

INCLUSIVE PEACE AND SECURITY




IDS Bulletin

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Cover photo Aleppo, Syria: Drawings on the walls of a room inside an apartment block that was badly damaged by Scud missile attacks from government forces are visible through a hole blown into the side of the building.

Photographer Tristan Vickers/Panos.

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Note

* Biographies for contributors to the archive articles are not available.

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IDS Bulletin

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INCLUSIVE PEACE AND SECURITY

Editor Robin Luckham



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From Disarmament and Development to Inclusive Peace and Security: Four Decades of IDS Research

Robin Luckham

Abstract This introductory article surveys four decades of work on peace, security, and development, centring on articles published in previous issues of the *IDS Bulletin*. These articles focused initially on disarmament and its actual and potential contributions to development. After the end of the Cold War, development research engaged more and more directly with conflict prevention and peace-building, turning the spotlight upon security. IDS work has been distinctive in three respects. First, in interrogating the multiple meanings of security, delinking it from state and international security. Second, by tracing the complex links between global, national, local, and personal security. Third, in its insistence that security be inclusive, drawing upon the experience and agency of the people and groups who are ‘developed’ and ‘secured’.

Keywords: disarmament and development, militarisation, security, violent conflict, inequality, social inclusion, peace, peace-building, human security, security in the vernacular.

1 Introduction¹

This article introduces an *IDS Bulletin* Archive Collection which reviews four decades of analysis and research on peace, security, and development. This work initially concentrated upon disarmament and development. Disarmament, along with reductions in military spending, it was argued, would release resources for development. It would also break the cycles of militarisation which propelled violent conflicts in many parts of the developing world. When the Cold War ended, however, the focus shifted to security’s troubled relationship to development, in a global context in which donor agencies engaged more and more directly with security questions. This article and the pieces reprinted in this Archive Collection² trace these shifts, before concluding that it may be time to revisit disarmament in the present times of chronic insecurity and increasing violence.

Despite these shifts in focus, certain common threads of analysis have continued throughout. First, security has been treated with circumspection, as a hugely contested, if vital, concept. It takes diverse forms, not all of them military, and connects intricately with development. Violence and insecurity disrupt economic progress and cause massive human suffering. On the other hand, security itself can impose burdens upon development. Uncaring or repressive governments frequently sacrifice their citizens at the altar of national security. Major powers tend to pursue their geopolitical security interests with little regard to the poor and vulnerable people harmed or uprooted by their interventions.

Second, contributors to *IDS Bulletins* have had a shared commitment to rigorous investigation of both (a) the multiple ways global, national, and local institutions and actors interact to determine security and to shape the course of development; and (b) the many forms of security (international, national, military, personal, livelihood, food, environmental, etc.) and how these interconnect, or indeed clash.

Third, and most important, has been an insistence on asking the question 'whose security, and whose development?' This question has both analytical and political repercussions. Interrogating security and development 'from below' reframes the established agendas of security and development thinking. Activating the experience and agency of the people and groups who are 'developed' and 'secured' is at the same time a profoundly political process, especially so in a world in which geopolitics and national security are once again on the march.

2 Disarmament and development

The theory and practice of security, and likewise that of development, was shaped within the historical matrix of the post-Second World War international order. The dirty secret of the 'long peace' maintained through nuclear deterrence during the Cold War was that the struggles between capitalist West and communist East played out in the warscapes of the South. A series of United Nations (UN) conferences and reports proposed curbs on arms races, reductions in military spending, and the reallocation of the resources released by these reductions to development. But military spending kept rising and the peace dividend never materialised. The Bretton Woods institutions and aid agencies maintained a studied distance from the brute facts of war and political violence which disfigured many parts of the developing South. Violent conflicts, often aggravated by arms sales and international interventions, continued to increase throughout the Cold War period with devastating legacies, many of which persist to this day.

IDS first began to investigate the relationship between disarmament and development in the 1970s (Jolly 1978). Its concern then as now was the safety and wellbeing of poor and vulnerable people jeopardised by global as well as local insecurities. The initial focus was upon the savings that could be achieved by deep cuts in military spending and arms sales,

and upon the reallocation of these savings to development and poverty reduction. But it soon became clear that it was not realistic to propose cuts without better understanding of the processes which drove military spending, propelled global and national arms races, spread insecurity, and triggered armed violence (Luckham 1976, 1977; Kaldor 1978). The central policy challenge was how to reverse militarisation through peace initiatives, conflict reduction, and the conversion of military industries to peaceful purposes. Whilst the broad thrust of this analysis was global, the optic was also ‘from below’, in that the goal was to reduce the burdens of security on poor and vulnerable people.

These were the principal themes of a 1985 *IDS Bulletin* on ‘Disarmament and World Development: Is There a Way Forward’,³ articles from which begin this Archive Collection (Brandt 1985 and Luckham 1985, both this *IDS Bulletin*⁴). The 1985 issue contained impassioned pieces by Willy Brandt, Shridath Ramphal and Inga Thorsson, all three prominent international proponents of disarmament and development.⁵ It was published at a fraught juncture of the Cold War, when the United States was ramping up its military spending and embarking on the controversial Strategic Defense Initiative (‘Star Wars’) proposals, and when the global economy was in a precarious state.⁶ Not long afterwards, the Reagan administration pulled the United States out of the forthcoming United Nations Special Conference on Disarmament and Development, planned for 1986, and thus ensured its cancellation.⁷

3 End of the Cold War: new world order, or *plus ça change*?

Within four years the Cold War came to a rapid end, and this appeared to change almost everything. The end of the stand-off between the two superpowers ushered in a period of apparent unipolar Western and especially American hegemony. At last, it seemed, the elusive peace dividend might be achievable. To be sure, new security challenges soon emerged from the breakup of the communist bloc in Eastern Europe; the destabilisation of client regimes in the developing world, which had previously been propped up by the communist East or the capitalist West;⁸ and the proliferation of multiple forms of ‘non-state’ violence, including terrorism. The ‘new wars’ of the post-Cold War period saw an unravelling of political authority, hastened by globalisation and aggravated by the rise of identity-based conflicts in many regions of the developing world (Kaldor and Luckham 2001). Nevertheless, the number of wars and other forms of violence soon began to decline, according to most published measures, as did the numbers of people killed and wounded, fleeing their homes, and suffering war-related human misery.

The policy environment was transformed even more dramatically. Starting from the UN Secretary-General’s *Agenda for Peace* in 1992 (UN 1992), the international community played an ever more assertive role in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peace-building, and post-conflict reconstruction. The development community became increasingly oriented to humanitarian action and emergency assistance in conflict zones (Buchanan-Smith and Maxwell 1994). International

donors and non-governmental organisations cast off their previous reluctance to address security issues, arguing that it was sometimes necessary to invest in security to protect weak states from the violence that threatened to engulf them, as well as to rebuild peace after conflicts.

Development analysis and policy began focusing on fragile states, including their failure to protect their citizens and deliver basic security and justice. Poorly resourced, non-accountable, and undisciplined military and security institutions were considered security threats in their own right. They subverted democratic transitions and engaged in cycles of violence, interacting with the non-state armed groups they were supposed to keep in check (Cawthra and Luckham 2003). Donors began by investing in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes to discourage ex-combatants from returning to violence. They promoted security sector reforms, to improve the effectiveness and democratic accountability of military, police, and justice institutions. Later on, they embarked on ambitious stabilisation and state-building programmes in fragile and conflict-affected states such as Bosnia, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Afghanistan.

These policies were reinforced by significant discursive shifts. First, peace-building was realigned around the preservation of security, and disarmament almost vanished from the picture. Second, the concept of security was broadened to comprise human and citizen security, alongside but not replacing more traditional conceptions of state and international security. The World Bank became an enthusiastic convert and its path-breaking *World Development Report 2011* (World Bank 2011) made citizen security the starting point for its policy engagement with state fragility and peace-building.

4 Securitisation, violence, and geopolitics

Nevertheless, the brute realities of inequality and global violence did not vanish with the end of the Cold War; far from it. Violent conflicts declined from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s, but have been on the upturn ever since. The cuts in global military spending of the post-Cold War era have largely been reversed. Major powers increased their military interventions in the developing world, especially after 9/11. The number of people uprooted from their homes and displaced across and within national boundaries is higher than at any time since the Second World War. The framework of international cooperation continues to stutter in the face of these and other global challenges, including that of climate change. And although real progress has been made in reducing poverty, the gains are unevenly spread, globally and in each national context.

Moreover, as critical analysts have observed, the liberal or democratic peace was never all it seemed. It was underpinned by an ideological vision in which political freedoms marched hand in hand with free market economics. Behind its façade lurked many of the same forces which had propelled militarisation in the North and violence and underdevelopment

in the South during the Cold War. It seemed that security had taken development hostage step by step. Simultaneously, development was being rewritten according to a neoliberal, free-market script.

Duffield (1994) argued in an *IDS Bulletin* published not long after the end of the Cold War that international interventions in complex political emergencies had begun to transform the development industry and to realign North–South relations; what he was later to term the ‘securitisation’ of development (Duffield 2001). Humanitarian interventions to fulfil the international community’s ‘Responsibility to Protect’ (ICISS 2001) vulnerable people exposed to genocide and extreme violence were increasingly intertwined with international security concerns. Even human security became compromised, when used to put a human face on these interventions or to justify donor support for state-building and market-based development. These critiques gained added traction after 9/11, when the ‘war on terror’ was initiated and a spate of international military interventions were launched, some under humanitarian or peace-building cover, others supposed to preserve international security, but almost all shaped around the geopolitical concerns of the major world and regional powers.

Willett (2001, this *IDS Bulletin*) spelled out the dangers of such ‘security first’ approaches to conflict prevention and peace-building. She argued that they can at best patch over violent conflicts driven by impoverishment, inequality, and social exclusion. Rather it is globalisation, along with market deregulation imposed by donors on weak governments and their poorly performing economies, which has sown the seeds of discontent, fuelling the violence. It follows that tackling globalisation and inequality may be the best peace-building strategy. The major international players and development institutions must put their own houses in order, and tackle the inequities generated by global capitalism, before imposing their liberalisation and peace-building agendas on others.

5 Tackling insecurities in an unequal world

Fundamental asymmetries characterise how global shocks are perceived and acted upon. According to the world view of many Northern decision makers, human insecurities, including violent conflicts, are largely confined to the South. Yet they intrude upon the North as well. First, through terrorism and transnational crime, seen in the media age as symbolic disturbances in the established order of things. Second, through the increasing flow of people displaced by violence and poverty across the borders of Europe and North America, generating increasingly hostile public perceptions. Third, through the political and social ruptures brought about by economic liberalisation, rapid technological change, and inequality in Northern countries themselves.

International security policy, humanitarian action and, increasingly, development policy are being reframed in an increasingly divisive political context which shifts the blame and the responsibility for dealing with spreading insecurity to the South. These largely Northern

perceptions disregard the brutal reality that it is countries, communities, and people in the South which suffer most from global shocks; which bear the traumas of most of the violence; and which shelter and feed the vast majority of refugees.

How is it possible to challenge these perceptions and to reframe the dominant discourse around more inclusive and yet realistic conceptions of security? This *IDS Bulletin* Archive Collection draws attention to a variety of analytical and policy approaches. None fits neatly under a traditional 'security' moniker. Most draw upon conceptions of human or citizen security, but go further in requiring deeper, more differentiated understandings of how poor and vulnerable people respond to and negotiate their insecurity (for more detailed discussion see Luckham 2015 and Lind and Luckham 2017). At the same time, they insist upon rigorous investigation of the determinants – local, national, and global – of insecurity, and of how these determinants interconnect.

A path-breaking example is Davies and Leach's (1991, this *IDS Bulletin*) exploration of the relationships between food security and protection of the natural environment. Their departure point is the livelihood strategies of poor rural producers, who do not in general distinguish sharply between their food security and the multiple ways they draw upon natural resources. In their day-to-day struggles to survive, these rural producers find themselves situated at many removes from the concerns of national and international policymakers.

Significant North–South discrepancies exist, Davies and Leach argue, in how food security and environmental sustainability are thought about and prioritised. The global policy discourse of environmental protection emphasises global interdependence as well as cooperation to tackle shared threats to the natural environment. Yet this fails to address the underlying North–South inequalities in access to technology and resources, and risks privileging environmental concerns over people. Analysis and policy should identify and negotiate the trade-offs and synergies between environmental sustainability and food security. At the same time, they should take full account of the wide gaps between the household, village, national, and global levels – above all by listening to and respecting the day-to-day concerns of those who are most directly affected by environmental change and by food insecurity.

Hossain (2009, this *IDS Bulletin*) reports on a study investigating the impacts of the post-2008 global food, fuel, and financial shocks upon social cohesion and crime in ten local communities in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, and Zambia. None faced threat of large-scale violence; yet in all, economic shocks increased insecurity, including growth of semi-legal and criminal livelihoods, organised crime, and the criminalisation of the police and other public agencies. The social networks on which poor and vulnerable people depended were weakened. And trust in public institutions and in their capacity to protect their citizens was undermined.

Richards and Bah (2005, this *IDS Bulletin*) argue that African civil wars have often arisen out of, deepened, and in turn challenged agrarian exploitation, which has deep historical and social roots in the colonial and pre-colonial past. Much of the analysis and policy emanating from international development bodies has discounted the grievances arising from exploitation and social injustice, and has misinterpreted resistance, including violent resistance, to this exploitation. Durable peace, Richards and Bah argue, can only be assured through comprehensive agrarian reforms which explicitly bring in previously marginalised social groups, including women and youths.

De Waal (1993, this *IDS Bulletin*) offers a powerful critique of the weaponisation of famine in Africa to win wars, to control populations, and to seize control over land and productive assets; an analysis which still rings true more than two decades after it was written – notably in countries such as South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen, and Syria. Then as now famine is not simply an African problem, it is complexly linked both to global shocks and to violent conflicts. Efforts to reduce it tend all too often to be compromised by the securitisation of humanitarian assistance, as well as the bureaucratic politics of the aid industry.

6 Uncovering silenced voices

The difficulties and opportunities of navigating research in dangerous and politically contested conflict zones are explored by contributors to this *IDS Bulletin* (see also Rivas and Browne 2018). During the past two or three decades, research on violence and the different forms of insecurity has increased in both volume and quality. Researchers have adopted a wide spread of methodological prisms, including historical analysis, ethnographic fieldwork, participant observation, action research, and quantitative techniques. Justino, Leavy and Valli (2009, this *IDS Bulletin*) explore the potential of quantitative techniques of inquiry, notably their use in micro-level research on violence, arguing that they complement rather than replace qualitative methods.

Hume's (2009, this *IDS Bulletin*) account of the gendered silences of violence in El Salvador highlights the disempowerment of women and the challenges this poses for researchers investigating the multiple ways in which they are silenced.⁹ She provides a trenchant analysis of how violence and the fear of violence in El Salvador have been normalised by both police and criminals to silence women and stifle dissent.

De Mel (2009, this *IDS Bulletin*) provides a trenchant picture of the militarised masculinity of Sri Lanka's military and security institutions, supposed to protect all citizens, including women, from violence. Her portrayal of the interactions between Sri Lanka's 'military boys' and its 'garment girls' suggests how the militarised masculinity of the former reinforces the gendered insecurity of the latter, which in turn stems from the feminised exploitation of labour in the country's transnational Free Trade Zones.

How to uncover silenced voices is as much a political as a methodological task, as both Hume and de Mel suggest. Abello Colak and Pearce (2009, this *IDS Bulletin*) investigate 'security from below' through case studies of community-led responses to violence and peace-building in Guatemala and Colombia (see also McGee 2017, who links the silencing of people in the Colombian Pacific to the invisible as well as visible power of elites and violent groups). Action research and community-led peace-building, Abello Colak and Pearce argue, provide better empirical understanding of the insecurities faced by vulnerable people and groups. In addition they offer credible, popularly supported alternatives to the perverse, forcibly imposed forms of order which sometimes pass for security in violent situations.

7 Inclusive citizenship, legitimate public authority, and the social contract

Citizen participation is essential to legitimate public authority as well as inclusive security. However, Kabeer's (2002) insightful analysis of the multiple dimensions of citizenship points out that certain forms and experiences of citizenship can reinforce exclusion as well as inclusion. Political authority is diminished when particular categories of citizen – marginalised minorities, submerged classes, women, etc. – are deprived of some or all of the entitlements of citizenship, including protection from violence. Diminished citizenship along with the unravelling of authority connect complexly to insecurity and violence, both as frequent causes and as frequent outcomes of violence (Kaldor and Luckham 2001).

Leonard (2013, this *IDS Bulletin*) focuses upon the making and unmaking of the social contract between states and citizens in sub-Saharan Africa. Much of the political turbulence in the region has arisen from the unstable bargains made between and within African political elites, security apparatuses, and regimes, upon which much of the analysis of conflict and insecurity has concentrated (World Bank 2017).¹⁰ Yet equally if not more fundamental has been the failure of elites and governments to fulfil their social contracts with citizens, and in particular their inability or unwillingness to deliver basic physical safety along with other public goods.

In the absence of the state, alternative 'hybrid' forms of security provision have emerged, in which an eclectic range of non-state actors (traditional institutions, elders, religious authorities, community groups, and even warlords and criminal mafias) offer protection and various forms of justice (Bagayoko and M'Cormack 2012; Bagayoko, Hutchful and Luckham 2016). Based on research in Côte d'Ivoire, Allouche and Zadi Zadi (2013) suggest that civilian groups interacting with the state can play a vital role in containing violence and maintaining 'zones of peace' in situations of acute conflict.

Behind the analysis and practice of security again lurks the fundamental question raised at the beginning of this article and which is implicit in the social contract: exactly whose security and whose development are

Table 1 The complex landscapes of risk and (in)security

The multiple layers of (in)security	Violence and threats of violence	Economic dislocations	Sustainability risks
Local, community, and individual	Gender, identity-based, criminal, and vigilante violences	Inequality, poverty, and fragile livelihoods	Famine, epidemics, child mortality, and displacement
	Proliferation of non-state armed groups	Uneven impacts of development	Unequal distribution of risks between rich and poor
	Localised or subcontracted state violence	Spatialised inequalities at the margins	
National	Violent ungoverned borderlands	Weak states unable to manage 'adjusted', dependent economies	State failure to deliver public goods, respond to emergencies, or maintain safety nets
	Unravelling political authority	Widening vertical and horizontal inequalities	Government disinterest or hostility towards environmental protections
	Exclusionary, oppressive governance structures and practices	States as capitalist enforcers	Neglect of infrastructures supporting health, wellbeing, and safety
	Hollowing or capture of democracy by violent elites	Corruption cartels and bandit states	
North–South, South–South, and regional	Rising powers and new forms of hegemony	Varying regional capacities to weather economic shocks	Regional competition over water, land, and resources
	Regionally interconnected violence and insecurity	Brunt of adjustments imposed on poorest countries and people	Mass population displacements, refugees, and migration
	Insecurity 'blowback' towards the North		
Global	Networked violence: terrorism, drugs, and crime	Footloose, non-accountable big capital	Unchecked climate change
	New technologies of war and surveillance	Global financial and economic shocks	Health pandemics (HIV, Ebola, etc.)
	Muscular geopolitics and military interventions	Widening global inequalities	Spreading food and water insecurities

Source Author's own, adapted from Luckham (2015).

we talking about? People whose lives are thrown into turmoil by violence and insecurity almost invariably see their insecurity differently from how it is seen by national governments, international peacekeepers, and others charged with delivering peace and security. They speak security 'from below' in many vernaculars, reflecting significant variations in history, culture, and social milieu (see Lind and Luckham 2017, which introduces a special issue of *Peacebuilding* around these themes based on recent IDS research). Their insecurity invariably intertwines with other forms of human suffering and social exclusion; that is, freedom from violence and from the fear of violence necessarily belongs within a wider consideration of other dimensions of human security.

8 Mapping (in)security from below

How can 'security from below', and 'security in the vernacular' both activate vulnerable and insecure people and groups themselves, and make a tangible difference to analysis, research, and policy? Even if one's starting point is an appraisal of the risks which press most heavily upon the day-to-day lives of vulnerable people, these risks must be appraised in their national, regional, and global context. Table 1 presents a schematic landscape of insecurities and risks, along with the different levels, from local to global, at which they tend to be most pressing.

The forms of violence and insecurity which most directly affect poor and vulnerable people are summarised at the head of Table 1. Placing them in a wider context and tracing the determinants, direct and indirect, of their (in)security is of course enormously challenging. Local and community insecurities are deeply shaped by remote national, regional, and global dynamics, which local people scarcely understand and have very little ability to control. Global risks such as climate change, economic shocks, and transnational violence cascade through to regional, national and local levels, but how they do so is poorly understood, as well as difficult for those most affected to grasp.

Conversely, seemingly local or national insecurities too have major global reverberations: for instance, the networking across international boundaries of localised Islamist insurgencies in the Arabian Peninsula, the Horn of Africa, and the Sahel; or the political and military upheavals propelling large numbers of people fleeing repression and violence in Africa and the Middle East to seek refuge across the Mediterranean; and the worldwide panics set off by pandemics, such as the Ebola epidemic.

Researchers struggle as best they can to map these interconnections, to expose them to empirical scrutiny, and to draw informed conclusions for policy and political action. It is an undertaking simultaneously of deepening and of broadening (see Luckham 2015 for a panoramic view). It demands rigorous analysis rather than speculative conjecture about the drivers of global change and their attendant risks.

How, for instance, do the diverse insecurities (violence, famine, disease, displacement, etc.) faced by people and groups at the margins (top of Table 1) interconnect and reinforce each other? How do they link vertically to impoverishment and global capital accumulation? How can those most directly at risk mobilise locally and globally, in order to confront the massive inequalities that determine their fate? How do geopolitics, rampant capitalism, fossil fuel extraction and climate change interconnect, and where are the entry points to break these interconnections? Where are global market dislocations, shifts between old and rising powers, and deepening inequalities now taking us; are they now beyond regulation; and what forms of subaltern protest or resistance do they encourage?

These are enormous questions, and asking them has dangers. Mixing a smorgasbord of global, national, and local problems on the same analytical dish can reduce focus and clarity. It can foster the securitisation of all forms of risk, by opening the door to the reframing of global poverty, pandemics, climate change and so forth through the lenses of national and international security policy – potentially harnessing them to the interests of powerful governments and corporations. However, such dangers are best averted by spelling out, rather than obscuring, the interconnections and by opening them to empirical analysis.

At the same time, most risks tend to be politically and socially constructed and be mediated by states and other political authorities. These risks reflect and reproduce current distributions of power, bureaucratic authority and knowledge, none more so than security threats. The discourse of threats evokes a narrow narrative of violent contestation, in which the bodies of citizens become as one with the body politic of the state. This allows powerful actors and institutions to close analysis and policy around particular framings of risk, especially those which emphasise stability and control. Current analyses of ‘fragile states’ tend to focus upon challenges to the state’s monopoly of violence and the unravelling of political authority, especially in ‘ungoverned’ peripheries. But equally if not more problematic has been the emergence of new forms of authoritarianism, often dressed up in democratic drag, which crowd out or obliterate democratic challenges, such as those which extinguished the Arab Springs.

This makes it even more vital to rethink security ‘from below’, keeping the people and groups at grass roots whose burdens of risk are the greatest firmly in view (see Abello Colak and Pearce 2009, this *IDS Bulletin*; Luckham 2009; Lind and Luckham 2017). It is their silenced voices which must be attended to. It is their resilience and agency that coping strategies depend upon. It is they who have most reason to challenge the dominant framings of security. It is they who can benefit most by mobilising around demands for change. And it is their experiences and perceptions of risk which should be the starting point for analysis and action.

9 Towards inclusive security: what follows from listening to the voices of those who are most excluded and insecure?

What does listening to and giving precedence to the people and groups who are excluded from current framings of security and development imply for development analysis, research, and policy? First it provides a necessary corrective to the tendency of development researchers and practitioners to take for granted that they act on behalf of poor, vulnerable, and excluded people. Sometimes they do, but this cannot be assumed, especially when tackling the problems of people living in insecure and violent places. More reflection is needed upon positionality: where researchers and policymakers sit within the prevailing hierarchies of power and knowledge (Rivas and Browne 2018); precisely who is doing the securing and for whom; and whether the people ‘secured’ or ‘developed’ see policy interventions as

supporting their concerns rather than being indifferent, or indeed as indistinguishable from the structures of domination and exploitation that trap them in poverty and violence.

Second, uncovering silenced voices requires social inquiry that engages constructively with these voices, at the same time as being methodologically rigorous. This has been a particular strength of participatory and action research at IDS. But for action research to bring tangible improvements in the security of poor and vulnerable people, it must also rise to the challenges posed by the wider national and global structures of power and inequality which reinforce the different forms of human misery and throw up many obstacles to tackling them.

Third, there should be due caution about general conclusions and generic policy prescriptions. Both understanding insecurity and tackling it must be rooted in deep knowledge of regional, national, and local contexts. As Selby and Tadros (2016) argue in relation to the Middle East, analysis of security questions tends to be clouded by unexamined myths and preconceptions, which bias policymaking and may tangibly worsen the safety and welfare of people at the sharp end of violence and insecurity. Collaboration with researchers from countries in the global South is just one way to guard against these biases; even if the difficulties, political and other, of such collaboration should not be underestimated.¹¹

For all these reasons, critical self-reflection upon the development industry's own policies and programmes must be a priority. First, so as to identify and grapple with the inconsistencies between policy goals and how these bear upon development practice (Davies and Leach's (1991, this *IDS Bulletin*) analysis of the tensions between environmental and food security is exemplary). Second, to tease out the potential contradictions arising from the foreign policy and security imperatives of governments and donors, and to address the political dangers they create for development and humanitarian action. Third, to spell out the potentially perverse or negative impacts of both security policies and development programmes, particularly upon those who find themselves vulnerable and excluded. IDS has much to contribute to this process of critical self-reflection, because of its long track record of research on poverty, its commitment to participatory research, and its advocacy for those left behind by development.

10 Back to the future: the question of military spending and disarmament

Finally, it may now be time to revive analysis and debate about global disarmament and its place in building more inclusive and sustainable security. The threat of nuclear escalation did not vanish after the end of the Cold War, and still hangs over the relationships between rising as well as established powers. Military spending underwrites the geopolitical projects and repressive practices of states in all regions of the world. Access to weapons and military assistance with minimal democratic accountability to those who pay for them through taxes

reinforces the power of military and authoritarian elites. The flow of weapons and other strategic goods and services across national boundaries on the one hand sustains repressive states, and on the other hand arms insurgents and terrorist networks. Recent events in Yemen, Syria and elsewhere remind us that international arms transfers still oil the mechanisms of war and military intervention, supplying the weapons systems that visit destruction upon the social infrastructures on which large numbers of poor and vulnerable people depend.

