with their ethnic group ranges from 1.82 in Madagascar to 15.8 in Burkina Faso. Given what we know about ethnic politics in these countries, the nature of this variation is unsurprising. It is reasonable that a low percentage of Tanzanians identify themselves in ethnic terms. During his tenure as President, Julius Nyerere instituted federal policies, such as nationally-mandated Kiswahili programs, that served to weaken the saliency of ethnicity in Tanzania. Ethnic

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<sup>9</sup>See Elkins and Sides's (2007) work on ethnic minorities and state "attachment" as well as (Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi 2004), Chapter 7.



**Figure 4.5:** Ethnic Identification across 20 African Nations

identification is also predictably weak in South Africa, where only 2.7 percent of respondents reported strong feelings of ethnic identity. This may be attributed to South Africa’s unique transition and the post-1994 discourse of inclusivity that continues to occupy its public sphere. Such an environment has made many South Africans proud to declare their allegiance to the “rainbow nation” or, at least, wary of publicly admitting sole allegiance to their tribe. Conversely, ethnic identity appears to be more prominent in a country like Benin, where 12 percent of respondents identified themselves in exclusively ethnic terms. Benin is characterized by a national, all-inclusive, and politically relevant cleavage; ethnicity, as a result, is salient in Benin. This may explain why respondents there were more likely to identify as ethnic group members than respondents in other nations (see Ferree (2010) for more on Benin’s ethnic demography).

These explanations are only speculative; in fact, determining the causes of cross-national variation in ethnic identification are beyond the scope of this project. What is pertinent to our puzzle are the effects of this variation, or rather, the relationship between the strength of one's ethnic identity and their trust attitudes. Will individuals who place less emphasis on their ethnic identity exhibit a greater propensity to trust non-coethnics? If we can establish that bridging trust varies with the saliency of ethnicity, we move a step closer to explaining why some multi-ethnic communities are able to resolve their collective dilemmas, while others remain trapped in them.

Before presenting my findings, it is important to explain additional variables that will be included in the model. First, I control for certain demographic and social characteristics that may affect one's propensity to trust, such as age and gender. Moreover, I include a measure of educational attainment in the model. Some have argued that society's "have nots"—including those individuals with little education—are less trusting of others in general and may be especially distrusting of those who are socially distant from them (Uslaner 2002; Delhey and Newton 2003; Robert 2000).<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, I control for a respondent's employment status. I would surmise that employed individuals are embedded in wider social networks that may include non-coethnics; these bridging ties could influence in whom they place their trust. Finally, I use an indicator for urban respondents. Bearing in my mind Allport's (1979) contact theory, I would hypothesize that urban dwellers would be more likely to trust non-coethnics than rural respondents because they have become habituated to a multi-cultural environment.

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<sup>10</sup>Both Putnam and Delhey and Newton claim that "have-not" may be less trusting because they have suffered from discrimination and exclusion; the "haves", by contrast, are often treated by society with honesty and respect.

## 4.2 Estimation and Findings

To test my hypothesis I estimate an ordered logit model, in which bridging trust is the outcome variable and the six predictors discussed above are explanatory variables. Clustered standard errors are used to account for country heterogeneity. Although I am primarily interested in the effect of ethnic identification on bridging trust, I estimate a second model in which bonding trust is used as an outcome variable. Table 4.1 displays the parameter estimates from both models.

**Table 4.1:** Ordered Logit Estimates of Bonding and Bridging Trust

Variable	Bonding Trust	Bridging Trust
Ethnic Identification	-.046 (.034)	<b>-.108*</b> <b>(.039)</b>
Age	.006* (.002)	<b>.008*</b> <b>(.003)</b>
Employed	.041 (.037)	<b>.019</b> <b>(.038)</b>
Education	-.117* (.025)	<b>-.088*</b> <b>(.025)</b>
Female	-.153* (.031)	<b>-.183*</b> <b>(.028)</b>
Urban Dweller	.185 (.203)	<b>.099</b> <b>(.198)</b>
Observations	25,042	<b>24,814</b>
Log Likelihood	-33294.08	<b>-33315.84</b>

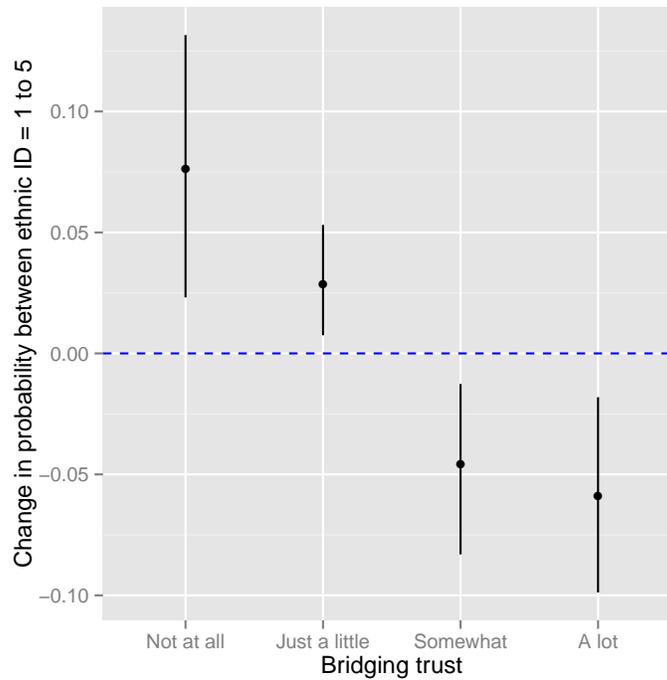
Robust standard errors in parentheses.

\*  $p < 0.05$

The results provide support for my main hypothesis. The strength of one's ethnic identity does, indeed, impact their propensity to trust out-group members. As the table demonstrates, respondents who identify with their ethnicity to a greater degree than their nationality exhibit lower levels of bridging trust.<sup>11</sup> Conversely, then, respondents who identify

<sup>11</sup>Recall that this variable is measured on a 5 point scale from "I feel only Ghanaian/Kenyan" to "I feel

with their nationality more than their ethnic group exhibit higher levels of bridging trust. This finding is statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level. To examine the magnitude of this relationship I calculated the differences in the predicted probabilities of my outcome variable between the high and low values of my key explanatory variable. These calculations revealed that a respondent with a strong national identity is 6 percent more likely to exhibit high levels of bridging trust than a respondent with a strong ethnic identity.<sup>12</sup> Figure 4.6 plots these first differences in graphical form. As we can see from

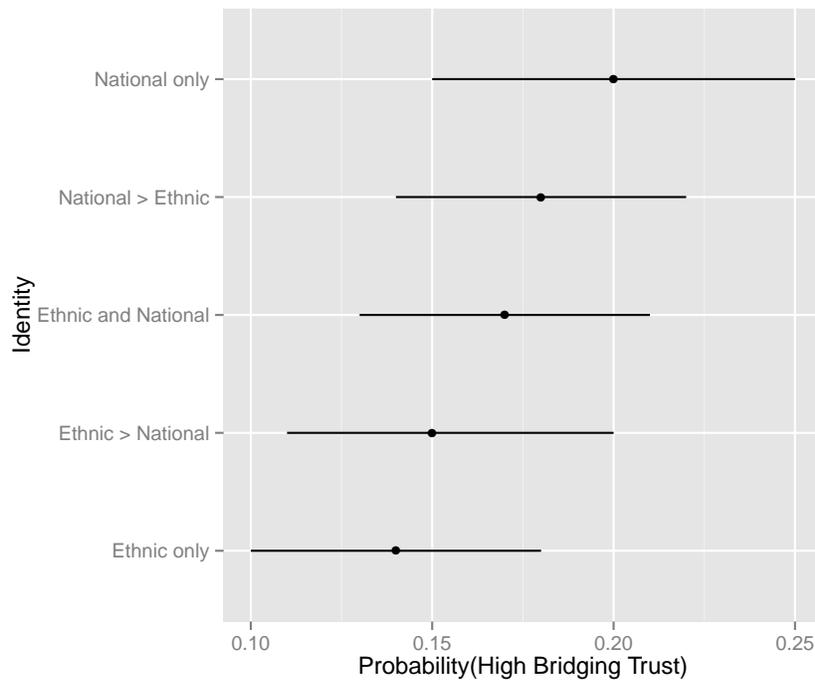


**Figure 4.6:** Comparing the Effects of Ethnic and National Identity on Bridging Trust

the graph, in response to a question that asks whether other Ghanaians/Kenyans can be trusted, a respondent with a strong national identity has a lower probability of stating “Not at all” or “Just a little” than a respondent with a strong ethnic identity. Conversely, she has only [Respondent’s Ethnic Group].”

<sup>12</sup>That is, they were 6 percent more likely to report that “A lot” of Ghanaians/Kenyans can be trusted, as opposed to “Somewhat”, “Just a little”, or “not at all”.

a higher probability of answering “Somewhat” or “A lot” in response to this question than an individual with a strong ethnic attachment. While this plot displays trust attitudes at the minimum and maximum values of identification, Figure 4.7 illustrates trust attitudes across the entire range of identification. Specifically, it displays the probability that a respondent exhibits high bridging trust at each value of the key explanatory variable.



**Figure 4.7:** Predicted Probabilities of High Bridging Trust across the Range of Ethnic Identification

These results suggest that a salient ethnic identity hinders the propensity to trust non-coethnics. An individual who strongly identifies with their ethnic group is likely embedded in an environment whereby her social relationships are structured by ethnicity. In this type of setting, she is less likely to place her trust in out-group members. Nonetheless, my findings suggest that should the saliency of her ethnic identity begin to wane, she will become more apt to trust non-coethnics. It appears that as circles of identity broaden, so

do circles of trust.

Interestingly, self-defined identities are not correlated with measures of bonding trust. It appears that respondents who place *more* emphasis on their ethnic identity are *not* more likely to trust in-group members, as the effect of identification on bonding trust is not statistically significant in this model. Given what we know about the function of ethnicity and the mechanisms of trust, this result is surprising. We would expect that individuals with a strong ethnic attachment would rely on ethnicity to navigate social exchange; they would, therefore, exhibit higher levels of bonding trust. However, these findings suggest otherwise. In-group trust does not seem to be dependent on self-identification. However, it is more likely that country heterogeneity is driving this non-result. Recall from Figure 4.5 that there is considerable variation in ethnic identification across the 20 African countries that comprise my sample. Levels of bonding trust vary significantly across African countries, as well. The percentage of respondents who exhibited the highest levels of bonding trust ranges from 9 percent in Nigeria to 48 percent in Senegal, with a mean percentage value of 25. Such cross-national variation likely explains why these variables are unrelated in this model, as ethnic identification does indeed predict bonding trust when estimating the model without clustered standard errors (see Appendix).

In order to gather more insight about why these variables are uncorrelated, I estimated a second model in which the identification variable was treated as a dichotomous, as opposed to continuous, variable. All respondents who identify exclusively as an ethnic group member were coded as 1, while all other respondents were coded as 0. Interestingly, this model suggests that individuals with strong ethnic identities are *less* likely to exhibit bonding trust than those with weaker ethnic identities.<sup>13</sup> Preliminarily, I would speculate that a particularly strong ethnic identity stunts the formation of trust in general, making one reluctant

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<sup>13</sup>For this model, I calculated predicted probabilities and found that the probability of high bonding trust for those with exclusive national identities is 4 percentage points higher than the probability of high bonding trust for those with exclusive ethnic identities.

to place their trust in people other than family. Those who identify themselves exclusively as an ethnic member most likely have strong attachments to their own tribe. They may—through the processes of cultural reproduction, in-group norms, and learned behavior—only extend their trust to immediate kin. As such, they may be wary of trusting anyone who is not a member of their kin, even those individuals with whom they are familiar.<sup>14</sup> More research is necessary to parse this complex relationship and explain this surprising finding. I suspect that more fine-grained measures of trust—such as indicators that enumerate a more precise radius of groups—would provide insight into the trust attitudes of individuals with markedly strong ethnic loyalties.

Turning to the remaining variables in the analysis, the model’s parameter estimates reveal that certain demographic attributes and contextual factors also affect individual trust attitudes. Older individuals as well as those who are employed appear more trusting of both in-group and out-group members. Furthermore, as I expected, urban dwellers are also more likely to trust both in-group and out-group members. However, women and those with higher education levels exhibit lower levels of both bonding and bridging trust. Each of these findings is significant at the 95 percent confidence level.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

This chapter has gathered survey evidence from 20 African nations to explore the relationship between ethnicity and trust. The results of my quantitative analysis reveal that Africans with more inclusive identities exhibit higher levels of bridging trust, while Africans with strong ethnic identities appear less trusting of non-coethnics. My findings suggest that the development of trust between non-coethnics may be stifled in settings where ethnicity is

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<sup>14</sup>Recall that the indicator used for bonding trust was a question that asked if respondents trust “other people you know.”

a salient identity point. By contrast, where the salience of ethnic identity is tempered, inter-ethnic trust will be given space to develop.

These findings have significant implications for this project. For one they corroborate the important link between identity and trust that was explicated in the previous chapter. The empirical link between ethnicity and trust suggests that ethnicity does indeed act as a “navigational” tool in social environments. It shapes how one views the trustworthiness of others and to whom one’s trust is ultimately given. The more salient one’s ethnic identity is, the more often it is invoked in social exchange and the more important it becomes to trust relationships. Consequently, a salient ethnic identity will restrict one’s circle of trust, making one less likely to place their confidence in non-coethnics.

More importantly, these findings bring us closer to understand why some multi-ethnic communities are able to supply public goods locally, while others fail to arrive at such outcomes. Trust is essential to the proper resolution of collective action problems, because it helps to reconcile the gap between self-interest and collective benefits. For mutually beneficial collective action to come to fruition in diverse communities, inter-ethnic trust must be present. But the supply of inter-ethnic trust varies across multi-ethnic communities. In some villages, ethnic groups are segregated into “cliques” (see (Granovetter 1973)), each group distrustful of the other. In other communities, bridging ties have formed among non-coethnics and individuals exhibit high levels of out-group trust. By linking these patterns of trust with patterns of ethnic identification, these findings suggest that a community’s supply of inter-ethnic trust will depend on the saliency of ethnicity within its social arenas. The next chapter explores the effect of trust on participation in public goods, thereby tackling the second part of this puzzle.

## **Chapter 5**

# **Trust and Participation in Public Goods Provision: Cross-National Evidence**

The previous chapter unpacked the complex relationship between ethnic identity and trust. Using Afrobarometer data I found that trust attitudes vary systematically with the saliency of one's ethnic identity. This chapter presents an empirical test of how such trust attitudes impact participatory behavior. Ultimately, these empirical tests provide insight into the puzzling variation in local goods provision across multi-ethnic communities.

Recall that, in Chapter Three, I argued that trust helps to provide a solution to the collective action problems that plague diverse communities. Bridging trust binds non-coethnics in mutual relationships that help to reconcile the gap between self interest and collective benefits. If a multi-ethnic community is endowed with high levels of generalized trust that cross social boundaries, this should manifest itself in greater participation in public goods provision among community members. In general, bridging trusters should be more apt to participate in local goods provision than those whose trust is extended only to others who are like them. Furthermore, I expect this relationship to hold in ethnically heterogeneous settings, as broad circles of trust engender cooperative behavior among members of

different social groups.

This chapter presents a research design that empirically tests these claims as well as statistical findings and analysis. First, I examine individual level evidence gathered in cross-national surveys that were administered to respondents across 20 African countries. By exploring data on the links between trust attitudes and participatory behavior, we can empirically test the micro-foundations of the hypothesized relationship between trust and local goods provision. Next, I present a more contextualized analysis of trust and participation, accounting for ethnic diversity with country-level data. Together, individual-level survey evidence and macro-level contextual data will allow me to properly test the validity of my theoretical claims.

## **5.1 Linking Trust and Participation at the Individual Level**

### **5.1.1 Measuring Participation**

Since this project aims to explain why and in what contexts individuals engage in communal goods provision, the concept of participation requires proper operationalization. Recall that public goods are non-rivalrous, non-excludable resources. They are goods like roads, storm drains, and street lights, or services like security and garbage collection. A community member participates in providing these goods locally when he volunteers to help maintain a shared well, takes part in fundraising efforts for communal school supplies, or joins a neighborhood watch. Scholars have measured participation in public goods provision in different ways. Habyarimana et al. (2009) use a mix of survey questions about respondents' policy preferences in regards to service provision as well as experimental games to capture this concept. Casey, Glennerster, and Miguel (2012) also use experimental methods to capture participation in public goods provision in their study of community-driven devel-

opment throughout post-conflict Sierra Leone. These authors gathered data by distributing funds for a local development project to a sample of community groups. The groups were then tasked with raising matching funds through voluntary donations.