By themselves, of course, neither military cuts nor curbs on arms transfers would halt violent conflicts; although they might help. Nevertheless, high (and currently increasing) military and arms spending are a matter of great policy as well as political concern. They represent a massive diversion of resources from other public purposes. They are inseparable from the inequalities in power, wealth, and access to the fruits of technological progress which ensure that the targets of armed violence are mostly to be found in the more peripheral regions of the developing South.¹² Disarmament is a tangible policy goal. It pinpoints the nexus between weapons systems, big capital, and military power. And it can open diagnostic windows through which to identify and mobilise against the structures of domination and exclusion that uphold global and national inequalities.

Notes

- 1 My deep thanks to Melissa Leach, Director of the Institute of Development Studies, for asking me to put together this *IDS Bulletin* Archive Collection, as well as to Dylan Hendrickson and Jeremy Lind for very insightful comments. My thanks also to Beth Richard for her careful editorial comments and corrections to this article.
- 2 Along with the other *IDS Bulletin* articles referred to in this introductory article, but not republished here.
- 3 Subsequent *IDS Bulletins* tackling aspects of the security and development relationship have included the following: 'Food Security and the Environment', *IDS Bulletin* 22.3 (1991); 'New Approaches to Famine', *IDS Bulletin* 24.4 (1993); 'Linking Relief and Development', *IDS Bulletin* 25.4 (1994); 'War and Rural Development in Africa', *IDS Bulletin* 27.3 (1996); 'Structural Conflict in the New Global Disorder', *IDS Bulletin* 32.2 (2001); 'Transforming Security and Development in an Unequal World', *IDS Bulletin* 40.2 (2009); 'Violence, Social Action and Research', *IDS Bulletin* 40.3 (2009); 'Hybrid Security Orders in Sub-Saharan Africa', *IDS Bulletin* 43.4 (2012); 'Piecing it Together: Post-Conflict Security in an Africa of Networked Multilevel Governance', *IDS Bulletin* 44.1 (2013); 'Undressing Patriarchy: Men and Structural Violence', *IDS Bulletin* 45.1 (2014); 'Ruptures and Ripple Effects in the Middle East and Beyond', *IDS Bulletin* 47.3 (2016).
- 4 The latter was written to be read with a companion piece, not published in this collection (Luckham 1985), which spelled out various scenarios for global change. Three of these arguably have some relevance today. First, a 'militarist-monetarist scenario', which

- traced the interconnections between monetarist economics, big capital, and military realpolitik. Second, a 'Brandt–Palme scenario', summarising the proposals of the Brandt and Palme Commissions (Independent Commission on International Development Issues 1980; Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues 1982) which floated many of the ideas that were to shape the liberal consensus on global governance after the end of the Cold War. Third, a 'global transformation scenario', proposing a mix of structural change in the North, delinking from the Cold War, and more self-reliant development in the South.
- 5 The former Chancellor of West Germany, Willy Brandt, chaired the Independent Commission on International Development Issues (1980). Inga Thorsson was a Swedish politician, diplomat and disarmament expert, who coordinated major international reports on disarmament and on the conversion of military to civilian industries. Shridath Ramphal was the current, well-respected Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.
 - 6 Analysed in a preceding issue of the *IDS Bulletin*: 'Showdown or Crisis? Restructuring in the 1980s', *IDS Bulletin* 16.1 (1985).
 - 7 I co-authored one of the two main discussion documents for the conference, which was heavily cut and pasted by the UN, but never published by it. The editing process was an instructive lesson in Cold War and UN politics.
 - 8 Such as the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia, or the Mobutu regime in Zaire, both of which were highly dependent on their international patrons, and both of which disintegrated soon after the end of the Cold War.
 - 9 See Byrne (1996) for an influential early discussion of the potential of gender analysis in the study of violent conflicts.
 - 10 Recent analysis by the World Bank (2017) focuses largely on the elite bargains and institutional restraints required to end conflict. In this respect, it is a step back from the Bank's earlier focus (World Bank 2011) on citizen security and 'inclusive enough' political settlements.
 - 11 Some of the *IDS Bulletins* from which contributions to this Archive Collection are drawn were products of collaboration with developing country partners, and most included pieces by Southern contributors. Contributors to the 2009 *IDS Bulletin* on 'Transforming Security and Development in an Unequal World' (the majority from the developing South) were members of the Global Consortium on Security Transformation, a South–North network which eventually foundered due to political difficulties faced by its Southern lead organisations.
 - 12 Terrorism is the apparent exception, which proves the rule. The numbers of people killed or maimed by acts of terrorism in the North are miniscule compared with the casualties of terrorist violence, still less state violence, in conflict zones in the developing world.

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INCLUSIVE PEACE AND SECURITY

Editor Robin Luckham



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Peace and Development

Willy Brandt

The thought has passed through my mind that there is really no need for another analysis of the state of the world; of the growing number of problems; of the immense dangers; of the continuing incapacity to turn our affairs to the better. There are a great number of proposals and recipes, in almost all areas. They range from economics to armaments; from money and finance to hunger; from drought and deforestation to the rapid growth of the world's population. There is a wide choice for everyone willing to choose. The supermarket of world problems and their solutions offers a complete inventory. There is hardly a gap on the shelves.

However, demand is not very strong. And this is so in spite of the fact that one must grant that most of those who carry responsibility for their people and nations genuinely would like to solve the world's problems. I do not want to paper anything over. Of course, there are those who are unable to do anything even if they wanted to. And there are those who are the authors and victims of ideological presumptions, including the nice but hardly effective preachers of a world without force.

Yet exciting contradictions are a sign of our times. The technical capacity to solve most problems has increased almost as much as the ability to destroy everything. Science and technology have empowered mankind in both respects, and beyond all earlier expectations. Scientific and technical insights grow at seemingly unlimited speed. We realise new dangers as much as new problems. But it seems as if mankind is helpless in the face of the irrespressible flood of new discoveries — still being unable to master the opportunities which have become available.

Here one cannot but remember the genius of Albert Einstein, who had the gift of reducing highly complex processes to a simple formula. I am referring to his statement that the atomic bomb has changed everything except the thinking of people. *Homo*

sapiens has developed the technical, and in a narrower sense the economic, capabilities of his brain much faster than his political and community building capacity. Or one could also say that the formation of character and of moral values has not kept pace with the rapid progress of technology. Yet these are the qualities needed to live and to deal with oneself, with others, with one's neighbours — among nations as much as among people. The economy is oriented towards output and profit, today no less than 2,000 years ago. Weapons are geared towards easier handling, greater distance and higher accuracy in the same way as for the past 2,000 years. And the conflicts between people and nations, including the criteria by which they are evaluated — sovereignty, prestige, power, dominance, hatred vis-a-vis the enemy — unfortunately all these too have not changed much.

There is one exception, however. It seems to have been dawning slowly that we must no longer behave as we used to behave some 100 or even 50 years ago if we all want to survive. The fear of human history coming to an end could be a reason for hope. But normally fear is not a reliable guide. Where then are we to find the strength for a rethinking, and according to what criteria?

If survival is the top priority then the preservation of world peace is the most important objective, dominating all others. To sharpen the point: there is no need to worry about cooperation and mutual interests if we fail to avoid a nuclear holocaust, or to prevent continent-wide famine. Only if we avoid self-destruction will we be able to continue quarrelling about our different ideas, about the best way to achieve happiness for all. In global terms this means that there is no alternative to common security (as elaborated three years ago in the report of the Independent Commission on International Security and Disarmament Issues under the chairmanship of Olof Palme, the Swedish Prime Minister).

The world can afford the coexistence of peoples and nations with the multiplicity of their ideas regarding the way towards welfare or happiness. Peoples and states may even turn their backs on each other as long as they do not dispute each other's right to exist. This holds globally; but it also applies regionally. The world might even be able to afford regionally limited conflicts, terrible as they may be. The Gulf War, for instance, is a frightening example of how a military conflict of this kind can start with arms supplied by both superpowers, who are nevertheless incapable of controlling what is happening.

At the same time, interdependencies are increasing and the need for cooperation is growing. The debt crisis and high US interest rates are a threat not only to the nations of Latin America but also for many of the poorer developing countries. Drought and large-scale starvation in Africa do not stop at national borders. The energy-crisis — which is far from over and which is not just an oil crisis; the threat of a drinking water crisis; the various ecological threats which have been so much neglected in the past — all these problems extend across borders between nations and political systems. My own country, for example, the Federal Republic of Germany, suffers from acid rain and dying forests no less than its neighbours, the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia and Switzerland.

In sum, many of our problems are of a global nature, they are system-bridging, and their number is growing. Reason calls for the adoption of global rules far beyond the traditional forms, and it calls for mechanisms which guarantee the observation of such rules.

Yet, egoism and narrow-mindedness have so far prevented progress in areas where the East-West conflict and North-South issues interact. It shows a considerable degree of stubbornness if people still refuse to admit that rising world-wide military expenditures are not only politically damaging but do a lot of harm economically. Those 1,000 bn US dollars or more which the world will spend on military purposes this year amount to a death sentence for millions of human beings, who are deprived of the resources which they would need for a living.

But there is another obstacle to our ability to see ourselves as partners in common security, namely the lust for power. Nobody can deny that the desire for power in individuals as in nations is a strong motivation which we cannot explain away. One could even see our history as a process in which unrestricted force has had to give way step by step — and in spite of many setbacks — to the rule of law. Each treaty voluntarily agreed to is another step in this direction.

Celebrating its 40th anniversary this year the United Nations stands as a symbol of the steps we have taken forward — and of the unavoidable difficulties associated with them. The mechanisms of the Security Council and the veto may be taken as evidence of the cool realism of its founders who knew that it would have been too much to expect the world organisation to overcome real power by schematic majority rule. But one might also say that joint decisions, agreed rules and comprehensive arrangements within the United Nations as well as elsewhere demand the cooperation of the powerful, especially of the superpowers.

Here we have witnessed a development since 1945 which in the context with which I am concerned nobody has expressed better than President Raul Alfonsin of Argentina, who belongs to the group of six heads of state and government from five continents who got together last year to voice their own and many other people's concern over the lack of progress in regard to arms control. In January this year at their meeting in New Delhi the President of Argentina stressed the legitimate interests of big powers, and superpowers in particular, regarding their security from each other and thus their ability to defend themselves. But he called attention to the undeniable fact that their military forces and their weapons arsenals have grown far beyond their defensive requirements. They have acquired the capability — only the two superpowers have it and nobody else — to eradicate all life from this planet. Thus their power has become a threat to all people. The decision to use those weapons is exclusively theirs. This implies that a few individuals and their advisors, small elites, hold the power to destroy the basic right of all people, their right to live. It is unacceptable to the five billion people and to the 160 nation-states to which they belong that they should have to trust in the wisdom and restraint of a small group of people in one or two capitals not to abuse their power and not to make that one irreversible mistake. The preservation of world peace is too fundamental a human right and a right of nations to be left to the leadership of superpowers alone.

From that right to life all those of us with less power derive our right to put pressure on the two superpowers to limit their power and to agree on common rules of conduct in the interest of maintaining world peace. This would not take away their power and I do not suggest that one can neglect political differences. But the global rule of preserving world peace must become effective, especially for those capable of its destruction. When the President of the United States and the leader of the Soviet Union meet in the near future the world does not necessarily expect them to become friends. Or that they would do

away by magic with their differences. We do expect, however, that they take steps to end the threat of an all-destroying world conflict. This would mean at least an interruption of the arms race while negotiations continue. It implies negotiations about critical regions of the world as much as about destabilising military programmes. It also means facing up to the linkages between the arms race and development, between hunger and weapons, making this issue part of the agenda.

To me the aim of such an urgently needed summit should be nothing short of an agreement which rules out a third World War. Peoples and states must demand such an agreement since otherwise security will not be established, neither in East-West relations nor in North-South problems. On the basis of such an agreement many issues would be easier to handle, and the export of East-West controversies into the Third World could probably be reduced. A halt to further arms build-ups would become plausible. And the ever increasing accumulation of destructive machinery would come to be seen as even more perverse.

Next year when the United Nations hold their special Conference on Disarmament and Development, once more drawing on the work of the group of experts chaired by Inga Thorsson, it will be necessary to limit the presentation of boring propaganda slogans on the one hand and the discussion of abstract theories on the other. We should also not be held back by self-declared realists who accompany their lack of initiative with nice rhetoric about the fact that disarmament and development are each important objectives in their own right — so that therefore there need be no linkage between them.

Now, with regard to North-South problems let me recall some of the proposals — ranging from emergency measures to proposals for structural reform — presented by the Independent Commission which I chaired. Most of our findings remain valid today. It would have been better if one could actually claim that some problems had been solved in a positive sense. Unfortunately this is predominantly not the case, and many issues today present themselves in still more serious terms. Many of the same questions came up again when the representatives of non-aligned countries formulated their suggestions for a comprehensive dialogue and also when the late Indira Gandhi raised the possibility of organising another North-South summit in the second half of 1985. Instead of these proposals being implemented, however, in the area of money and finance we see considerable skills being applied to patch up holes, whereas the required reforms are being avoided. The same goes for international trade and other areas well known to all of us.

No approach is yet in sight which might set in motion what has come to a halt in such a frustrating way. I am referring now to the intended 'global' discussion under the roof of the United Nations about those issues which are important for a re-ordering of world-wide economic relations. The responsibility for their complete failure has to be borne by different addresses. But one thing is quite clear: a general deadlock would not have occurred if important countries had been willing to move.

I underscore the paramount responsibility of the superpowers. At the same time, I want to warn the big countries not to allow the destruction of multilateralism and its institutions, unsatisfactory as they may sometimes be. Europe should realise that it has to play a role in counteracting negative developments. There is no reason why Europe should always wait for others. And much less should it jump on band wagons which may be big but moving in the wrong direction.

Speaking about unilateralism I want to add that there remains more room for it in a peace preserving function, more than many people believe. This would require a better equipment of the peace preserving facilities of the United Nations. And a fresh look should be taken at the mediating competence of both the Security Council and the Secretary General.

At the same time it is of elementary importance that we others who have neither bomb nor veto power no longer lose sight of the linkages between crises of security, world economy and environment. An independent clearing office for 'Peace and Development' could bring together concrete ideas from all over the world and in this way help with the constructive linking of East-West and North-South issues.

I have come close to making proposals of the kind whose practical value I questioned at the beginning of this article. Presumably it has become evident where, in my view, the key lies in seeking the solution to our most pressing problems. Pressures will lead nowhere as long as they are about isolated issues like indebtedness, commodities, food, birth rates, soil erosion, deforestation or other environmental degradations. Or, for that matter, about military budgets and the absurdity of allocating funds for armaments that are lacking for education or health care. The key to a solution not of all but of many problems is in the hands of the superpowers. The question is whether they succeed in limiting their fruitless conflict and their power to destroy the world, at least to the extent of agreeing on rules which make World War III impossible.

This cannot mean that the rest of us should hide behind the responsibility of the nuclear giants. We must do what our own responsibility calls for. This

includes the application of all possible pressure and telling the powerful of this world what they owe mankind.

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This article has been reissued as part of *IDS Bulletin* Archive Collection Vol. 49 No. 1A April 2018: 'Inclusive Peace and Security'; the Introduction is also recommended reading.

Editorial: Disarmament and Development – the International Context

Robin Luckham

'A Klee painting named 'Angelus Novus' shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned towards the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.' Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, Schocken Paperbacks, New York, 1969.

'A world in which politics is replaced by arsenals and economy by finance is simply a world in danger.' Raul Alfonsin, President of Argentina, quoted in SIPRI, 1985: 445.

Like the angel of history we all wish we could stretch back to repair the past. Still more, we would like to turn our heads forward to avert the catastrophes of the future. Five years ago, when introducing the Report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, *North-South: a Programme for Survival*, Willy Brandt had this to say to the international community:

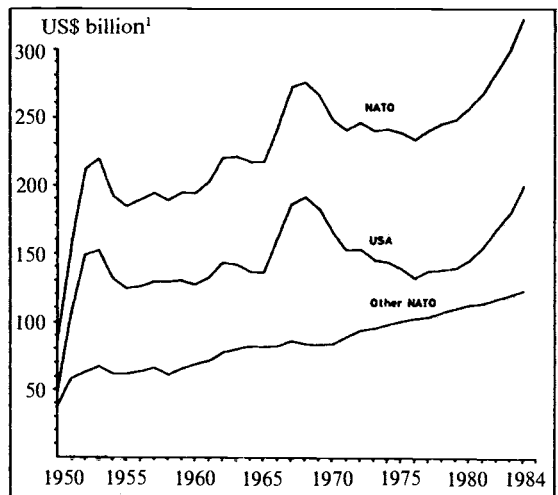
We see a world in which poverty and hunger still prevail in many huge regions; in which resources are squandered without consideration of their renewal; and where a destructive capacity has been accumulated to blow up our planet several times over. [Hence this] . . . globalisation of dangers and challenges — war, chaos, self-destruction — calls for a domestic policy which goes much beyond parochial or even national items. Yet this is happening at a snail's pace. A rather defensive pragmatism still prevails, when what we need are

new perspectives and bold leadership . . . The 'international community' is still too cut off from the experience of ordinary people and vice versa.

In spite of these warnings and many others like it, the snail's pace has become disorderly retreat. At the start of the 1980s the world economy slid into a new phase of recession, from which recovery is still uncertain. Furthermore, this deterioration and its effects on the developing countries could probably have been avoided, being 'explained in part by past policy choices as well as underlying economic and social conditions. In an interdependent world economy, growth in the developing countries is significantly affected by what happens in industrial countries' [World Bank 1984: 12].

Table 1

NATO Military Expenditure, 1950-84



¹ At 1980 prices and exchange-rates.

Source: SIPRI [1985: 229]

Recession has coincided with a marked acceleration in the global arms race. After a period of decline (both in constant price values and relative to GNP) the military spending of the major Western powers, especially the United States, has increased sharply (Table 1). Trends in the socialist bloc are less easy to discern because of the absence of reliable official figures, though most sources are in agreement that steady increases have occurred in the Soviet Union [SIPRI 1985: 251] contrasting with the more cyclical behaviour of the United States. The deployment in Europe of Soviet SS20 and American Cruise and Pershing missiles has gone ahead. Having broken down altogether at the end of 1983, negotiations concerning nuclear weapons have (since January 1985) resumed; though for the present they remain little more than 'talks about talks', being stalled over the United States' Strategic Defence Initiative for defence against ballistic missiles ('Star Wars'). Meanwhile there has been no sign of a resumption of the talks between the two superpowers concerning the limitation of conventional arms transfers to developing countries or of those about military restraints in the Indian Ocean, broken off in the late 1970s.

Instead, the major military powers (France and the UK as well as the superpowers) have built up their intervention forces, increased global naval deployments and negotiated new military facilities in the Third World, incorporating new areas within the strategic terrain of the new Cold War. The possibility of horizontal escalation between war theatres in Europe and the Third World is often discussed by strategic analysts. The 1978 fictional simulation of the *Third World War* by General Sir John Hackett and a team of military experts [Hackett 1978] describes how a nuclear confrontation between the powers in Europe in 1985 is precipitated by conflicts in the Middle East and Southern Africa, along with unrest in Poland and a Soviet invasion of Yugoslavia — a reconstruction that was supplemented in 1982 to cover events in Central America and the Far East [Hackett 1983]. Such scenarios are by no means confined to works of fiction. They are widely used by Northern governments and military planners to argue for closer involvement in Third World security questions. Conversely it is often argued that it is precisely the transfer of East-West tensions to the South that establishes a deadly connection between Third World conflict and global insecurity [see for example, Nincic 1985 and Tamas Szentes' article in this issue of the *IDS Bulletin*].

These developments have reinforced a widening disparity between global power relations and trends in the international economy. The long run decline of the US economy relative to Europe, Japan and the NICs [analysed in more detail in two recent issues of the *IDS Bulletin*: IDS 1985a and b], led to the breakdown of the

Bretton Woods system and ushered in a multipolar and altogether more anarchic international economic regime. In contrast, however, control over strategic relationships remains where it has been since the late 1940s — firmly in the hands of the superpowers. Indeed this control has been further consolidated by the Cold War. It is epitomised in the current Geneva 'umbrella' negotiations between the USA and the Soviet Union. One interpretation of the Strategic Defence Initiative is that it is as much aimed at reasserting the US's global power as at changing the strategic relationship with the Soviet Union.

This disparity between a bipolar military order and a multipolar economic order has reinforced the superpowers' determination to maintain their strategic duopoly. In both the USA and the Soviet Union an interdependence has been established between the military and the non-military sectors of the economy through the respective mechanisms of a market and of a centrally-planned economy. In both, the military and military-related industries are almost the only lines of production in which they have managed to maintain a clear competitive edge. The temptation to sell arms and to use force directly in the Third World is arguably all the stronger.

In turn the transfer of East-West military rivalries to the Third World has affected North-South economic relationships. One place where this is visible is in the aid programmes of the major world powers. The previous trend from bilateral to multilateral assistance has been decisively reversed. The allocation of aid has been increasingly harnessed to economic and military purposes. A recent review of US assistance carried out for the Secretary of State (the first major overall review of US aid policy since 1970) concluded that economic and military assistance must be closely integrated.

Economic growth and rising standards of living are vital to internal stability and external defense. Threats to stability impede economic development and prosperity. Thus . . . the future effectiveness of the mutual assistance program rests on the concept that security and growth are mutually reinforcing and that both are fundamental to the advancement of US interests [Commission on Security and Economic Assistance 1983: 2-3].

As for the developing countries themselves, their military spending (see Table 2) has increased more or less continuously over the post-independence era, faster on the whole than that of the industrial North, although the increases tailed off in the early 1980s, when the full impact of the second and more severe phase of the recession made itself felt. The opportunity costs of military spending in terms of development and

Table 2

World Military Expenditure, 1975-84¹

	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	Share of World Total %
Industrial market economies	257,534	252,529	260,073	265,584	270,652	280,052	290,278	307,827	324,230	348,697	53.7
Non-market economies	[171,972]	[175,263]	[176,551]	[183,312]	[197,798]	[189,842]	[185,448]	[189,757]	[191,671]	[196,133]	30.2
Major oil-exporting countries	33,352	37,450	[36,185]	38,107	38,941	41,712	[45,143]	[48,598]	[44,874]	[44,988]	6.9
Rest of the world	43,452	47,509	49,215	49,205	51,357	51,168	54,238	[61,862]	[60,018]	[57,419]	8.8
With 1982 <i>per capita</i> GNP:											
<US\$440	6,651	7,241	6,997	7,715	8,306	8,284	8,944	9,712	10,045	9,985	1.5
US\$440-1,679	8,979	9,323	10,193	8,547	8,541	8,101	8,493	9,385	9,415	8,635	1.3
>US\$1,680	27,822	30,945	32,025	32,943	34,510	34,783	36,801	42,765	40,558	38,799	6.0
World total	507,480	514,030	523,400	537,730	560,330	564,440	576,860	609,900	622,800	649,070	100.0

¹ At 1980 prices and exchange rates.

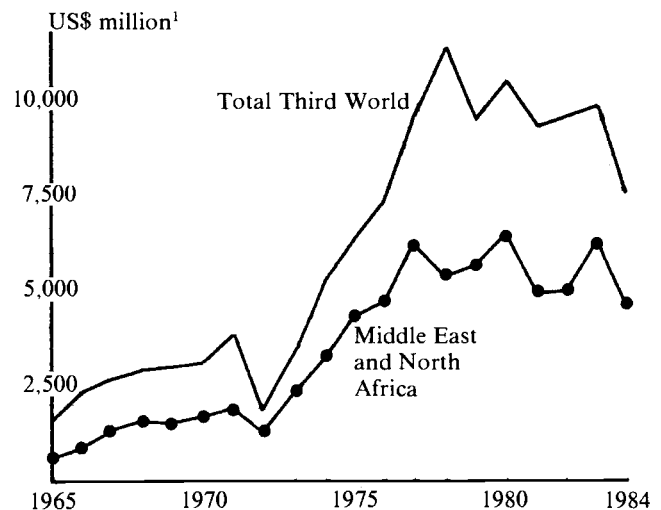
Source: SIPRI [1985: 270]

even more of social welfare expenditures are high. Yet the fact is that many governments in the South place more emphasis upon national defence than upon development, arguing indeed that the latter is meaningless without the former.

Most developing countries are unable to meet their needs for military equipment from local production, thus being forced into the international arms market where they pay both dearly and frequently for successive generations of weapons systems. The Third World's imports of major weapons approximately doubled in constant price values during the 1960s and quadrupled in the 1970s, before levelling off and then declining in the early 1980s (Table 3). At the same time, most suppliers have reduced their military grants and insist on payment on commercial terms. Thus in the great majority of cases arms imports have had to be paid for in scarce foreign exchange. The need to earn the latter has far-reaching implications for the structure and management of domestic economies: for example increasing their vulnerability to unstable or declining terms of trade, encouraging short-sighted policies towards non-renewable resources and adding to their international debt burdens. According to the Stockholm Peace Research Institute's estimates, during the period 1972-82 foreign borrowing by non-oil developing countries could have been approximately 20 per cent less each year and their accumulated debts at the end of the period some 15 per cent smaller, had they made no foreign purchases of arms (Table 4).

Table 3

Trends in Export of Major Weapons to Third World, 1965-84



¹ At constant (1975) prices.

Source: SIPRI [1985: 370-371]

Whilst the industrial North faces the prospect of a potential nuclear holocaust, much of the developing South is already engulfed in violence: both the direct violence of armed conflict, and the structural violence of repression and underdevelopment. Some of the

Military-related Debt of Non-oil Developing Countries, 1972-82¹

	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1972-82
1. Arms transfers (excl. China)	6,005	7,390	5,165	5,145	6,120	7,025	8,565	11,085	12,690	12,540	13,895	—
2. US gifts	2,400	3,420	1,520	1,400	190	70	130	170	340	280	290	—
3. Soviet gifts	490	900	520	360	760	710	1,040	2,540	1,580	1,560	1,720	—
4. Arms to be paid for	3,115	3,070	3,125	3,385	5,170	6,245	7,395	8,375	10,770	10,700	11,886	—
5. Possibly paid for	165	590	615	80	15	255	870	465	500	1,165	525	—
6. Estimated arms transfer credits (A)	2,950	2,480	2,510	3,305	5,155	5,990	6,525	7,910	10,270	9,535	11,361	—
7. New debt of non-oil developing countries (B) ²	8,821	11,288	17,634	22,195	26,660	31,505	37,619	43,478	45,621	50,766	47,419	—
8. Estimated arms transfer credits as percentage of new debt (A as a % of B)	33%	22%	14%	15%	19%	19%	17%	18%	23%	19%	24%	—
9. Interest payments on arms transfer credits and debt-service borrowing ³	—	165	340	527	764	1,130	1,571	2,125	2,917	3,958	5,169	18,668
10. Total accumulated military-related debt, 1972-82	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	86,659
11. Total accumulated military-related debt, 1972-82, as a percentage of total debt, 1982	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15%

Source: SIPRI [1985: 449-50]. For explanation of the sources and methods used in the compilation of this table see SIPRI [1985: 456-458].

Notes:

¹ Figures are in current \$ millions.

² New debt is measured by net flows (disbursements minus amortisation) from the IMF's *World Debt Tables*, supplemented by 10% to cover the OECD's assumption that non-disclosed military debt is some 10% of total reported long-term debt.

³ For the interest-rates used in arriving at these figures see SIPRI [1985: 449].

wars fought in the South have been as destructive as any fought on this planet. Their casualties (since World War II) number in the tens of millions, not to mention those who have been wounded, fled the war zones or become victims of hunger and disease. Two things have greatly increased the devastation. First, the social character of many conflicts, the fact that they are not merely conventional wars between states but are rooted in much broader social upheavals — as in Central America, Southern Africa, the Lebanon or Afghanistan. And secondly, the fact that advances in military technology have introduced ever more powerful ways of killing, maiming and destroying. Chemical weapons and other ways of modifying the natural environment have already been used in conflicts in the Third World — by the US, for example, in Vietnam, by Iraq against Iran and perhaps by the USSR in Afghanistan. At the same time the conventional munitions developed by the arms manufacturers — cluster and fragmentation bombs, fuel-air explosives etc — and increasingly utilised in the Third World, have become so destructive that they are calling in question the established boundaries between nuclear and conventional warfare.

Thus it is no longer possible (if it ever was) to make sharp moral and empirical distinctions between the risk of nuclear mass destruction in the North and the appalling realities of warfare and underdevelopment in the developing South. Any inventory one might make of those — including children — who are most at risk from poverty, disease and natural disaster would overlap with those most at risk from military violence. The target-groups of poverty-focused development assistance have too frequently also been the targets of weapons. There are direct and indirect causal relationships between armed conflict, economic deterioration and even natural disasters (like the droughts in the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa). It is difficult to generalise about such interconnections, since they vary so much from situation to situation. Nevertheless, they deserve more serious scrutiny by development researchers and practitioners than they usually receive.

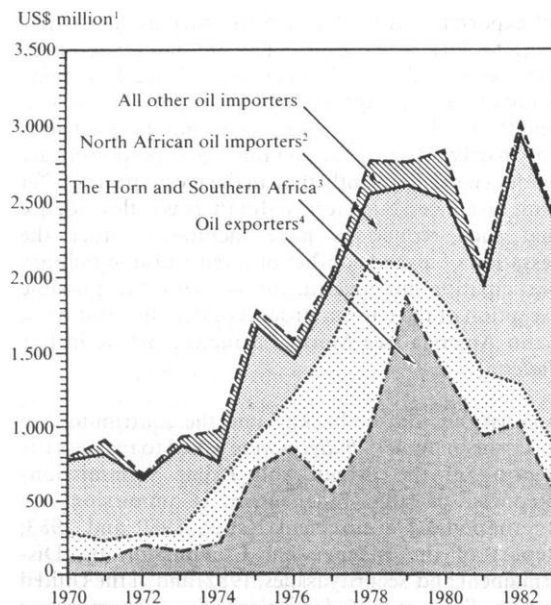
Glimmers of hope can be extracted from the resumption of arms talks and the impending Reagan-Gorbachev Summit. In the longer run the relative economic decline of the superpowers and the disagreement developing between the USA and Western Europe over issues such as the Strategic Defence Initiative, economic relations with Eastern Europe, industrial protection and intervention in the Third World could open up opportunities for change as well as give rise to fresh dangers.

As for the developing countries themselves, their military expenditures have never (in spite of rapid

growth) constituted more than a small fraction of the global total (see Table 2). Some comfort can be extracted from the fact that they have now ceased to rise. In any case, there has always been much diversity, with some countries (many of them oil exporters) devoting large shares of government revenue and GNP to military purposes and others relatively little. The bulk of arms purchases have been heavily concentrated among a relatively small number of Third World recipients, many of them in the Middle East (Table 3). The determinants of arms transfers are too complex to be explained *purely* in terms of East-West relations or the 'pushing' of arms by the suppliers (even though both are crucial).

Table 5

African imports of major weapons, 1970-83: by economic and geographical groups



¹ At constant (1975) prices.

² Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia.

³ The Horn includes Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan. Southern Africa includes South Africa, Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

⁴ Algeria, Congo, Gabon, Libya and Nigeria.

Source: SIPRI [1985: 301]

An illustration of this complexity is provided in Table 5 which demonstrates how at different times since 1970 the major factors influencing the transfer of arms to Africa have varied, including the recycling of

oil revenues by African members of OPEC; the conflicts in the Horn and Southern Africa; and the recent conclusion by the United States of agreements with strategically placed countries in North Africa and the Horn under which arms have been supplied in exchange for military facilities for the rapid deployment force (US Central Command). Another factor which the Table does not, however, bring out is the fact that the Soviet Union was the continent's major supplier for much of the 1970s [see Luckham 1985a].

The flow of arms to the Third World contracted sharply in the first part of the 1980s and there is little evidence that it is likely to resume its previous rapid growth. It is sometimes argued that this is because the arms market is now saturated after a period in which several developing countries simultaneously replenished their armouries with new generations of sophisticated weapons. More important, however, is the impact of recession and international debt. Many oil exporters have exhausted the surplus funds they used to buy arms; and some are no longer even considered credit-worthy borrowers. Other developing countries (excepting some NICs) are even less able to find the hard currency for weapons purchases. This is only partly offset by the fact that the superpowers are tending more frequently than in the recent past to offer arms on concessional terms. But there is little evidence that such reductions have facilitated either the cessation of armed conflict or a reduction in military participation in government — with the possible exception of the current process of demilitarisation in Latin America [see Mario Carranza's article in this *Bulletin*].

Against this sombre background the contributors to this issue of the *IDS Bulletin* were asked to reassess the Reports of the Brandt and Palme Commissions (Reports of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, 1980 and 1983; Report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, 1982) and of the United Nations *Study on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development* (the Thorsson Report: United Nations 1981). All four studies were made during a period of transition in the global economy and the Cold War (1979-83). Despite differences of emphasis they all advocate an integrated global approach to world economic and military problems, the restructuring of North-South economic relationships, strengthening of detente and reductions in the allocation of resources for military purposes. They have sometimes been criticised for not taking their analysis far enough or for lack of political realism [see for example IDS 1981, Luckham 1985b and Holm below]. But it cannot be disputed that the reports represented a crucial series of initiatives by influential

groups operating *inside* the international policy-making community, at a critical juncture in history.

Why, then, have they had so little impact on policy and still less on the march of events? Is it because of inconsistencies in the arguments of the reports themselves? Did they give enough attention to the political changes that might be required — such as dismantling the system of blocs, reorganising the UN or establishing a political constituency for disarmament in the Third World as well as in Europe and North America? Why has international discussion tended to isolate the economic from the strategic/political dimensions of the present global crisis? Why do policy-makers in the North seem to show so little interest in disarmament and development? Is there a legitimate basis for Third World suspicion of Northern proposals to limit arms transfers and military spending in the South? Or is the lack of progress merely one consequence among many of the overall deterioration in the international situation?

Our contributors were also asked to address themselves to how disarmament and development could be put back on the international agenda. Should each issue be dealt with separately on its own merits, or is a coordinated approach required? What can be learnt from the successes and failures of earlier proposals? What role can Third World countries play? How might their demands be linked to European proposals for dealignment from the blocs? Do the new negotiations between the superpowers create the space for other initiatives to reduce international tension? How might the forthcoming UN Special Conference on Disarmament and Development be used to launch a new series of initiatives?

Willy Brandt and Inga Thorsson argue strongly that most of the findings of their respective reports remain valid today. Failing to implement them — and instead applying 'considerable skills . . . to patch up holes' as Brandt put it — is the fault of the superpowers. A similar analysis is made by Shridath Ramphal, a member of both the Brandt and the Palme Commissions, who adds that the winds of history were already turning against detente and the construction of a New International Economic Order when the reports were put before the public. All three, however, believe that the superpowers can still be influenced by political pressures and by appeals to their enlightened self interest. They support a multilateral approach, calling for a strengthening of the decision-making and peace-keeping machinery of the United Nations. And they argue that both disarmament and development remain very much on the UN agenda, pointing out that the debate over their relationship will continue — though perhaps in a lower key — at the 1986 UN Special Conference.

Next we come to two outside assessments. The first, by Hans-Henrik Holm is a useful summary of the reports and a biting critique. The reports are faulted on two major grounds. First, for their tendency to assume that the world's major problems could be solved by transfers of resources from rich countries to poor and from military to non-military uses, without adequate empirical demonstration of the intervening links. Second, for their lack of political realism: their failure to translate multilateral measures based on long term common interests into policies for change that national governments, especially those of the major military powers, could implement. In this he reinforces some of the criticisms made of the Brandt Report in a previous issue of the *Bulletin*, 'Britain on Brandt' [IDS 1981, especially the article by Vaitos]: that the practical procedures for implementing its proposals were not well enough specified in technical terms, were at variance with established global power relations and assumed a mutuality of interest between North and South which the mere fact of their interdependence did not necessarily create.

Some readers might think these criticisms rather harsh. The difficulties of moving from analysis to policy and from policy to practice are notorious. Unlike the angel of history, the angel of policy sets his face so resolutely forward that he does not see the storms catching him from behind. The angel of politics (if there is one) is so busy trimming his wings to the winds that he cares not where they take him until he falls.

There is, however, no lack of concrete proposals in the reports which, after all, were the work of men and women who possess between them vast collective experience in the making of policy. In his article Willy Brandt suggests that Europe should play a more active role in bringing the superpowers to the negotiating table and in reactivating proposals for a 'global discussion' of international economic issues. Shridath Ramphal argues that the non-nuclear countries can ensure that alternative voices are heard on disarmament through a variety of international channels, including the Commonwealth. Inga Thorsson emphasises the importance of domestic and international political processes, since governments tend not to take action unless obliged to by their citizens. She also extracts some encouragement from the economic difficulties facing the industrial North: that this could force a reassessment of the costs of the arms race by governments in both major military blocs.

But, these are piecemeal suggestions. They do not directly address the deep structures of the arms race; nor (except Thorsson) do they give enough attention to political processes through which it could be reversed. A good starting point for understanding the

latter is provided by Chris Smith and Mac Graham, who argue that the disarmament and development debate is itself the outcome of a distinct political process played out within the inherent limitations of the UN system. It first emerged in the 1960s as a direct reaction to the manner in which the superpowers pushed disarmament to the sidelines in favour of arms control based on bilateral negotiations (or in a few instances talks among a limited circle of nuclear-armed states). It acquired its own political constituencies among the neutral countries in Europe and the non-aligned countries in the Third World. It gathered momentum during the period of detente, climaxing at the 1978 and 1982 UN Special Sessions on Disarmament. But like detente it was undermined by the renewal of the arms race.

The arms race in turn has been driven by the sectoral momentum of the military product cycle combined with shifts in international power politics. One might almost talk of a political trade cycle, clearly visible in the movements of US military spending depicted in Table 1. New generations of weapons systems have been developed and brought into service. This has encouraged the major military powers to extend the frontiers of the Cold War into space and into the Third World. It has also brought even bilateral talks to a virtual halt.

Such arguments are taken still further in a sweeping critique by Ferenc Mislivetz of the way disarmament has been subverted by the bipolar logic of the arms race. There has developed a symmetry between civil society and the military sector, cemented by a promiscuous network of military interests and alliances and legitimised by the concept of security: a characterisation he regards as being equally (but differently) valid for the socialist countries of the East as for the capitalist countries of the West. It is in this context that he suggests that military technology may be the most crucial legacy of the North to the South, almost inevitably shaping the process of development.

The way East-West conflicts have been extended to the South, contributing to the latter's militarisation, is also taken up by Tamas Szentcs. His perspective is perhaps less Manichean, and he argues that the distinctions between North and South, East and West are simplifications that sometimes get in the way of our understanding of the underlying relationships. What is particularly striking is his argument that the Cold War has encouraged the transfer of inappropriate socialist as well as capitalist development models: the former failing, indeed, to reflect crucial changes in economic management that have taken place in Eastern Europe since the earlier Cold War period.

The danger, however, with arguments that the Cold War and inequalities between North and South are so

deeply entrenched in the international system that they will not respond to policy reforms such as those proposed in the Brandt, Palme and Thorsson reports, is that they can easily induce apathy: roll on the holocaust! Or they can lead, full circle, to a cynical conservatism: power politics is all that counts and the devil take the hindmost! Any strategy for change must be able to identify the fault-lines as well as the structures, the virtuous as well as the vicious circles.

This in turn, requires a better understanding of empirical relationships. Does military spending in fact entrench underdevelopment? How easily can resources be transferred from military to non-military uses? To what extent and through what mechanisms is militarisation in the South linked to the arms race in the North? Will the resources released by cuts in military spending be used for productive purposes rather than conspicuous consumption? Is there an adequate political case for linking disarmament to development; or is connecting them likely to obstruct progress on both?

A major obstacle to establishing the empirical connections is the absence of reliable data on the military sector. This situation is examined by Nicole Ball, who proposes a number of ways in which it could be remedied, including the use of national military budgets to supplement the information available in the standard international statistical sources. Both in the industrial and the developing countries governments tend to conceal their security expenditures from public scrutiny. The data are seldom disaggregated in a manner that enables researchers to analyse the most crucial variables, for example the foreign exchange component of military spending. As Dudley Seers once pointed out, this is a difficulty with which development researchers are already familiar. Many of the standard macroeconomic indicators — national accounts, government budgets, balance of payments — presuppose a Keynesian model of advanced industrial economies and are of less use in understanding the dynamics of developing economies [Seers 1983].

Deger and Smith also argue for more careful analysis of the variety of channels through which military spending can affect the development process. Their own econometric studies (some of which are cited in the UN report) suggest that defence spending reduces growth through its adverse effects on saving, investment and foreign exchange, as well as on human capital and absorptive capacity. These more than compensate for the positive effects in terms of the mobilisation of resources and possible technological spin-offs.

A warning note is, however, sounded by David Evans who used more recent evidence based on the World

Bank's 1983 *World Development Report*, to demonstrate that the positive effects of military spending may (in the 1970s) have outweighed their diversion of surpluses from productive investment. The title of his article, 'Back to Benoit?', referring to the original studies by Emile Benoit which had uncovered positive relationships between military spending and growth, is perhaps misleading. For the real message is that more specific analysis is required, with regard to time-periods, regions and above all the particular models of development being implemented and their political conditions. Strong government and high military spending (though the two do not necessarily go together) could well facilitate certain types of externally-oriented capitalist development [Luckham 1977]. The same could well be true of some models of socialist development, at least if the frequency of left-wing military regimes ('garrison socialism') is anything to go by.

This line of argument is reinforced by Eboe Hutchful in regard to Africa, and by John Ohiorhenuan in his case study of Nigeria. They both suggest that structural adjustment programmes of the type proposed by the Berg Report in Africa (discussed in IDS 1983) frequently impose heavy social costs and result in political instability. Authoritarian government is a necessary condition for the particular type of 'crisis management' undertaken under the supervision of the IMF and World Bank. Ohiorhenuan argues that this helps explain the heavily repressive policies of the recently deposed Nigerian military government; although even the latter never concluded a formal agreement with the IMF, because it believed the political costs of devaluation to be too high.

So can it still be argued that disarmament and the reallocation of resources from military purposes are in Third World interests? The response to this question falls into two parts, depending on whether one is referring to disarmament in the industrial North or in the Third World. The latter, as Eboe Hutchful shows, is problematic to say the least, African countries are still on the whole lightly armed by global standards, in spite of two decades of rapid growth in their military spending and arms purchases. Their governments have legitimate security concerns, including aggression from South Africa and repeated military intervention by external powers. Even if there were to be major resource transfers from the industrial North these would not by themselves overcome underdevelopment. Development and the removal of the basic injustices which cause conflict are the first priorities on the African agenda; and disarmament is only relevant to the extent that it can be demonstrated — and not simply assumed — that it advances them.

Mario Carranza is less doubtful of the relevance of demilitarisation to Latin America. A number of South American countries have recently transferred power from military to civilian hands, as well as cut their military spending. The so-called 'Brazilian miracle' no longer looks like such a good advertisement for military rule as it did some years ago; still less does the catastrophic economic situation presided over by the Chilean and the former Argentinian juntas. In Central America, armed conflict and US intervention are unequivocally the main causes both of military expenditure increases and economic deterioration. There is little here to support the argument that there is any fixed relationship between strong government and development, even along market-oriented World Bank/IMF lines [see Diaz Alejandro 1983, who introduces a similar note of scepticism].

One reason for divergence between Carranza and Hutchful may be the latter's somewhat narrow definition of disarmament in terms of nuclear arms control in the North and cuts in military budgets in the South: a combination which has admittedly tended to result in social transformation in the South becoming mortgaged to the preservation of the nuclear balance between East and West. A broader conceptualisation of disarmament in terms of transformations in the social and economic relationships which underpin both the arms race and the international division of labour would not be open to the same objections — although it might become correspondingly more difficult to specify empirically.

Nevertheless, Hutchful believes a good case can be made for a 'nuclear free zone' Africa. He doubts, however, whether African countries could negotiate — still less enforce — such a zone in the present situation of confrontation between the superpowers. Carranza reviews Latin America's rather more extensive experience of regional arms limitation, including the 1967 Treaty of Tlatelco declaring Latin America a nuclear-weapons-free zone, and the 1974 Ayacucho Declaration on regional conflict-resolution and arms limitation. The former, however, has been undermined by the proliferation of 'civilian' nuclear technology; and the latter has had relatively little effect on regional arms races. Nevertheless such agreements have symbolic importance, illustrated by the conclusion of a five country agreement to declare the Pacific a nuclear-free zone, in August 1985 (shortly after the sabotage of the Rainbow Warrior).

Regional security and arms limitation agreements such as these were a major recommendation of the Palme Report. But Third World countries are bound to have reservations about limiting their own armament whilst the superpowers still regard themselves as entitled to use force in the Third World

and preserve their monopoly over negotiations concerning the central strategic balance. Similarly the inability of the major world powers to restrain nuclear competition among themselves has emerged as one of the major obstacles to agreement about nuclear non-proliferation, as at the 1985 NPT Review Conference.

So can governments in the North be persuaded it is in *their* interest too, to curb military spending and disengage from the arms race? As Inga Thorsson points out, if the linkages between military spending and economic stagnation can be empirically demonstrated, this strengthens the political case for disarmament. It also suggests the case for limiting arms sales, to the extent that the latter are necessary for the maintenance of prevailing specialisations in military production. Deger and Smith's analysis of military spending in the developing countries follows up earlier studies by Smith (1977) which suggest that in the advanced capitalist countries of the OECD military expenditure in the post World War II period has been negatively related to investment and, through investment, to growth. The economies with the highest military spending relative to national product (the USA, the UK and France) have invested less and have grown slower than those with historically lower military burdens (notably West Germany and Japan). Raphael Kaplinsky examines the longer term factors that account for this uneven pattern of industrial accumulation, suggesting that military spending (contrary to what is popularly assumed) has had a net negative effect on technological progress, both in the USA and in the UK.

But do these considerations still hold good in a period of recession, when military cuts could bring loss of jobs and adverse multiplier effects? The large military increases of the early 1980s, it is sometimes maintained, have helped restore growth in the US economy. Whether the recovery is sustainable is still not clear. Perhaps alternative strategies for economic recovery, based on civilian investment would have lower opportunity costs and create more employment. Yet as in the 1930s [see Kalecki 1943] military spending has been a *politically* more attractive option during a period of gathering domestic and international tension; all the more so when full employment has ceased to be the touchstone of economic policy.

Nevertheless, if alternative options are to be put forward, realistic strategies for the conversion of military resources to civilian uses are essential. As regards the UK, Kaplinsky points out successful large scale resource transfers have been achieved on at least three occasions since World War II, both from and (over the past six years) to the military sector. The most systematic attempt to date to spell out a strategy

for conversion in an advanced industrial economy is Inga Thorsson's report to the Swedish government. *In Pursuit of Disarmament* [Government of Sweden 1984], reviewed in this *Bulletin* by Sue Willett. The special structural characteristics of the military industries — their orientation toward product rather than process innovation ('gold-plating'), cost escalation, their cosy relationship with the defence establishment — create technical problems which Thorsson nevertheless argues are soluble. Less amenable to technical solutions, as Willett points out, are the political issues: to elaborate a programme of military reductions for the UK could be construed as a challenge to NATO. If conversion implies less reliance on arms sales, cuts in naval and 'rapid deployment' forces and reduced military commitments 'outside the NATO area', it also requires changed relationships with the Third World. In a world in which the costs of economic recovery have all too frequently been passed on to the Third World — through high interest rates, aid cuts, the economic and political conditionalities built into aid programmes and interventionist foreign policies — this may present the greatest challenge of all.

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Editor Robin Luckham



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Globalism Versus Villagism: Food Security and Environment at National and International Levels¹

Susanna Davies and Melissa Leach

Introduction

Perceptions of the trade-offs between the pursuit of food security and environmental protection at the household or village level differ widely from those at national and global levels. Many poor rural producers exploit natural resources to achieve food security, and they do not distinguish between environmental and food security objectives. Their livelihood strategies are characterised by a continuous process of balancing immediate and longer-term needs. In stark contrast, at higher levels, institutional, political and economic distinctions are made between food security and environmental protection. Policy and planning options to integrate what are seen to be conflicting objectives are elusive. This paper examines how the globalist perspective has come about; looks at some of the ways in which it operates; explores how it might be brought closer to a villagist approach and the problems associated with bridging the gap.

Where a convergence of food security and environmental interests exists, it has come about through a focus on vulnerable groups and their access to food, and the realisation that conservation cannot be achieved by ignoring the people who are dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods. But links between the environment and food security occur at national and international levels, as well as at local ones. Moreover, interactions **between** levels are of crucial importance to the overall picture.

Current debates tend to deflect attention from these linkages, although they have been examined in the context of sustainable agriculture by Conway and Barbier [1990]. The environmental problems which poor people face, and the conflicts which arise from disputes about control over natural resources, are almost invariably highly localised. Conversely, the burgeoning international environmental agenda is dominated by concern with 'global environmental change'. Issues such as climatic change, tropical deforestation, biodiversity and transboundary pollution are discussed in terms which have little direct bearing on local livelihoods. This gap between 'globalism' and 'villagism' on environmental policy

agendas risks ignoring crucial trade-offs with food security objectives.

At the global level, food security and environmental concerns are experienced quite differently by north and south. Not surprisingly, global discussions of the two issues are couched in contrasting terms. Food insecurity is overwhelmingly a problem of poor nations and an issue with which developed countries are rarely directly concerned. North/south relations tend to be characterised by dependence of the south on the north for food aid and other resources, often in emergencies, and by northern instruction and policy prescription. In contrast, global environmental concerns are often discussed in terms of interdependence and the need for north/south cooperation to resolve common threats [WCED 1987]. In extreme cases, such as the much vaunted destruction of Brazilian rain forests, the north experiences dependence on the south for its survival [Myers 1984], in ways that are ironically reminiscent of the Latin American dependency theorists [see Frank 1969].

Nevertheless, the imposition of northern agendas dominates north/south environmental relations. The sense of dependence, coupled with increasing resources being made available within aid budgets to protect the environment, has stimulated a re-emergence of policies of what Adams [1990] has called 'ecological managerialism' imposed on developing countries. A characteristic of this approach is putting environmental concerns above people. And since food insecurity is not an issue which directly affects the populations of the north, except in extreme circumstances of war or natural disasters, environmentalists' concerns do not need to take account of people's food security.

This article first discusses these separate approaches to food security and environmental protection in recent historical context. While contemporary local level approaches now recognise that the concerns are shared, separatism still characterises national and international policy agendas. Some linkages between food security and the environment at international and national levels are then examined, showing that the agendas and needs are quite different from those at local level. The gap between vulnerability to food insecurity or environmental degradation and the responsibility to decide policy, characterises north/

¹ This article is based on a longer paper, Davies, S., Leach, M. and David, R., 1991, 'Food security and the environment: conflict or complementarity?' *IDS Discussion Paper No. 285*, IDS, Brighton.

south relations as well as those between government and vulnerable groups within developing countries. At the national level, resource, timing and planning constraints often faced by developing country governments compound this problem. The resulting policy trade-offs are often made at the expense of local livelihood securities.

Parallel Planning and Policy-making

The rise and fall of environmental and food security concerns in the south has been something of an historical see-saw. It is only in recent years that they have shared a prominent position at the top of development agendas.

In the aftermath of the famines in 1972/73, the World Food Conference [in 1974] restated the case for greater food production. At more or less the same time [1972], the idea of 'sustainable development' was first adopted at the Stockholm Conference on Human Environment, in an attempt to combine the dual policy objectives of economic development and environmental conservation and/or regeneration. No explicit link was made between food security and the environment in either instance. Policy formulation has continued along parallel tracks since the early 1970s.

This process has been mirrored at the national level in developing countries, where much energy has been put into the elaboration of national food strategies, in an attempt to tackle the production, exchange and consumption dimensions of food insecurity in comprehensive national food plans [see e.g. Lipton and Heald 1984]. Little attention was paid to environmental issues in the elaboration of these documents. Many of the policy instruments promoted have few direct environmental consequences, particularly those which focus on storage, exchange and nutrition. But the central theme of needing to increase food production and to diversify exploitation of natural resources, often in increasingly marginal areas, clearly does have implications for the environment, which are not addressed. This failure to consider environmental issues has been borne out by a parallel planning exercise in the elaboration of national environmental plans. Equally, these rarely addressed food security issues directly.

The famines in Africa of the mid-1980s, triggered in part by successive years of drought, shifted food security planners' attention away from medium-term strategies towards short-term response. This took the form of emergency food aid. As a response to famine, international food aid (and the literature about it)² took no account of the environment at all. Indeed, for the recipient developing countries, there was no environmental impact. For the food aid donors

(principally the US and to a lesser extent, the EEC and Canada), environmental costs were neither acknowledged nor measured in this context.