While these measures are novel, my aim is to explore cross-national patterns of participation in public goods provision in the interest of generalizability. Therefore, I measure participation using survey data contained in the fourth Round of the Afrobarometer. I construct a latent variable that effectively measures a person's involvement in local goods provision, using a range of questions about participatory activities in respondent communities. Exploratory factor analysis was used to compose this indicator. The individual questions that comprise the variable consider three behaviors: whether respondents are members of a "voluntary association" or "community group"; whether they have attended a "community meeting" in the past year; and finally, whether they have, in the past year, "joined others to raise an issue." Responses were coded on a four point scale, according to the frequency of action or depth of commitment.<sup>1</sup> The results of the factor analysis suggest a strong relationship between individual responses to each of these queries.<sup>2</sup> For instance, the Cronbach's alpha scale reliability coefficient, a statistic that essentially measures how well two or more variables capture a single latent construct, is 0.7265. The measure is well within an acceptable range, suggesting that there is strong internal coherence between these three survey questions.

Conceptually, these questions serve as appropriate indicators of my main outcome variable. Throughout Africa, community groups or so-called "hometown associations" are actively involved in goods provision, helping to supply the kinds of welfare services and basic infrastructure that the state is unable to deliver.<sup>3</sup> In their study of hometown asso-

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<sup>1</sup> See Round 4 Afrobarometer Survey Data Codebook for precise wording of questions and responses.

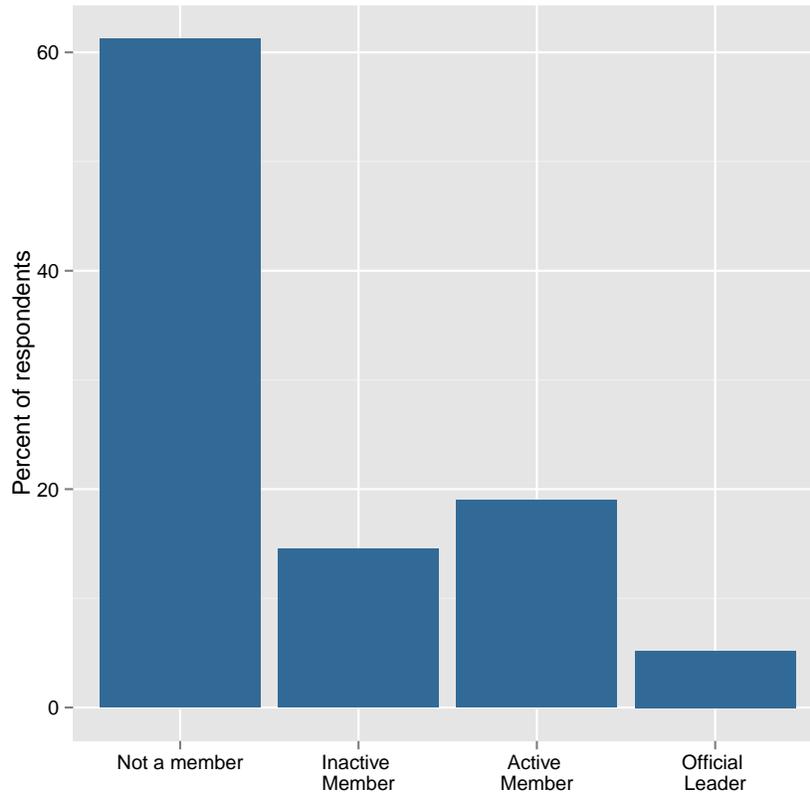
<sup>2</sup> See Appendix for the results of the factor model.

<sup>3</sup> For an in-depth study of voluntary associations throughout Africa, see Tostensen, Tvedten, and vaa's (2001) edited volume *Associational Life in African Cities*.

ciations across Africa, Barkan and McNulty (1991) describe the wide-ranging activities of these groups. Some of the most successful provide basic services like, “primary and especially secondary schools; medical services through the construction of and staffing of health clinics and even hospitals; electricity and telephone lines through the installation of utility poles; water, roads, public-meeting halls, and postal services through the construction of necessary infrastructure” (Barkan and McNulty 1991, 462). Some scholars have argued that the importance of voluntary associations to the health of communities in the developing world has increased in the last two decades. Neo-liberal programs associated with “Structural Adjustment” have reduced the role of the state in providing welfare services, leaving communities to implement a range of public programs. Moreover, new development paradigms and practices have placed emphasis on “community-driven development” (Mathie and Cunningham 2003), or “CDD”, as a strategy for poverty reduction and have provided local villages with additional aid resources to launch CDD programs. Given the types of undertakings community groups pursue across Africa, these Afrobarometer questions appropriately gauge one’s participation in public goods provision.

How participant are Africans? Figure 5.1, on the next page, displays Afrobarometer data on one survey question in particular, namely whether or not they are members of voluntary associations in their communities. It shows a distribution of the percentage of respondents in each reply category.

As we can see from the bar graph, the majority of respondents do not participate in community group activities. Only 24 percent of respondents are active members or leaders of these associations. These numbers are somewhat unexpected, when we consider Afrobarometer data on civic engagement as a whole. Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi (2004, 25) have found that associational life is “alive and well in Africa.” However, the authors measured such behavior using an additive index of group membership, which captured membership in trade unions, religious organizations, professional and business associa-



**Figure 5.1:** Membership in Community Development Associations

tions, farmer’s groups as well as community development associations. While a multitude of Africans (approximately 45 percent of respondents) may be actively involved in their church, fewer tend to join community development organizations. That a small number of respondents participate in community development projects corroborates what we know about public goods provision—the nature of public resources means they become subject to pervasive free riding problems and, therefore, providing them can be immensely challenging. The aim of this project is to help explain what enables individuals to participate in their provision, especially in those communities that face obstacles associated with diversity.

## 5.1.2 Explanatory Variables

Bridging trust is the key explanatory variable in this analysis. Nonetheless, I am interested in capturing each facet of trust and examining whether it predicts participation in public goods provision. This means I will include measures of both bridging and bonding trust in my analysis, using trust data from the 20 African countries included in the fourth round of the Afrobarometer. The same two Round 4 questions that were included in the previous chapter will be put to use in this one. These questions capture respondents' radius of trust or to what degree they trust members of their in-group and out-group. They ask "How much do you trust each of the following types of people?" The first question inquires about "other people you know" and is used as an indicator for bonding trust; the second about "other [Ghanians/Kenyans, etc.]" and is used as an indicator for bridging trust. The responses to each question were coded on a four point scale, from "Not at all" to "I trust them a lot." As I explained in Chapter 4, these questions serve as suitable proxies for intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic trust. I expect that the indicator for bridging trust will be positively correlated with the factored participation variable.

Additional variables are included in the model. It is necessary that I test for the independent and joint impact of factors other than trust that may predict one's participation in public goods provision. At an individual level it is possible that one's socio-economic status and level of education explain such behavior. There is a substantial literature linking participatory activity with general literacy and civic knowledge (Verba and Nie 1972). Often referred to as the SES model, this theory maintains that, *ceteris paribus*, educated citizens tend to participate more broadly in community life. Moreover, social status may affect one's propensity to participate in community projects, as higher social status is often correlated with feelings of efficacy. In their work *No Easy Choice: Political Participation in Developing Countries*, Huntington and Nelson (1976) state that peasants and urban poor

often exhibit low political efficacy, as these groups tend to lack sufficient information, contacts, income, and time. Often they expect their demands to be ignored, and they may fear repression from the government or discrimination from employers, creditors, or landlords.

The fundamental axiom of the SES model is that those individuals who possess greater motivation and resources for civic activity will be more inclined to become active (Verba and Nie 1987; Leighley 1995). In many respects, both motivation and resources tend to be a function of certain ascriptive and achievement characteristics. But some scholars have deconstructed the SES theory, isolating resources as the main determinant of participation (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995). These scholars propose that the presence or absence of resources, such as time, money, and civic skills, can explain the variation in participation levels within and across nations. The presence or absence of resources—which are determined by both accidents of birth and individual choices—also establishes the theoretical and empirical mechanism that links socioeconomic status to participatory activity. Therefore, in my research, I include measures of educational attainment and employment status as well as other demographic variables like age and gender they may affect one’s propensity to become involved in their communities.

### **5.1.3 Estimation and Findings**

I test my first hypotheses with an OLS regression model, using the individual-level predictors discussed in the above paragraphs. 5.1 displays the parameter estimates of my statistical model. As my results show, the indicators for bridging trust and bonding trust are positively correlated with participatory behaviors, measured by a latent participation variable specified earlier in the chapter. However, the effect of bridging trust on participation is 3.9 times greater than the effect of bonding trust, suggesting that it is a stronger predictor of one’s engagement in local goods provision. Moreover, older individuals are more

likely to participate in their communities, while more educated individuals and women are less likely to do so. Each of these variables is statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level.

**Table 5.1:** OLS Estimates of Individual Participation in Public Goods Provision

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>
Bridging trust	.092*	.007
Bonding trust	.024*	.007
Employed	.007	.007
Education	-.027*	.003
Female	-.220*	.01
Age	.003*	.000
	Observations	26,174
	R-squared	.05

These findings support my hypothesis by demonstrating that high trusters are indeed more likely to participate in public goods provision in their communities. Interestingly, both dimensions of trust are associated with increased participation, suggesting that local goods are provided by those who trust their closest, co-ethnic kin *and* those who trust unknown, non-coethnic strangers. It lends support to the argument that trust—in any form—engenders individual contributions to public goods, by reducing concerns about the exploitation and opportunism of other community members not willing to assume this responsibility. With that being said, bridging trust appears to have a stronger effect on participation than bonding trust. Those with broader circles of trust, encompassing coethnics and non-coethnics alike, engage more frequently in public goods provision throughout their community.

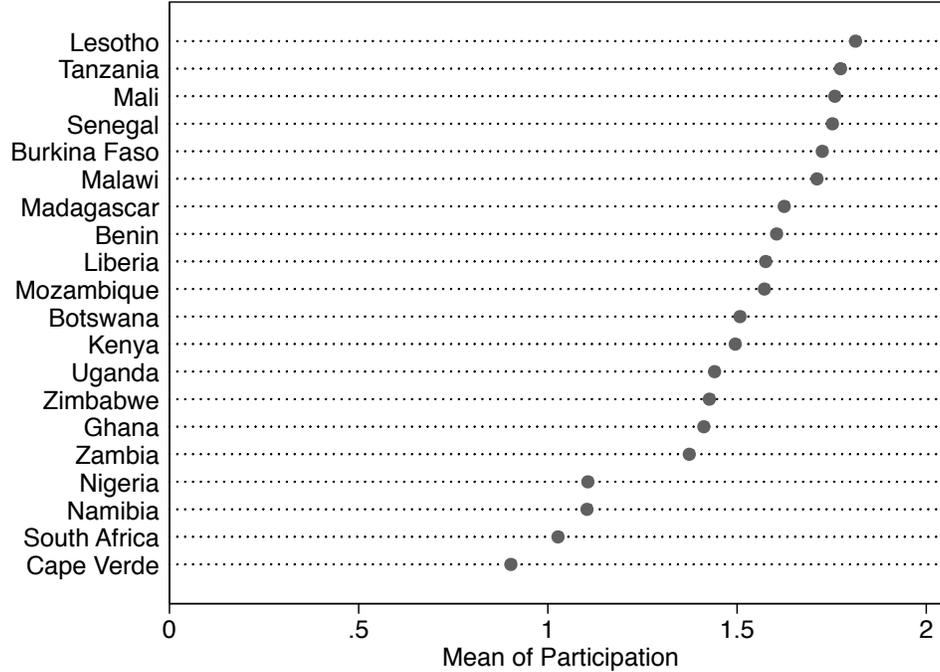
## 5.2 Accounting for Diversity

Establishing an empirical link between trust and participatory behaviors helps to corroborate the formative role of social capital in solving collective action problems. Does ethnic diversity vitiate this link? Can trust sustain cooperative behavior in multi-ethnic communities, where organizing the mechanisms that bridge the gap between self-interest and collective benefits has proven to be particularly challenging? In the previous chapter I argued that it can, outlining when and why trust resolves the collective action problems that plague diverse groups. If my theory is indeed valid, the relationship between bridging trust and participation will hold in contexts of diversity.

This section presents a contextualized model, in which the effects of trust on participation in public goods provision are modeled across different levels of ethnic heterogeneity. To do so, I use a multi-level analysis (Steenbergen and Jones 2002), a framework that allows a researcher to model macro-level effects on individual-level behaviors. Accounting for higher level variables, like diversity, may be an appropriate strategy given the nature of the data. Figure 5.2 shows the distribution of the mean value of participation across the 20 countries included in this study.<sup>4</sup> The plot demonstrates that there is considerable cross-national variation in community-based participation across Africa. The mean values of participation range from .902 in Cape Verde to 1.8 in Lesotho. This cross-country variation may be explained by certain country-level factors, a potentiality that motivates my use of a hierarchical model. Before outlining these modeling techniques, I discuss the data used to measure ethnic diversity and other country-level variables.

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<sup>4</sup>Recall that participation, here, is a latent variable, captured using three related Afrobarometer survey questions.



**Figure 5.2:** Mean Participation across 20 African Nations

### 5.2.1 Measuring Ethnic Heterogeneity

In order to examine how diversity impacts the link between trust and participation across Africa, one needs an appropriate measure of ethnic heterogeneity on the continent. I use the *ethnopolitical group fragmentation* (EGF) index developed by Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999). This Africa-specific index measures the “share of the politicized population that belongs to each ethnopolitical group or subgroup” and was calculated with the inverse of the well-known Herfindahl-Hirschmann concentration index (Mozaffar, Scarritt, and Galaich 2003, 384). This measure enumerates, by country, those ethnic groups that are politically relevant and, so, provides an important test of whether diversity significantly alters the relationship between trust and participation in public goods provision. Moreover,

the index provides an accurate measure of contemporary Africa's complex ethnic morphology, enumerating ethnic groups at three levels of aggregation and accounting for patterns of sub-fractionalization. It includes "all undivided top and middle-level groups and all lowest-level groups... that are potentially politically relevant at the national level" (Mozaffar, Scarritt, and Galaich 2003, 384). In this way, the EGF index improves upon other measures of heterogeneity that suffer from "grouping problems" (Posner 2004a). The metric of the commonly-used ethno-linguistic fractionalization index (ELF), for example, has collapsed a number of distinct, identifiable and politically relevant ethnic groups into singular categories, thereby obscuring important sub-cleavages. The EGF, on the other hand, incorporates these intra-group divisions and accounts for the "existence of multiple bases of ethnic identity" (Mozaffar and Scarritt 2002, 9) in Africa today. As such, it is a more precise reflection of the constructivist understandings of ethnic diversity that I espouse in my theoretical framework.

In addition to heterogeneity, two other variables are used as country-level controls in this model. First, I incorporate national economic performance, measured by GDP per capita, into the model. A relatively strong economy may increase the capacity of the state to deliver public services, thereby reducing the need for local provision. By contrast, a very weak economy signifies increased levels of poverty, which may have individual-level effects on people's capacity to devote time and resources to community-based projects. Secondly, I include an institutional variable by controlling for the proportionality of electoral systems, using the well-known measure of *mean district magnitude*. I would surmise that macro-level institutional arrangements affect patterns of participation by influencing public perceptions of government responsiveness. For instance, an individual may be compelled to participate in community projects if she feels the state is failing to provide adequate public goods. Conversely, she may believe her participation will be more consequential with a *more* responsive government. Scholars have demonstrated that institutions, in part, shape

perceptions of government responsiveness, as these attitudes vary in predictable ways between individuals in majoritarian and those in PR systems (Cho 2010; Cho and Bratton 2006). A simple difference of means test reveals that there is a statistically significance difference\* in perceptions of government responsiveness between respondents in countries with List PR electoral systems and respondents in countries with less proportional systems.<sup>5</sup> If participation is influenced by perceptions of government responsiveness than it is necessary to account for any institutional variation that may shape these attitudes.