Nevertheless, environmental concerns and policies returned to the development agenda after a post-colonial lull. The preoccupations of northern environmentalism were increasingly exported to the south, stimulated by the globalism which had gained ground since the 1964 International Biological Programme and 1970 Man and the Biosphere Programme. In the north, the search for solutions (either technical or fiscal) was informed by the perception of the polluter as someone who could either afford to pay (be taxed or fined) or switch to an alternative activity [Pearce *et al* 1989]. Transported to developing countries, the polluter pays philosophy found disquieting resonance with the view of rural people as taxable, excludable resource degraders which underlay the colonial legacy of preservationist environmental policies [Beinart 1989, Wilson 1989]. When the 'polluter' is always poor and hungry, this philosophy conflicts with the pursuit of individual food security.

Shared Concerns

Since the late 1980s, the idea that conservation (or regeneration) of the natural resource base is an essential prerequisite for future development of poor countries has gained currency [WCED 1987]. This has been informed to a large extent by the fact that since the mid-1970s, drought has been a major contributory factor to food insecurity and natural resource degradation [Downing *et al* 1989, Willhite *et al* 1987, Watts 1987]. From the food security side, the recurrence of famine in Africa in the 1970s and 1980s has lent impetus to attempts to look beyond crisis-driven food security towards longer-term policies which promote sustainable food production and which do not degrade the environment. Interestingly, there is greater pressure from northern governments on poor farmers in developing countries to pursue sustainable agriculture, than there is on northern farmers to do so.

On the environmental side, the mid-1980s saw growing acceptance of the costs of preservationist approaches to conservation for local people, and the emergence of new perspectives on the relationship between environmental protection and economic growth. The World Conservation Strategy [IUCN 1987] emphasised that environmental protection, if it was to succeed, had to take account of those people who depended directly on the environment for their livelihoods. The problem was no longer seen to be simply one of wilful degradation, but rather as one of degradation by subsistence. Shifts at the conceptual level have not, however, been pursued with much vigour on the ground.

² See, for example, Thomas *et al* 1989, for a review of the literature concerning food aid to sub-Saharan Africa.

The idea of 'sustainable development' gained wide currency with the publication of the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development [WCED 1987]. Though seemingly self-evident, the concept has proved ambiguous and controversial and has attracted much discussion [Chambers 1988, Redclift 1987].³ The 'sustainable development' debate has, however, engendered some partial re-evaluations within policy-influencing agencies. Within the conservation movement, organisations such as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature [IUCN] now claim to take account of the needs of local people. Yet as Adams [1990] points out, this is a modification, not a transformation, of historically-rooted environmentalist perspectives. At the planning level, conservation agencies still tend to favour northern environmental interests (e.g. in the preservation of rare bird species) over local needs, when they conflict.

There has been some reappraisal within international agencies such as the World Bank and FAO. Agencies and departments concerned with environment have tentatively begun to consider the poverty/food security angle, while those dealing with food security have been forced to address environmental concerns,⁴ and some linking initiatives have been established (for example the FAO/SIDA Forests, Trees and People Programme). However, these re-evaluations too often remain at the level of rhetoric rather than of practical application.

There have also been changes within those parts of the northern 'Green Movement' with a more explicitly political profile. Organisations such as Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace have begun to lobby on Third World environmental issues, both by addressing problems which are of major concern to developing countries (e.g. biomass fuel scarcities) and by pointing out differences in how northern and developing countries experience 'global commons' issues such as tropical deforestation. However, their campaigns rarely address the question of food security directly.

The concept of sustainable livelihood securities, which has emerged within the sustainable development debate, represents the most explicit attempt to link food security and environmental concerns. It focuses on local people's ability to act in an environmentally-sustainable way, and on removing the constraints which prevent them from taking the long-term view in conserving their resource base in which, it is argued, they have a vested interest for food security and other reasons [Chambers 1988]. This approach is, however, firmly grounded in local-level concerns; parallel concepts dealing with national and international level issues have not emerged. The concept of sustainable livelihood securities has been justifiably criticised for

failing to take account of the importance of the influence of the wider national and international political economy on local livelihood securities [Redclift 1987].

Differing Agendas and Needs

The International Level

Despite the fact that global environmental concerns are principally aired by certain northern industrial countries, it is developing countries which are likely to experience the dramatic effects of global environmental change most severely. In many instances, these effects will directly reduce their ability to produce food. Three areas of conflict and/or complementarity arising from global environmental problems and food security in developing countries illustrate the different concerns of north and south.

i Global Warming and Food Production

The case of global warming provides a good illustration of possible linkages between global environmental change and food security. Despite a lack of scientific understanding of precisely what it will mean for agricultural production and the distribution of costs and benefits between countries and geographical regions,⁵ productive capacities in some developing countries, already vulnerable to food insecurity, are likely to decline. Two examples illustrate possible effects.

Firstly, if temperatures rise by the projected two degrees (with concomitant declines in rainfall), many parts of the Sahel — already at the margin for millet cultivation — will no longer be able to produce food crops. Conversely, the wheat belt will move north, enabling higher production in temperate zones. There are, however, numerous complicating factors including: the unsuitability of some northern soils for cereal cultivation; greater variation between dry and rainy seasons in the Sahel; and changes in the movements of parasites harmful to crops [Monier 1990]. Secondly, if sea levels rise, low-lying countries such as Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia and Thailand are amongst those at risk of losing large areas of crop land.

Even if **global** food production increases as a result of global warming,⁶ the geographical distribution of production increases will be concentrated in developed countries and will not automatically compensate food insecure countries. This is because, firstly, the cost of imports will not necessarily decline as production rises if, for example, northern governments employ price

³ There is a growing literature on this subject: see, for example, IPCC, 1990. Parry *et al* 1988.

⁶ Some projections show an average increase in world production of 10 per cent for some crops [Monier 1990].

³ See also Adams, 1990, Bartelmus, 1986, Dixon and Fallon, 1989.

⁴ See WFC, 1988a, 1988b, Jagannathan, 1989.

support policies or if adapting to new conditions increases the costs of production. Secondly, if production of cash and food crops in developing countries also declines, their food deficits will increase, whilst the ability to pay for imports declines. Thirdly, technology developed in the north to deal with climatic change will not necessarily be relevant to the south and affected poor countries are unlikely to have independent technology developing capacities.

ii Trees for Food Exchanges?

There are converse arguments to be made regarding the penalisation of developing countries by the effects of global warming, particularly those which are custodians of the world's remaining tropical rainforests. Global warming could conceivably offer new opportunities for these countries to exploit natural comparative advantages, by producing carbon dioxide absorbing vegetation to reduce greenhouse gases. Replanting 700 million hectares of forest has been suggested to balance carbon emissions, coming mainly from the north [Marland 1988]. Such suggestions understandably anger Third World governments. Yet carbon-fixing could indirectly assist food security. 'Trees for food' exchanges between differently affected regions could be envisaged as a logical outcome of global warming.⁷ Although perhaps appealing at the level of global abstraction, the distributional problems arising from this — admittedly hypothetical — scenario are enormous, particularly for national governments in developing countries and their food insecure populations.

iii Environmentally-conscious Aid Flows

A principal influence of environmental concerns on food security in developing countries originates with the growing preoccupation of international aid agencies with environmental issues. Under pressure from their northern funders, they have attempted to 'green' their international image since the mid-1980s. In this respect, the lack of clarity about linkages between environmental protection measures and food security carries dangerous implications for developing countries. A major concern is that environmental objectives will be pursued with real costs to other international aid flows; notably those directed towards poverty alleviation and, by extension, improved food security, with negative effects at national and local levels.

Environmentally-inspired northern legislation may also alter the quantity and composition of aid flows to the south. As over-production and the development of new technologies have altered biotic resources,

increasing pressure is being put on northern governments to legislate against the intensive use of chemicals and fertilisers in agricultural production. This could prove to be a double-edged sword for developing nations. On the one hand, increasing production costs of imported staples could severely jeopardise national food security in developing countries which have become reliant on food imports from the north. On the other hand, agricultural exporting developing countries may be prevented from selling their produce to richer nations because they fail to reach environmentally acceptable standards [Runge and Nolan 1990].

The costs of improving environmental practices for global benefit tend to be accounted for in aggregate terms. Although it is increasingly realised that developing countries require some form of incentive or even compensation for reducing environmental degradation, the distribution of costs borne **within** those countries is rarely considered by global planners. This cannot be dismissed as a purely internal or national level problem: much of the decision-making about internal distribution of costs will be made on the basis of aid availability and donor/government negotiations about its use.

This situation is exacerbated by parallel planning and execution structures within the international agencies concerned. Typically, environmental programmes originate in environmental departments. Meanwhile, food security issues are discussed within agricultural, food policy and health departments. There is often remarkably little coordination between these departments and this, coupled with the fact that they work through different national ministries, inhibits consideration of the mutual implications of food and environmental policies.

The National Level

In seeking to pursue policies which protect the environment and which promote — or do not compromise — food security, national governments in developing countries face resource, planning and political constraints. Four aspects of the environmental and food security trade-offs which may be faced by such national governments are considered here.

i Cash Crops

The promotion of export crop production to fuel economic growth (of either the centre or the periphery) has been a central plank of economic policy in many developing countries since colonial times. Cash crops have been seen as a means of enhancing food security by exploiting natural comparative advantages: at a national level to earn foreign exchange, and at a household level, to produce a surplus for sale.

⁷ An environmentally-conscious coal burning power station in the United States recently tendered a 'carbon sequestration project' which was won by CARE to implement an agroforestry project in Guatemala, with a supposed range of (food security enhancing) benefits for the local population.

Cash crops are often argued to have a negative effect on food security by displacing food crops, exploiting scarce resources (fertile land, inputs, investment in agriculture) and perpetrating dependence on the north (e.g. when the terms of trade between cash crop exports and food crop imports decline). However criticisms of these arguments from a food security angle [see Maxwell and Fernando 1989] emphasise that it is not export crops *per se*, but the particular relations of production under which they are sometimes grown, that can undermine national and household food security.

Cash crops have also been criticised from an environmental point of view [Hines and Dinham 1984, Redclift 1989, Vanegas 1986]. There might therefore be trade-offs in terms of the depletion of the natural resource base for a government which pursues an export crop development policy, at least in part to assure food security. There is, however, a dearth of hard data to substantiate the overall environmental effects of cash crops and little consensus has been reached. Repetto [1988] and Barbier [1987], amongst others, argue that traditional export crops (e.g. oil palms, coffee, cocoa) tend to have, if anything, less deleterious effects than basic food crops (e.g. maize, sorghum, millet) because of their greater ground coverage. Again, it is important to consider not only the direct environmental effects of export crops, but also the policy contexts and relations under which they are grown. For example, if national strategies encourage men to grow cash crops so that women's seasonal food crops are marginalised on to easily erodible land, the (indirect) negative environmental consequences can be serious.

ii Green Conditionality

Both food security and environmental policies in many developing countries are dependent, in part at least, upon aid flows for their execution. This is particularly true of many of the most food insecure countries. National governments are forced to respond and adapt to changes in developed countries' objectives. Policy formulation will in turn be strongly influenced by changing attitudes towards aid. As environmental concerns become increasingly important determinants of aid expenditures, there may be serious consequences for the pursuit of food security. 'Green conditionality' could develop, manifesting itself in several forms. Firstly, it could emerge in the context of food production and development of rural areas more generally, placing — at its most extreme — environmental concerns above those of improved food security.

A second manifestation of green conditionality might be an overall decline in aid flows to all sectors in some countries. This could either be as a result of discriminating against developing country govern-

ments which do not pursue environmental protection policies, or by creating a two-tier aid beneficiary community. Countries which have what are perceived in global terms to be natural resources of key global significance (e.g. Brazil), might be rewarded for conservation, whereas those which do not (including many of the most food insecure countries) could be excluded from a tranche of the aid budget.

Thirdly, indirect green conditionality may arise if project aid flows are diverted away from food security (either at national or sub-national level), towards environmental spending. In an attempt to attract the international 'green dollar', implementing agencies at national level are already tempted to highlight the environmental components of their projects, and to use environmental concerns as the basis for project identification and impact evaluation. From here, it is a short step to projects which protect and conserve the environment at the expense of local people and their food security [cf. Greeley *infra.*].

iii Resource, Timing and Planning Constraints

Planning and other internal constraints to national governments' elaboration of national food security and environmental policies, and the (hidden) trade-offs implied, must be considered against this backdrop of a changing aid climate.

The disjuncture between food security and environmental planning amongst donors tends to be mirrored within developing country governments. Whereas attempts have been made to link other development concerns to good environmental behaviour — notably through 'debt for nature' swaps — food security and the environment tend not to be linked explicitly either by the donor community or by the beneficiary governments. The linkages tend, therefore, to be indirect consequences of wider policy initiatives or aims. Similarly, conflicts arising from pursuit of policies in one or other domain tend to be unforeseen or ignored.

Governments are rightly concerned with the long-term implications of natural resource degradation not just for the sake of food security, but also for development more generally. These concerns are reflected in all national environmental strategies or plans. But many developing country governments are unable to invest in the long-term when short-term priorities are themselves often constrained by insufficient resources. Short-term crisis management of food crises forces longer-term strategic food security planning off the agenda. In contrast, despite the language of environmentalists, most of the environmental problems identified are not of a crisis nature in the sense of requiring immediate attention (unlike famine). Environmental degradation rarely, for example, threatens to destabilise governments in the way that urban food riots can. The time

preferences of national governments forcibly and inevitably conspire against the pursuit of long-term environmental practices [WCED 1987] and make the pursuit of policies which seek to integrate food security and environmental concerns difficult to execute.

To compound the resource and timing constraints, many developing country governments are faced with weak planning capacities, which can only become more stressed by policies seeking to integrate environmental and food security concerns. The difficulties associated with integrated rural development projects, attempting a multi-sectoral approach, are well known. Equally, the problems of implementing national food security plans are manifold. Adding a further dimension to this planning process would involve fundamental institutional changes which are rarely taken into account, either on the food security or the environmental side. The problem is further exacerbated by the power of taxation vested in many Ministries of Natural Resources, which is unlikely to be yielded willingly.

iv Environmentalism as a Political Tool

For all the constraints facing developing country governments, the environment can also provide them with a useful justification for pursuing certain policy aims at the expense of others. For example, governments are under pressure to improve the food security of their people, but are often reluctant to adopt policies which genuinely target the poorest. The environmental dimension to rural development is a potentially useful tool in this process, not least because of its apparent political neutrality. A stated policy of environmental protection can provide the justification for pursuing a range of other objectives. An obvious example is the acquisition of revenue through the levy of fines for resource degradation. Others include forced resettlement, sedentarisation of nomadic groups, banning of open access to key resources or destruction of indigenous management systems on the basis that they do not comply with environmental aims. Donors are often unwitting partners in such processes.

At the extreme, pursuit of environmental objectives by national governments seeking to raise revenue extraction from rural areas may actually create the conditions under which environmental degradation increases. The more poor people are fined, taxed or made to divert labour from subsistence production towards protection of the environment, the more food insecure they will become, and the more they will need to degrade natural resources to survive. Although such vicious circles may be interpreted as the result of conspiracy by national governments, they are also almost inevitable 'accidental' consequences of separating environmental and food security objectives

at the planning level.

An associated problem is the tendency for many of the most food insecure nations to be weak states in the sense that they are vulnerable to internal threats to their exercise of power [Buzan 1991]. This threat often increases as food insecurity rises, most obviously in times of famine, but also if urban food prices rise or wages fall. The environmental conditionality which looms from the north takes no account of the potential political costs of conservation, particularly if it entails heightened food insecurity. Whereas strong states in the north (which tend, coincidentally, to be those setting environmental agendas) can focus on economic costings of environmental protection, for many food insecure developing countries, it may entail direct threats to the political *status quo*.

Conclusions

The importance of the linkages between food security and the environment at international and national levels lies not only in the policy trade-offs which may be made at these levels, but also in the interactions between them. Complying with international environmental agendas for tropical rain forest conservation may, for example, compromise national food security in a country heavily dependent on timber export revenues to purchase food imports. International and national level issues also interact with the local level. Government forestry policies aimed at preserving such timber reserves for future use (and meeting northern donors' conservation interests) can threaten local environmental sustainability and access to food by pushing food cropping and collection activities out of 'reserves' on to ecologically marginal land.

As well as these negative interactions, there is scope for policy interventions which improve food security and environmental sustainability at more than one level. For example, investments in rural areas which simultaneously enhance local access to food and increase food supply to urban areas are likely to be more attractive to governments than micro-level interventions with no national level spin-offs. Current research on ways of enhancing local environmental management practices which fix large amounts of carbon offers policy potential for exploiting the complementarity between local livelihood concerns and international concern about global warming.⁸

While the gap between globalism and villagism in food security and environmental debates persists, these interactions will be missed. The wider political economy which affects local livelihood concerns, hinted at in several of the case studies in this Bulletin, will remain unanalysed in terms of its relevance for policy trade-offs.

⁸ Leach, G. personal communication.

The problem-focused approach used in this article can help in the eventual identification of such trade-offs, but these can only infer policy guidelines. A clearer picture of causalities is needed to inform policy prescription. But until more research has been conducted, it is unlikely that incontrovertible causal links will be found to clarify the complementarities and conflicts under discussion.

There are already some local case studies which examine the trade-offs between food security on the one hand, and conservation of natural resources on the other⁹ and the papers in this Bulletin have contributed some interesting further examples. There is a much greater lack of research at national and international levels. The emergent recognition of the need to incorporate food security considerations into the pursuit of environmental objectives, in which respect the World Commission on Environment and Development [WCED 1987] is of note, is helping to fill this gap at a global level. Research on global environmental change may be beginning to pay more attention to food security concerns at all levels, although it is notable that 'sustainable livelihood securities' still have no voice in most discussions of international agendas.

At the national level, and additionally when considering links between national and other levels, there is remarkably little documentation. National governments in developing countries are in some senses caught between the pincers of local and national food insecurity and northern-defined environmental concerns, whilst at the same time recognising that for long-term development objectives to succeed, the natural resource base must be protected. Although most national environmental strategies stress the importance of conservation for overall sustainable development, precision about policies which protect the environment without compromising present food security needs is generally given little attention. The same could be said for national food plans and their treatment of environmental issues.

As yet, there is little indication that the trade-offs which will inevitably have to be made between long-term goals and short-term expediency are part of the national policy-making process, and little indication of emerging research which can inform them. This should be a priority, to complement our growing understanding of local level linkages between food security and the environment. In the meantime, existing evidence makes it clear that any complementarity between the objectives of food security and environmental protection will not just happen: it needs to be actively sought. If it is not, the potential for conflict is great.

⁹ Some of which are reviewed in David 1991.

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INCLUSIVE PEACE AND SECURITY

Editor Robin Luckham



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Alex de Waal

In much of Africa, war has become synonymous with famine. The glib commonplace, 'war plus drought equals famine' grossly understates the complexity and intimacy of the links between the two. Some writers are content to enumerate the physical destruction caused by war, the resources potentially diverted from 'development', and the obstruction to international relief efforts, to explain the links. While containing some truth, this is no more sophisticated nor comprehensive.

This article attempts a more wide-ranging, though still preliminary, analysis. War creates famine essentially for three reasons. The first is the consumption of armies and the destruction of battle. The second is that war is often designed to create famine; certain siege tactics and counterinsurgency strategies can have no other consequence when pursued in Africa. The most severe famines in modern Africa have been caused in this manner. Finally, we are seeing the rapid development of political economies based upon militarized asset-stripping. Though analytically separate from war, this sort of predation is often a facet of war, and is violent, hence it is included here. Somalia is the most salient example. This violence may have been silent at an earlier moment in Africa's history, now it is very noisy.

Throughout, a small selection of examples is presented to illustrate the main points made. These examples should not be seen in any sense as exhaustive; there are numerous instances from all parts of Africa and elsewhere which could also be adduced.

1 ARMIES AS CONSUMERS AND THE DAMAGE OF BATTLE

The nineteenth century Emperor of Ethiopia, Teodros, was once confronted with a complaint brought against a peasant farmer who had killed a soldier who was helping himself to the farmer's granary. The Emperor responded tersely: 'Soldiers eat, peasants provide' (Crummey 1986: 142).

The most direct and obvious ways in which war creates famine can be simply dealt with. Even former President Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethio-

pia was compelled at one point to admit that his annual 'defence' budget could construct four major universities or ten hospitals (Mengistu 1988). Some of what has passed for an analysis of the origins of famine in Mozambique is little more than a catalogue of Renamo vandalism.

There is a long history of armies creating famine by requisitioning grain and other foodstuffs. This can take the form of forcible requisitioning or billeting soldiers on households. The fear of the impositions of troops may cause households to conceal or even destroy their food and possessions, or to abandon their homes and hide in inaccessible areas. In Mozambique, Renamo's practice of living off the land has meant that food is scarce, and rural people have gone hungry. During 1991 and 1992, much of Renamo's strategy consisted of trying to maintain control over productive rural populations, so as to keep its fighters fed. As the burden of exactions increased, more rural people began to try to flee Renamo-controlled areas, while Renamo tried to increase the size of the territory it controlled, particularly in the more fertile areas of the country (Africa Watch 1992: 126-30).

In recent times, armies have found that international food aid, donated for the relief of hungry peasants, is extremely accessible for requisitioning. In 1986, the US General Accounting Office found that in some places as little as 12 per cent of the international food aid destined for refugees in Somalia was finding its way to its intended recipients; much of the remainder was being taken by the Somali army and associated militias. Similar phenomena are familiar from the famine in northern Ethiopia in the 1980s, Mozambique, southern Sudan and elsewhere.

Armies are also prone to loot and pillage, in order to sustain themselves, or for profit or booty. The systematic raiding by Baggara Arab militias in Sudan of Dinka areas during 1985-8 was largely responsible for the catastrophic famine that overtook parts of southwest Sudan at that time. The raiders stole cattle and other livestock and household possessions, burned fields and villages, cut down trees, poisoned wells, killed tens of thousands of men,

women and children, and often took slaves as well (Africa Watch 1990: 81-91). A similar extremity of looting occurred on several occasions during 1991 and 1992 in Rahanweyn areas of southwest Somalia, when local farmers were dispossessed of most of their possessions by a succession of invading clan militias. The last and most brutal looting was carried out by forces loyal to the former dictator Siad Barre in March and April 1992, and directly precipitated the extremely severe famine that followed (Vaux 1992).

The conscription of large numbers of adult men may contribute to labour shortages, and measures taken by these young men to evade conscription, such as hiding themselves or running away, may also make it difficult for normal productive activities to progress. As Mengistu Haile Mariam stepped up his efforts to repulse rebel offensives in 1990 and 1991, the forcible press-ganging of young men for military service took on huge proportions; over 100,000 were seized for the army in under a year. This seriously disrupted productive activities in many southern parts of Ethiopia. Women may also be conscripted to serve as cooks, domestic servants, and prostitutes for soldiers. This was common in many parts of Ethiopia during the long wars fought by the Mengistu regime (Africa Watch 1991: 300-2).

At a national level, military budgets consume vast amounts of resources that would otherwise be available for services or development. This has been the case in Angola, where 'defence' expenditure ran at approximately \$1 billion per annum during the 1980s, compared with a gross domestic product of under \$5 billion (IISS 1989: 120). Alternatively, military expenditure bankrupts governments, bringing on economic and political crises. This was the case in Ethiopia and Somalia, and threatens to be the same in Sudan.

Armies also serve as disease vectors. Diseases such as AIDS are closely associated with the progress of armies. Some of the main epicentres of AIDS cases in Africa coincide with areas where armies have campaigned a few years previously. The Tanzanian occupation of southwest Uganda in 1979 may well be a case in point.

Battle itself can wreak enormous amounts of destruction, particularly if fought in economically important areas such as cities. There is the direct destruction of houses, crops, foodstores, livestock, and essential infrastructure such as roads, bridges,

port and airport infrastructure, dams, irrigation channels, clinics, schools, etc. Instances of this type of damage to cities include the battle for Massawa in Eritrea in February 1990, the battles in Monrovia, Liberia, in late 1990, the fighting in Mogadishu, Somalia, in January 1991 and between November 1991 and February 1992, and the battles in Juba, Sudan, between June and September 1992. In rural areas, major mechanized battles around Keren, Eritrea, in 1978 and Cuito Cuanvale, Angola, on several occasions in the 1980s, notably 1987-8, have rendered useless important agricultural areas.

There is also the loss of land to mines and military infrastructure such as trenches and encampments. The trench warfare that was characteristic of Eritrea during the 1980s meant that many areas of importance for local herders and cultivators were out of bounds.

Land mines are a particular problem, as without systematic clearance efforts they continue to remain in the ground after the conflict has finished. In northern Somalia, large amounts of pasture remain unused due to the land mines planted by the Somali army during its 1988 campaign against the rebel Somali National Movement. Mines were planted around strategic military and economic locations, along most main roads, inside the city of Hargeisa, around wells and reservoirs, and were scattered in large numbers over fields and pastures. Even areas that are not in fact mined remain unused by the local population, because of the fear of mines. Angola is another example of a country, this time with enormous agricultural potential, where the widespread and often random dissemination of anti-personnel mines makes it impossible to carry out productive activities in many areas (Africa Watch 1993).

In the immediate vicinity of battle, normal economic activities are disrupted; farming and trade are usually impossible.

Battle can also cause extensive environmental damage. Trees can be knocked down by tanks or set ablaze by shellfire or bombing (particularly if incendiaries or defoliants are used). Attacks on munitions dumps or oil tanks can cause severe local pollution. The destruction of forests by soldiers to build trenches and emplacements, for firewood, or to create clear sight lines can also be extremely damaging. In Eritrea, much deforestation has been caused by the former Ethiopian army, for each of these reasons.

Sometimes, wholesale destruction can be a deliberate military strategy. For example, the retreating Soviet army in 1942 practised scorched earth tactics in the face of the invading Germans. Anything that could possibly have been of any economic or military value to the invader was removed eastwards or destroyed, including large amounts of food. Partly as a result of this, the Ukraine suffered severe famine during the following three years (Moskoff 1990: 22-9).

In Mozambique, the rebel Renamo forces practised a policy of 'conspicuous destruction', destroying bridges, railway tracks, clinics, schools and almost any form of infrastructure that existed except churches. The aim was to advertise the presence and strength of the rebels, cow the local population, and terrorize supporters of the government. The practice of mutilating victims by cutting off lips, noses, ears or sexual organs, and committing other spectacular atrocities, was a logical development of this strategy (Africa Watch 1992).

2 FAMINE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF WAR

The most severe famines in recent history have all been caused when famine was used, usually deliberately, as an instrument of war. War, fought in particular ways, not only destroys 'objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population' (in the words of the Additional Protocols of the Geneva Conventions (ICRC 1977)), but systematically prevents people from following coping strategies. It may rapidly also precipitate social collapse. The result is that frank starvation, possibly unknown in modern peacetime famines, has become familiar from war famines in Africa (de Waal 1990).