## 5.2.2 Estimation

As noted earlier, two levels of data are used to examine whether the relationship between trust and participation persists in contexts of ethnic diversity. The first level variables include bridging and bonding trust, as well as the demographic control variables contained in the first model; the second-level variables are fragmentation, GDP per capita, and mean district magnitude. I include an interaction term in the model—fragmentation X bridging trust—to examine how the effect of bridging trust on participation changes across the range of heterogeneity. I expect that the coefficient on this interaction term will be negative, as it is likely that the effect of bridging trust on participation will weaken at the highest levels of ethnic fragmentation. However, in accordance with my theory, I expect that bridging trust will remain a positive predictor of participation across all levels of ethnic fragmentation. Because of the nature of my argument and the data used—individual respondents nested within countries, with country-level variables shaping individual-level attitudes—I test my hypotheses in a multi-level framework with the following formalized equation:

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<sup>5</sup>\* $p > 0.05$ . Afrobarometer Round 4 data was used in difference of means test. To measure perceptions of government responsiveness I used two questions: “How much of the time do you think Members of Parliament try their best to listen to what people like you have to say?”; “How much time does your Member of Parliament spend in this constituency?”.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Participation}_{ij} = & \beta_{0j} + \beta_{01}(\text{Bridging Trust})_{ij} + \beta_{02}(\text{Bonding Trust})_{ij} + \beta_{04}(\text{Employment})_{ij} \\ & + \beta_{05}(\text{Education})_{ij} + \beta_{06}(\text{Gender})_{ij} + \beta_{07}(\text{Age})_{ij} + r_{ij} \end{aligned} \quad (5.1)$$

where the the country-level covariates enter through  $\beta_{0j}$ :

$$\begin{aligned} \beta_{0j} = & \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(\text{Fragmentation})_j + \gamma_{02}(\text{GDP/capita})_j + \gamma_{03}(\text{District Magnitude})_j \\ & + u_{0j} \end{aligned} \quad (5.2)$$

In these models,  $\beta_{0j}$  is the average level of participation in each country  $j$ .  $\beta_{0j}$  is predicted by the three contextual factors discussed above.  $r_{ij}$  indicates the error at the individual level, while  $u_{0j}$  indicates disturbance at the country-level. These equations are estimated using a mixed effects model, with random intercepts for each of the 20 countries in the sample. Before estimating this model, I conducted an analysis of variance of my main outcome variable to examine the variance components at *both* the country and individual level. Table 5.2 on the next page reports these findings. It demonstrates that both variance components are statistically significant, suggesting that there is substantial variation in participation at both levels of analysis. With that being said the individual variance is proportionally larger than the country-level variance in the model. Specifically, about  $\frac{0.07}{.70} = 10\%$  ( $p < 0.001$ ) of the variance in the data are at the country-level. But it is unsurprising that the majority of the variance in the model is explained by individual responses, given that these are survey data measured at the individual-level (Steenbergen and Jones 2002). Moreover, this share of the variance is common in a similar multi-level analysis that uses both Afrobarometer data and the EGF index (Cho 2010). The results of the ANOVA suggest that we must take into account both individual and country-level factors in order to

fully understand what explains participation in public goods provision across Africa.

**Table 5.2:** Analysis of Variance for Participation in Public Goods Provision

<b>Parameter</b>	<b>Estimate</b>
<i>Fixed effects</i>	
Constant	.035* (.058)
<i>Variance components</i>	
Country level	.067* (.021)
Individual level	0.63* (.005)
N	27,133
* $p < 0.05$	

### 5.2.3 Findings

Table 5.3 presents the model estimates for the determinants of participation in public goods provision. The results provide support for my hypothesis that trust will be positively correlated with participation under contexts of ethnic diversity. In ethnically diverse and ethnically homogeneous countries alike, respondents with high levels of bridging trust are more likely to participate in community-based projects than individuals with low levels of bridging trust. This parameter estimate is statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence interval. Does this relationship change across the range of ethnic heterogeneity in my sample? As the table demonstrates, the coefficient on the interaction term is negative and statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level. This indicates that high levels of diversity do, in fact, reduce the effect of bridging trust on participation. However, the magnitude of this effect is marginal and, more importantly, the effect remains *positive* across all levels of fragmentation. Figure 5.3 plots the interaction term in this model, displaying the marginal effect of bridging trust on participation at ascending levels of the EGF index.

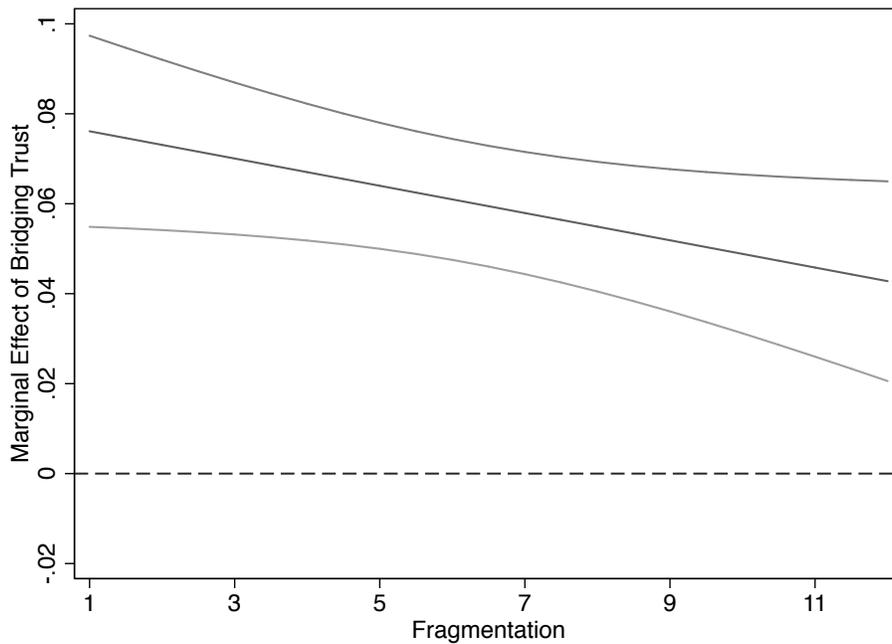
As we can see, bridging trust remains a predictor of participation in public goods provision in the most diverse of contexts.

**Table 5.3:** Linear Mixed Model Estimates of Individual Participation in Public Goods Provision, Controlling for Ethnic Fragmentation

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Err.
<i>Individual Level Covariates</i>		
Bridging trust	.079*	.012
Bonding trust	.026*	.007
Employed	.049*	.007
Education	.015*	.003
Female	-.199*	.010
Age	.003*	.000
<i>Country Level Covariates</i>		
Fragmentation	-.031*	.012
GDP/capita	-.035*	.018
District Magnitude	-.003	.004
<i>Cross-Level Interaction</i>		
Fragmentation × bridging	-.003*	.001
<i>Variance Components</i>		
Country-Level	.067*	.021
Individual-Level	0.63*	.005
Constant	.324 *	.094
Individuals		23,847
Countries		17
Log Likelihood		-27968.097

\*p < 0.05

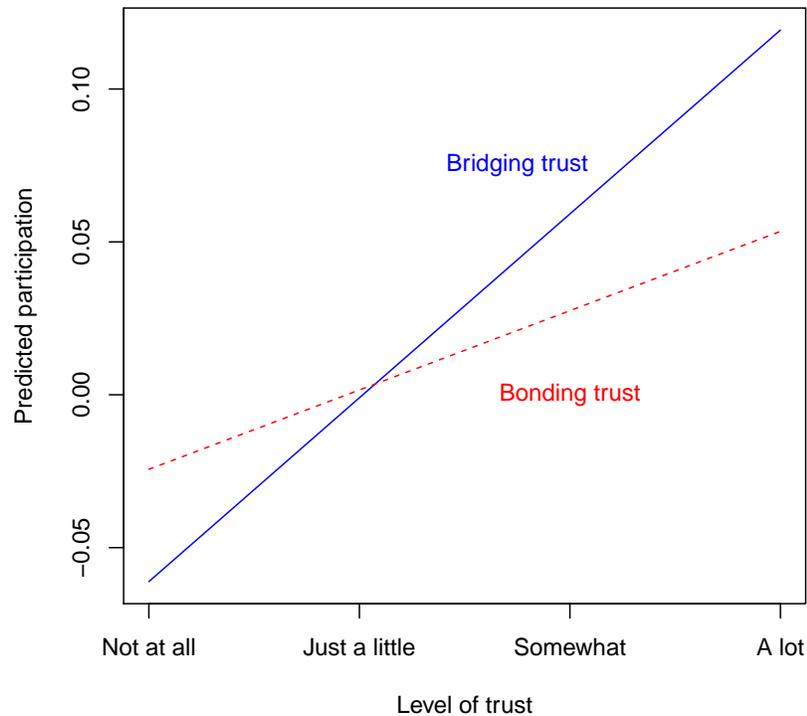
Do bonding trusters contribute to public goods provision in multi-ethnic places? Interestingly, bonding trust also exhibits a statistically significant and substantial relationship with participation, controlling for ethnic diversity. It appears that, in heterogeneous communities, individuals who readily place their confidence in in-group members will be more likely to join a neighborhood watch or a garbage clean-up. Taken together, these findings suggest that trust—in any form and in varying conditions of diversity—underpins communal



**Figure 5.3:** The Marginal Effect of Bridging Trust on Participation across EGF Index

participation. With that being said, I find that the magnitude of this relationship differs depending on which dimension of trust is considered. Taking contextual factors into account, I find that the effect of bridging trust on individual participation is proportionally larger than the effect of bonding trust. Specifically, it is nearly 3 times larger (a proportion similar to what I found in my first model). Figure 5.4 displays this difference by plotting the separate effects of bridging and bonding trust on the outcome variable. It suggests that while both dimensions of trust matter for participation in public goods provision, bridges are more consequential than bonds.

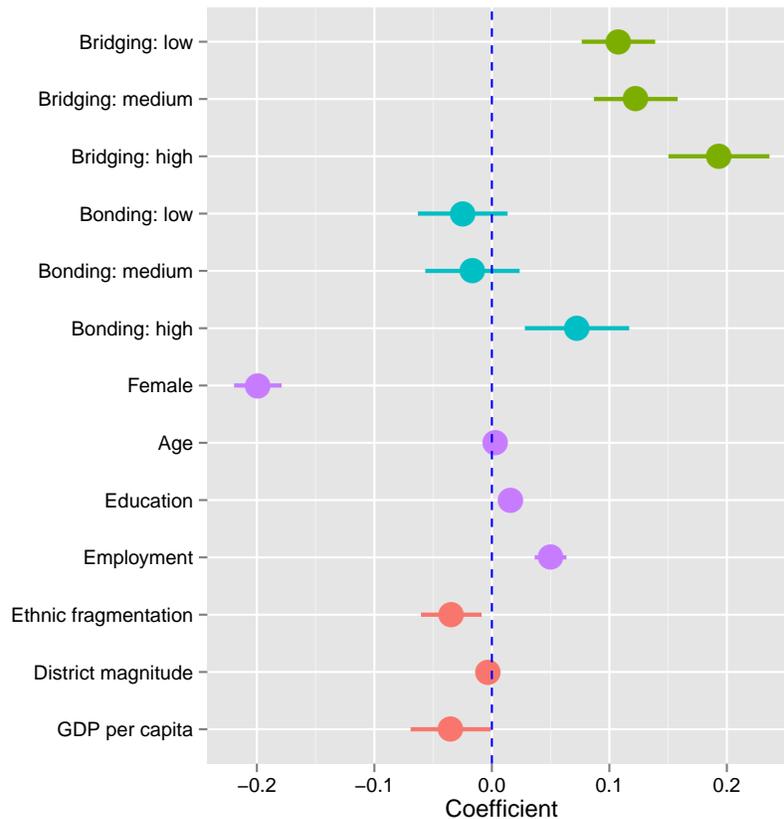
To further explore the dynamic effects of my main explanatory variable, I estimated a second model in which each trust variable was treated as a categorical variable, as opposed to a continuous one. This allows me to test whether the predicted levels of participation



**Figure 5.4:** Comparing the Effects of Bonding and Bridging Trust on Predicted Levels of Participation

differ substantially across the four response categories of each trust variable. Figure 5.5 plots the coefficients for the dichotomized trust variables as well as the parameter estimates for each of the other predictors in the model (Whiskers represent the 95 percent confidence intervals). The plot reveals that bonding trust is not a significant predictor of participation at lower levels of trust; only those individuals who trust in-group members “a lot” (in comparison to the reference category “not at all”) are significantly more likely to participate in public goods provision in their communities. By contrast, each level of bridging trust (in comparison to the reference category) is a significant predictor of participation. Moreover,

the plot indicates that the effect of bridging trust on participation is greatest among those respondents who are *most* trusting of out-group members. It seems that the broadest circles of trust engender the most participation.<sup>6</sup>



**Figure 5.5:** Random-Intercept Regression Coefficients on Participation in Public Goods Provision

Turning to the other individual-level variables in the model, we see that education levels, employment status and gender remain statistically significant predictors of participation in the mixed model. Those who are employed full-time and/or have received more schooling are more likely to become members of neighborhood watches or join garbage collectives; females, in general, are less likely to engage in such activities. Turning to

<sup>6</sup>Note that the effect of high bridging trust on predicted participation is 3 times larger than the effect of high bonding trust.

the country-level variables, the results show that individuals in nations with higher GDP per capita are less likely to participate, while a country's mean district magnitude has no statistically significant effect on this behavior. Finally, and unsurprisingly, high degrees of country-level diversity are associated with lower levels of participation. *Ceteris paribus*, individuals in highly fractious societies are less likely to participate in public goods provision. Such a finding is consistent with literature on the aggregate effects of ethnic heterogeneity on civic engagement (Alesina and La Ferrara 2000).

### **5.3 Conclusion**

In this chapter I have established an empirical relationship between trust and local goods provision in contemporary Africa. Through careful analysis of cross-national survey data from 20 African nations, I have demonstrated that more trusting individuals participate in community development efforts. More importantly, I have shown that this relationship can be found in contexts of homogeneity *and* in contexts of diversity. It appears that bridging trust—a type of social capital that brings together non-coethnics—enables individuals in multi-ethnic communities to participate in public goods provision. My findings suggest that, where social capital is available, those intractable collective action problems that seem to plague diverse communities can be resolved. Relationships of trust bind non-coethnics together, facilitate cooperation between them, and help them achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. The next chapter presents a qualitative test of this relationship, exploring local goods provision in two of Cape Town, South Africa's multi-ethnic communities.

## Chapter 6

# Fighting Crime and Grime Locally: Inter-ethnic Trust and Community Policing Efforts in Cape Town, South Africa

The previous empirical chapters presented individual-level evidence that explicates the role of trust in solving the collective action problems that plague multi-ethnic communities. My analysis of public opinion data from Africa revealed two empirical relationships that support my theory. First, patterns of ethnic identity vary with patterns of trust, such that individuals who weakly identify with their ethnic group tend to maintain broader circles of trust. Secondly, trust attitudes predict participatory behavior in homogeneous *and* heterogeneous communities, as “bridging” trusters tend to participate more frequently in community development projects. This chapter explores these themes through an in-depth analysis of local goods provision in a specific context, namely the diverse neighborhoods of Cape Town, South Africa. Using original data collected in 2012, I investigate the role that ethnic, and in particular racial, identities play in shaping trust patterns in heterogeneous neighborhoods throughout the city and how such dynamics impact the capacity for these

communities to provide collective security measures.

The chapter precedes as follows. I first explain why Cape Town was selected as a research site and why it serves as a useful case for in-depth analysis. Guided by my theoretical framework, I then outline my hypotheses and expectations and discuss the design of a field-based research program that tests these hypotheses. The remainder of the chapter is dedicated to a comparative analysis of local neighborhood watches and community policing efforts in the diverse communities of Delft and Zonnebloem, in order to evaluate whether the explanations proposed in my theoretical framework are borne out by the processes of goods provision I observed in the field. I find that different cleavage structures account for varying patterns of trust between these diverse communities. Ultimately, it is these environments of trust that explain why Delft has experienced success in local security provision and why Zonnebloem has not.

## **6.1 Why Cape Town?**

South Africa provides an ideal environment for which a researcher can explore the dynamics of political behavior in ethnically heterogeneous societies. The “Rainbow Nation” is a quintessential multi-ethnic society, comprised of Blacks of Bantu descent, Whites of European ancestry, Indians and Malay people, and Coloured persons of mixed black and white descent, among other groups. South Africa’s Black population comprises a majority of the total populace (approximately 80 percent), within which there are a host of ethnic groups. They include the Khoi-San, Xhosa, Zulu, Ndebele, Sotho, Shangaan, Venda, and Tswana, as well as smaller tribes.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, South Africa is as fractionalized linguistically as it is ethnically. The rainbow nation recognizes eleven official languages, includ-

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<sup>1</sup>The ethnic composition of South Africa is, in fact, more heterogeneous than official estimates, given the large number of undocumented migrants from neighboring Zimbabwe and other African nations, who have emigrated from their home countries in search of better economic opportunities.

ing the widely-used Zulu (isiZulu), Xhosa (isiXhosa), Afrikaans, and English. The less prominent languages spoken by smaller ethnic groups include isiNdebele, sePedi, seSotho, seTswana, siSwati, tshiVenda, and xiTsonga. Within South Africa, Cape Town is considered one of the country's most culturally diverse cities—a melting pot of ethnic communities that exemplify what it means to be a “rainbow” nation. Cape Town has a rich history of interaction between different races, ethnicities, and language groups. In fact, before the onset of Apartheid policies in 1948, Cape Town was considered the least segregated city in Southern Africa, especially in the racially-mixed, working class housing tracts Western and Coles (1996). Apartheid fundamentally changed these dynamics and the legacies of this system continue to structure inter-racial interactions in the city. Nonetheless, Cape Town remains a prototype of diversity in Sub-Saharan Africa, and so, makes a compelling case for focused analysis on local goods provision in contexts of diversity.

More importantly, race and ethnicity *matter* in South African society. As such, this case constitutes a hard test of the role of trust in facilitating inter-ethnic cooperation. In South Africa, race and ethnicity have been structured by the institutional legacies of an Apartheid system that sought to consolidate the political and economic power of White South Africans by means of racial segregation policies. Apartheid was underpinned by a fallacious classification scheme that assigned individuals into four constructed racial groups, to which political, economic, and social rights were either granted or withheld (e.g. federal employment opportunities for Whites; disenfranchisement for non-White South Africans). It was upheld by so-called “divide and rule” strategies that attempted to thwart the political unity of disadvantaged groups by pitting them against each other. For example, in an attempt to aggravate relations among non-White groups, Coloureds and Indians were allotted higher quality housing and provided with better public facilities than Africans. They were also given preference over Blacks in employment under the “Colored Labour Preference” policy. The “divide and rule” strategy was epitomized by the government's “homeland”

system, in which separate territorial units were allocated for African ethnic groups whose members were, subsequently, forced to revoke their South African citizenship.

Apartheid's entrenched system of institutional prejudice produced deep-rooted, structural imbalances in socio-economic conditions between Whites and non-Whites. These legacies continue to uphold the relevance of race and ethnicity in the social and political landscape of present-day South Africa. South Africans tend to view their opportunities and constraints through the prism of race. Ferree notes, "Forty years of Apartheid (and centuries of segregation before it) taught South Africans to link individual prospects to racial identity" (Ferree 2011, 37). Consequently, voting patterns tend to mirror racial demographics across the country. Since the 1994 transitional election, a majority of African voters have thrown their support behind the African National Congress, while a majority of White voters have continuously backed leading opposition parties. Moreover, campaign politics in South Africa has been marked by either overt or thinly veiled, racial rhetoric, as parties often perceive an electoral advantage in making appeals to voters on the basis of race (Ferree 2011). In short, race and ethnicity are the backdrops of South African society and, therefore, its "mother city" of Cape Town serves as an appropriate setting to explore the nexus between ethnicity and political behavior.

But ultimately, it is South Africa's varied and complex ethnic topography that make it an ideal case for in-depth analysis, providing me an opportunity to evaluate the internal validity of my theory. Recall that, in Chapter 3, I argued that while inter-ethnic trust helps to solve collective dilemmas in multi-ethnic communities, its presence varies according to contextual factors. Inter-ethnic interaction, I explained, takes place in varied social, political, and institutional contexts. These contexts provide a foundation for either the development or the suppression of bridging trust. In communities where cleavages have been moderated by demographic, institutional or other variables, the saliency of one's ethnic identity decreases and becomes less consequential in social arenas. In these types of com-

munities, inter-ethnic trust is given space to germinate, improving the capacity of residents to resolve their collective dilemmas and confront their shared challenges. South Africa provides an ideal setting for me to gauge how different contextual variables shape the saliency of ethnicity across space, thus producing divergent outcomes with respect to local goods provision. Although racial and ethnic identities continue to prevail in the modern South African consciousness, there is considerable variation in the salience of these identities across contexts. For instance, Indian ethnicity continues to be a politically relevant and socially salient identity point for individuals in the Kwazulu-Natal city of Durban. In the last decade, the oppositional Democratic Alliance has spent substantial amounts of political capital courting the Indian vote. They have appealed to particular “Indian concerns” about the allocation of resources and possible ANC bias towards African communities (Ferree 2011). In Cape Town, however, Indian ethnicity has assumed less significance in public arenas as a distinct, ethnically-based identity around which people mobilize. During the implementation of Apartheid-era spatial policies, Capetonians of Indian descent were permitted to live anywhere within the perimeters of the “Coloured Group Areas.” Because Indians were too few in number, no attempt was made to allocate a separate living space within the city limits. By contrast, Indians comprise a sizable portion of the populace in Durban (and Kwazulu-Natal, in general); because they were successful shopkeepers, they were considered an economic threat to Whites. Consequently, they were confined to a separate Indian group area (Western and Coles 1996). Because of a combination of demographic patterns and apartheid institutions, the salience of Indian identity differs between these cities. Indian ethnic markers are likely to mean one thing in Durban and another in Cape Town.

In South Africa, the salience of ethnic identities has varied over time as well as space. For example, “Coloured” identity was tempered during the heyday of Apartheid-era resistance, when the “Black Consciousness” movement gained strength in Coloured Group

Areas. During this time, Coloureds began demonstrating solidarity with Africans, in townships across the Cape Flats and in the halls of parliament.<sup>2</sup> Coloureds across South Africa eschewed their prescribed yet distinct, ethnically-based identity in favor of a more encompassing one, based on their position (alongside Africans) as marginalized peoples (Jung 2000). Some individuals redefined “Coloured” as “Black”, in a maneuver meant to deny the validity of the National Party’s racial classification scheme. However, Coloured identity made a resurgence in the aftermath of the negotiated transition that ended Apartheid. In a free South Africa, Coloureds promptly found themselves competing directly with Africans for employment opportunities. And many Coloureds felt marginalized by the ANC’s new affirmative action laws, especially those low-skilled individuals who could be more easily replaced by African workers when employers decided to diversify their demographic profile (James et al. 1996). Many Coloured elites found themselves embracing an explicitly “Coloured” identity, as a means of political mobilization and interest definition in a new political landscape. But even as “Coloured” identity has experience a resurgence since the fall Apartheid, its activation and expression in social and political life varies across contexts. Courtney Jung explains, “Coloureds identify differently along multiple cleavage lines” (Jung 2000). According to her research on ethnicity in South Africa, coloured identity is most salient amongst working-class, Christian, and socially conservative individuals. However, young, urban, and educated Coloureds appear prefer to be identified as South African. For Coloureds in Cape Town, ethnic identity is overlaid with religious, ideological and, most noticeably, class identities; contextual variables condition which identity an individual will embrace.

In sum, both of these examples highlight the fluidity of racial and ethnic identity in the ‘rainbow’ nation. Identities in South Africa are heterogeneous, indefinite, and “unevenly

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<sup>2</sup>Inspired by the Black Consciousness movement, parties representing Coloured South Africans rejected a conciliatory offer from the National Party to form a tri-cameral parliament—composed of Whites, Coloureds, and Indians—on the basis that such an institution preserved African disenfranchisement.

politicized” (Jung 2000)—an artifact of Apartheid engineering, the country’s complex ethnic morphology and the conscious manipulation of different political entrepreneurs seeking to gain the loyalty of mobilized and unmobilized groups. As my theory suggests, variations in the salience of ethnic identity throughout South Africa have implications for the intensity of ethnic cleavages in local communities across the the country, including those in the city of Cape Town. If the intensity of societal cleavages varies according to context, so will patterns of inter-ethnic trust. We can speculate, then, that collective action problems may be intractable in some of Cape Town’s diverse neighborhoods, but quite solvable in others. In the next section, I lay out expectations and hypotheses.

## **6.2 Expectations**

My analysis of Cape Town’s multi-ethnic neighborhoods is grounded in a number of hypotheses. First, I anticipate that, between my sampled communities, patterns of trust will vary with the saliency of ethnic cleavages. As my theory purports, the intensity of ethnic divisions depends on certain contextual factors. Ethnic cleavages can become salient, for instance, when certain institutional configurations increase the political relevance of ethnic groups as distinct, mobilizable groups (i.e., Posner (2005)). Cleavages could also become salient if identity cleavages, like race and class, overlay each other. In contrast to the moderating effects of cross-cutting divisions, reinforcing cleavages tend to create conflict in diverse societies (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Dahl 1982; Diamond 1988). When ethnic groups are divided by race as well as class, they view each other as different along many dimensions. In these types of environments, ethnically-based identities can become more salient, suppressing the development of inter-ethnic trust. Because the City of Cape Town is characterized by ethnic and racial diversity as well as intra- and inter-group heterogeneity in class, it is likely that I will find that, within my sample, some diverse communities are

defined by reinforcing cleavages while others contain cross-cutting social forces. I expect that these structural variables will shape patterns of inter-ethnic trust in these communities.

Furthermore, I anticipate that these patterns of trust will vary with outcomes of local goods provision across Cape Town's multi-ethnic communities. I expect more cooperative behavior among non-coethnics in neighborhoods characterized by cross-cutting social cleavages or other structural variables that vitiates the saliency of ethnic differences. It is likely that these diverse communities will be endowed with higher levels of inter-ethnic trust. I expect that such trust will manifest in higher observed levels of participation in local goods provision. By contrast, I expect to observe less cooperative behavior in more deeply-divided neighborhoods that lack such moderating variables. It is likely that inter-ethnic trust will be scarce in such communities. Consequently, I predict that fewer individuals will participate in community development projects there. In sum, I expect to observe that, across Cape Town's multi-ethnic neighborhoods, outcomes in local goods provision will vary with patterns of inter-ethnic trust. If my hypotheses are borne out by the evidence, they will support several tenets of my theory. Not only will I have found evidence that the effects of ethnicity on individual behavior are context-dependent, but also that trust binds ethnic groups in mutually reciprocal relationships that help to solve collective action problems.

### **6.3 Research Design**

This section presents a qualitative research design that will allow me to test my posed hypotheses. My comparative analytical method will be akin to a "most similar systems" design, in which two cases with comparable characteristics and contrasting outcomes are analyzed and explained. Below, I discuss my method of case selection, heeding close attention to the distinctive (but not uncommon) geography of diversity in post-Apartheid Cape

Town. I introduce two multiethnic neighborhoods within the perimeters of the “Mother City” that will be the focus of this qualitative study. Finally, I discuss the operationalization and measurement of key concepts in my analysis, including trust and local goods provision.

### **6.3.1 Case Selection: The Suburbs of Delft and Zonnebloem**

My analysis centers on the diverse communities of Delft and Zonnebloem. Before discussing these cases in detail, I will briefly explain my case selection process. In order to choose research sites within Cape Town, I relied on 2001 data from the South African census bureau.<sup>3</sup> This data allowed me to identify Cape Town suburbs with significant ethnic heterogeneity to warrant in-depth analysis.<sup>4</sup> Finding heterogeneous communities in Cape Town, however, proved to be challenging. While the city can be characterized as highly multi-ethnic at the aggregate level, individual districts remain considerably homogeneous. As specified in the Group Areas Act, racial groups were kept spatially segregated under the Apartheid system. Non-White South Africans were forcibly removed from desirable locations and allocated sub-standard housing in the sandy, Cape Flats area to the east of Cape Town’s “city bowl” (i.e. the municipality’s central business district). In some cases, segregation policies were instituted *within* suburbs, where separate areas were “zoned” according to race.<sup>5</sup> Although the legal framework that codified racial segregation was repealed

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<sup>3</sup>An updated census questionnaire was distributed throughout South Africa in 2011. However, the census data will not be released to the public until Spring 2013 and, therefore, was not available during data collection or the writing of this manuscript.

<sup>4</sup>The term “suburb” in South Africa refers to the smallest geographical subdivision of a city. It is equivalent to the term “district” outside of South Africa. While the suburbs may have their own administrative institutions (postal codes, police stations, etc.), together they form the metropolitan municipality of Cape Town (governed by a 221 member city council).

<sup>5</sup>The suburb of Fish Hoek/Kommetjie is a prime example. Coloureds were forcibly removed from designated White areas of the two villages and assigned housing in a nearby, newly established township called Ocean View. The name is misleading, as the township was situated a few kilometers inland from the Atlantic Seaboard. Its inhabitants were, in fact, stripped of their “ocean views” under Apartheid.

over twenty years ago, Cape Town is still defined by the geography of Apartheid. Where integration has occurred, it has been brought about by slow-moving, market mechanisms. The ANC has taken many steps to correct the racial inequalities that were inherited from the Apartheid system, including providing 1.8 million houses for needy South Africans as of 2007 (Ferree 2011). But the government has eschewed the adoption of active integration policies in favor of deficit reduction plans and tight monetary policy, as stated in their orthodox policy framework, the Growth, Employment, and Redistribution Programme (GEAR). As a result, Cape Town continues to appear as a “racialized grid” (Robins 1998) with the slow pace of desegregation reinforcing patterns of social polarization and ghettoization.

Nevertheless, pockets of Cape Town are characterized by considerable racial and ethnic diversity. Many communities in the Cape Flats, for example, have become more heterogeneous with the construction of new social housing projects. Racially integrated developments are being erected throughout this sandy expanse, like in the former Coloured townships of Delft and Mitchell’s Plain. Now Coloureds are living adjacent to Africans, Indians, and other ethnicities, after decades of residing in homogenous quadrants of the Cape Flats. Moreover, the communities on the lower slopes of Devil’s Peak and the upper “Southern suburbs”—including Woodstock, Salt River, Mowbray, and Wynberg—comprise some of the most heterogeneous populations in the city. Interestingly, these communities remained racially mixed during Apartheid. Where the government was unable to forcibly remove non-White Capetonians from desirable locations—because of opposition from concerned White residents or interest groups in the community—the neighborhoods were reluctantly permitted to remain “grey areas.”<sup>6</sup> The economic advancement of a growing Black middle class has also contributed to an increase in the number of racially-mixed neighborhoods in the “Mother City.” Many upwardly mobile Africans are beginning to leave the Cape Flats

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<sup>6</sup>Western and Coles (1996) describe how opposition to forced removals often came from Mission churches in removal areas and from well-to-do, White home-owners who relied on in-house, Coloured domestics.

and settle closer to the cosmopolitan city bowl. As a result, some previously designated “White areas” of Cape Town are experiencing rapid increases in levels of diversity.

Notwithstanding post-apartheid integration, Cape Town has always been more heterogeneous than it would appear to a casual observer. Many neighborhoods are quite diverse along dimensions other than race, a reality that highlights South Africa’s complex ethnic topography. In Cape Town, some Coloureds are Muslim and others are Christian; Whites may speak Afrikaans or they may speak English; a majority of Blacks are Xhosa, but there are considerable numbers of Venda and Zimbabweans.<sup>7</sup> Many racially homogenous communities are, in fact, internally fractured by language, religion, and class. According to government data, the large, mostly Black township of Khayelitsha is one of the most racially homogeneous districts in the city. But what the numbers do not reveal is that Khayelitsha is divided internally—characterized by linguistic and religious diversity as well as sub-ethnic fractionalization. Recent survey data from the 2005 Cape Area Study attests to this diversity.<sup>8</sup> When asked to identify their race as it was (or would have been) classified under the Apartheid system, nearly 97 percent of Khayelitsha’s respondents claimed that they were “Black/African” (a number that corresponds to official census estimates). However, when probed for their own self-classification, a significant percentage of respondents stated that they belonged to the following groups: Zulu, Xhosa, Hlubi, Mfengu, Pondo, and Tembu. These latter four groups are sub-tribes of the parent Bantu group, the Xhosa; each has comparable but distinctive cultural heritages.<sup>9</sup> Clearly, Khayelitsha—like many of Cape Town’s seemingly homogeneous suburbs—is an ethnically plural community.

The South African census data provides insight into which areas of Cape Town are ver-

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<sup>7</sup>A Cape Town taxi driver confessed to me that he often overheard the racy gossip of his unsuspecting Xhosa passengers. He told me that most assumed he was Zimbabwean; they, therefore, felt free to speak openly, in a language they thought he did not understand, about all matters of topic.

<sup>8</sup>The 2005 Cape Area Study is part of an ongoing series of public opinion surveys on political and social issues in the city of Cape Town.

<sup>9</sup>Khayelitsha is also home to a large population of immigrants from other sub-Saharan African nations, which provides further evidence that the township is quite ethnically diverse.

itably “multi-ethnic.” Using the 2001 figures for the city of Cape Town, I estimated racial and linguistic fractionalization indices for each Cape Town suburb. To calculate these indices I used the inverse of the well-known Herfindahl-Hirschmann concentration index (see (Scarritt and Mozaffar 1999)). The index is calculated by the following formula:  $1/\sum(g_i^2)$ , where  $g_i$  is the racial or linguistic group  $g$ 's share of the suburb's population.<sup>10</sup> I then coded each suburb as “high”, “medium”, or “low” multi-ethnic, according to both its racial and linguistic fractionalization score (in comparison to other suburbs). As I suspected, the data reveal that many Cape Town neighborhoods are linguistically plural even as they are racially homogeneous. For example, Durbanville's racial fragmentation score characterizes the suburb as “low multi-ethnic”; however, its linguistic fragmentation score places it among the city's “medium multiethnic” suburbs. Although Durbanville's White population comprises a numerical majority, the suburb is linguistically heterogeneous (and culturally plural along other axes of identity).

I used my constructed fractionalization indices to select research sites, focusing on suburbs that registered as “high” or “medium” multi-ethnic. The majority of my field work was conducted in the following suburbs: Mowbray, Observatory, Woodstock, Wynberg, Delft, Muizenberg, Khayelitsha, Zonnebloem, Athlone, and Brackenfell.<sup>11</sup> In this chapter, I focus my analysis on the suburbs of Zonnebloem and Delft. These communities provided ideal cases for hypothesis testing using a most-similar systems design because they are similarly composed with respect to a number of essential characteristics.