2.1 Sieges

During recorded history, armies have sought to use hunger as a weapon to force their enemies to submit. The classic instances of this occur during sieges.

Probably the most severe siege famine of the twentieth century was the siege of Leningrad of 1941-4, in which somewhere between 600,000 and one million people died from the combined effects of hunger, exposure and disease (Moskoff 1990: 185-206). The surrounding German forces tried to starve the city into submission by firebombing food warehouses and, as far as possible, preventing supplies from reaching the city. Simultaneously, the Allied powers maintained a strict blockade of German-occu-

ried areas of the continent. This contributed to a severe famine in Greece during 1942-3, which was the occasion for the founding of the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief, later to become Oxfam (Black 1992).

Sieges have been widely used in civil conflicts in Africa. In the Nigerian civil war of 1967-70, the Federal Army's first response was to blockade the area controlled by the Biafran secessionists (Stremlau 1977). This involved shelling ships (twice in June 1967) and attempting to shoot down aircraft. The blockade extended to relief flights, and one aeroplane operated by the International Committee of the Red Cross was shot down in June 1969. The Federal Government refused to let relief agencies obtain free access to Biafra, arguing that relief flights were used as cover for arms shipments. This claim had an element of truth, as the main Biafran airstrip at Uli was fitted out by relief agencies, and relief and military flights arrived at the same time (by night) and used the same facilities. In addition, there is evidence that the relief food was used to feed the Biafran army and bureaucracy.

The siege of Juba in southern Sudan is the longest-running siege in contemporary Africa, having been first imposed by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in late-1984. Throughout the intervening eight years, the SPLA has regularly blocked food supplies to Juba. Commercial supplies were largely prevented by encircling the city and blocking movement, and by a ring of land mines on roads and paths. Relief supplies have also been blocked; road convoys have been attacked (on four occasions in 1987-8) and relief aircraft shot at (four occasions in 1986-8). On at least six other occasions, most recently in 1992, the SPLA has declared its intention to fire at any aeroplane, military or civilian, flying to the town.

An important and often neglected element in the way in which sieges create famine is the complicity of the besieged army or government. In the USSR during World War II, the Soviet government made inadequate preparations to preserve stockpiles of food in the months immediately before the siege, failed to take all possible measures to mitigate the impact of the siege, and concealed the true extent of the suffering from the rest of the Soviet population and the outside world. The Biafran secessionist government also used the fact that it was besieged to its military advantage, often at the expense of the civilian population. For example, it made it impos-

sible for relief and military flights to be separately identified, thereby facilitating its arms supply but making relief deliveries more difficult.

Juba is perhaps the most extreme example of the complicity of the besieged forces. The example of Juba differs from Leningrad and Biafra in that the civilian population of the besieged town is seen by the occupying army as actually or potentially hostile, and sympathetic to the SPLA. The northern-commanded army does little to protect the southern civilians - on the contrary, it engages in frequent sweeps to arrest, detain and execute residents. Army officers have also worked closely together with northern merchants to create and maintain artificial scarcities of items such as fuel, sugar and staple foods. This has been achieved by making overland convoys infrequent (during 1985-8), deliberately mixing relief, commercial and military supplies in these convoys so that food cannot be made immune from attack (and on one occasion in 1992, using an aeroplane with UN insignia to fly in arms and ammunition), blocking relief deliveries (for example soldiers fired at a relief aircraft in 1988), and preventing residents leaving the city to obtain food from outside (using patrols and land mines). Food prices have remained high; merchant-officer partnerships have made fortunes, while the residents of Juba have gone hungry. Other garrison towns in southern Sudan have similar stories.

2.2 Counterinsurgency

More insidious than sieges, but equally effective at creating famine, are the use of modern counterinsurgency strategies, intended to impose maximum control over a potentially hostile population. Mao Tse Tung famously described a guerrilla among the people as like a fish in water, leading to the description of counter-guerrilla warfare as 'draining the sea to catch the fish'.

The most systematic exponent of such counterinsurgency theories has been the French military. One of the first theoreticians was General Lyautey, who commanded the forces responsible for the pacification of Morocco during 1912-25. Lyautey's predecessors discovered that conventional military engagements could not hope to defeat an irregular army, such as those fielded by the tribes of the Moroccan interior. Instead, Lyautey developed what he called 'the policy of the smile'. He argued 'the pirate [guerrilla] is a plant which grows only in certain ground ... the most efficient method is to

render the ground unsuitable to him.' (Gottman 1944: 242). Lyautey characterized his army as '[civil] organization on the march'.

In the context of the French conquest of Morocco, Lyautey's policy meant establishing the centres of French control as centres of attraction, compared to the surrounding areas of anarchic rule. These centres then spread like an 'oil spot' throughout the countryside. Establishing personal security for ordinary people and expanding local commerce were central to Lyautey's overall plan, and as such, it promoted protection from famine.

Most modern counterinsurgency takes place in a very different context. The society is already subject to administration by governmental structures, and these structures themselves are among the reasons for the insurgency. In the following quotation, from a French military advisor during the Algerian war, 'making the ground unsuitable' for the guerrilla carries very different implications.

Anything that could facilitate the existence of the guerillas in any way, or which could conceivably be used by them - depots, shelters, caches, food crops, houses, etc. - must be systematically destroyed or brought in. All inhabitants and livestock must be evacuated from the [guerillas'] refuge area. When they leave, the intervention troops must not only have destroyed the [guerilla] bands, but must leave behind them an area empty of all resources and absolutely uninhabitable.

(Trinquier 1964: 85)

Some modern counterinsurgency campaigns have been closer to the spirit of Lyautey, stressing the need for the controlling forces to be subject to the law (and seen to be so) and ensuring the provision of compensatory assistance to the controlled population. An example of this was the British campaign in Malaya in the 1950s (Thompson 1966). However, these have remained exceptions. More commonly, military commanders have stressed the need to engage and destroy the guerrilla forces, and have treated the local population as though they were actual enemies rather than potential allies. Rather than winning the local population over from supporting rebel forces, campaigns have been more akin to meting out punishment.

In this context, counterinsurgency warfare in a poor area is tantamount to creating famine. Three main

components of counterinsurgency are particularly relevant. They are:

- 1 Population displacement to 'protected villages' and related controls of the population;
- 2 Control of trade, especially in foodstuffs;
- 3 Control of movement of people.

The relocation of the civilian population to protected villages or secure zones is one of the commonest strategies used by counterinsurgency strategists. The rationale is that the population can then be kept under surveillance, so that guerrillas cannot infiltrate or obtain recruits and supplies. The imposition of counterinsurgency villagization is usually combined with curfews, perimeter patrols, mining of entrances, and other restrictions. Sometimes, scorched earth is practised to compel people to come to the villages.

This tactic has been common in Africa since the Boer War, when the concentration camp was invented. It was used by colonial armies fighting independence movements in Algeria, Kenya, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and elsewhere. Outside Africa, it is familiar from Vietnam and Guatemala, to name only two examples. On many occasions it has contributed to famine.

Eritrea is one example. In 1967, the Imperial government conducted a series of large military offensives in Eritrea, during which it burned over 300 villages, relocating the people to fortified villages (Africa Watch 1991: 42-6). Onerous restrictions were then imposed in these villages. This effectively prevented the inhabitants from carrying out the range of economic activities that had previously sustained them. Because of the curfew, many trading activities became impossible. Far fields had to be abandoned, and foraging for grass, wood and edible fruits in the bush became very limited. Animal herding was most difficult of all. Transhumance became impossible, the grazing of village-based animals was limited to the distance which the animals could travel during a few hours, and the long-established practice of grazing livestock at night (when it is cooler) had to be abandoned altogether. By these means, the viability of much of the lowland Eritrean economy was undermined, leaving it vulnerable to famine.

More recently, villagization was implemented as a counterinsurgency measure in western and eastern

Ethiopia during 1984-8 (Africa Watch 1991: 231-6). The rationale and consequences were very similar to the earlier programme in Eritrea. The villagization programme mounted by the Mozambican government in Zambezia province in 1986-7, ostensibly for the protection of rural people from Renamo attacks, also contributed to the creation of a severe famine in that area that was otherwise capable of producing surpluses (Africa Watch 1992: 78-83, 115-16).

Control of trade was instrumental in creating famine in Ethiopia in the 1980s. This has often been overlooked, because of the (misleading) paradigm of the self-provisioning peasant. In fact, no such peasants exist; all are dependent to a greater or lesser extent on exchanges with neighbours and neighbouring districts. Intended or not, preventing those exchanges proved an effective method of creating famine, largely invisible to outside observers.

Government restrictions on private trade, particularly trade in grain, were imposed throughout the country. In the centre and south, this was ostensibly for reasons of socialist transformation. Thousands of lorry grain traders had their licences revoked, and part-time pack-animal traders were subject to a bewildering range of requirements and taxes, to the extent that 'it is unclear whether small scale grain trade [was] illegal or not' (Lirenso 1987: 52). In insurgent areas, the roadblocks were more numerous, and the latitude given to soldiers to confiscate grain or animals was greater. Traders who were unable to convince the soldiers that they were not taking food to the rebels could also face arbitrary imprisonment and fines. The result was that the intra-regional food trade was choked off. The pockets of deficit - that always existed - could not make good their shortfalls, while in food surplus areas, the harvests could not be transported out. The price of grain in parts of northern Ethiopia rose to famine levels as early as 1982; the famine arrived earlier and struck harder because of these policies (Africa Watch 1991: 150-2). Meanwhile, in rebel-held areas, the air force carried out a policy of systematically bombing marketplaces. This forced markets to be held at night, and greatly restricted trade.

Complementary to the restrictions on the grain trade, the then-Ethiopian government exercised strict control of movement. All people had to have travel permits before they were allowed to move outside their villages, or they could be arrested as a rebel suspect. This made labour migration, petty trade and mutual assistance networks almost impossible,

and was also instrumental in creating the famine (Africa Watch 1991: 152-4).

In Sudan, restrictions on trade, movement and economic activities were the final straw which precipitated exceptionally severe famine among the Dinka migrants in southern Kordofan in 1988. These people, driven from their homes by the rapaciousness of the Baggara Arab militias, were forced to seek sanctuary in small towns controlled by those very militias. There, they were in effect kept in confinement, denied opportunities to help themselves (by working for money, gathering wild foods or seeking charity), denied access to the market on fair terms (they could not buy food, and could only sell possessions at extremely low prices), and denied the opportunity to escape. Death rates reached the unprecedented levels of one per cent per day in several camps during the summer of 1988 as a result (Africa Watch 1990: 128-30).

Counterinsurgency famines come about essentially because the levels of restriction imposed upon the population makes it impossible for that population to remain self-provisioning. The population is then reduced to a state of dependence. This can either lead to starvation, or total control by the force controlling the food supply. One particularly insidious element in the strategy can be the use of international relief.

By their nature, relief agencies search for destitute and dependent populations in need of assistance. Several African governments have realized that people displaced by counterinsurgency operations fit these criteria, especially if the agencies can be persuaded that the cause of the displacement is 'drought' or 'bandits'. The assistance provided by the relief agencies removes from the government the obligation and burden of supplying compensatory aid to the people it has displaced. This can allow it to maintain, extend or intensify a counterinsurgency campaign in ways that might not otherwise have been possible. It also gives a gloss of legitimacy to such a campaign. What is for a military commander a protected zone, may be for an inmate a concentration camp, but may appear to a relief agency (and hence the international media) to be a feeding shelter. Particularly striking examples of this come from Ethiopia and Mozambique.

3 STATES OF WAR

In recent years, states have emerged in Africa based upon the systematic asset-stripping of less powerful

people. This is usually militarized and hence violent, though not always. Often, but by no means always, militarized asset-stripping occurs in the context of civil war. Including this form of political-economic predation as a category of war famine is therefore somewhat analytically misleading. However, because the most extreme and well-known examples, such as Somalia, are normally presented as war famines, and are indeed extremely violent, this must be excused.

One of the first examples of systematic asset-stripping was Zaire, whose rulers have been characterized as a 'kleptocracy'. Throughout the country and at all levels, government officials and military officers sustain and enrich themselves through stealing assets, increasingly often assets essential for the survival of rural people (such as cattle), often using force. For the most part, Zaire's abundance of food has prevented decline into outright famine.

Sudan is another example in which the state and those associated with it have sustained themselves by transfers of assets. Partnerships between army officers, militiamen (many of them cattle herders) and businessmen have meant that, for some, war has been extremely profitable. The raiding of Dinka cattle by the Arab militia, with military, commercial and political support, is one example; the creation of artificial scarcities in southern garrison towns is another. Outside the war zones, the expropriation of large swathes of land used by smallholders and pastoralists to create commercial farms is also rapidly creating a very poor and vulnerable class of labourers, who suffer famine in years such as 1990-1 when the price of food soars beyond their reach. This expropriation is carried out without outright violence (though the implicit threat of violence is always there), but is part of the same process.

In Somalia, these processes have gone a stage further. During the 1980s, under Siad Barre, a group of people with access to the state and foreign currency were able to enrich themselves through seizing assets and establishing monopolistic control of lucrative businesses. Using the provisions of the land reform act of 1975, those with connections in government were able to acquire title to land, over which others had customary rights. Commercial farms, registered as cooperatives, were established. In the Juba valley and adjoining areas, the beneficiaries were mainly the Marehan, members of the same clan as the President, and the losers were the Rahanweyn, the relatively deprived clan of farmers indigenous to

the area. Meanwhile, the most profitable businesses, which included both normal commercial activities and illegal activities such as arms dealing, cattle rustling, the transit of ivory and smuggled gems, and the diversion of foreign aid, were controlled by a mafia-like network, also with connections to government.

As armed opposition to the regime intensified from 1988 onwards, trade (especially in cattle) and the plantation-commercial farming economy became increasingly militarized, initially for self-protection, and then as a way of acquiring more trade goods and assets. Cattle rustling merged into cattle raiding. Commercial food traders kept competition at bay with armed roadblocks demanding extortionate payments, and other violent deterrents. The powerful businessmen and politicians were able to acquire weaponry for themselves and their clansmen. The Rahanweyn, Digil and Bantu as the most politically marginal groups in the country, were unable to acquire armaments to match their neighbours, and were less well organized. As farmers, they were also easy prey for the mobile pastoralists.

This process of the militarization and commercialization of government continued after Siad Barre was driven from Mogadishu in January 1991. The fact that Somalia no longer had a recognized sovereign government closed off some avenues for wealth acquisition - for instance, former government officials could no longer demand kickbacks for awarding contracts, and the Ministry of Finance could no longer print money. However, the essentials of the process continued unchanged, even heightened.

All the parties, including Siad's Somali National Front (SNF), the two factions of the United Somali Congress now occupying different parts of Mogadishu, and other factions in the south, engaged in an orgy of looting. This was a highly organized orgy, financed by traders with international connections. In the cities, electrical goods, furniture and household fittings, industrial equipment, copper wiring - in fact, anything with a resale value - was liable for looting and export to Kenya, Sudan or Arabia. In the rural areas, looting started with livestock, diesel pumps and household valuables such as jewelry, but as the base of easily resaleable assets diminished, the looters turned to ordinary household items, clothes, and food. Some of this was freelance looting by disaffected young men with guns, but much of it was carried out by the militia armies of Siad Barre and the other factions.

Much of the time, these armies were not paid, and sustained themselves through looting. When they were paid, it was by commercial financiers with specific interests, often in acquiring cattle or other tradeable commodities.

The final, most systematic and most brutal round of rural looting was carried out by the SNF in Rahanweyn areas in March-April 1992, as the SNF forces faced military defeat by the USC and flight to Kenya. Large areas of Rahanweyn countryside were stripped of everything that could be taken. The area immediately descended into a famine of almost unequalled severity.

During the Siad Barre years, the diversion of foreign aid was a major source of income for the government and those associated with it. The refugees in the country received only a small part of what the international community donated for them. After Siad fell, most of the aid flows dried up, but insofar as relief programmes continued, they were often exploited by the merchant-politicians. The most important way in which this occurred was through protection rackets. Because of the low level of personal security, relief agencies were obliged to hire armed guards to protect themselves. They usually hired guards from the very same factions that were responsible for the political turmoil in the country, thereby helping to enrich them. This became a major factor in the second half of 1992, when many more aid agencies rushed to the country to start programmes, in the wake of the belated media attention. The factions also ensured that, when possible, relief was provided first to members of the relevant clan, thereby ensuring that less accessible and powerful clans, such as the Rahanweyn, were last in the line. There was also looting of relief shipments, though not on the scale often claimed by the media and some of the less responsible relief agencies.

The victims of the 1992 Somali famine were very largely the Rahanweyn, and to a slightly lesser extent Digil and Bantu. Those displaced by the fighting also suffered severely. The pastoral clans for the most part escaped severe hunger. The gradation of suffering faithfully reflected the relative political and military power of different groups, established over the years.

The Somali famine is therefore a war famine, but with important differences from the conventional and guerrilla wars discussed earlier. The famine is

not created by specific military strategies as such, but instead by the military and predatory nature of the political-economic structures in the country. The famine is created, not by the way in which the contending militias fight each other, but by the way they sustain themselves as political and economic forces. This type of war famine therefore falls into a new category in the typology of war-created famine.

4 CONCLUSION

War is and will continue to be the major cause of famine in Africa. Compared to other contributory causes such as drought, environmental degradation,

inappropriate development strategies, etc., it has received far less attention than it deserves. The hazards of doing field research during wars, and the unreliability of governmental, media and relief agency accounts of war famines, on account of ignorance, censorship and political sensitivity, means that war famines will probably continue not to receive sufficient analytical scrutiny. However, war famines have now become so depressingly commonplace that it is possible to establish simple typologies and analyses. This article has attempted to do that in a preliminary fashion. It is a first step towards seeking some solutions.

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INCLUSIVE PEACE AND SECURITY

Editor Robin Luckham



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Introduction

Of all the requisites necessary for sustainable development, peace is without doubt the most fundamental. In its absence it would be illusive to expect an improvement in the human condition. Currently, however, the developing world is replete with civil conflicts and political instability. According to the records of the International Institute of Strategic Studies there are some thirty major armed conflicts around the world, the vast majority taking place in the developing world (IISS 2000). Armed conflict interrupts the process of development (Fitzgerald 1999; Stewart and O'Sullivan 1999; Tansey *et al.* 1993); it destroys infrastructure and communities, disrupts economic activity, uproots populations, undermines social capital and leads to the impoverishment and marginalisation of its victims. Confounded in their efforts to promote development and deliver humanitarian assistance, donor agencies have begun tentatively to address the complex relationship between conflict, security and development (DFID 2000; Annan 1998; OECD DAC 1998).

The growing consensus on the need to address security as a development issue was reflected in, and reinforced by, the adoption of the Security First initiative in Mali. In 1994 a United Nations Advisory Mission to Mali concluded that the lack of capacity of the police, gendarmerie, national guard and border guards to control smuggling and banditry was blocking both the implementation of the peace accord and economic and social development. The Mission proposed a 'Security First' approach under which aid for development and the re-integration of ex-combatants was integrated with assistance to improve policing and border controls. The initial success of the Mali experiment stimulated the adoption of other initiatives modelled on the 'security first' philosophy, such as the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Cooperation in West Africa (PCASED). So far, however, 'security first' programmes have only met with limited success in terms of enhancing security and stability in conflict-burdened regions.

The 'security first' approach represents an important step in mainstreaming security in development, but it fails to address the deeper

Insecurity, Conflict and the New Global Disorder

Susan Willett

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structural problems that lie at the heart of conflicts in the developing world. Theories of how and why violent protracted conflict occurs generally distinguish between structural factors on the one hand and accelerating, or triggering factors on the other (Azar 1990; Azar 1999; Galtung 1976). Structural factors, which must be viewed as long term, include interconnected political, social and economic elements, such as the failure to meet basic human needs, population pressure, distributional injustice, the depletion of natural resources, environmental degradation and ethnic tensions. Accelerating or triggering factors, on the other hand, operate in the context of the above adverse structural factors, but involve specific events, attitudes or decisions, which provoke or encourage violence. Such factors may include the abuse of political and military power, the proliferation of small arms, ideological conflict and struggles to exert control over natural resources.

Currently much of the international donor communities' efforts at conflict resolution and peacekeeping focus on policies that prioritise mediation between adversaries, ceasefires, micro-disarmament, demobilisation, the reintegration of ex-combatants, security sector reform and the overseeing of free and fair elections. While these are important elements to any programme that is tasked with establishing peace and stability, they tend to focus on the triggering rather than structural causes of conflict.

This article argues that *one* of the major structural causes of current patterns of violence and conflict is to be found in the general failure of neoliberal policies underpinning the current phase of globalisation, to deliver more equitable patterns of development to large parts of the world. While globalisation has enhanced the wealth of the already rich and powerful (both states and people), it has simultaneously impoverished and marginalised many economies and peoples on the periphery of the global economy. Widening socio-economic polarisation exacerbates social, political, cultural and ethnic tensions and contributes to growing levels of social unrest and conflict, particularly in the least developed countries (LDCs).

In many situations where the inclusion in formal economic activity has been closed off – either

because of economic collapse, debt crises, economic marginalisation or social disarticulation – there has been a notable emergence of cultures of violence predicated on patterns of primitive accumulation, reflected in the rise of organised crime and/or non-state military actors intent on controlling natural resources (Berdal and Malone 2000). Analysts such as Collier (2000) argue that greed primarily motivates the warlords and criminal elements that utilise violence and undermine security in many parts of the developing world and transition economies of the former Soviet Union, but, as this article attempts to argue, social, economic and political marginalisation represent equally strong motives for taking up arms.

In elaborating upon these issues the first section of this article briefly explores the changing global order and the role that neoliberal policies have played in global restructuring. The second part explores the relationship between globalisation and economic insecurity, with particular reference to sub-Saharan Africa, where the majority of conflicts in the developing world occur. The third section explores the relationship between debt and poverty. The fourth discusses the relationship between poverty and conflict. The fifth section looks at the new forms of conflict and how they are structured, influenced and incorporated by the forces of globalisation, and the final section proposes an alternative approach to enhance security and development.

2 The Global Order/Disorder

The end of bipolar confrontation encouraged the global spread of capitalism as the former Communist economies were 'opened up' and integrated into the global economy. In Washington, renewed zeal for neoliberal policies dictated that market liberalisation and deregulation underpinned the global economy. A new ideology, 'liberal internationalism', inspired by Fukuyama's *End of History* (1992) thesis, advocated the notion of a 'democratic peace', which maintained that the global spread of capitalism would induce global stability and peace. This proposition was based on two assumptions; one that globalisation, in the form of free trade and the deregulation of markets encourages economic growth resulting in an improvement in the standards of living of the

world's poor, thereby reducing tensions and conflict about the distribution of resources (World Bank 1997). The second assumption is that economic interdependence brought about by globalisation would render war unprofitable, because if a country's main markets are likely to be destroyed through conflict a disincentive is created to initiate war for reasons of vested interests (Gilpin 1992). In this sense globalisation was thought to reduce the previous altruism of the dominant nation-states, encouraging greater cooperative behaviour on a global scale through a process of collective self-interest (Beinen 1992).

These ideas coalesced within the powerful multilateral institutions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank to form the 'Washington Consensus', which set the terms of debate on the development strategies of the transition economies of the former communist world and for the rest of the developing world (Manzo 1998). Orthodox macro-economic strategies based on trade liberalisation, the opening up of domestic markets to foreign investment and competition, the privatisation of state assets and the deregulation of markets were applied with renewed vigour via IMF structural adjustment programmes and World Bank development aid. At the same time, new forms of political conditionality were introduced into IMF and World Bank policies to encourage democratisation, good governance, greater transparency and accountability, and compliance with human rights norms. The neoliberal model of development has all but replaced the developmental model that was widely favoured and promoted in the 1960s and 1970s.

The shift in preference for neoliberal policies is ideologically motivated, rather than being determined by the efficacy of one model of development over another. Ideological fervour, spurred on by the triumphalism associated with the end of the Cold War, has in effect blinkered the dominant global institutions to the actual and prolonged effects of neoliberal reform on the economic performance and security situation in the poorer parts of the world.

The mood of optimism about world peace and the benign spread of capitalism was short-lived,

however. The transitional problems experienced by the newly democratising states in Central Europe and Central Asia led to a rise in nationalism and inter-ethnic rivalry, which in turn acted to undermine the sovereignty of states. Europe witnessed the return of genocide with the war in Yugoslavia. The US peace enforcement operation in Somalia ended ignominiously with the loss of eighteen US Rangers' lives. The debacle of Somalia proved a turning-point in the international communities' commitment to peacekeeping operations in the Third World.

Against this background, the perception of a 'new world order' fast disintegrated into the notion of a 'new world disorder'. Liberal internationalists, severely shaken by these events, have chosen to explain such conflicts as the 'collapse of civilisation' and a return to anarchy – a Hobbesian state of nature in which order and rationality are suspended (Kaplan 1994). Rarely, if ever, has there been introspection, in which the fallibilities and mythologies of the dominant liberal discourse about peace and stability have been subjected to rigorous scrutiny, let alone a recognition that shock therapy, rapid market liberalisation and onerous structural adjustment programmes might be part of the security problem rather than the solution.

3 Globalisation and Economic Insecurity

The neoliberal policies of trade liberalisation, deregulation and privatisation have without doubt contributed to a growth in world output and increased global volumes of trade and capital mobility; but mounting evidence also suggests that globalisation has resulted in increased economic volatility that undermines the basic economic security of many millions of people and contributes to a severe fissure between the 'winners and the losers' in unfettered global markets (UNCTAD 2000; UNDP 1999).

The *losers* include some 1.3 billion people in eighty-nine developing countries who are worse off now than they were ten to fifteen years ago. The neoliberal idea that somehow the benefits of global economic growth will 'trickle down' to the world's poor, has been challenged by the stark reality of the experience in the world's poorest societies. Some sobering

UNDP figures summarised the balance of poverty, at the end of the twentieth century (UNDP 1997):

- More than a quarter of the developing world's peoples still live in poverty as measured by the UNDP's human poverty index (HPI). About a third of total global population, 1.3 billion, live on incomes of less than \$1 a day.
- Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest proportion of people in poverty. Some 220 million people, half the population of the continent, live in poverty, and the proportion is rising.
- Eastern Europe and the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) have seen the greatest deterioration in their living standards in the past decade. Poverty has spread from a small proportion of the population to about a third. There, 120 million people live on less than \$4 a day.
- Certain groups of people are particularly vulnerable to poverty; these include children, women and the aged. An estimated 160 million children are moderately or severely malnourished, and some 110 million receive no education. Women are disproportionately poor and often disempowered. Their lack of access to land, credit and better employment opportunities inhibits their ability to be able to improve their economic circumstances. The aged often live their final years in acute poverty and neglect.