Zonnebloem is a residential and commercial area that borders Cape Town's central business district and is situated between the lower slopes of Devil's Peak and the docks of Table Bay. Zonnebloem is the former District Six, a lively, mixed-race neighborhood that garnered national attention when, in the 1970s, the Apartheid regime forcibly removed over

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<sup>10</sup>This data is coded for a single point in time, 2001.

<sup>11</sup>More homogeneous areas like Oranjezicht, Grassy Park, and Elsie's River were also visited.

60,000 of its inhabitants and declared the district a “Whites only” area. Today, the residents of Zonnebloem are ethnically heterogeneous, comprised of White, Coloured, and African tenants and homeowners. According to the 2001 South African census, the racial breakdown of Zonnebloem is as follows: 39 percent of its residents are Coloured, 23 percent are Black African, 36 percent are White, and 2 percent are Indian/Asian. Zonnebloem is also linguistically plural, with English, Afrikaans, and Xhosa speakers distributed throughout the area. Zonnebloem can be considered a “low” to “middle” income community, with a heterogeneous mix of “white-collar” property owners and “blue-collar” government housing beneficiaries. The occupation profile of Zonnebloem’s labor force is also considerably diverse. Residents include managers, professional, technicians, clerks, service workers, and craft and tradesman.

Outside of the city bowl lies Delft, a large, low-income township on the Cape Flats, east of Cape Town International Airport. It is one of the most ethnically heterogeneous suburbs in the area. The 2011 census reports that approximately 58 percent of Delft’s residents are Coloured, 39 percent are Black African, 0.4 percent are Indian/Asian, and 0.1 percent are White.<sup>12</sup> In addition to being mixed-race, Delft, like Zonnebloem, is linguistically heterogeneous. English, Afrikaans, Xhosa, and other African languages are widely spoken throughout this community. While Delft is poorer than Zonnebloem, it also maintains an occupation profile that is heterogeneous. Residents of Delft include clerks, service workers, craft and trade workers as well as plant and machine operators.

As we can see, the cases of Delft and Zonnebloem conform well to a “most similar systems” analytical framework. Each of these communities is among Cape Town’s most racially and ethnically heterogeneous districts. Delft and Zonnebloem have similar racial and linguistic fragmentation scores, even as they maintain different demographic composi-

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<sup>12</sup>Updated census data from 2011 was available for the district of Delft: however, the 2011 census grouped Zonnebloem with three other districts (Observatory, Woodstock, and Mowbray) into one ward. As such, I rely on 2001 census data which collected Zonnebloem-specific data.

tions.<sup>13</sup> Based on its ethnic fractionalization score (2.99), Zonnebloem is the second most diverse community of the 34 Cape Town suburbs in my sample.<sup>14</sup> Delft's ethnic fractionalization score (1.95) places it as the eighth most diverse suburb in my sample.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, Zonnebloem and Delft are also similarly diverse in language composition. Based on its linguistic fractionalization score (2.79), Zonnebloem is the fourth most linguistically diverse community in my sample. Delft (1.97) is, again, the eighth most diverse in language composition.

But beyond their ethnic heterogeneity, Zonnebloem and Delft are similar in other important characteristics. Both communities, for instance, have high numbers of tenants, who are either renting units or occupying houses rent-free in these areas. And both Delft and Zonnebloem have a large number of residents who are new to the area. Delft's population profile has changed considerably since 2001, as a large numbers of African families have relocated to Delft's newly-built, state-subsidized housing developments.<sup>16</sup> In fact, according to the South African census, there has been a 52 percent increase in Delft's population since 2001, with new African residents accounting for most of the demographic change.<sup>17</sup> Zonnebloem's population has also enlarged in the last decade. According to the South African census, Zonnebloem and the surrounding areas of Gardens, Mowbray, Observatory, Salt River and Woodstock have seen a 37 percent increase in population since 2001. For one, developers have begun to refurbish the empty lots of the former District Six into commercial and residential properties (Nkomo December 6, 2011). And the former resi-

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<sup>13</sup>Delft's White community is small, while Whites comprise over 35 percent of Zonnebloem's population.

<sup>14</sup>Only Muizenberg registered a higher fractionalization score at 3.03. Note: some Cape Town suburbs were excluded in my EFI calculations.

<sup>15</sup>Fractionalization scores range from 1 to 3.03. Mean Score: 1.57. Median Score: 1.25.

<sup>16</sup>The municipality agreed that 50 percent of all new government houses erected in Delft were to be allocated to Coloured families on the municipal waiting list, while the remainder of houses were to be allocated to the mostly Black African families currently residing in selected informal settlements across the city (Muyeba and Seekings 2011).

<sup>17</sup>In 2001 Africans comprised 25 percent of Delft's population; in 2011, they comprised 39 percent. Conversely, in 2011 Coloureds comprised 59 percent of Delft's population, down from 73 percent in 2001.

dents that were forcibly removed from District Six have begun resettling in the area, having resolved their land restitution claims with the South African government. In addition to their new populations, both communities have similar percentages of “low income” and “middle income” residents, even as Zonnebloem maintains higher aggregate household income. According to recent census data, 25.6 percent of Zonnebloem’s population occupy the low-income category, which ranges from R1 to R1600 per month; In Delft, 24.5 percent of residents occupy this same category.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, 17.2 percent of Zonnebloem’s population occupy the middle-level income category, ranging from R6401 to R25,600; In Delft, 13.6 percent of residents occupy this same category.<sup>19</sup>

Table 6.1, on the next page, displays selected community characteristics in Delft and Zonnebloem. The table illustrates that these multi-ethnic communities maintain a number of similarities. It also shows, however, that Zonnebloem and Delft have experienced different outcomes with respect to local goods provision. These varying outcomes, I will argue, are explained by differences in the supply of local, inter-ethnic social capital between the two suburbs.

**Table 6.1:** A Comparison of Selected Community Characteristics

	<b>Delft</b>	<b>Zonnebloem</b>
Ethnic Fractionalization Index	1.95	2.99
Linguistic Fractionalization Index	1.97	2.79
% of Renters and Occupiers	43	37
% of Low Income Earners (R1 - R1,600/month)	24.5	25.6
% of Middle Income Earners (R6,401-R25,600/month)	13.6	17.2
Local Goods Provision	Successful Community Policing	Ineffective Community Policing

<sup>18</sup>This income category is equivalent to a range between \$0.11 to \$180 U.S. dollars.

<sup>19</sup>Zonnebloem maintains higher aggregate income than Delft because fewer residents are unemployed (i.e. taking in no income).

## **6.3.2 Operationalizing Key Concepts**

### **Measuring Local Goods Provision**

This dissertation focuses on the local provision of public goods. Nowhere is the process of local goods provision more salient and politicized than in South Africa. After a brief engagement with redistributive policies under the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the South African state adopted a neo-liberal policy platform that was dubbed GEAR (i.e. Growth, Employment and Redistribution Framework). Attuned to Washington Consensus prescriptions, the main tenets of GEAR included: trade liberalization, fiscal restraint, privatization, and cost recovery. These policies sought to transition the South African government from a “redistributive” state to an “enabling” or “facilitating” state (McDonald and Pape 2002, 4). While they were intended to promote sustainability and support the successful integration of the South African economy into the global marketplace, the policies have contributed to overburdening local governments and undermining service delivery across the country. As a result, service delivery has become a contentious political issue in South Africa, pitting the ANC and the increasingly ineffective local governments it supports against workers’ unions, rights groups and grassroots protest movements. More importantly, and for the purposes of this study, service delivery failures have left local communities in charge of providing essential public goods.

In Cape Town, service delivery failures have been particularly apparent in the domain of public safety. As a public good, the provision of security is essential to the health of a society and the welfare of its citizens. In the face of endemic crime, the city of Cape Town has struggled to provide adequate security for its residents. As a nation, South Africa is plagued by exceedingly high rates of violent crime. Crime in Cape Town is particularly egregious, as the city has continuously experienced the highest prevalence of murder and drug-related crime in the country (City of Cape Town, 2006b). In fact, Cape Town has one

of the highest murder rates in the world, with more than 40 victims per 100,000 persons. Crime in Cape Town has become so pervasive that it is beginning to stretch the capacities of the state. With finite resources and staggering counts of murder, rape, and theft, municipal and provincial law enforcement struggle to fight ordinary crime in the city. Some police districts are disproportionately over-burdened, as crime tends to concentrate in the townships of the Cape Flats.

Because it is a salient public issue across Cape Town, I focus on security initiatives as an indicator of public goods provision. Since I am interested in the *local* provision of security, I chose to examine community policing efforts, in particular. In order to stretch their resources and improve their law enforcement capacities, the City of Cape Town has attempted to involve the public in fighting crime. Three of these initiatives are pertinent to this study. First, the city has made efforts to implement neighborhood watches throughout the municipality. Secondly, they have attempted to mobilize anti-gang community groups, reaching out to churches to spearhead local initiatives. Finally, in each district, the city has established Community Policing Forums (CPFs) that serve as consultative bodies, in an attempt to improve communication between community members, government, and law enforcement. According to the policy framework that underpinned their nationwide establishment, South Africa's CPF's are intended to be a "collaborative, partnership-based approach to local-level problem solving" (Pelser 2011). The municipality of Cape Town—in conjunction with the Western Cape Province—has placed community policing structures in almost every district. However, there is considerable variation in how effectively these bodies perform from community to community. In some suburbs, community members eagerly await monthly CPF meetings, in which they have the opportunity to exchange information about crime and safety in their neighborhoods. In other suburbs, CPF meetings are sparsely attended. In some suburbs, highly organized networks of voluntary neighborhood watches work in close collaboration with municipal law enforcement; in others,

neighborhood watches meet infrequently, appear disorganized, and are comprised of only a handful of dedicated residents.

My data collection commenced with these community policing bodies. In my selected sample communities, I visited municipal police stations and community improvement district headquarters, interviewing local police officers, chairpersons of Community Police Forums, and ordinary members of neighborhoods watches. These interviews were semi-structured in format and took place between July and September 2012. During the course of the meetings, I collected relevant and important information about these organizations. In particular, the interviews focused on rates of participation among residents in community policing efforts, the functions and objectives of these organizations, and the challenges and obstacles that these bodies face. I also collected a number of primary documents, including various Community Police Forum newsletters and minutes from several CPF meetings in my sample communities.

### **Measuring Trust**

To measure patterns of inter-ethnic trust in Cape Town, I relied on various sources. First, I conducted semi-structured interviews with a range of local residents in my sample communities. Some interviewees were active members of community groups, who spent much of their spare time volunteering in their neighborhoods. Other interviewees were employed by the City of Cape Town as directors of local Community Improvement Districts.<sup>20</sup> Some interviewees were ordinary, non-active citizens; others were prominent community leaders. I attempted to gauge community characteristics from these interviews, including perceptions of community cohesion and levels of inter-personal trust between neighbors of different ethnic and racial groups. In addition to interviews, I used a number of primary

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<sup>20</sup>Community Improvement districts are public-private partnerships that focus on urban regeneration by providing top-up services to those districts within the municipality that choose to form an organization. The services provided—including additional cleaning and security—are funded by the ratepayers in these districts.

sources. These included electronic correspondence among neighboring residents concerning local community issues, among other documents.<sup>21</sup> I also relied on secondary sources to measure inter-ethnic trust within my sample communities, such as in-depth anthropological studies of community relations in various Cape Town suburbs. Each of these studies contained extensive interviews with residents, who discussed their own trust attitudes as well as other personal views. Finally, where they were available, I perused public opinion surveys of the greater Cape Town metropolis. In particular, I relied on the 2005 Cape Area Study, which included a number of survey questions pertaining to trust and social capital. It is important to note that the spatial parameters of the Cape Area Study are limited to a select number of Cape Town suburbs. Some of these sample communities were excluded from the survey, however. As such, it served as a secondary data source, whereas interviews were the primary focus of my data collection.

## **6.4 Inter-ethnic Trust and Local Security Provision in Delft and Zonnebloem**

The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to a comparative study of Delft and Zonnebloem. Through my analysis, I draw a link between trust attitudes and collective efforts to provide security in these diverse areas of Cape Town. Ultimately, I demonstrate that differences in patterns of inter-ethnic trust explain why community policing efforts have succeeded in Delft and failed in Zonnebloem.

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<sup>21</sup>Such documents were willingly shared with me.

### 6.4.1 Delft

During data collection in South Africa's "mother city", I found that relationships of trust are embedded in the low-income, diverse neighborhoods of Delft. Interview, survey and anthropological case study data reveal that levels of trust in Delft are high, in comparison to other suburbs in Cape Town. In fact, over 40 percent of Delft-area respondents from the 2005 Cape Area Study stated that they agreed with the statement that "generally speaking, most people can be trusted." This is a substantively significant percentage, as the median response rate across the 32 suburbs surveyed was 26.5 percent. Delft ranked as the 10th highest suburb in levels of generalized trust in the Cape Area Survey. Of the racially integrated suburbs that were surveyed, only three Cape Town suburbs ranked higher than Delft in reported levels of generalized trust.

Are these patterns of trust merely indicative of bonding trust among coethnics? To some degree, they are. Survey responses indicate that Delft residents are more willing to place their confidence in coethnics than non-coethnics. In her study of community organizing in the Cape Flats, Oldfield (2004) found that racially segregated networks continue to persist in Delft, shaping economic and social relations throughout the suburb. Nonetheless, to a measurable degree, inter-personal trust *does* reach across racial and ethnic lines in this community. 40 percent of respondents stated that "some" or "most" members of other racial groups can be trusted, while only 20 percent of respondents stated that "none" or "very few" can be trusted. The largest percentage of respondents stated that they "don't know enough" about members of other racial groups to say whether or not they could be trusted. This seems to reflect unfamiliarity, as opposed to distrust. These data stand in contrast to other multi-ethnic suburbs of Cape Town, which reported significantly lower levels of bridging trust. In the ethnically heterogeneous suburb of Muizenberg, for instance, 45 percent of respondents stated that "very few" members of other racial groups can be

trusted.

In addition to survey evidence, scholars have observed the presence of bridging trust in Delft in interviews with local residents. Muyeba and Seekings (2011) found that many residents in Delft feel comfortable placing their confidence in noncoethnics, relying on members of different races for childcare and lending items or money to a non-coethnic in need. Among Muyeba and Seeking's interviewees in Delft, one Coloured man noted:

I can leave them [his children] with anyone, either White or Black or Muslim, around me, I can leave them there, . . . I can be comfortable to leave them there. No that's one thing I can tell you about my neighbours. I can leave [my children] with [them] comfortable [if] my wife [and] I want to go . . .” (Muyeba and Seekings 2011, 665)

And when asked if she maintained any close relationships with people of other races, a Coloured woman remarked:

“Yes! Many times I go and visit one, the other one will maybe come to me. So, we visit as if we are not different races. We feel fine asking each other things.” (Muyeba and Seekings 2011, 665)

These statements illustrate that, throughout the community of Delft, non-coethnics are embedded in relationships of trust.

Bridging trust is an important bellwether of inter-ethnic social capital. So, too, are perceptions of community cohesion, as they gauge the strength of “networks and norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness” (Robert 2000, 23) within a particular community.<sup>22</sup> Survey and interview data reveal that community cohesion is perceived to be high in Delft. Over 50 percent of those surveyed believe that “feeling or sense of togetherness” in Delft is “strong”, 4 percentage points higher than the median response percentage in the sampled suburbs. Moreover, during interviews, local leaders identified a kind of communal bond that permeates this diverse suburb. The chairman of Delft's Community Police Forum ex-

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<sup>22</sup>Robert Putnam defined social capital as such in his seminal book *Bowling Alone*.

plained to me that while poverty, hardship and crime afflict the residents of Delft, there is a civic spirit and a committed network of active, visible leaders that shoulder the community.

He noted:

“That spirit is there [in Delft]... I believe to heal the community is through mass participation. That is how you heal it. That is why I went to the churches and said, ‘Listen. We need to look because the Devil is everywhere. It’s in the church, it’s in the school. We must now stand together and fight him.’ And that is how we ended up electing the religious forum. We have an imam. We have a religious person from each church in the different sectors. Once a month we go onto the corners of Delft, the exits, we’ll pray there five minutes and then we go to the next exit and we pray there five minutes we got to the next exit, all the four corners of Delft and we pray there and all the religious people will pray there. All the pastors, the Imams.” (D. #2)<sup>23</sup>

And the former Chairman of Delft’s Inter-Faith Forum shared with me an acronym that local residents and community leaders use in reference to Delft. He explains:

“D is for determination. E is full of expectancy. L is we are a lovable people in Delft. F is freedom for all. T is together. We do it together.” (D. #1)

The Cape Area Survey captures a third indicator of trust in this diverse community: general helpfulness among residents. Responses revealed that citizens of Delft are particularly helpful towards their neighbors. 90 percent of those surveyed in Delft stated that they could rely on a neighbor to help them by “holding a ladder or moving furniture.” Among the 32 suburbs that were surveyed, Delft reported the third highest percentage of affirmative responses.<sup>24</sup> And 75 percent of respondents stated that they could rely on a neighbor to “lend you R20 if you needed it.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>In this study, D. denotes a Delft interviewee, Z. denotes a Zonnebloem interviewee, W. denotes a Woodstock interviewee, and W.P. denotes an interviewee from the provincial government of the Western Cape. To preserve anonymity, numbers were assigned to each person interviewed.

<sup>24</sup>The suburbs of Atlantis and Fish Hoek reported higher percentage rates than Delft, while percentages reported in the suburbs of Crossroads and Kraaifontein were on par with Delft.

<sup>25</sup>R20 denotes a 20 note Rand, the South African currency. 1 South African rand is roughly equal to 0.11 U.S. dollars.

Finally, norms of reciprocity have been observed throughout Delft, extending beyond delineated racial and ethnic groups. In interviewing Delft residents, Muyeba and Seekings found that non-coethnic neighbors often engage in reciprocal behavior. In reference to an African neighbor, one Coloured woman remarked:

“Whatever is too small for my little ones I give to them, and they would come and say thank you very much here is a bottle of coke for you, something like that.” (Muyeba and Seekings 2011, 665)

While conducting research on racial integration in Delft, Oldfield also observed norms of reciprocity. For example, it is common for a Coloured family to look after an African neighbor’s home, when the latter travel to see family in the Eastern Cape (where many African families originate). These African families return the favor if their Coloured neighbors leave Cape Town for a short time.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, Muyeba and Seekings found that it was common for non-coethnics to attend each other’s family funerals. An African man notes:

“In such a way that . . . we don’t even worry about living with Coloured people, we take them as our people. If they have a problem . . . or things like funerals . . . we go. . . .” (Muyeba and Seekings 2011, 663)

These interviews and survey data attest to the presence of bridging trust in Delft. This data does not suggest that bonding trust is absent in Delft or that racial tensions are non-existent. As several community leaders reported to me, Delft is continually arbitrating the challenges of a diverse population. Delft’s ethnic groups are characterized by different histories, behaviors, and social traditions. And after two decades of freedom, residents of Delft continue to play out their racialized experiences of Apartheid. Even now, everyday practices reflect the geography of Group Areas. Many African residents attend social events and church services in their former neighborhoods, outside the perimeter of Delft. Like-

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<sup>26</sup>Such behavior stands in contrast to practices in more wealthier neighborhoods in the city bowl. One man in the lux neighborhood of Orangezicht confessed that, prior to a three month holiday in Great Britain, he didn’t bother alerting his neighbors of his impending absence.

wise, the children of many Coloured residents attend schools in their former suburbs, since many Delft area schools have abandoned Afrikaans-based instruction (Oldfield 2004). As we can see, race continues to shape identities and structure social action in Delft. Nonetheless, evidence indicates that inter-ethnic trust *is* present within the confines of this melting pot. Bridging ties have been forged between the various ethnicities, races, and religions that occupy this expanse of the Cape Flats.

In fact, historical accounts allow us to trace the development of inter-ethnic trust in Delft. In the years following the negotiated transition, relations between Coloureds, Africans and Indians were considerably shaky. Having spent decades within designated, mono-racial “Group Areas”, old and new residents of Delft were unaccustomed to sharing space with non-coethnics. As such, inter-racial tensions were commonplace. But beginning in 1998, relations between Africans and Coloureds began to change, due, in part, to the activities of one local group. The “Door Kickers” refers to a local group of residents who organized illegal home invasions in poor areas of Delft South, after having grown exasperated by the slow pace of municipal housing allocation. As Oldfield recounts in her study of this ethnically diverse organization, a Door Kicker family would find, claim, watch and protect a self-allocated property, defending the space from its legal recipient. During this process, kicker families formed supportive relationships with one another. Ultimately, the kicker network built a foundation for the establishment of neighborhood-level organizations (night watches, etc.). It appears that the campaign planted the seeds of inter-ethnic trust throughout the community of Delft. Oldfield explains:

“The struggle to keep the houses that families invaded created a high degree of trust between Coloured and African families. Families spoke about the significance of their relationships with their neighbours, despite their different backgrounds... Kickers might still work, shop, and visit families and friends in different parts of the city, but their experiences as Kickers forced them to work together. In the process, new relationships and a network were formed that linked families in their immediate areas and across a number of sections

of Delft South (Oldfield 2004, 197).”

Oldfield notes that the campaign—and the cooperative, inter-ethnic relationships it fostered—did not act to dissolve racial identities in Delft South. Rather, new identities were created. These identities were spatial and political, revolving around shared experiences of marginalization on the Cape Flats. In some sense, hardship has acted as a “social leveller” between Delft Africans and Coloureds, as both groups began to see that “their neighbors share their own economic difficulties” (Muyeba and Seekings 2011, 667). These new identities began to overlay existing racial and ethnic identities. Individuals began to express these identities in social arenas, which, in turn, helped forge bridging ties throughout the community.

Undoubtedly, the Door Kickers organization contributed to the formation of bridging ties among segregated African and Coloured “cliques.” But beyond this specific campaign, what accounts for the presence of inter-ethnic trust in Delft? What distinguishes Delft from communities like Muizenberg, where ethnic groups remain partitioned in cliques with few associational or economic linkages and where distrust of non-coethnics is widespread? Examining the ethnic demography of Delft provides some insight. Delft is marked by a complex ethnic configuration. Its features of diversity include overlapping racial, religious and income cleavages as well as internally fragmented identity groups. For instance, Africans in Delft are divided by tribe. Some Xhosa-speaking Delft residents identify themselves as Hlubi, while others identify themselves as Mfengu (CAS 2005). Coloureds are divided by language and religion. Some Coloureds are Muslim; others are Christian. Some are English-speaking, while others speak Afrikaans. Moreover, Delft’s cleavage structure is cross-cutting. Among the very poor in government housing facilities across Delft South and Blikkiesdorp, one will find both Africans and Coloureds, Muslims and Christians. And each identity group is represented among the more stably employed residents of the Hague

and Rosendaal. Recent census statistics illustrate this cleavage pattern. According to 2011 data, of those residents occupying the low-income bracket (R1601-R 3200/month) 53 percent are Africans and 45 percent are Coloureds (Statistics South Africa, 2011).<sup>27</sup> Of those residents occupying a middle-income bracket (R 3200-R6400), 41 percent are Africans and 56 percent Coloureds. As the data reveal, Delft is characterized by a relatively equal distribution of income among race groups.

Evidence suggests that these cross-cutting identities and intra-group divisions have moderated the intensity of cleavages in Delft. Because social cleavages crisscross in Delft, groups maintain an interdependence that reduces potentially contentious conflicts of interest. More importantly, these features weaken the saliency of racial identities in Delft. Muyebe and Seekings (2011) explain that within Delft, “Racialized identities still matter: people see themselves and others as Coloured or African (or Muslim, White and so on). But the persistence of racialized identities does not seem to be associated with enduring racial division.” They continue, “Our point is not to say that relationships between neighbours of different races are exemplary, but rather that race seems much less important than we expected in shaping everyday interactions and attitudes (Muyebe and Seekings 2011, 666).” In sum, cross-cutting identities and shared experiences of poverty have attenuated the social salience and political relevance of ethnic identity in Delft. As a result, inter-racial interactions have become more frequent in Delft and manifestations of racial toleration have become more common. In this community, inter-ethnic trust has been given space to germinate.

The bridging ties that have formed across ethnic lines in Delft have helped this community address shared problems. Trusting relationships between non-coethnic neighbors have bolstered the capacity of these diverse neighborhoods to act collectively on behalf of mutually beneficial goals, like fighting local crime. And the manifestations of inter-ethnic

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<sup>27</sup>Data was compiled by the Strategic Development Information and GIS Departments, City of Cape Town.

cooperation are observable. Delft residents are considerably active in local goods provision and especially participatory in community policing efforts. There are over 14 active neighborhood watches in the six sectors of Delft. These groups work in conjunction with the Police on various safety and security initiatives. Patrolling the neighborhoods is their principal activity. The Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator of the Delft CPF explained:

“We regularly go out with them [South African Police Services (SAPS)] on search and seizure operations and we do foot patrols of our neighborhoods.” (D. # 3)

According to another CPF organizer, the tasks of Delft’s neighborhood watches are:

“Mostly patrolling, especially on the weekends. Fridays and Saturdays are important for patrolling in order for elements not to commit crimes. The visibility of them (NHWs) and the Police visibility helps a lot in reducing the crime especially in the areas that are hotspots that we identify.” (D. # 4)

In addition to patrolling, neighborhood watch members organize other community initiatives like youth days or anti-truancy programs (in association with local schools). The Delft CPF Newsletter discussed one recent NHW event, called a “Walk-about”:

“During the Walk-about they went around to most of the Gang-and-Drug outlets and warned the owners to refrain and stop their illegal activities. The project was initiated to speak to the drug dealers and gang members personally and allow them the opportunity to voluntarily stop their illegal activities in Delft.” (CPF Newsletter, July 2012)

As we can see, Delft’s neighborhood watch is not only an active organization, but one that is committed to change. By contrast, in many suburbs of Cape Town, neighborhood watches are disorganized, ineffectual and barely visible to residents. When asked about street committees in the multi-ethnic suburb of Woodstock, one community activist explained:

“They are trying to start one in Walmer Estate, but it is difficult because you need a budget, even for Walkie-Talkies” (W. # 2).

This activist lamented Woodstock's stillborn neighborhood watch, explaining that most residents fail to contribute to the organization yet are exceedingly vocal with their complaints about safety in the neighborhood. Similar sentiments were echoed by interviewees in other areas. A community activist in Muizenberg related to me that their local neighborhood watch has very little support from the community because of its dysfunction. By contrast, Delft's neighborhood watches appear particularly committed, as their high rates of participation and wide range of activities attest. One CPF organizer noted:

“They (NHWs) are very very active, very committed also.” (D. # 4)

It is important to reiterate that these neighborhood watches are comprised of volunteer members. So too is the Delft CPF. Even though CPFs are an institutional arm of the South African Police Services, its district chairpersons, executive boards, and sub-forum members are volunteers. Some members informed me that they are deeply concerned about crime in Delft, and so they dedicate their time to promote safety in their communities. The chairman of Delft's neighborhood watch network explained:

“We are volunteers and get no financial gain from what we are doing. Our main objective is to ensure that the areas that we live in, that it is safe for our wives and children. We volunteer our time and energy to the community because we care and want a crime-free society. We do it out of love for our community and nothing else.” (D. # 3)

Community policing efforts in Delft extend beyond neighborhood watch organizations. In order to involve more residents in public safety efforts, the CPF holds monthly community meetings called Imbizos (a Xhosa word for “get together”). A CPF member explains, “We have Imbizos... for the community to raise concerns and we, as a CPF and SAPS, address those concerns and get back to them in order to improve service delivery in that regard. That's the whole reason we have these Imbizos.” (D. # 4) Delft's CPF chairman elaborates:

“In Imbizo you get the opportunity to raise your problems and we will get the problems and we will sit down in your meetings with the sub-members and say, ‘Listen. This is the problems that we have, that the community is having.’ That is how we communicate. And we communicate through our visibility also.” (D. # 2)

CPF members are satisfied with attendance at Imbizos and, in general, the level of participation from the community in policing efforts. They relayed that, although it is difficult to garner participation in the winter months, many individuals in Delft are eager to participate in public safety initiatives.<sup>28</sup> One member notes:

“The commitment is there, especially from the community leaders, the churches, the schools, the teachers and principals.” (D. # 4)

In fact, the Provincial Chairperson of the Community Police Forum network in the Western Cape looks to Delft as a model of community policing amidst diversity. He explains:

“I will tell you one of the diverse areas is Delft. Delft is an extremely diverse area. It’s got White people, Coloured people, Indian people. It’s got the whole Rainbow nation. It’s got foreigners; it’s got people from Pakistan, Somalia. It’s one of the areas that I always look at in terms of diversity and policing in a diverse area. It can be challenging but very responsive. People are very responsive in this area. And I find that people tend to be living in harmony.” (W.C. # 1)

As we can see, community policing *works* in Delft. In fact, their success in organizing and maintaining community-based public safety programs has surpassed the expectations of provincial ministers. An environment of inter-ethnic trust has made this success possible. As the evidence has revealed, non-coethnics are trusting of one another in Delft. As a result, a plethora of individuals contribute to community policing efforts in their community. Because individuals are participant and committed, neighborhood watches are active and Imbizos frequently attended. Trust has enabled Delft to confront the challenges that

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<sup>28</sup>The former chairman of the Delft Inter-faith Forum relayed to me that residents are, naturally, especially participant after a period of crime spikes.

come with diversity, work together on behalf of mutual goals, and provide public goods for the community.

#### **6.4.2 Zonnebloem (Justice Walk)**

The neighborhoods of Zonnebloem have not enjoyed the same level of success in community policing efforts as Delft. From the data I have collected, I have inferred that social capital is scarce in Zonnebloem. This diverse area—situated on the grand slopes of Devil’s peak—lacks the relationships of trust that facilitate collective action and sustain local goods provision. As a result, community policing efforts have been largely stillborn in Zonnebloem.

In conducting research throughout Zonnebloem, I found little evidence of general social capital and even fewer indicators of inter-ethnic trust among residents.<sup>29</sup> During interviews, many local residents hesitated when asked if individuals in Zonnebloem were trusting of their neighbors. In general, interviewees felt that neighbors are distant towards one another. Interviewees claimed that most residents in Justice Walk would be unlikely to ask neighbors for assistance if it were needed (e.g. moving furniture or lending money). One resident admitted:

“Only your closest neighbors greet each other. It’s easier to not be involved with each other.” (Z. #1)

Such statements highlight Zonnebloem’s lack of reciprocity norms, an important indicator of trust. One reason that trust appears scarce in this multi-ethnic community is due to the geography of private space in Zonnebloem. Like Delft, homes in Zonnebloem are in close proximity. Streets are tightly lined with row houses, and each property lacks green

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<sup>29</sup>Many scholars draw a distinction between social capital and trust. Trust refers to individual attitudes about others’ expected behavior or their commitment to norms of reciprocity. Social capital—of which trust is an indicator—refers to community characteristics, such as norms or networks, that link individuals in benefit-inducing relationships.

space. But unlike Delft, high walls separate homes in Justice Walk. These walls appear to reinforce the social distance among neighbors. One resident explained:

“People are closed off. You have a physical wall that divides people. People are living close to one another. So you are aware of your neighbor, because there isn’t too much privacy. But people aren’t best friends.” (Z #1)

These walls have obstructed the formation of ties among neighbors in Zonnehloem. And as a result, many residents discern a weak sense of “community” in Zonnehloem. I found little evidence that residents maintain positive perceptions of community cohesion—an important indicator of trust—in Zonnehloem. When asked whether or not she felt there was a sense of togetherness in these neighborhoods, one resident replied:

“It is very weak.” (Z #1)

In addition to weak perceptions of cohesion, there are very few manifestations of “togetherness” in Zonnehloem. In a letter to the District Six Redevelopment Committee, residents expressed their frustration with a developer’s plans to build new homes on open space in Zonnehloem. In this particular area, children are often seen playing soccer or cricket and residents are seen walking their dogs. They noted:

“Fawley Park, at the end of Justice and Lymington roads, is probably the only aspect of community that still exists in this strip.” (District Six Development Framework Consultation Feedback 2/16/2012)

Such comments attest to the weak sense of togetherness that is present here. Another reason that cohesion and trust appear weak in Zonnehloem is the large number of tenants that reside in the area. Many young residents populate the homes along Justice Walk; but these individuals do not own the properties. Rather, they rent these flats, remaining in the area for a fixed time period before moving on to other areas. A number of interviewees discussed the considerable residential turnover in Zonnehloem and its negative effects on community cohesion. One resident commented:

“Many people don’t know their neighbors, because quite a few people have tenants living here.” (Z #1)

Delft, too, has a considerable number of tenants populating its neighborhoods. However, a large tenant population has not affected community cohesion in Delft like it has in Zonnebloem. Renters in Delft maintain appear less transient; many have forged ties with their neighbors and maintain interdependent relationships with them. Such relationships are less common among tenants in Zonnebloem.