While the ratio of trade to gross domestic product for the world has been rising over the past decade, in the forty-four LDCs¹ whose populations total more than a billion people, the ratio of trade to economic output has in fact deteriorated since the beginning of the 1990s (UNCTAD 2000). Between 1997 and 1999 the combined annual index of free market prices for primary commodities, which represent 80 per cent of Africa's export earnings, fell by 25 per cent. Despite rapidly rising export volumes in the 1990s, the purchasing power of exports remains significantly below the levels attained in the early 1980s. At the same time, rapid trade liberalisation has not been matched by increased market access in developed countries.

The LDCs' economic future looks bleak. Those countries whose real GDP per capita income has been in decline or was stagnant during the period 1990–98, 'can be expected to become caught in a situation in which economic regress, social stress and political instability interact in a vicious circle' (UNCTAD 2000). Even for those LDCs whose economies are growing, there will be an ever-present danger that external shocks, natural disasters or negative spillover effects from neighbouring LDCs will disrupt economic activity, throw their fragile growth trajectories and cast them into a spiral of economic decline, instability and conflict.

4 Debt and the Poverty Trap

The protracted deterioration in terms of trade experienced by the majority of low-income countries has led to foreign currency deficits and high levels of indebtedness. For instance, at the beginning of 1998 the total external debt of sub-Saharan Africa was estimated to be \$328.9 billion, of which approximately 45 per cent was owed to official bilateral sources, 30 per cent to official multilateral sources, and 25 per cent to commercial lenders. To service this debt fully, African countries would have to pay more than 60 per cent or \$86.3 billion of the \$142.3 billion in revenues generated from their exports. In fact African countries as a whole paid more than 17 per cent of their total export earnings to donors and commercial lenders, leaving a total of \$60.9 billion in unpaid accumulated arrears.

For almost two decades unsustainable debt has undermined human development in many of the world's poorest countries. It remains a profound threat to the efforts of heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs) to achieve the international development targets set for the year 2015. Moreover, as Kofi Annan has noted, the failure to meet basic needs due to the debt burden in no small measure contributes to the level of tension and conflict on the African continent (Annan 1998, Section 93).

While Africa cannot avoid its share of responsibility for the present debt predicament, the international community needs to acknowledge its own role in creating and perpetuating the debt problem. More precisely, it needs to recognise the ways in which the current macro-economic stabilisation

programmes used by the international community to address the debt crises undermine human development and contribute to the growing levels of human insecurity and conflict on the African continent.

The international community deals with indebtedness through the IMF's enhanced structural adjustment facility (ESAF). Under the terms of IMF conditionality, indebted countries must undergo a package of economic reforms, which invariably involve the following elements:

- A reduction in government expenditure, by making public-sector redundancies, freezing salaries, instituting cuts in health, education and social welfare services;
- The privatisation of state-run industries, often resulting in large-scale lay-offs and the loss of services to remote or poor areas;
- Currency devaluation and export promotion, leading to the soaring cost of imports, land use changed for cash crops, and reliance on international commodity markets;
- Raising interest rates to tackle inflation, which often has the effect of putting small companies out of business;
- The removal of price controls, leading to rapid price rises for basic goods and services.

Faced with severe balance of payments problems, indebted countries have few choices – they are either obliged to implement IMF policies, even when they are ill-suited to their economic and social circumstances, or risk economic isolation. Most governments are prepared to sacrifice their economic sovereignty rather than face isolation and economic sanctions. As a consequence, the IMF in its role as 'lender of last resort' finds itself managing the economies of a growing number of countries around the world. It currently dictates the macro-economic policies of some eighty developing countries, affecting the lives of over two billion people, or one third of the global population.

Two thirds of all ESAF programmes are located in sub-Saharan Africa. Many of these countries have been subjected to IMF-imposed reforms for a decade or more, yet the overall performance of these economies remains remarkably poor, despite considerable progress on liberalisation and

deregulation. The average annual growth of real GDP in Sub-Saharan Africa fell from 2.5 per cent between 1985–89 to 1.9 per cent between 1990–97. During the 1990s, financial direct investment (FDI) flows to sub-Saharan Africa economies were negligible, despite considerable efforts by LDCs at economic reform and trade liberalisation. Overseas development assistance continues to be the main source of financial flow, but remains at a pitiful level; that is, too low to generate any sort of development gains for the majority of LDCs (UNCTAD 2000).

During the 1990s, per capita income has also declined in most of Africa's LDCs. According to the World Bank, the minimum requirement for a basic standard of living is an annual income of \$370. In 1997 average per capita income in low income countries in sub-Saharan Africa was \$350 per annum, life expectancy at birth was fifty-nine years, infant mortality was seventy-eight per 1,000 live births and illiteracy was 47 per cent of the population over the age of fifteen (World Bank 1998).

Public expenditure cuts have meant that social spending in ESAF countries has deteriorated significantly. Per capita education spending has fallen by an average of 0.2 per cent per annum, with the result that the number of children attending school is on the decline. On present trends, approximately 80 per cent of ESAF countries will miss their target of achieving universal primary education by the year 2015. Health spending has been another casualty of IMF-imposed economic public expenditure cuts, with the effect of an increase in child mortality within ESAF countries. The ESAF countries are unlikely to reach the target of reducing child mortality by two thirds by the year 2015 (Oxfam 1999).

In the majority of LDCs, levels of debt continue to be unsustainable, despite prolonged exposure to IMF-imposed economic reforms. The HIPC initiative introduced by the World Bank and IMF to deal with unsustainable debt has so far provided little, if any, genuine debt relief. Acceptance for debt relief, under the HIPC initiative, has proved onerous and has generated concerted criticisms from NGOs and some of the more enlightened donor countries for radical reform of the HIPC

initiative to ensure a genuine commitment to debt relief that is compatible with international targets for poverty reduction. So far, however, the reforms suggested by the G7 at its Cologne meeting that propose to develop mechanisms for strengthening the linkage between debt relief and poverty reduction are at best weakly integrated into strategies for achieving the internationally agreed human development goals set for 2015. If the linkage between debt relief and poverty reduction is to be strengthened, ESAF must be integrated into a broader, longer-term strategy for human development. With regard to eligibility for HIPC, debt relief should be provided at the earliest possible stage to governments demonstrating – through a Debt-for-Development plan – a capacity to absorb savings into national poverty reduction strategies (UNICEF/Oxfam 2000).

5 Poverty, Instability and Conflict

Globalisation, far from being benign, is now widely recognised to have a dichotomous nature, which simultaneously, includes and excludes, integrates and fragments the global community (Rogers 2000; Kofman and Youngs 1996; Cox and Sinclair 1996). While certain states and their economies have been strengthened via the process of economic integration, many states in the periphery – exposed to the twin forces of globalisation, namely the ITC revolution and market liberalisation – have been weakened and marginalised. Weakened states, stripped of their sovereignty in economic affairs, are no longer able to operate in their national interest (Cerney 1996; Strange 1996). In a growing number of cases the state has been so undermined that its ability to provide basic public goods such as welfare and security to its citizens has been all but nullified.

When governments fail to provide social welfare, health, education and security to their citizens they lose their legitimacy in the eyes of their citizens. One of the only channels left open for citizens is to demonstrate against hardship and injustice. As Woodruff and Ellis-Jones (2000) have recorded, civil unrest, demonstrations, strikes and violence opposing the effects of structural adjustment are on the rise. These should indicate to the Bretton Woods institutions and bilateral donors that their policies are not only excluding the poor, but are contributing to social unrest and political instability.

The IMF and World Bank tend to distance themselves completely from their failed programmes, blaming inadequate political will or corrupt governance. Of course it would be improper to overlook the role that irresponsible and corrupt governments have played in the impoverishment and mismanagement of their economies. But it is equally inappropriate to overlook the role that external agencies have played in exacerbating poverty, tensions and conflict in these vulnerable and weak economies.

Conflict theorists have for some time been at pains to point out that poverty, the unequal distribution of wealth and the failure to meet basic human needs constitute a source of structural violence that lies at the heart of many conflicts (Azar 1990; Rogers 2000; Suhrke 1999; Tansey *et al.* 1993). Nowhere is this more apparent than in sub-Saharan Africa, where the spiral of poverty, indebtedness and conflict is most visible. An examination of the development statistics of sub-Saharan countries engaged in conflict, or recently emerged from conflict, reveals a startling pattern of low per capita income, low life expectancy, low levels of FDI, low levels of overseas development assistance (ODA) and high levels of indebtedness (see Table 1).

It can be argued that the statistics in Table 1 reveal the effects of conflict on development, but for many of these countries economic collapse preceded the outbreak of violence. Moreover, most of these countries have been subjected to prolonged periods of IMF-imposed structural adjustment programmes which have done little to stimulate growth but much to intensify social tensions and unrest.

6 Globalisation and the New Forms of Conflict

The simultaneous rise in debt, loss of economic sovereignty, weakening of the state, unequal terms of trade and growing levels of poverty have resulted in the emergence of what the French writer Alain Minc call *les zones grises* – grey areas (Minc 1993). These are regions in which state legitimacy and the rule of law have all but broken down. They are on the increase especially in sub-Saharan Africa and the former Soviet Union. In these regions, authority is increasingly divided between what is left of formal institutions, local warlords and gang or

Table 1: LDCs in Africa affected by conflict 1997

	GNP per capita \$	Life expectancy	FDI \$m	ODA \$m	External debt % GDP	Debt service % of exports
Angola	270	46	412	436	91	13
Burundi	140	44	0.5	119	120	33
CAR	320	48	4.3	92	90	7
Chad	230	46	37.4	225	65	11
DRC	110	52	-7.4	168	149	12
Eritrea	230	49	n.a.	123	11	n.a.
Ethiopia	110	47	67.9	637	152	10
Guinea Bissau	230	42	10	126	304	22
Liberia	n.a.	39	291	95		n.a.
Mali	260	46	39.4	455	129	14
Mozambique	140	46	64.4	963	208	25
Niger	200	46	-7.1	341	104	17
Rwanda	210	22	2.6	592	61	17
Sierra Leone	160	34	9.6	103	122	22
Somalia	n.a.	47	0.1	104	n.a.	n.a.
Sudan	290	51	97.9	187	91	9
Uganda	330	41	175	840	53	24

Source: UNCTAD (2000)

Mafia leaders. In such circumstances the risk to life and property have grown substantially – a situation compounded by the permissive and abundant flows of small arms.

Of the thirty major conflicts recorded around the world in 2000, twenty-three are inter-societal, and many of the latter are protracted. For instance, the wars in Angola and Columbia have been going on since 1963 and 1961 respectively. Over time, protracted conflicts exact a huge cost in human life and resources (see Table 2 for details). In total, the twenty-three conflicts listed have resulted in over four million deaths and have cost the countries a total of 138 billion dollars (1995 prices). These figures must be treated with caution, however, as statistics from conflict-prone developing countries are notoriously unreliable. Nevertheless, they do provide some kind of indicator of the immense socio-economic costs that conflict exacts and give some kind of scale to the human tragedy that this form of conflict generates.

Yet another group of states has only recently emerged from conflict yet remains vulnerable to the

legacies of violence. This includes Guatemala, Nicaragua, Haiti, Albania, Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, Mali, Niger, Chad, Liberia, Central African Republic, Mozambique, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Tajikistan, Yemen. Yet other states have formal ceasefire agreements in operation, but conditions remain tense: these include Congo, Western Sahara, Abkhazia, the Kurdish region of Turkey, North Osetia, South Osetia and two large regions in Peru.

Wars and violence in developing countries have been variously characterised by liberals as conflicts between 'erratic primitives of shifting allegiances, habituated to violence, with no stake in civil order' (Peters 1994), or conflict is seen to be motivated by 'fanatical, ideologically based loyalties' (van Creveld 1991). Conflict thus perceived is depicted as irrational and dysfunctional, as it interrupts the benevolent processes of economic development and democratisation promoted by civilised powers in the North. In accordance with this view, conflict resolution takes place when the various parties are persuaded to see reason, to recognise the plus-sum advantages of peace for all, and when the state is reconstituted and the *status quo ante* is resurrected.

Table 2 : Current inter-societal conflicts

Country	Duration	Fatalities	Costs US\$m ('95 prices)
Afghanistan	1992-	72,000	1,800
Angola	1961-	1,555,000	3,350
Algeria	1992-	82,000	7,500
Burundi	1993-	208,000	126
Colombia	1963-	47,000	25,640
Congo	1997	13,000	35
DRC	1996-	100,000	735
Iran	1979	28,000	6,700
Iraq	1988	198,000	n.a.
Indonesia	1975	244,000	23,000
Kashmir	1989	23,000	25,000
Mexico	1994	5,000	10,620
Myanmar	1985	9,000	18,300
Philippines	1968	121,000	5,100
Rwanda	1990	813,000	466
Russia (Chechnya)	1999	5,000	1,300
Senegal	1997	2,000	33
Sierra Leone	1991	43,000	226
Somalia	1991	375,000	280
Sudan	1983	52,000	940
Sri Lanka	1983	66,000	7,200
Uganda	1993	4,000	354
Total		4,065,000	138,705

Source: IISS 2000

But the fact that conflicts in the periphery have proved largely resistant to the international communities' peace initiatives suggests there is something more than irrational behaviour that motivates and perpetuates violence in the global periphery.

The interpretation of war and violence as irrational and dysfunctional has been contested by a number of authors, who argue that conflict serves an economic function in those regions of the world where social fragmentation and collapsing states have become the norm (Berdal and Malone 2000). Keen, for instance, challenges the common assumption that war is a contest between two sides, each trying to triumph over the other. Rather, he argues, war has become an alternative system of profit, power and protection, in which adversaries

often cooperate in their pursuit of profit (Keen 2000). In much the same vein Duffield argues that, far from being irrational or anarchical, the proliferation of international criminal networks, shadow war economies and cultures of violence in the developing world are rational, calculated responses that maximise comparative advantage in the periphery of a deregulated and liberalised global political economy (Duffield 2000).

Collier argues that the majority of wars are driven by the economic motive of greed rather than by grievance (Collier 2000). This somewhat determinist argument has been contested by analysts such as Ero (2001) who maintains that grievance is still a major factor contributing to violence in many developing countries. Often, of course, grievance arises due to the economic

exclusion of certain ethnic or social groupings, but this economic motivation is very different from the motivation of greed identified by Collier. Moreover, the motivational forces of armed groups often change over time (Keen 1998). Groups dominated by warlords, such as UNITA in Angola, the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia and the FARC in Colombia, have moved from a strong ideological agenda that predominated during the Cold War, which was based on grievance, to one dominated by economic aims in the current post-Cold War climate.

Wars motivated by greed often centre on the control of natural resources such as mines, forests, endangered species, cocaine, marihuana and opium fields, and lucrative trade routes for illicit traffic. They tend to be less to do with taking control of the state. In this context, control of the state and state borders has become increasingly meaningless. The state has in effect been replaced by multiple centres of authority dominated by local elites or 'warlords', who may not even have a particular interest in capturing the reins of government, except perhaps as a means to extend their commercial activities. To describe such conflicts as interstate, as is so commonly done, is misleading, as the very phrase presupposes there is a 'state' over which, and inside which, combatants are fighting. Duffield (1998) prefers to refer to these types of conflict as 'post-modern', a phrase which takes account of 'the emergence of long-term political and economic projects that no longer need to anchor political authority in conventional territorial, bureaucratic or consent-based structures.

For many actors in conflict, war makes rational economic sense, not only because it enhances their local status and wealth, but also because it is rooted in the power relations in the global *status quo ante*. War provides ample opportunities for elites to develop links with the global economy via the diamond trade, money laundering, drug and gun smuggling. War economies such as those that have evolved in Angola, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo are highly integrated into both legitimate and illegitimate global markets, reflecting a symbiotic relationship between current patterns of globalisation and conflict. This is most starkly illustrated in the relationship between global corporations and local military elites. During the

Mozambique war, British Petroleum was obliged to pay what was effectively protection money to members of Frelimo, whilst Renamo obtained regular payments from a subsidiary of Lonhro, for protecting the Beira oil pipeline (Keen 1998: 16). Until the recent campaign to control the conflict-diamonds trade, De Beers bought up the diamonds traded by UNITA to sell in the global market-place; and in the Congo, Laurent Kabila reportedly received £30 million from a consortium of South African and Namibian businesses, as well as the Namibian Government, to finance his military campaign against the rebels threatening to overthrow his government (Pythian and Duval-Smith 1998).

Militarised elites, both inside and outside government, have been able to manipulate control over local resources and generate political support via the distribution of rewards to followers, reinforcing and strengthening the evolution of the kleptocratic state on the one hand (Bayart, Ellis and Hibou 1999) or leading to its fragmentation and collapse on the other (Zartman 1995) – a situation in which warlords and criminal networks flourish. In both situations the gun has replaced the rule of law, bestowing political and economic power. It has become a means to accumulate wealth and a guarantor of personal security. Berdal (1996: 17) has noted that, in such a context, 'weapons always have an economic as well as a security value'. The widespread resort to arms can thus be viewed as a Darwinian form of survival through the use of force in situations where formal guarantees of economic and physical security have broken down.

Collectively, these observations help to explain the durability of violence and conflict in the periphery, and the general resistance that they have to the international community's attempts at conflict resolution and international peace-brokering (Berdal and Malone 2000). Far from being the irrational responses of primitives, these 'post-modern' forms of conflict are highly rational in a situation of economic scarcity and exclusion (Duffield 2000). But more than this, these forms of conflict are a product and a process of the evolving global order, not an aberration as is often assumed in liberal discourse.

7 Security and Sustainable Development

The traditional discourse on security and development is found wanting in a world where familiar boundaries, structures of authority and identity are breaking down.

For far too long the concept of security has been tied to the idea of territorial security, the protection of national interests in foreign policy (or the idea of global security free from the threat of a nuclear holocaust). These concepts have overlooked the fact that for many millions of people the greatest threats to their security come from disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards. In recognition of this hiatus, there has been a shift in the referent point of security from one that lays stress on territoriality and sovereignty, to one that emphasises human security.

Human security is here understood as 'freedom from fear and freedom from threat', and is concerned with economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security. These elements form an interdependent whole. When the human security of people is endangered anywhere in the world, other nations are often drawn in. The problems of famine, disease, drug trafficking, terrorism, ethnic disputes and social disintegration know no borders. Their consequences traverse the globe. Thus the provision of guarantees for human security to those most threatened in their daily lives ensures greater global security.

The challenge of transforming an environment that marginalises and impoverishes people with one that provides sustainable livelihoods is a starting point for guaranteeing human security for all. The emphasis placed on sustainable development rather than on more orthodox economic growth strategies derives from a realisation that policies of development based on material enrichment, as measured by gross national product (GNP) per capita, have not necessarily improved the conditions of the vast majority of the populations of the developing countries of the world. In fact, despite growth in GNP, poverty and deprivation has been on the increase and with it a growing incidence of human insecurity and violence.

The paradigm of sustainable human development values human life for itself. It does not value life simply because people can produce or consume material goods. Nor does it value one person's life over another (UNDP 1994). In this paradigm, no human being ought to be condemned to a short life just because they are born in a certain region or country, are a certain race or sex. Development should allow individuals the choice to explore their human potential to the full and to put their capabilities to best use. The universal right to life is the link between the needs of human development in the present and those of the future – especially the needs for environmental preservation and regeneration. The strongest argument for protecting the environment is the right of future generations to opportunities similar to the ones earlier generations have enjoyed.

The universal right to life is also the common thread which binds the notion of sustainable human development to that of human security. The fear or the reality of want and of physical threat are the major factors that contribute to the insecurity for the poor and marginalised in the developing world. In the sense in which sustainable human development provides an ethical and normative framework conforming with certain fundamental universal moral values about the right to life and freedom of choice, it can also be viewed as a tool for conflict prevention and local and regional security.

The recognition of the need to manage economic reforms in such a way as to enhance, rather than undermine, political stability has been forced rather reluctantly on the agendas of the Washington institutions by the experience of the East Asian crisis. It has opened the way to an acknowledgment that governments must be fully involved in defining the reform process and that programmes must not be imposed formulaically, but instead tailored to each country's particular political and economic circumstances. But if economic inequality is to be challenged effectively as a source of structural violence, the international institutions need to do far more than simply tinker with reforms. There needs to be a fundamental transformation of the ideological foundations upon which these institutions legitimise themselves. Global security will not be enhanced until such

time as the existing economic orthodoxy is challenged and replaced.

8 Conclusion

The neoliberal view of globalisation as a benign process encouraging peace and development lives on as the dominant doctrine of the multilateral organisations. Yet the protracted failure of IMF- and World Bank-imposed reforms to deliver the most basic of human needs to over 20 per cent of the global population, is a testimony to their failure as a model of both development and stability. Rather, neoliberal policies constitute a form of structural violence that places the greed of the few above the basic human security of the many.

Increasingly, demands are being made for a reform of the current patterns of globalisation to redress its destabilising effects (DFID 2000; Hellenier 1999; UNDP 1999). Kofi Annan (2000), in his Millennium Assembly speech, observed that the best way to prevent conflict is to promote healthy and balanced economic development, combined with human rights, minority rights and political arrangements in which all groups are fairly represented. To achieve this will require the adoption of a different model of development to that which currently dominates the multilateral agenda.

Attempts to articulate an alternative value system for the global economy are to be found in the 'Alternative Declaration' produced by the NGO Forum at the Copenhagen Summit. It lays stress on equity participation, self-reliance and sustainability.

The 'Alternative Declaration' 'rejects the economic liberalism accepted by the governments of the North and South, seeing it as a path to aggravation rather than the alleviation of the global social crisis. Moreover, it identifies trade liberalisation and privatisation as the cause of the growing concentration of wealth globally' (Thomas 1998: 459). Its alternative conception of development values diversity above universality, and is based on a different conception of rights than that which is articulated by the 'Washington Consensus'. It poses a challenge to the economic orthodoxy and existing global structures of power, and intrinsically establishes a relationship between globalisation and the rising insecurity in the developing world. In the absence of a doctrinal change that concretely deals with the suffering and marginalisation caused by the inequities of the global system, the spectre of disorder, instability, crime and violence will only grow. These are, after all, the rational responses to the survival of the fittest in a global system that puts profit before people's basic needs.

Note

1. The criteria defining an LDC include low income as measured by GDP per capita, weak human resources as measured by a composite index based on indicators of life expectancy at birth, per capita calorie intake, combined primary and secondary enrolment and adult literacy, low levels of economic diversification, as measured by a composite index based on share of manufacturing in GDP, share of labour force in industry, annual per capita commercial energy consumption, and UNCTAD's export concentration index.

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INCLUSIVE PEACE AND SECURITY

Editor Robin Luckham



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Peace Through Agrarian Justice

Paul Richards and Khadija Bah*

1 Introduction

The extent to which recent African civil wars have also been agrarian crises has been underestimated. Urban “loose molecules” and the lure of mineral resources have been put forward as reasons for protracted conflicts. Recent research in Sierra Leone (Richards *et al.* 2005; Humphreys and Weinstein 2004; Richards *et al.* 2004) shows that most combatants came from rural backgrounds and were induced to fight by promises of food, jobs and marriage partners, not diamonds. Many ex-combatants want to go home (to rural areas), but are unwilling to do so without major agrarian reforms. These include strengthening the land and property rights of women and youth. Through failing to understand the rural roots of recent African conflicts donors and policy-makers have risked rebuilding the causes of war. Attention to agrarian justice, we argue, is now essential if further violence is to be avoided.

2 The issue of forced labour

A striking photograph from the 1970s shows “gentlemen farmers” of the Mabile Valley (in northern Sierra Leone). The fathers and grandfathers of the group in the picture had maintained large slave-managed estates to grow rice to feed the trading caravans along the Falaba Road (between Port Loko and Guinea). The photograph showed the group waving aloft a collection of rusty trade cutlasses. They had posed in response to a question, “how had landowners prevented farm slaves from running away?”

The war in Sierra Leone became infamous for its atrocities, which included the cutting off of victims’ hands and feet. After intervention by private security forces (former South African Defence Force counter-insurgency specialists simultaneously contracted by the government and international

diamond mining companies) and the consequent collapse of a promising peace process a destabilised rebel movement exacted terrible revenge. Too little is made of the fact that the weapon of atrocity was an ordinary agricultural implement, the cutlass.

It is hard to talk objectively about the issue of slavery in Sierra Leone and Liberia. The two countries were founded as homes for freed slaves, and the issue embarrasses national elites. This embarrassment also extends to friends of the two countries. At a meeting about the Sierra Leone crisis organised by the British government in the early 1990s the senior civil servant in the chair bluntly warned speakers ‘not to waste our time this afternoon by raking over old issues concerning slavery’. The issue does need to be raised, however, because it left an institutional legacy, which forms an important background to recent wars in West Africa.

Domestic slavery was not finally abolished until around the end of the third decade of the twentieth century (1928 in Sierra Leone, 1930 in Liberia). There are still plenty of Liberians and Sierra Leoneans who were born into a world of domestic slavery. It was illegal to acquire new slaves in provincial Sierra Leone after the enactment of the Protectorate Ordinance (1896). But colonial government considered the 1898 uprising of interior chiefs a response to the threat to free existing slaves. In 1896 it was estimated that as many as half of all provincial Sierra Leoneans were slaves. Not wanting to risk further instability, the British soft-pedalled abolition. The institution (it was hoped) would die a natural death.

In Liberia, developments followed a similar path. The country had been founded as a frontier settler outpost for free Blacks from the USA. Little thought was given to the issue of relations with African peoples. The constitution gave government sovereignty over the interior, but there was no

effective presence when the British and French expanded into neighbouring up-country Sierra Leone and Guinea. The colonial powers gave the Liberians an ultimatum – occupy the interior or face British and French claims on Liberian territory. President Arthur Barclay adopted Indirect Rule (the British-devised system for licensing interior chiefs to administer on behalf of the state according to “custom”). The Liberian frontier force “pacified” the interior, driving many communities deep into the forest, and waited for chiefs to negotiate with the Executive Mansion. So long as local rulers then did Monrovia’s will their control over domestic slaves remained unchallenged.

Domestic slavery remained important in both countries. Roads and plantations for export crops were made by slaves. The British were frank that the prospect of forced labour helped motivate candidates for chiefly election. Colonially supervised local courts in Sierra Leone still assisted slave owners to recover runaways as late as the 1920s (Grace 1977). Although slaves as a proportion of the rural population declined sharply in districts close to Monrovia and Freetown, the figure in some more remote Sierra Leonean chiefdoms adjacent to Liberia remained 50 per cent or more in 1927 (Grace 1977).