Other factors have contributed to low trust in Zonnebloem. For one, plans for the redevelopment of District Six have left residents in the area disgruntled and has even created animosity between neighbors. Zonnebloem is the site of the former District Six, an area known for the forced removal of thousands of Coloured, Indian, Malay and African residents at the hands of the Apartheid regime. Because the state designated this low-income area a “slum”, most buildings in District Six were razed and left as empty plots. The Apartheid government’s plans to redevelop District Six as a prosperous “White area” failed to come to fruition. For the remainder of the Apartheid system, much of District Six remained unused, open space, with the exception of residential spaces in upper Zonnebloem (including Lymington Close and Justice Walk). In the late 1990s, interest in Zonnebloem increased. For one, the 1994 Restitution of Land Rights Act spearheaded a campaign to recognize the claims of expelled residents and resettle them in newly built housing developments across lower Zonnebloem. Meanwhile, property speculators interested in gentrifying the area have drafted plans to build commercial and residential properties throughout Zonnebloem. These plans have angered residents of Justice Walk, who feel that they have been excluded from the redevelopment process. During interviews with me, residents expressed frustration that key stakeholders have failed to address their concerns about development plans, including how newly built complexes will affect their property values.<sup>30</sup> Residents

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<sup>30</sup>For example, residents expressed a fear that new condominiums would block their view of Table Bay

also expressed unease about how conditions in their neighborhoods might change once restitution claimants have moved back into Zonnestraat. In a letter to the District Six Redevelopment Committee, they questioned:

“Since most claimants are relatively old by now would we soon have a retirement village? Since they will soon pass on but have to keep their property for 15 years, what would happen to it then? Does this mean their kids inherit it? What claim do they have to these properties as they are not returnees? The pilot project below seems to have many absent landlords. Is the same going to happen here? Are claimants permitted to rent their properties out?... We’ve heard the returnees would not be required to pay rates and taxes for a number of years. We are concerned about the economic, social and aesthetic impact this arrangement could have on the neighbourhood.” (District Six Development Framework Consultation Feedback 2/16/2012)

These questions suggest that the residents of Justice Walk feel some trepidation about their new neighbors. They are also indicative of the communal rift that redevelopment has sparked in Zonnestraat. This rift appears to have undermined community cohesion in Zonnestraat. It is likely that disagreements over the future of urban regeneration in Zonnestraat will impede the development of trust between old and new residents in the area.

Finally, community cohesion in Zonnestraat has been most gravely undermined by the deep rift between residents of Justice Walk and tenants in the government housing project on De Waal Drive, behind the Lymington Close row. During interviews with me, property owners expressed their frustration with the condition and appearance of the “Council Flats.” For one, residents expressed disgust that De Waal Drive tenants have used parking bays on their streets as dumping grounds. “It’s like living in a rubbish dump,” one resident declared (ZNW minutes 2/2012). Moreover, they fear that the Council Flats has become a hotbed of criminal activity, including drug trafficking and drug abuse. At a recent Neighborhood Watch meeting, residents claimed:

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and, therefore, devalue their property.

“There is a feeling that the flats harbour criminal elements. The flats are allocated to people on the waiting list for social housing and no criminal check is done. In fact, a criminal record would not invalidate someone from receiving housing.” (ZNW minutes 2/2012)

Another commented:

“Unfortunately the council has given some of the flats to very undesirable people.” (Z. #1)

Because of the conditions of the Council Flats and the alleged criminal activity that occurs there, many residents feel that their neighborhood is quickly deteriorating. They fear that its shabby appearance will devalue their property. One resident commented:

“My area is turning into a slum... The graffiti, the rubbish, the overgrown footpaths, the dumping, has anyone looked. What are our cottages worth now? If any of us wanted to sell would we be able to?” (Z. #2 )

Another writes:

“De Waal Drive Flats in 3 words, shocking, disgusting, unacceptable.” (District Six Development Framework Consultation Feedback 2/16/2012)

Residents have put pressure on the management of the Council Flats, demanding that rubbish be cleared and “codes of conduct” enforced. However, residents explained to me that the Flats’ property managers have been largely unresponsive.

The contentious relationship between Justice Walk property owners and the tenants (and management) of the Council Flats highlights the lack of *inter-ethnic* trust in Zonnebloem. Many of the Council Flats’ tenants are Coloured. Also, there is a considerable number of Africans living in these units. Recently, government-subsidized housing has been earmarked for families living in informal settlements. Since Africans comprise most of Cape Town’s informal settlements, newer residents tend to be African (Muyeba and Seekings 2011). By contrast, many of the property owners in Justice Walk are White South Africans. Evidence suggests that there are very few bridging ties between these groups. In regards to her neighbors in the Council Flats, one resident admitted:

“Those people are avoided.” (Z #1)

As in Delft, examining the ethnic demography of Zonnebloem provides insight into why inter-ethnic trust is scarce in this area. Property owners in Upper Zonnebloem tend to be White, middle-class professionals.<sup>31</sup> The tenants of the Council Flats are mainly low-income, underemployed Africans and Coloureds. Unlike Delft’s cross-cutting social pressures, Zonnebloem is characterized by a reinforcing cleavage structure. Recent census statistics illustrate this social pattern. According to 2011 data from Zonnebloem and its adjacent districts, of the households that occupy a high-income bracket (R25601-R51,200/month), 16 percent are African, 19 percent are Coloured, and 58 percent are White. Of the households that occupy a low-income bracket (R1- R1600/month), 40 percent are African and 30 percent are Coloured while only 22 percent are White. Clearly, Whites in this area are more prosperous than Coloureds and Africans.

The implications of this demographic configuration are considerable. In Zonnebloem, class divisions reinforce race divisions. As such, each group sees the other as “different” from them, belonging to another social class and rooted in entirely different traditions and cultural practices. In this type of environment, ethnic identities become more salient. They begin to structure patterns of everyday engagement within communities. In Zonnebloem, social boundaries have been sharply drawn between neighboring groups. A property owner on Lymington Close (behind the De Waal Flats) commented:

“This kind of housing... it brings a lower socio economic group into the area which is causing a lot of problems to us... It should not be allowed in the area. Province should sell this so that decent people can move in the area and alleviate all the problems in the area.” (Z. #3)

Such comments illustrate that, in this neighborhood, socio-economic differences overlay race divisions. This social structure has created social distance between the residents of

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<sup>31</sup>Cape Malay and Indian families live in Justice Walk, as well, although it was unclear whether many of these families are property owners or tenants.

Justice Walk and De Waal Drive, which has manifested in tension and resentment. Residents have been particularly vocal in their complaints about garbage dumping in the Council Flats highlights. One resident noted:

“The rubbish is the kind of stuff normal people would through away in their bin, kitchen rubbish.” (Z #2)

Another commented:

“It’s a crying shame we have to live next to neighbours like this.” (Z. #3)

Such complaints reveal the types of attitudes that some residents hold toward non-coethnics in Zonnebloem. They highlight deep racial, socio-economic, and cultural divisions in Upper Zonnebloem. These divisions have largely impeded processes of social integration between Africans, Coloureds, and Whites in this neighborhood. Reinforcing cleavages have maintained a structure of “cliques” (Granovetter 1973) in Zonnebloem. For these residents, there are few opportunities for the formation of weak ties among members of different groups. And as a result, relationships of trust among noncoethnics have failed to materialize in this area.<sup>32</sup>

Inter-ethnic distrust in Zonnebloem has negatively affected local goods provision throughout the community. The absence of broad-based, bridging ties has led to persistent collective action problems, as few residents contribute to keeping Zonnebloem clean and safe. While a neighborhood watch has been formed in Zonnebloem, it is small and largely ineffectual. Members have expressed frustration with the group’s disorganization and disappointment with community members’ disinterest. One member noted:

“There is no chairperson of the NHW and there are lots of organizational problems. Blender St. is really uninvolved... there is apathy.” (Z #1)

Another member admitted:

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<sup>32</sup>Relations between White, Cape Malay and Indian families are considerably better in Zonnebloem. In discussing race relations in Zonnebloem, one resident reminded me that “Capetonians have always respected the Muslim Community.”

“I am a great believer in NHW and Community Forums, but our bunch is a bit of a let-down.” (Z #4)

Unlike in Delft, Zonnebloem Neighborhood Watch members do not patrol the streets, nor do they work in close conjunction with the South African Police Services. A majority of the activities of the neighborhood watch include phoning and e-mailing various city departments and specific city officials. Through correspondence, neighborhood watch members lodge complaints about issues related to cleanliness and security in Zonnebloem. From primary documents given to me by the organization, I found that the most common complaints involved the De Waal Drive Council flats, vagrants and crime, and a derelict Zimbabwean embassy recently taken over by squatters.

Interviewees expressed frustration with the disorganization of the neighborhood watch. Many felt that it was ineffective for members to contact city officials individually regarding goods provision in Zonnebloem; organizing as a common voice, they presumed, would be more productive and consequential. But the organization has, as of yet, not been able to do so. One member noted:

“I have to keep on phoning and writing letters to keep my area clean. It is really time consuming.” (Z. #1)

She admitted that she was “sick and tired” of filing complaints with city officials and the manager of the Council Flats, on her own. Despite her best lobbying efforts, many of her concerns have been left unaddressed. Members have made suggestions about ways to improve their organization and enhance its lobbying capacity. In the ZNW meeting minutes, members agreed:

“In order to effect improvements in the neighbourhood, ZNW needs to be structured more clearly. Rather than several residents emailing officials, it would be better to channel complaints through a single person. It is easier to monitor feedback and progress if there is one point person.” (ZNW minutes 2/2012)

In addition to their organizational problems, the Zonnebloem Neighborhood Watch has also struggled to elicit participation among residents. The lack of community involvement has undermined the effectiveness of community policing efforts in Zonnebloem, as the group is not able to implement night patrols or form clean-up crews. During interviews with me members expressed disappointment that their own tenants are generally inactive in public safety initiatives in Zonnebloem, including neighborhood watch and CPF meetings. One member explained:

“I have urged my tenants to attend the neighborhood meetings but they have not.” (Z. #3)

It appears that the tenants of the De Waal Drive Flats have been unresponsive, as well. Members expressed frustration that so few tenants of the De Waal Flats communicate with the Zonnebloem Neighborhood Watch about matters of public safety and cleanliness. In correspondence with the Council Flats building manager, one neighborhood watch member implored:

“I repeat our invitation to one of your members to attend weekly or at least monthly our regular CPF and Crime Prevention meetings which take place on a Thursday morning at 8 am at Cape Town Central Police Station.” (Z. #4)

This member informed me that such invitations have not yet been accepted. While the members of the neighborhood watch are disappointed in the lack of involvement from the Council Flats, they recognize what has to be done to elicit their participation in community initiatives. In the ZNW meeting minutes, members agreed:

“The department of human settlements [owners of the Council Flats] must make the first attempt to organise a flat committee, then ZNW must attend the meetings to help build the relationship.” (ZNW minutes 2/2012)

In a recent follow-up interview with a member of the the Zonnebloem Neighborhood Watch, I was told that the organization has been successful in putting more pressure on

those responsible for the Council Flats (i.e. Ministry of Human Settlements). She appeared optimistic that, in the future, the management of the flats will be more responsive to the concerns of property owners in Justice Walk. However, as of now, neither a Flat Committee nor a tenant manager have been established on De Waal Drive.

With little community involvement to support their efforts, members of the Zonnebloem Neighborhood Watch have been left to fend for themselves. Participation levels are too low to organize street patrols or neighborhood clean-ups, so members are forced to take up these efforts on their own. One member explained that, after having become exasperated with vagrants' use of nearby garage space as a public toilet, a Justice Walk property owner attempted the "cleaning up work" himself. As of now, the extent of the organization's activities are infrequent meetings, individual correspondence with city officials concerning particular problems and e-mail correspondence with each other.

As a result of meager participation and organizational problems, Zonnebloem has maintained a poor record of local goods provision. In this diverse area of the "city bowl", only a small number of dedicated, civic-minded individuals volunteer their time to keep their neighborhoods clean and safe. Essentially, the community of Zonnebloem has struggled to reconcile the divide between individual interests and collective benefits. As evidence suggests, it is an environment that lacks relationships of trust, networks of bridging ties, and norms of reciprocity. As a result, the majority of residents forgo participating in joint efforts to address "crime and grime" in their neighborhoods. In this multi-ethnic corner of Cape Town, hurdles to collective action have prevented these neighborhoods from realizing their goals.

## 6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a comparative case study of local goods provision in two multi-ethnic communities of Cape Town, South Africa. Through the careful analysis of original data collected in 2012, I have demonstrated how patterns of trust condition the degree to which diverse communities succeed in collective endeavors. I have also demonstrated how contextual variables structure patterns of interethnic interaction in multi-ethnic communities. In doing so, they shape environments of trust and prospects for collective action in these communities. Cross-cutting cleavage structures in Delft bolstered the development of inter-ethnic trust across the community. Trust attitudes have enabled Delft's residents to participate in public safety initiatives, helping this community achieve success in security provision. By contrast, reinforcing cleavages in Zonnebloem have suppressed the development of inter-ethnic trust among Africans, Coloureds, and Whites in the area. As a result, its neighborhood watch receives little support from the community and has been unable to achieve its public safety goals.

This chapter has complemented my use of cross-national survey data in chapters Four and Five, by providing a comprehensive view of local goods provision in a specific community context. It has allowed me to test my hypotheses "on the ground", thereby enabling me to incorporate into my analysis contextual variables that could not be suitably captured with survey data. These variables have helped to highlight the context-dependent effects of ethnicity on behavior in South Africa, thereby helping to account for puzzling variation in local goods provision. All too often, scholars assume that South Africa is a deeply-divided nation and, therefore, prospects for meaningful inter-ethnic cooperation are dim. In reality, ethnic identities in the "rainbow nation" are fluid, heterogeneous, and complex; their effects on behavior will vary according to context. As such, ethnic diversity will undermine social, economic and political outcomes in some but not all communities. This chapter has

demonstrated that where environments of trust mediate the adverse effects of ethnic diversity, multi-ethnic communities in South Africa are able to converge on mutually beneficial outcomes.

# Chapter 7

## Conclusions

At the onset of this project, I set out to explain why some multi-ethnic communities are able to achieve mutually beneficial collective action while others remain trapped in social dilemmas. In some ethnically diverse communities, residents struggle to coordinate night patrols, repair community wells, or manage local irrigation systems. In other diverse communities, non-coethnic residents often work together to raise funding for school supplies. In some multiethnic communities, shared problems are addressed and, ultimately, resolved. In other diverse areas, individuals tend to abstain from contributing to community initiatives, neglecting opportunities to improve the welfare of their neighborhoods. Using an analytical approach that is theoretically informed and methodologically heterogeneous, this dissertation provides insight into why inter-ethnic cooperation materializes in some diverse communities and not in others.

In searching for factors that support local goods provision in ethnically heterogeneous societies, this dissertation has concentrated on the importance of trust. I have argued that trust attitudes enable community members to work together on behalf of mutually beneficial goals by reducing fears of exploitative behavior and inducing confidence in others' reciprocity. Because it encompasses both in-group and out-group members, bridging trust

facilitates cooperative behavior among non-coethnics and, therefore, underpins local goods provision in diverse societies. In searching for factors that explain *variation* across multi-ethnic societies in effectuating local goods provision, this dissertation has concentrated on the variable role of ethnic identity in shaping trust attitudes. It highlights the significance of contextual factors in determining the political relevancy and social saliency of ethnic identity in social arenas. And it explains how such factors contribute to creating environments suitable for the development of inter-ethnic trust and the resolution of collective action problems.

The dissertation has employed public opinion data from the African continent as well as an in-depth case study of diverse communities in South Africa to examine the relationship between ethnic identity, trust, and local goods provision. With these data I have found several key empirical relationships that support my theoretical propositions. For one, I have illustrated the micro-foundational link between ethnic identity and trust. In Chapter Four, I used data from over 20,000 respondents across 20 African countries to demonstrate a robust relationship between the *strength* of ethnic identification and *types* of trust attitudes. I find that respondents with strong attachments to their ethnic identity are less likely to exhibit out-group trust. Conversely, respondents who classify themselves in terms of their nationality are more likely to display high levels of out-group trust.

My findings suggest that because trust attitudes vary, in predictable ways, with the saliency of ethnic identity, different environments will produce different patterns of trust. In communities where ethnic cleavages run deep, ethnic identity is more likely to structure trust attitudes and suppress the development of inter-ethnic trust. However, in communities where the intensity of ethnic cleavages has been tempered, ethnic identity will be less prominent in navigating social relationships, encouraging the formation of bridging ties among non-coethnics. This mechanism is further explored in Chapter Six. The chapter's in-depth analysis of two multi-ethnic communities in Cape Town, South Africa highlights

how ethnic configurations influence trust attitudes in diverse neighborhoods. Together these findings provide a partial solution to the puzzling variation in public goods provision across multi-ethnic societies by accounting for variation in patterns of inter-ethnic trust.

In Chapter Five, I addressed the second part of my puzzle by presenting evidence that links trust attitudes and participatory behavior. Using public opinion data from the Afrobarometer project, I demonstrated that individuals with higher levels of bridging trust are more likely to contribute to local goods provision in their communities. While demographic factors such as educational attainment, employment status, and age influence one's propensity to participate in community development projects across African democracies, high levels of bridging trust have the largest effect on participation. These findings support a central hypothesis guiding this dissertation, namely that inter-personal trust is an essential component of successful local good provision.