The League of Nations prodded the British government of Sierra Leone into abolition by 1 January 1928, and a similar reform was enacted in Liberia in 1930. In the Mabo Valley the government introduced a work oxen ploughing scheme to compensate the cutlass-wielding “gentleman farmers” – a clear indication the slaves had no intention to stay. In western Liberia, the anthropologist Warren d’Azevedo (1969–71) records that slaves departed in droves, and Gola owners wept at the thought of the work they would now have to do.

3 The issue of gender and rural marriage relations

After abolition control of rural elites over the labour of the rural underclasses was reasserted through other institutions legitimated by colonial (or Monrovia) rule. Marriage arrangements became a key. Leading men used their wealth to patronise poorer families, and received a disproportionate number of young women as wives. Poorer men could not afford bridewealth. Many of their liaisons were, perforce, with the wives of polygynous village chiefs and elders. Local courts in both countries

cracked down on these relationships. An impoverished young man might find himself heavily fined, and the fine commuted to labour on the husband’s farm (a kind of retrospective bride service), for the offence of “woman damage”. Young women were married to rich elders whether they liked it or not.

Gibbs (1965: 215) summarised the class structure of Kpelle society, in rural north western Liberia in terms of the marriage system. His account could be extended to neighbouring groups in both countries. Three groups are distinguished: “rich people”, “children of the soil” and “clients”. Wealth was measured (for a man) not only in terms of money and goods but also in control over women and children. Control over marriage exchanges was the key to the differences between the classes of men as “wife givers”, “wife keepers” and “wife borrowers”. The three classes were, Gibbs notes, the freeborn, the slaves and pawns. The *toh nuu* (literally “upstanding”, prominent person) might allow some of his wives “to become consorts of poor men of the lower class who become his *tii keh nuwai* [workmen or clients] ... a ready-made claque ... sure to praise the man’s name”.

In recent discussions of war and its causes in both Liberia and Sierra Leone, the issue of marriage (including women’s property and the exploitation of the labour of young men) was regularly raised by villagers and ex-combatants (cf Richards *et al.* 2005; Richards *et al.* 2004). Young wives reported being locked in abusive marriages because parents could not afford to refund bridewealth, and complained that the family of the husband seized the assets of the marriage where a widow refused levirate marriage. More generally, it was reported that ‘the chiefs take everything intended for women’, including postwar relief supplies, and that legal redress was impossible, since the same male elders sat in the local courts (only the daughter of a wealthy family could afford to appeal a “customary” case to a higher court). Young men repeatedly objected to being fined large amounts because of their inability to marry legally. Many openly stated a preference for vagrancy to forced labour exacted in lieu of fines.

Militia forces in both countries exploited this issue. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone – a movement in which 87 per cent of ex-combatants were abducted, mainly from farms or rural primary schools – formed a “combat wives units” to offer marriage partners to young men who

would otherwise have been too poor to marry. Asked about inducements to remain within the movement (Humphreys and Weinstein 2004), 24 per cent of RUF ex-combatants mentioned being given a marriage partner. The RUF also sought to empower young women by training them to fight. As many as a quarter of the movement's ex-combatants were female, though underrepresented in demobilisation (nationally, women accounted for only 7 per cent of ex-combatants with benefits). Some women fighters were explicit that they had joined a militia faction because of gender-based rural poverty, disadvantage and discrimination (Richards *et al.* 2003).

4 Testimony

The part played by marriage, labour and gender disempowerment in fostering conflict are illustrated in the following comments, typical of the perceptions of ex-combatants and villagers concerning the causes of the two wars (cf Richards *et al.* 2005; Richards *et al.* 2003).

I joined the rebel forces to fight inequality in the country, and because of this issue I also encouraged my three children to join. (Female ex-combatant, Margibi County, Liberia, 2004)

Chiefs victimise youths by imposing heavy and unjust fines ... [but] protect their own children from doing communal work; criminal summonses make youths run from the village. (Youth focus group, Kamajei Chiefdom, Sierra Leone, 2002)

This war was caused by poverty and injustice. Our (youth) poverty is caused by having no education, no training, no money and no jobs. [The chiefs] fine us too much for any small thing. Because we are poor, we cannot pay. So somebody "buys" our case, and then we have to work for that person, and for the chief. This means we cannot work for ourselves, so we get poorer, so some have to steal to survive and, when ... caught ... get fined again. (Youth focus group, Margibi County, Liberia, 2004)

Elders ... force [us] to marry ... as soon as we harvest our first ... palm fruits. If you refuse ... they charge you to court for smiling at a girl ... But the bride service is not reasonable. You will

be required to do ... jobs for the bride's family, like brushing and making a farm for the family ... sharing the proceeds of your own labour, harvest or business ... You will be forced to give them 70 per cent [of your drum of palm oil], or you will lose your wife and be taken to court ... Most of us ... avoid the scene ... [in Tongo Field, a diamond mining area] you can ... marry a woman of your choice. Marriage [in the village] is the same as slavery. (Male ex-combatant, eastern Sierra Leone, 2003)

5 Policy implications

International opinions about war in Liberia and Sierra Leone are heavily affected by the views of national elites. The "children of chiefs" protected from "community labour", arbitrary fining and other abuses, tend to deny or downplay the role of agrarian factors. Rural commoners, for their part, are deeply sceptical about the role of elites. In Sierra Leone they notice the rapid postwar spread of fine houses in the hills above Freetown in a country with no effective economy for the past ten years, while isolated villages, too far off-road to be visited by aid delegations, continue to lack even the most basic facilities (schools, health posts, sanitation). The contrast re-ignites some of the bitterness that fed the war.

We argue (cf. Richards *et al.* 2004; Richards *et al.* 2005) that only fundamental agrarian reform will serve to reduce resentment. Five requirements stand out:

1. Land reform (to introduce guaranteed shorthold tenancies to reduce the dependence of mobile young people on traditional patrons)
2. Marriage reform (to protect women's property and reduce vulnerability of young people to labour exploitation)
3. Reform of local courts (to document custom, and abolish it where inconsistent with national law, e.g. on rural women's inheritance; to supervise court officials)
4. Reform of basic schooling (to increase participation of rural girls, enable management of schools by parents, shift curriculum towards knowledge and skills important in rural livelihoods, and offer incentives to trained teachers to work in remote localities)
5. Reform of rural skills training (to stimulate application of appropriate agricultural

technologies and business methods, including electronic networking of rural post-primary institutions and teaching of information technology [IT]).

On this last point, it is interesting to note that IT was among the preferred options of many ex-combatants. When RUF ex-combatant computer trainees were interviewed (Richards *et al.* 2003) several mentioned that they thought electronic connection might have mitigated the violence. With the internet, RUF grievances would have been harder to ignore, with less chance for resentment to escalate out of control. One female signals technician talked about how radio training in the movement had helped give her a sense of gender empowerment, now being put to good use in making a success of her small postwar computer-based typing service. Young women should certainly be included in any scheme for rurally oriented IT.

More generally, agrarian technologies should be chosen or designed with a clear understanding of the institutional disadvantages faced by impoverished women and rural youth. For example, bio-engineered seed technologies with a propensity to spread from farmer to farmer (e.g. disease-resistant rice or groundnut types, and hybrid oil palm seedlings) should be preferred to schemes requiring heavy involvement of government and landowning elites (such as subsidised agricultural credit or tractor cultivation).

But technology will be powerless to create employment and encourage young rural people to bind with wider society without institutional reform. The reluctance of governments and donors to contemplate such reform is a worrying sign. Social advisers – based in metropolitan capitals and lobbied on their brief forays into the countryside by non-agrarian elites – sometimes seem oblivious to the urgent need for reform of land tenure, rural justice and marriage. It is argued that these issues are “too sensitive” in the immediate aftermath of war. In Sierra Leone we have been told that to seek to limit the customary privileges of the rural

landowners would risk re-igniting conflict. This rates risk of a recurrence of the war of 1898 as higher than that of the war of 1991.

Liberia sets a somewhat better example. When Charles Taylor stepped down (August 2003), the women’s caucus in the Liberian Senate introduced a law recognising many abuses associated with custom, as applied to marriage, labour and women’s property. *The Act to Govern the Devolution of Estates and Establish the Rights of Inheritance for Spouses of Both Statutory and Customary Marriages* approved by the Liberian House of Representatives on 7 October 2003 bans recovery of bridewealth (“dowry”) by a husband if a marriage fails (s. 2.4), renders it illegal for parents to ‘compel the daughter or other female relative to marry a man not of her choice’ (s. 2.10); forbids a husband to ‘aid, abet, or create the situation for his customary wife to have illicit sexual intercourse with another man for the sole purpose of collecting damages’ (s. 2.7) and renders it unlawful to ‘compel or demand any female of legal age, whether or not she is his customary wife, to “confess” or call the name of her lover ... in order to collect damages from the said lover ...’ (s. 2.8). The Act addresses some of the concerns cited above, and has relevance elsewhere in the region.

Other institutional reforms are also needed if impoverished young people are to return to rural communities and contribute to agricultural development. Clear and enforceable contracts concerning land and labour are as crucial as an end to the arbitrary workings of undocumented “custom”. A British-funded scheme to build chiefs’ houses through “community” labour sent a wrong signal in Sierra Leone. It was seen by many young people as “punishment” for challenging elders during the war. But donors also need to put their own house in order. Abolition of rich country farm subsidies combined with emphasis on agrarian rights and justice within the West African region might serve the interests of peace more than other aid initiatives combined.

Note

* This article expresses the personal views of the authors and not those of their organisations.

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INCLUSIVE PEACE AND SECURITY

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‘Security from Below’¹ in Contexts of Chronic Violence

Alexandra Abello Colak and Jenny Pearce

Abstract At the same time that the field of security moves away from traditional state-centred perspectives towards a human-centred understanding of security, contemporary states seem to be incapable of protecting people from increasingly complex forms of insecurity. Inadequate and inefficient public responses have contributed to the erosion of the idea of security as a public good, especially in contexts of chronic violence. In this article, we suggest that in these contexts ‘security from below’ could help analytically and in practice to humanise security provision by focusing attention on the lived experiences of insecurity, by encouraging participation in debates about the local and universal values that should inform state responses and by enabling people to demand a people-centred but publicly delivered form of security. Rethinking security from below is not a suggestion for replacing the state; it is instead an attempt to increase the capacity of communities and local level actors to articulate their demands for better security provision based on agreed norms and under democratic principles in which security must be at the heart of all struggles for equitable development and social justice.

1 Introduction

Traditionally, the field of security policy has been associated with conservative worldviews, which focus on order and avoidance or management of conflict. Security provision has been about specialist agencies, expert analysts and top-down policy approaches. As an academic and policy field it is highly gendered (Tickner 1995) and state-centred (Morgenthau 1948 is just one example among many). It has focused on threats to strategic national state interests from without and also within. However, over the past two decades, this has been challenged from various quarters. There has been a move to widen the meaning of security and to recognise that it is not just about the state but also about citizens. Security, it is argued, is linked to the wellbeing of communities, and this must include protection from hunger, disease, violence and repression, as well as consolidation of democracy and social justice (UNDP 1994). The idea of human security encourages governments, policymakers and other organisations to give value and attention to a broader range of threats to life than is normally recognised, particularly in the global South.

However, this shift from state-centred to human-centred security has uncovered the weakness of the state and the difficulties it faces in protecting people from complex forms of insecurity. It has also increased international and social demands on states, which are now asked to protect their citizens from chronic threats in a particular moment in history during which their ability to provide even basic protection from physical violence and attack is in crisis and undermined by global phenomena. The spread of ‘new wars’ in the global South has highlighted the limitations of state security provision, but there are also growing problems of urban and rural violence in countries that had postwar peace agreements and even in those which have experienced no war at all. For example, in the mid-1990s, the number of homicides among young men aged 15–44 in Brazil was higher than that of Colombia, a country recognised to be in the midst of a civil war (Krug *et al.* 2002).

This weakness of the state security response has contributed to a gradual erosion of the idea of security as a public good, as well as loss of faith in state security provision. Many people already

depend on private and informal forms of security and justice provision. Wealth and poverty determines the choice: private security firms on the one hand and local gunman on the other. Some now argue for a shift from the focus on state provision in favour of more support for non-state providers in post-conflict and fragile states. They include commercial, informal and community forms of justice and security delivery (Baker and Scheye 2007: 154). In many such contexts, it is argued, the state sector will simply never deliver in the short to medium term and alternatives need to be found based on local realities.

‘Security from below’, we argue, should not be a substitute for security as a public good. The challenge, however, is how the latter can be constructed in contemporary contexts of multiple violences and insecurity, with weak states, corrupt and non-accountable security institutions and with powerful global networks trafficking arms and drugs that foster violence and further erode the state’s legitimate monopoly over the means of violence. Rather than widen the idea of security to embrace ever more areas of human interaction, we need to ‘humanise’ security provision, or make it *people-centred but publicly delivered*, and in ways that promote non-violent forms of human interaction, encourage civil participation and protect women, children and vulnerable youth from abuse. We believe that ‘security from below’ is about encouraging people to think about their security as they do about their food, livelihood and human rights; it is of equal importance.

Security provision must be provided by public institutions, but it needs to be founded on agreed norms and shared values. It also has to respond to contextualised needs in ways that are legitimate and respectful of human rights. These norms may well have to be constructed from ‘below’. Developing norms and principles which are compatible with public provision may be one of the particular challenges of our times, and there are contexts today where it is not yet conceivable that the state can or will take on the task. Indigenous and community forms of justice may be the only viable forms in some contexts. However, there are many challenges on what is meant by publicly agreed norms and shared values, when these have not yet been democratically constructed. While there may be a need to recognise transitional community-level

security and justice forms, these should, we argue, contribute to building universal norms, which can help construct effective state provision rather than substitute for it.

In order to analyse how ‘security from below’ could help humanise security provision in contexts of chronic violence,² our article begins by exploring the implications of the discursive shift from state-centred to citizen- and human-centred security. Drawing mostly on examples from Latin America and based on our initial research activities in Guatemala and Colombia, we then explore the signs of the crisis in practice, as well as the community, market and donor agency-led responses to it that have emerged. We critically analyse their limitations and question how we can move from failing public provision to security as a fairly distributed and effective public service. We finally argue that ‘security from below’ in the specific contexts under discussion, could help analytically, and in practice, to build norms and principles to inform contemporary security approaches. By drawing attention to real and diverse contexts of security provision, ‘security from below’ seeks to focus on the relevance and effectiveness of prevailing forms of public and non-public security provision. It asks how far these facilitate participation for social change and democratic development? If security is to be judged by such criteria, it requires new debate to be opened up at the grassroots level, democratically embedding a sense of what is right and appropriate in communities, which have become subjected to the arbitrary imposition of certain concepts of perverse ‘order’ in the name of security.

2 From state-centred to human-centred security

As an academic field and as a policymaking enterprise, security has been dominated by a Western understanding of world politics. It has been focused on the protection of the international system born in Europe in the seventeenth century which regards state sovereignty and power competition as the driving forces of international life. Over the last two decades, however, traditional theories focused on state survival and power preservation have been challenged. By denying the alleged universalism and neutrality of realist definitions of security obsessed with state security and survival (Wendt 1992; Cox 1981) and criticising the restrictive focus of traditional security studies as inadequate

to contemporary realities (Booth 1991; Wyn Jones 1999), scholars and policymakers have been invited to consider individuals and communities as the main referents of any security endeavour. New feminist perspectives have also challenged the exclusionary traditional discourse of security by exposing its deep connections with hierarchical social relations between women and men, rich and poor and insiders and outsiders (Tickner 1995: 180). It is now widely accepted that the protection of individuals and their liberties and the creation of contexts that enable human wellbeing are the main challenges of this century.

All these contributions and the pre-eminence of the concept of Human Security after the publication of the UNDP *Human Development Report* in 1994 have contributed to taking security out from the secrecy and closeness associated with intelligence, military and defence circles. Although there is still no agreement on the definition of Human Security, it is generally accepted that it places the protection and welfare of individuals as the primary concern of any security approach, something that seems difficult to achieve through traditional military means. Human security is not only a comprehensive concept, it is also a campaign to open up security thinking to new fields and to bring security practices closer to contemporary human problems. Appealing to the core idea of 'humanness', this broadened concept has made 'security' a concept of relevance to the left as well as the right, to women as well as to men, to the global South³ as well as the global North, to non-Western societies and to academics and practitioners of almost all sciences and fields.

This discursive shift in the field of security has raised new demands on the state. Under the new paradigm, the state loses its preponderance but gains responsibilities. Contemporary states must not only protect individuals and communities from a wider set of threats, but they should also create conditions for wellbeing and social justice, be respectful of democratic values and human rights and be accountable to citizens. All this when rather than strengthening their infrastructural capacity, states have increasingly lost their ability to restrain the impact of transnational phenomena, to maintain their legitimate monopoly of coercion and to be responsive to local needs.

The human-security approach suggests multi-layered and multi-area interventions and implies new political and institutional landscapes at national and international levels to protect individuals and communities. However, state institutions have not substantially changed or properly adjusted in that direction over the last two decades. On the contrary, despite national and international attempts to reform the security sector in many countries, traditional assumptions, practices and values are still deeply entrenched in state institutions and social groups. Public responses to insecurity very often slip towards authoritarianisms and they also lack transparency and accountability. Citizens in heightened states of fear are often encouraged to support hardline and authoritarian public responses. At the same time, neoliberal globalisation has reduced the emphasis on building public coffers or increasing public provision, and it has made the possibility of handing over the provision of some services to private actors that are regarded as economically more efficient than the state attractive, including security.

One of the most evident signs of crises in security provision is the lack of effective protection from physical violence, the basic aspect of security. An estimated seven million violence-caused deaths occurred in the world, 75 per cent of them civilian, between 1993 and 2003 (Smith and Braein, quoted in Hurwitz and Peake 2004: 1). Internal wars as well as an increase in the levels of crime and delinquency around the globe, especially but not exclusively in growing urban concentrations of the global South, are responsible for most of those deaths. In its many forms, violence is increasing in urban as well as in rural areas, affecting the lives of millions of people, which produces a growing sense of insecurity that paralyses cooperative social interaction, decreases wellbeing, obstructs democratisation and undermines the states' credibility. In Latin America where, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), violence was the first cause of death in 1999, violence seems to be growing at an epidemic pace. The growth in homicide rates has affected countries with historically low rates such as Costa Rica and Argentina, as well as countries with a history of internal wars and high levels of violence, such as Colombia or El Salvador.⁴

It is not our aim to discuss here the causes of this increase in the levels of violence but the

responses that have emerged and their limitations. However, it is worth highlighting that only in some cases the levels of violence are linked to the legacy of fought wars or, as in Colombia, partially fed by the ongoing conflict. But in all cases, violence and a sense of insecurity are being fostered by the opportunities offered by globalisation for illegal trafficking of drugs and arms, by the negative effects of forced implementation of neoliberal reforms in deeply unequal societies, by intergenerational processes of violence transmission, by the failure of current public policies and state institutions, by the expansion of a dominant consumption-orientated culture and by a problematic and manipulated socialisation of youth in both the global South and the North.⁵

It is in this context that public security provision, as it is conceived now, is proving ever more inadequate for the task. It is not only inadequate in terms of the quantity and resources dedicated by the state to protect communities, but also in the quality of the provision and its assumptions about the best way to tackle insecurity. In many cases, the state does not have a legitimate monopoly of violence and certainly not over the entire territory, and where there is provision, it often abuses rather than protects the population.

In some contexts, the crisis has led to the *emergence of parallel communities* where coercion is exercised outside the institutional framework of the state. This is the case even where states are relatively strong (e.g. Brazil) as well as where they are weak (e.g. Guatemala). In these communities the state is not normally capable of providing basic services, including security, and its intervention is often intermittent, reactive and disciplinary rather than protective. One of the characteristics of these parallel communities is that state institutions such as the police are not the main, best equipped, or even desirable providers of protection. Alternative actors often connected to lucrative illegal or informal economic activities replace the state and often act interchangeably as coercive ‘protectors’ for some sectors of the population, creating protection rackets.

In these communities, the state–society relationship is often characterised by mutual distrust and even resentment. One of the most critical examples of areas where coercive

protection is provided outside the institutional frontier of the state is the case of Comuna 13 in Medellín, the second biggest city of Colombia. For more than three decades, armed groups have fought for the control of this area. Citizens living there have demanded protection from the violent domination exerted by the armed groups, including threats, murders, massacres and forced displacement. Their desperate demands for protection have been temporarily met by successive armed groups that replace their opponents, only to use similar techniques in their attempt to exterminate them and to gain control of the territory and of their people.

It was not until 2002 that the state attempted to retake control through a military operation. Given the excessive violence used, this state intervention was initially difficult to differentiate from the many other interventions by coercive actors in the past. However, Operación Orion, as it was called, has been seen as a successful step towards the pacification of the Comuna 13. Nevertheless, six years later it is evident that the intervention has not managed to remove the deep causes of violence in the Comuna. It is not yet clear whether the state is the only effective provider of security in the area, or the reduction in the number of crimes is due to a deep transformation in the community. Although the local government has tried to reform traditional politics, supported the demobilisation of former combatants and opened spaces to local participation, in terms of security, the police and other state bodies still do not have absolute control over the situation. There are powerful actors in the city who people still fear, who provide some sort of order and decide the fate of whoever is seen as a threat to their interests.

The crisis in security provision makes more problematic the *lack of connection between the state’s objectives and local communities’ needs*. In the context of violence, communities need to be protected and helped to build more secure environments. However, public security provision tends to focus on eliminating enemies or competitors to state territorial control and not on mitigating the perverse effects of insecurity and violence on people’s lives. Sometimes the methods used by the police and military forces increased unrest, fear and insecurity among the local population. Lack of communication between communities and police institutions not only makes it harder

to identify priorities for responsive security provision but also detracts from the legitimacy of the methods used by the state in 'securing or pacifying' dangerous areas.

In Colombia in 1994, surveys were carried out to ask citizens their views on the service provided by the police, which revealed systematic distancing between the police and local communities. Recognition of this has, in some cases, promoted the implementation of community-policing approaches. These contain seeds of an alternative way of seeing public provision, as measured, for instance, by whether people feel secure, rather than the number of criminals arrested. However, in practice, community police are often not valued by the rest of the police, undermining the trust in them. In Medellin, we found that the community police were seen as the 'soft' even 'feminised' side of the hard, masculine and 'real' policeman's work; their reputation was useful when police colleagues were needed to be deployed in the community or gather intelligence, but it then eroded when community police were included in police military style operations (Abello Colak and Pearce 2008).

Another symptom of the crisis is the *exaggerated social expectation from applying hardline measures*. Given the desperation for relief from insecurity, many groups are not only adopting aggressive attitudes towards crime but are also supporting a more aggressive state response towards insecurity problems. Hardline responses are focused on increasing police patrols and attacks on 'dangerous areas' and are implemented by targeting 'suspicious individuals'. In Central America, where the problem of gangs is out of hand, responses have included increasing sentences, reducing the age limit for arrests in order to prosecute younger offenders, and enabling police to arrest people on suspicion of belonging to a gang. In some cases, having a tattoo has become a determining factor for being arrested. Other responses have been urban military operations on areas seen as dangerous, like those carried out in Colombia and Chiapas, Mexico, with summary executions as the outcome.

Hardline measures give rise to three sets of problems: (1) they exacerbate social tensions through their reactive and punitive targeting of certain social groups 'problematic communities'; (2) they deepen existing gaps between the level

of protection that different sectors of society receive from the state; and (3) they delay reforms to security provision that could make it more preventive and less reactive, and impede dealing with fundamental problems. As the case of Medellin shows, hardline measures can give the initial impression that the state is tackling the security problems, but they cannot prevent future violence. Rather, a tense calm is created until new groups emerge.

From a citizen's perspective, public security is failing, especially in the most violent contexts and where protection from physical attack is needed. However, security remains important to the survival of citizens and communities, and some responses to the crisis have emerged. Some of these are *led by the market for protection and the commoditisation of security*, others are responses *led by communities* and others are responses *led by international donor agencies*. In the next section we explore the main features of these responses and their limitations.

3 Responses to the crisis in security provision

3.1 Market-led initiatives

One of the most lucrative businesses, in the context of violence, is the provision of security. The market for protection is growing and becoming highly competitive. A growing number of private companies are offering protection to national and multinational businesses, banks and individuals. The privatisation of security is not an exclusive phenomenon of the global South. In the European Union, Canada and Austria, the number of private guards has already exceeded the number of police officers (Richani 2002).

However, in the context of chronic violence, leaving security in the hands of the market runs a greater risk. The creation of a private space for the profitable provision of security can be easily manipulated by powerful coercive actors. In some cases, the state supervises the process, but not in ways that are democratically accountable or transparent. One example is the experience of Las Convivir created in Colombia. These were private forms of security, supervised and authorised by the state with around 9,633 men. In rural areas they were quickly controlled by powerful elites and narco-businesses to serve their interests and to cover more vicious forms of private security already in place, like paramilitary forces. In highly insecure contexts it is very

difficult for a weak state to ensure that criminal actors do not co-opt the very lucrative private security business. By profiting from insecurity, the latter can also further undermine the state's capacity to improve public provision. In Colombia, almost \$150 million annually is being spent on private security (Richani 2002: 92); money which could finance better police forces through taxes and to improve the public security sector.

The other problem with the privatisation of security is that protection becomes a commodity and even a privilege. Deciding what is punishable, what is worth protecting, by what means and based on which values cannot be the result of a decision left to the market or private interests. Whoever is capable of providing security in a given society is also entrusted with power and has leverage to impose a specific social order by managing social conflict and deciding what is acceptable or punishable. In Colombia, this means that paramilitary groups, even ones which have officially been demobilised, often impose rigid social norms around dress and behaviour in the areas they control. Similar patterns have been found in other areas of the world where community authority is under *de facto* paramilitary, militias or drugs lord control. It is the poorest communities that are most exposed.

3.2 Community-led initiatives

There are other responses originating in *community initiatives*. Some are based on traditional indigenous values and on a long history of local conflict management within communities. Some of these traditional forms of justice and conflict management may conflict with Western values and understandings of the state. Customary law is sometimes in tension with state justice and security, with mutual denials of legitimacy, while elsewhere customary law and state institutions may coexist with customary law acknowledged and recognised by the state. These forms of justice provision are sometimes the only available forms of security in violent contexts and need to be recognised. They respond to the immediate concern of how to create some sort of immediate order and seem to be good at responding to local needs. However, they may also be rigid and reproduce traditional discriminations on ethnic or gender lines. It is important to explore the values behind them, how they respond to minority rights and what kind of relation they can have with the state.