But can trust sustain collective action among a community of people who are different from one another? My findings suggest it can. In Chapter Five I tested the impact of trust on communal participation at different levels of ethnic heterogeneity, using a methodological approach that accounts for both individual and country-level variance as well as data on ethnic fractionalization across Africa. I found that the empirical relationship between trust and participation holds in contexts of ethnic homogeneity *and* in contexts of high fragmentation. In both homogeneous and diverse communities, individuals with higher levels of bridging trust are significantly more likely to participate in community development projects. While the effect of bridging trust on participation weakened in highly fragmented environments, the relationship between these variables remained positive and statistically significant in the model. This finding implies that trust *does* sustain collective action under conditions of diversity.

In Chapter Six, I explored the impact of inter-ethnic trust on community policing efforts in two of Cape Town's multi-ethnic neighborhoods. While my two cases share important

characteristics, I found divergent outcomes with respect to local goods provision in these communities. In Delft, bridging ties among Africans, Coloureds and Indians helped to sustain a responsive and effective Community Police Forum. In Zonnebloem, distrust among non-coethnics contributed to a disorganized and neglected neighborhood watch. The cumulative findings from these chapters suggest that, in multi-ethnic communities, the effects of diversity on local goods provision are mediated by trust attitudes.

## **7.1 Theoretical Implications**

This study makes a number of important contributions to the field of comparative politics, and in particular, to literatures on collective action, ethnicity, social trust, and political behavior in general. Most importantly, my findings suggest that the collective action problems assumed to “preordain” (Poteete and Ostrom 2004) multi-ethnic societies to persistent failure are, in fact, far from intractable. Diverse communities maintain the capacity to resolve these problems, *if* non-coethnics are embedded in relationships of trust. We know that supplying public goods (beyond those provided by the state) can be a challenging endeavor for any community. The properties of such goods subject them to persistent free-rider problems, as individuals face incentives to pass the costs of provision onto others. This problem reveals the inherent paradox between self-interest and collective benefits. As I have recounted in Chapter Two, reconciling the gap between individual interests and collective welfare is particularly difficult in ethnically heterogeneous societies. Nonetheless, resolving this paradox is far from impossible. In certain environments, relationships of trust bind ethnic groups in reciprocal relationships, engendering inter-ethnic cooperation on behalf of mutually beneficial goals.

In addition, this research has advanced scholarship on the microfoundations of ethnic identity. Chapter Four illustrated that to whom one places their trust is dependent upon

the degree to which they identify with their ethnic group. By revealing an empirical relationship between ethnic identity and types of trust, this study has contributed to our understanding of the impact of ethnic identity on individual behavior. As political scientists, we know that ethnicity *matters* to many political and social outcomes. In empirical studies, it has been linked to a number of political behaviors, including voting (Lindberg and Morrison 2008; Wantchekon 2003), patronage distribution (Chandra 2004), and participation in political violence (Fearon and Laitin 2000). But we have yet to definitively decipher *when*, *to whom* and *why* ethnicity matters to such outcomes. In a 2006 annual review piece on constructivist studies of identity, Chandra (2006) urged political scientists to advance scholarship on the effects of ethnicity on individual behavior. She declared, "... ethnicity either does not matter or has not been shown to matter in explaining most outcomes to which it has been causally linked by comparative political scientists (Chandra 2006, 397)." By demonstrating the impact of ethnic identity on trust attitudes, this research heeds Kachan's constructivist mission and contributes to a better understanding of why ethnicity matters to political and social behavior.

Moreover, my cumulative findings provide insight into the macro-level effects of ethnicity on political, social, and economic outcomes. In recent decades, political scientists and economists have elevated the importance of ethnicity in explaining trajectories of economic and democratic development (Easterly and Levine 1997; Alesina, Baqir, and Easterly 1999; Horowitz 1985). But many of these scholars have underspecified variations in the outcomes of ethnic diversity. As a result, many have put forth overly pessimistic prospects for multi-ethnic societies, especially the poverty-stricken plural societies of Africa. Much of this literature has neglected to account for the contextual factors that mediate the effects of ethnicity on political outcomes. This dissertation demonstrates that institutional, demographic and social factors influence the degree to which ethnicity becomes socially salient and politically relevant within communities, which consequently shapes the contours of interethnic

interaction therein. Context matters, as it determines whether or not ethnic groups will be able to bridge their divides and achieve collective ends. In sum, the effects of ethnicity on political outcomes are neither reflexive, nor uniform. They are, in fact, context-dependent. And once we recognize ethnicity's contingent effects, we begin to understand why variation in local goods provision across diverse communities has been observed.

In this sense, diversity, in and of itself, cannot account for collective action failures in multiethnic communities. The *features* of diversity (e.g., demography, etc.) provide better insight into when and where collective action can be sustained. Some diverse societies are characteristically polarized, or what has been termed "deeply divided" (Lijphart 1975). Deeply-divided societies are comprised of internally cohesive groups that vehemently oppose one another, their intra and inter-ethnic divisions having been repressed through symbolic manipulation. In such societies, inter-ethnic trust will be scarce and the prospects for cooperation at the community level are dim. Even more dire are the implications for national-level outcomes. Without a foundation of inter-ethnic cooperation, deeply divided societies face persistent democratic instability and sluggish economic development. The cases of genocide in Rwanda and Burundi are examples of the grave outcomes that result from the union of ethnicity and politics in a divided society. But in other plural societies, salient inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic divisions have created complex ethnic configurations, in which substantial numbers of relatively small ethnopolitical groups find themselves unable to achieve political majorities on their own. Such features are the hallmark of a multi-ethnic (as opposed to a deeply-divided) society. In these types of societies, ethnic cleavages are less intense and polarization less common. As such, there are brighter prospects for inter-ethnic cooperation, local goods provision, democratic vitality, and economic growth. This dissertation has added nuance to a literature that often conflates these prototypes and, subsequently, fails to specify when and where diversity may undermine collective action and when and where it may not.

Finally, this project advances scholarship on the causes and the consequences of trust in developing countries. Interestingly, much of the social trust literature has largely neglected the African continent. There are a small number of interesting and informative studies of trust across Africa (Nunn and Wantchekon 2011; Kuenzi 2008; Widner and Mundt 1998), but none of these works explicitly considers how ethnic identity impacts trust attitudes on the continent.<sup>1</sup> This dissertation presents a systematic and generalizable cross-national study of trust and ethnicity on the African continent, coupled with a focused case study of inter-ethnic trust in specific community contexts within Cape Town, South Africa. My findings fill a gap in our understanding of trust outside of a Western context. For one, they reveal that ethnic identity indeed impacts trust attitudes on the continent. Whether or not one places their trust in a non-coethnic depends on the degree to which they identify with their ethnic group. However, data on self-identification in Africa reveal that ethnic identities on the continent are much less entrenched than scholars have presumed. In fact, a considerable percentage of those surveyed (35 percent) exhibited strong attachment to their national, as opposed to ethnic, identity. These respondents maintain moderate or high levels of bridging trust, as well. Conventional wisdom has assumed that the majority of Africans maintain strong ethnic identities and high levels of bonding trust. For one, many African countries have been embroiled in ethnically-based civil wars in past decades. And social organization in many parts of Africa is dominated by communal structures and informal institutions like the family unit, the kin-group, the village, and the ethnic clan. However, my findings reveal a more nuanced picture of identity and trust across Africa. They contribute to dispelling myths about the dominance of ethnic identity on the continent and advance our understanding of social and political attitudes throughout Africa.

Relatedly, these findings demonstrate that patterns of trust in Africa correspond to trust

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<sup>1</sup>Many of these studies are also limited to a specific sub-sample of African nations (i.e. Widner and Mundt's (1998) interesting work on social capital in Uganda and Botswana) and are, therefore, limited in their generalizability.

attitudes elsewhere around the globe. For example, Alesina and La Ferrara (2002) found that—in addition to individual-level, socio-economic characteristics—racial identity significantly impacts trust attitudes across the U.S. It appears that the same factors affect Africans’ and Westerners’ propensity to trust others. Such a finding contributes to a growing literature on public opinion in Africa, which contends that political behavior on the continent does not substantially diverge from patterns observed in other regions (Mattes and Davids 2000; Bratton and Mattes 2001*a;b*).<sup>2</sup>

## 7.2 Policy Implications

In addition to advancing scholarship on ethnicity, trust, and behavior, this dissertation has considerable implications for policy-makers. In particular, it can contribute to the generation of more informed development policies by advancing our understanding of the dynamics involved in local goods provision. Ultimately, the impact of development initiatives is felt locally. It is important that communities develop a capacity to organize themselves, so that they may achieve the benefits of cooperation and secure the advantages of development. As I emphasized earlier, such a process can be challenging for diverse communities, but essential for the well-being of its citizens. For practitioners working on capacity building projects, this study provides insight about elements of success and failure in multi-ethnic communities.

In recent years, research institutes and NGO practitioners have placed greater emphasis on what has been termed “Community Driven Development” (hereafter CDD). According to Mansuri and Rao (2004, 1-2), CDD refers to “... community-based development

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<sup>2</sup>There is a tendency to view political behavior in Africa as exceptional, given the embryonic democratic systems and conditions of poverty throughout the continent. In fact, political behavior across Africa’s emerging democracies mirror trends in other regions of the developing (and developed) world. See (Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi 2004) for related discussion.

projects in which communities have direct control over key project decisions, including management of investment funds.” Community-based approaches have quickly become a preferred method of channelling development assistance, with entities like the World Bank greatly increasing lending for CDD projects.<sup>3</sup> Such strategies of poverty reduction are seen as effective and sustainable—empowering the poor, strengthening local communities and circumventing any federal authorities that may usurp aid resources.

While the virtues of CDD have been well documented, scholars and practitioners of development policy are still searching for what factors contribute to successful outcomes in community-based approaches. Many have recognized the value of social capital as a tool (see Grootaert and van Bastelaer (2002); Woolcock (1998)). Motivated by the work of Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti (1994), some development practitioners now view social capital as a key source of a community’s ability to achieve success in CDD projects. As such, development NGOs have begun to introduce concepts related to social capital into their implementation frameworks. In fact, some argue that the social capital paradigm has become *embedded* in development thinking in recent years (Mansuri and Rao 2004).

If social capital is thought to enhance community-based approaches, diversity is thought to undermine them. Practitioners and scholars alike recognize that ethnic heterogeneity (and ethnic politics, in general) has impeded political and economic development in many developing countries. And as a result, many NGOs have been hesitant to develop programs in ethnically heterogeneous communities. They have assumed that they will find low levels of participation in these seemingly “bad” communities (Khwaja 2009) and that CDD projects will flounder as a result. Many development organizations continue to believe that diversity will undermine the positive effects of social capital on development outcomes. But my findings suggest otherwise. Ethnic heterogeneity does not reflexively suppress the formation of social capital in multi-ethnic communities. In some diverse areas, ethnic

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<sup>3</sup>According to Mansuri and Rao, the World Bank increased funding for CDD by %4 from 1996 to 2003.

cleavages lack the kind of saliency that leads to group polarization. It is in these contexts that practitioners may find patterns of inter-ethnic trust serving as a foundation for community development initiatives. As my findings demonstrate, development organizations *can*, indeed, achieve success under conditions of diversity.

In sum, this project provides useful material to NGOs working in multi-ethnic localities. It elucidates a framework for understanding ethnicity, trust, and community development within different cultural and political contexts. By doing so, it gives practitioners the tools to recognize when, where, and why social capital can facilitate the achievement of development goals in diverse societies and when it cannot.

### **7.3 Limitations and Future Directions**

This study has examined the dynamics of local goods provision in multi-ethnic societies. As with most empirical research, some limitations exist. First, the nature of the data I have employed presents a series of challenges. First, public opinion surveys can be volatile, which may affect the reliability of the data. Capturing trust, identity, and participation trends over time would resolve such an issue. While the Afrobarometer project includes several rounds of surveys conducted over a decade, my use of older surveys was limited by question inconsistencies. Secondly, employing public opinion data opens up the researcher to problems associated with observational error. It is possible that the data could be affected by such issues as non-random sampling, measurement error due to respondents, or measurement error due to interviewers. Each of these possible “survey errors” (Weisberg 2005) could limit the casual interpretation of my findings. Third, my qualitative study of community policing efforts in Cape Town was limited by finite resources. This restricted the number of interviews I could conduct and, consequently, the number of data points that were produced for analysis. My case studies could be expanded to include more communi-

ties and more local organizations and perhaps incorporate ethnically diverse neighborhoods in other municipalities of South Africa. By expanding data collection with more interviews and additional cases, I would further substantiate my empirical findings.

To conclude, I would like to address some avenues for future research. Empirical studies have definitively illustrated that ethnic heterogeneity is associated with suboptimal political, economic, and social outcomes. This dissertation, however, has demonstrated how trust mediates the adverse effects of diversity, generating beneficial outcomes for some multi-ethnic societies. In future projects, I would like to further explore the contextual variables that nurture the development of inter-ethnic trust. In Chapter Three, I discussed how certain institutional configurations temper the saliency of ethnic cleavages and create environments that support the formation of bridging ties across ethnic lines. A fruitful and productive research agenda would examine, in depth, which types of institutions generate and maintain trust between non-coethnics. For instance, we can surmise that effective democratic institutions engender inter-ethnic trust. Scholars have recognized that distrust among ethnic groups is often a product of entrenched inequality combined with poor institutional resolve (Rothstein and Uslaner 2005). In many political systems, elites from one ethnic group exclude other ethnic groups from the democratic process and from the material rewards that they may reap from these positions of power. Excluded individuals begin to recognize that they live in the midst of high inequality and that outsiders are responsible for their economic plight. Such conditions suppress the formation of inter-ethnic trust (see Uslaner (2008)).

Effective democratic institutions, however, can foster bridging trust in society and counter the kinds of out-group mistrust brought about by ethnically-based inequality. Democratic institutions propagate rules, laws, and rights that are upheld uniformly in society. Sound democratic institutions signal that fair legal processes protect individuals from the abuses of others (Jamal 2009). When the institutions of government work effectively in

protecting citizens rights, individuals may feel more confident in their interactions with others (Kuenzi 2008). They may feel less likely to be exploited and, hence, more trusting of others, including out-group members. Moreover, democracies create avenues of participation and influence open to all citizens. As such, it is likely that sound democratic institutions have the potential to build solidarity in society and, consequently, the ability to nurture the development of inter-ethnic trust. Future research must take institutional hypotheses seriously. For it is worthwhile to examine any manipulable factor that may, ultimately, build a foundation for inter-ethnic cooperation.

Future research should also examine how trust mediates the effects of diversity in regions other than Africa. While the African continent serves as a setting for this dissertation's empirical analysis, its findings have far-reaching implications. It sheds light on the determinants of successful collective action in any multi-ethnic community and in every corner of the globe, by developing an analytical framework that incorporates changing contextual variables. By doing so, it contributes to a better understanding of the effects of diversity on political outcomes at large. Too often diversity is assumed to be the root of social, economic and political problems in societies that are characterized by it. Diversity is a trap, scholars have long held, that undermines democratic vitality, social stability or economic growth (see Dahl (1982); Rabushka and Shepsle (1972)). Diversity may initiate the demise of the European welfare state (Freeman 1986); it may keep the bottom billion in perpetual poverty (Collier 2010); it may be the cause of widespread social isolation (Putnam 2007). But, as social scientists, we should be cautious about making such prognostications. The causal pathways from ethnic diversity to the outcomes we study are complex, and we must scrutinize the generalized inferences we make based on the patterns we observe in diverse societies. This dissertation implores us not only to recognize the invariable effects of diversity, but also to properly examine each of the social, economic, and political variables that characterize multi-ethnic communities and condition outcomes

therein. By doing so, we will begin to recognize when and where diversity could undermine the health of societies and when and where multi-ethnic communities may be able to bridge their divisions and, together, face their shared challenges.

# Chapter 8

## Appendix A

**Table 8.1:** Ordered Logit Estimates of Bonding and Bridging Trust without Clustered Standard Errors

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Bonding Trust</b>	<b>Bridging Trust</b>
Ethnic Identification	-.046* (.009)	<b>-.108*</b> <b>(.009)</b>
Age	.006* (.001)	<b>.008*</b> <b>(.001)</b>
Employed	.041* (.015)	<b>.019</b> <b>(.015)</b>
Education	-.117* (.006)	<b>-.088*</b> <b>(.006)</b>
Female	-.153* (.023)	<b>-.183*</b> <b>(.023)</b>
Urban Dweller	.185* (.029)	<b>.099*</b> <b>(.029)</b>
Observations	25,042	<b>24,814</b>
Log Likelihood	-33294.08	<b>-33315.84</b>

Standard errors in parentheses.

\*  $p < 0.05$

**Table 8.2:** Results of Factor Analysis of Participation in Public Goods Provision  
(Varimax Rotation)

<b>Item</b>	<b>Participation</b>
Community Group Member	0.4486
Attended Community Meeting	0.7510
Join Others to Raise Issue	0.7633
<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	0.7265
<i>Observations</i>	27,133

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