There are other more extreme community responses to wrongdoing, such as street justice and lynchings in rural (and sometimes urban) communities in countries like Guatemala. These highlight in a dramatic way, the extent of the failure of security and justice provision, as well as how the sense of abandonment in communities can lead to even more violence. In the end, such kinds of responses leave communities vulnerable to manipulation and facilitate their stigmatisation by other sectors of society that consider them savage, primitive and ignorant.

We would like to highlight, however, that sometimes other (more positive) forms of community-led responses to violence can emerge. We have witnessed how people can organise themselves and stand up to violence in countries like Colombia and Guatemala, where civil society organisations have tried to create spaces for action that delegitimise violent actors (Pearce 2007b). There are numerous examples of how civil society participation is promoting social change, fostering municipal development initiatives and improving women's capacity to participate and to challenge political and social violence.

Greater participation does not immediately or automatically translate into a change in security provision, but it affects the way in which state and society interact – potentially affecting assumptions about what the state should do and protect and, in consequence, about the kind of state that is being constructed. Community and civil society participation is prompted by the desire to defend fundamental rights and to empower people to act against conditions that are seen as life or livelihood threatening. Such participation can help to build public opinion, to disseminate a sense of rights, to encourage people to challenge the *status quo* and to engage citizens in addressing issues of security, human rights and the rule of law (Pearce 2007b).

3.3 International donor agency-led initiatives

The third kind of response to the crisis in security provision is *led by donor agencies* through their support to security sector reforms (SSRs). Their focus is on state institutional transformation. Such reforms, however, suffer from their lack of local embeddedness. In some cases, like in Guatemala, they have had qualified success in fostering cooperation between civil society organisations and state institutions in designing

security policy (although in a weak state context, such as Guatemala, this does not easily impact on actual public security provision). But this does not mean a better connection between the state and the wider society (Pearce 2006). In fact, civil society organisations have tended to become less responsive to the needs of local communities, especially in rural areas. SSRs have focused more on training and adoption of new values by police and military institutions, but less on supporting communities and citizens to gain their own understanding of issues and build their own consensus on the kind of security they need.

In sum, none of the three responses discussed totally addresses the problem. Security provision needs to be based on agreed norms compatible with universal values, equitably provided and should be responsive to local needs. Some community-led responses are trying to tackle the issue of lack of effective provision and draw on indigenous values. However, they cannot respond to the complex challenges and problems that create insecurity in this century without improved state provision. To tackle insecurity today, it is necessary to develop robust political commitment, strong anti-corruption enforcement to prevent mafias from permeating institutions and urgent attention to the socioeconomic contexts of insecurity.

4 Rethinking ‘security from below’

We suggest, therefore, that we need to progress beyond these different modes of crisis response, and reaffirm that security be regarded and provided as a *public service!* The idea of rethinking ‘security from below’ is not a suggestion for the replacement of the state. The latter is still the only actor that could guarantee that public goods and services are provided, and not sold or administered according to the rational choice logic that guides markets. ‘Security from below’ is a call to increase the capacity of people to think about their security and to define collectively the values and norms that should inform state provision. It is a call to find ways to increase accountability of the state, not to foreign investors or economic elites, but to common citizens. It is also an attempt to increase the capacity of communities and local level actors to articulate their demands for a better security provision under democratic principles in which security must be at the heart of all struggles for equitable development and social justice.

In order to rethink security and to develop new practices, academic research on security needs to develop a better understanding of the daily experiences of victims of insecurity and also of police officers working in contexts of violence. The analysis of security provision requires research that is commensurate with the complex reality on the ground. To help people to think about the norms and values which should serve as foundations for public provision of security and to improve their capacity to control it, it is necessary to get closer to people’s everyday lives in violent contexts and to the difficult work of police officers and other state officials in such contexts. While there are many abusive and corrupt officers, our work with the community police in Medellin suggested that many are devoted to public and community service but that the prevailing police structures are a disincentive to their endeavour.

We believe that research methodologies involving people in the co-production of knowledge⁶ in the field of security could help to increase the possibilities of articulating alternative visions of security that are locally relevant and that can have an impact on public institutions. Action research can also have an impact on society’s capacity, as well as on state willingness to agree on norms and values for a more efficient form of security provision.

Encouraging people to think about their security can enable problem areas to be recognised and addressed: for example, the fact that men and women, old, poor and privileged experience insecurity in different ways, means that provision should be adapted to particular needs. People can also be encouraged to think of which local values or local capacities can inform public security policies; in some cases this will include indigenous ways of conflict management. Mainstream approaches could learn from some of these time-honoured experiences.

The greater intensity with which insecurity affects people’s lives demands new thinking and new practices. The idea of ‘security from below’ could help state institutions to open channels to communicate with communities and to respond to local needs. There are examples of how opening institutional and political spaces for participation encourages civil and community actors to communicate differently with the state and to build better oversight of state institutions.

In Medellín for example, advances have been made with monitoring mechanisms for the municipal development plan that allow social organisations and the private sector to have a say in the municipal planning process. Such accountability mechanisms could be adapted and extended to security issues. Of course, this would require a cooperative attitude from the state and support from political authorities. Such was the case in Medellín, with the election of independent Mayor Fajardo and the use of the constitutional recognition of participatory planning systems achieved in Colombia in 1991.

We hope that the idea of ‘security from below’ can encourage academics, authorities, communities and civil society organisations to think about security in a different way. We also hope it can help the latter to articulate their needs from the perspective of their lived experiences. They need to participate in debate about the local and universal values that should inform policing approaches and state responses. Nevertheless some civil society organisations resist participation in debates about security; they see security as the domain of the conservative political right that is more interested in preserving social order than in social change. Resistance from within state security institutions can also be expected. These attitudes need to be overcome so that people with agendas for social change take the security dimensions of these agendas seriously and help to strengthen a public provision which will guarantee freedom to challenge the *status quo* by democratic means.

5 Conclusion

We stress the need to recognise that security is something more than eliminating threats to human and social life. It is a public service that should be fairly and *effectively* provided by the

state through *mechanisms that guarantee the peaceful management of social conflict and the de-escalation of violence*. These mechanisms should comply with three requirements: *they should be informed by universal as well as local values and respectful of human rights; they should be agreed by society and responsive to local needs and they should not create more fear or insecurity among populations*. ‘Security from below’ has nothing to do with vigilantism or *de facto* civilian responses to their insecurity.

In the context of complex urban and rural violence, accountable, effective and inclusive public security, which does not create more fear in its implementation, is a vital component in enabling the poorest to rebuild their communities and reduce the violence within them. The lack of basic physical security is an impediment to social change and progress in the poorest communities of the global South and the North that affects the lives of all in society. Daily violence and crime affect human interactions, democratic participation and public life. These problems are increasingly affecting neighbourhoods and communities, and they are linked to global dynamics as well as national and local problems. In the face of inadequate and inefficient forms of public security provision, new forms of provision will continue to appear, some of them in the form of a lucrative business, and not driven by social public interest.

We hope that the development of ‘security from below’ thinking and practice can help to prevent the manipulation of people’s fear and desire for protection for political or economic purposes. It focuses our attention on the lived experiences of insecurity and how people can shape their security on the basis of their own needs as well as universal norms, and be empowered to demand it from the state.

Notes

- 1 This was the term used in the Colloquium for Global Security Transformation, which took place in Sri Lanka in September 2007.
- 2 By chronic violence we refer to the context in which rates of violent death are at least twice the average for high- and low-income countries, respectively; where these levels are sustained for five years or more and where frequent acts of violence are recorded across several socialisation spaces, including the

household, the neighbourhood, the school, intercommunity and the nation-state (including disproportionate acts of violence attributed to state security forces) (Pearce 2007b).

- 3 The Final Report ‘Human Security Now’ published by the Commission on Human Security in 2003 is a good example of how the problems of the global South are reshaping the security agenda. It identifies six critical issues on human security: protecting people caught

- up in violent conflict, protecting people on the run, especially migrant and displaced populations, protecting people in countries recovering from violent conflict, protecting people from poverty, recognising the link between health and security and guaranteeing access to basic education and knowledge.
- 4 Although there are variations across the region, the general tendency has been towards increased violence and the countries with the highest homicide rates are El Salvador, where the number of deaths per year in the 1990s exceeded the average during the war in the 1980s, Colombia, Venezuela and Brazil.
 - 5 Young men in particular are affected by lack of self-esteem (Pearce 2007b). On gender issues in violence, see Pearce (2007a).
 - 6 Co-producing knowledge recognises different kinds of knowledge that can be brought to bear on a problem and engages thinkers and practitioners in a joint endeavour to develop new knowledge relevant to context. Different kinds of knowledge range from the academic forms of propositional and analytical knowledge to the experiential knowledge of actors in their contexts.

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Editor Robin Luckham



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Gendering the New Security Paradigm in Sri Lanka

Neloufer de Mel

Abstract This article points to the significant military turn that has taken place in Sri Lanka following the armed conflict between the Sri Lanka government forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). It is particularly concerned with the impacts on gender relations and how the lines between women's insecurity and militarised masculinity have been redrawn and reinforced. It argues that these gender relations can be seen in sharp relief in the country's Free Trade Zones, where young rural women in the garment industry and young rural men who join the military meet, and where features of transnational labour, violence against women, law and the state combine to reinforce globalisation and militarisation as the twin rationalities upon which national security regimes and the global order rest today. The article discusses resistances to this paradigm, and assesses their successes and failures in the context of how security is currently marketed as a public good and militarism as a path to the 'good life'. It concludes by pointing to how these constructions have elicited consent on the part of a significant segment of Sri Lankan society to the militarisation of its society as a whole.

1 Introduction

It is a curious fact that in June 2003, 20 years into Sri Lanka's armed conflict, the country's military leadership chose to introduce their forces as 'ceremonial institutions since independence'.¹ Today, such a narrative is no longer tenable or desirable. How do we understand this change and what issues does it foreground particularly on gender and security in Sri Lanka? That the narrative of ceremoniality is heard less often reflects a military turn in the country, which complements the determination of both the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for a decisive 'final battle' that will end the 25-year war. It also points to the significant shifts that have taken place in the Sri Lankan military, its current ethos as a hardened and modernised fighting force, and its central role in the nation's imaginary. In the emerging security regime driven by these forces, there is a vivid interplay of security and gender: of masculinised militarism and gendered insecurity that have their corollary in violence against women and the marginalisation of women's labour. This article explores these issues, first by marking the new

security paradigm in Sri Lanka, and second by examining the Free Trade Zones in the south of the country where the feminisation of labour and masculinisation of security concur, and where security is marketed as a public good in a manner which elicits consent for the militarisation of society as a whole. The 'social imaginary' that results is constitutive, in turn, of deeply gendered fault lines.

2 The Sri Lanka military: entangled temporalities, multiple identities

The popular narrative of the Sri Lanka military as a ceremonial institution until the first Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP)² insurrection in 1971 and more pertinently until the 1983 separatist war, denies its true antecedents. During British colonial rule, security in Ceylon rested on a volunteer rather than regular armed force. But this volunteer force was called out on many instances to quell anti-British 'riots' as in 1818, 1848 and 1915. In 1915 in the aftermath of Sinhala-Muslim clashes and anti-colonial agitation, the military was incorporated as a unit of utmost value when martial law was declared. The regular force of the Sri Lanka Army came

into effect in 1949, one year after independence. Almost immediately, whether in its first operational role of preventing an influx of 'illicit' immigrants from India in 1952 or in containing anti-state dissent in the hartal of 1953, the agitation at Gal Oya in 1956, or the Emergency of 1958, its engagement in securing Sri Lanka's borders and the state brought it face to face with Tamil dissent. During the Emergency of 1958 precipitated by Sinhala–Tamil clashes, the military was under state orders to 'shoot and shoot to kill' (Vittachi 1958: 55–6). This was also the first time in an independent Sri Lanka that military officers were gazetted as coordinating officers of provinces, thereby superseding the government agents of those provinces who were drawn from the civil service (SLAC 1999: 102).

Given this show of force, which continued into the 1960s,³ what made it possible to represent the Sri Lanka military as ceremonial? Until the first JVP insurrection of 1971, the security forces were not meaningfully modernised (SLAC 1999: 300), and not until after 1983 and the 1987–9 second JVP insurrection had it to face organised armed combatants on a significant scale. One could argue therefore that the description of ceremoniality carried the trace of non-combat. But the use and exchange value of this term (primarily by those in power rather than by those oppressed by the military), point to far more complex structural features, which underpin militaries today.

One such feature is of the multiple temporalities and identities that modern militaries inhabit. In Sri Lanka, although deployed as a tool of social and political control, the military did not automatically enjoy superiority over civilian authority until relatively recently. There were instances of deference to civilian power even at heightened moments of military engagement, which underscored the army's commitment to democratic constitutionality. For example, during the Emergency of 1958, despite the powers it vested on the military, faced with a 3,000-strong crowd, the commander of the army unit in Pollonnaruwa requested written permission first from the government agent to open fire before ordering his men to do so (Vittachi 1958: 43). In 1962, following the abortive coup, the army leadership distanced itself from the rebel faction within it, acknowledged damage to its reputation and

initiated public image-building exercises to restore confidence in the institution (SLAC 1999: 163).⁴ Much later, in 1989 when a Major General wanted the Ops Combine to be centralised under his sole authority in order to effectively fight the JVP, his request was granted but not without 'some delay and exchange of letters' (Chandraprema 1991: 301). Such actions enabled the army, even as it resorted to hardline tactics against the rebel JVP and LTTE, to simultaneously inhabit multiple registers of discourse and when required, trace a ceremonial history, assert its commitment to the constitution and draw attention to its leadership as 'officers and gentlemen'. It thereby also forwarded a gendered ethos, which privileged elite males and masculinity.

In such state–military relations, the military became both central and auxiliary to the purposes of governments, available for battle and a return to barracks.⁵ It was permitted to think of itself on dual registers: as honourable men who safeguarded the constitution and deferred to elected civilian authority, and as combatants who dirtied their hands in battle, which allowed the ordinary soldier as much of a chance as the elite officer to become a *Rana Viru* or War Hero. Even as its excesses in exterminating insurgency and separatism were ignored and/or actively promoted, the Sri Lanka military was encouraged to embrace a humanitarian vocabulary central to the moulding of modern, professional militaries today (Kennedy 2004: 268). This has not meant, as David Kennedy notes, that we cannot 'often tell who is speaking ... as if a tune were being played in slightly different keys. We can hear the voice of victory and the voice of virtue' (Kennedy 2004: 282). But the multiple registers and entangled temporalities the military inhabits as it conjures up both ceremoniality and martial valour, both humanitarian outlook and militarised efficiency, are important to note. They provide an understanding of militarisation as a dynamic process in which the military can be marketed in different ways all containing traces that, together with contingency, can play a part in how the current military turn in Sri Lanka intensifies or abates.

3 The military turn

Sri Lanka's current security regime is boosted by an absence of serious political will towards a negotiated settlement to the ethnic conflict.

Inevitably state–military relations have moved closer towards installing states of exception as the norm. The military turn is one of its effects, particularly evident in the eastern province after the victory for government forces at Thoppigala.⁶ Martial law was not declared, but the Sri Lanka army was empowered to act for the state. In July 2007, the military commander of the eastern province notified local civil administrators that his office ‘would have the final say on which humanitarian and development NGOs [non-governmental organisations] were allowed to work in the areas recently re-taken from the LTTE’ (ICG 2008). Ministry of Defence approval had to be obtained prior to all visits by international NGOs to the east. Similarly in Jaffna (as well as portions of the eastern province recaptured from the LTTE) the Sri Lanka military issued its own photo identification card which residents are required to carry in addition to the standard national identity card (NIC).⁷ In tandem with such developments, the LTTE also commanded a significant presence within civilian institutions in areas it controlled. Two or more LTTE operatives functioned as *grama sevakas* (village administrators) in each village in full possession of details of all households, etc. by virtue of their office (Jeyaraj 2007a: 6). What is evident here is a constitutive characteristic that Achille Mbembe noted of the post-colony: of a ‘form of government [which] forces features belonging to the realm of warfare and features proper to the conduct of civil policy to coexist in a single dynamic’ (Mbembe 2001: 74).

4 Life and law in the free trade zones

The free trade zones (FTZs) in the south of Sri Lanka are sites where this particular form of governance, in which national security and public policy are sutured into violence, militarised surveillance and coercion, take on particularly gendered forms. The FTZs are where many of the garment factories under Sri Lanka’s Garment Factory Program (GFP) are situated. The GFP was inaugurated in 1992 as a response to unemployment, poverty and male youth unrest that led to the second JVP insurrection of 1987–9. Despite its initial objective to provide employment to rural Sri Lankan male youth, President R. Premadasa mandated that each factory should employ 450 women and 50 men (Lynch 2004: 170).⁸ Consequently, significant numbers of rural Sri Lankan women began working in the semi-urban FTZ garment

factories. Epitomising the feminisation of labour, enduring oppressive work and living conditions, which approximate, according to one female worker, a ‘slave camp’ (Hewamanne and Brow 2001: 21), these women suffer alienation and social stigma. Commonly referred to as ‘garment girls’ or *juki kello*,⁹ they are accorded diminutives that refuse to recognise them as members of a significant political community. Such a politics of recognition has led to the FTZ women being constituted primarily as sexualised subjects. In turn they have elicited public disapproval amounting to a ‘moral panic’ at the transformations that have taken place in their lives as a result of migration from the villages and their financial independence, etc. The ‘garment girls’ became subjects of derision, and in the 1990s were the pivot around which taunts and rejoinders about Sri Lanka’s insertion into a transnational economy were publicly bandied and a moral politics on the degradation of young Sinhala Buddhist women under neoliberalism launched (Lynch 2007: 91–120, 2004: 113–16).

Attempting to survive the cycle of poverty and harsh labour, the FTZ women often look to relationships with army men, popularly referred to as the ‘army boys’. This diminutive however, unlike the ‘garment girls’, is a term of affection. Moreover, as *Rana Viru* (War Heroes), these military men are vested with tremendous social capital that the women do not enjoy. Although the women contribute in large measure to the nation’s foreign exchange earnings, because the men are entrusted with its security during times of war, they are accorded hyper-recognition in a militarised public sphere at the expense of the women whose labour remains unrecognised and undervalued. This is a gendered hierarchy endorsed by the military itself, which accepts that it is the *duty* of these women to serve and nurture military men. It is common practice for military vehicles to drop off male soldiers after hours at garment factories, positioning garment factory women as extensions of camp followers. In turn, the women often look to the military men and their socioeconomic status as paths towards their own upward social mobility. Their gendered insecurity feeds into a paradigm where the militarised male is looked upon as the protector and provider of security even as the women suffer domestic violence, unwanted pregnancies and rejection at the hands of these men. These experiences, depicted forcefully in

Sinhala language films, such as Asoka Handagama's *Me Mage Sandai* (This is My Moon) (2001), Satyajith Maitipe's *Bora Diya Pokuna* (Scent of the Lotus Pond) (2003) and Inoka Satyangani's *Sulang Kirilli* (Maidens of the Wind) (2002) provide vivid examples of the fraught entanglements of security, gender, life and law within the FTZs.

The women respond to their condition in complex ways. On the one hand they sport a subversive deportment that flaunts their garment factory worker status in the face of public denigration (Hewamanne 2003: 76–80, 2008a: 179). On the other, they demonstrate docility and compliance, which affirm their suitability as marriage partners (Hewamanne and Brow 2001: 22). Forming relationships with military men and seeking militarised protection is also a way in which the FTZ women attempt to evade the gendered violence and verbal abuse often directed at them in public. These relationships with military men reflexively confer on the women a 'respectability' within a social imaginary that allots value to martial virtue, patriotism and duty during times of war. Citing examples of how women workers observed two minutes of silence on a factory floor for their brothers and boyfriends in the military, despite objections from the factory supervisor, trips to Buddhist temples to invoke blessings on the army, and their relationships with military men, these women become in effect 'good women' by offering support to men on the battlefield (Hewamanne 2008b).

Such a repertoire of activities, including the strategic use of a legitimising narrative on patriotism towards an act of resistance on the factory floor, enables the women to reconcile the tension between their stigmatised reputations and dutifulness as citizens in times of war (Hewamanne 2008b). They endorse a social imaginary towards a sense of the common good (Taylor 2004: 23). That this common good is sutured into militarism, and that the women's resistance incorporates forms of desire that accept the authority of militarisation, illustrate Saba Mahmood's argument that in locating women's agency, 'it is important to interrogate the practical and conceptual conditions under which different forms of desire emerge, including desire for submission to recognised authority' (Mahmood 2005: 15). The popular construction

of FTZ women as sexualised subjects constitutes such a set of conditions under which militarism gains value because of its transactional ability to confer respectability on the FTZ women who display loyalty to military boyfriends, even if it means violence and rejection at their hands. The rejection most often stems from the fact that while military men are happy to have affairs with FTZ women, they do not see them as worthy marriage partners, preferring instead to choose wives from a pool of women who work as school teachers and/or public servants and thereby enjoy social prestige.

The impermanent nature of these relationships resonates with the sense of alienation and transience that characterises FTZ life (Abeysekera 2005: 24–5). Given the conditions of labour, the FTZ women view the factory work as temporary.¹⁰ Under the constant threat of summons to the battlefield, mobility also characterises the sojourn of the army men. But it is precisely this fluidity and the absence of familial structures and surveillance of the village that affords them the opportunity of new relationships. The women also form close friendships with other women workers who are lodged in the same boarding houses, while camaraderie as a valued principle of a military corps encourages the army men to develop close masculine bonds with military colleagues. In a context where traditional labour unions have been weakened, alternative ways of organising labour provided by women's groups, drop-in centres and self-awareness/education centres within the FTZ also encourage the women into new forms of membership and socialite. Yet, there also exists a tension between regularity and provisionality. The very open-endedness of the outcomes of these collaborations holds forms of 'not knowing [which] is where the notion of uncertainty lies and uncertainty is how risk is shaped' (Patel 2007: 103). Exactly how risk, gendered insecurity and their corollary in violence are experienced in the 'everyday' by these FTZ women was brought out starkly with the rape and murder of 22-year-old garment factory worker Chamila Dissanaika, and its aftermath.

The Chamila Dissanaika case highlights the extent of the security dilemma faced by FTZ women when their personal security has been eroded by the very public institutions charged

with safeguarding it. Chamila, who sought treatment at the Negombo base hospital, the main public medical facility available to FTZ women working in the Seeduwa area, was raped by the doctor she consulted, dragged through a corridor and flung out of a sixth floor window to her death. In the aftermath of this crime, a web of authority functioned to sanction violence against FTZ women. It was learnt that the doctor had a history of sexually abusing women to which the authorities had turned a blind eye (Jayasinghe 2007). Thereafter a janitor who had worked for five years at the hospital and had witnessed the doctor drag Chamila along the corridor, was dismissed from her job.

This prompted several waves of protest by FTZ workers. A thousand-strong crowd participated in a demonstration three days later that was to end at the hospital but was stopped by the police at Mal Farm junction (Lankadeepa 2006; Silumina 2006). Following the janitor's dismissal from her job, the FTZ and General Services Employees Union launched a campaign of protest. Her dismissal not only resonated with job insecurity as a general condition for women working within the FTZ, but it was also recognised as a move to obstruct justice. The doctor, who had been remanded and had attempted suicide in his cell, had later been warded at a mental health institution and deemed unfit for trial. All of this prompted the FTZ and General Services Employees Union to call in a letter for a public demonstration by FTZ women on 8 March 2008, International Women's Day, to highlight the issues of the Chamila case, the public image (*samaja garuthwaya*) of FTZ women and their gendered insecurity (*anaarakshithabhavaya*). In an interview with the BBC Sinhala *Sandeshaya* service, one of Chamila's friends linked the systemic devaluing of FTZ women's labour and violence against women and stated bitterly 'We are treated like toys. That is why my friend faced an unfortunate death. Society should take action to prevent these things happen[ing] to us. We contribute to [the] Sri Lankan economy and we deserve better recognition and respect'.¹¹

Despite these waves of anger and protest, the twin rationalities of globalisation and militarisation, which animate the FTZs and the masculinised patriarchies they endorse, work to rein in the necessary female workforce. But on what terms is such a potentially volatile

workforce kept in check and secured? To begin with, the many instances of women's 'consent to patriarchies' as Kumkum Sangari notes, 'is often an effect of the *anticipation* of violence, or the guarantee of violence in the last instance – to ensure obedience, inculcate submission, punish transgression' (Sangari 2008: 3, my emphasis). This enables 'Patriarchies [to] rest equally on consent by women, violence against women, and on legitimating ideologies' (Sangari 2008: 3). What are these legitimating ideologies that work to elicit women's consent to the *status quo* even as they organise against its sanction of gender-based violence? Foremost is the promise of the 'good life' within neoliberal promise, which depends, to quote Sangari, 'on *both* active consumers and a docile labour force' (Sangari 2008: 17). And if, as Chandra Mohanty noted, 'global assembly lines are as much about the production of people as they are about 'providing jobs' or making profit' (Mohanty 2003: 141), then this 'production of people' is about shaping a social imaginary that, within the context of the Sri Lankan FTZs, entices women into a Faustian pact with militarism.

5 Militarism and the good life

What are the terms of this bargain? And how does the state mediate and monitor its contract imbricating the good life and militarism as two public goods that in turn conjure a powerful new social imaginary? If Shakespeare's Prospero (the archetype imperialist) provides clues to how the modern state 'oscillates' as Veena Das notes, 'between a rational mode and a magical mode of being' (Das 2006: 162), Achille Mbembe points to mechanisms such as salary and privilege in a postcolonial state as '*gift* [s], when examined closely, allocated for the purpose of institutionalising a form of domination having its own rationality' (Mbembe 2001: 54, my emphasis). The social and economic capital enjoyed by military men in Sri Lanka is a direct effect of such 'gifts' or allotments by a state fully committed to the war effort. Reports that civilian men pose as military ones to seduce FTZ women (Pereira and de Silva 2007: 10) highlight the currency Sri Lankan military men enjoy over their civilian counterparts. In an economy characterised by a shrinking public sector, the expansion of the military complex is the exception. Salaries within it are attractive. As of 2007, a private in the Sri Lanka army enjoyed a basic pay of SL Rs12,000/month, rising with

additional allowances for uniforms, service in the operational areas, and frontline activities, the take-home salary is approximately SL Rs17,000–20,000/month. This is a high salary for those from rural backgrounds, and importantly, a steady income, paid to the soldier even if disabled in war, and to his widow and dependants if he dies in action. The FTZ women who aspire to be military wives know that the military income and the pensionable service they are part of would give them an economic edge both within rural and semi-urban social structures. The promise of the good life becomes attainable, and loyalty to the military institution becomes inexorably linked to the means by which the good life can be attained.

For a cash-strapped government faced with a huge debt burden as a result of borrowing largely to finance the war,¹² there are other mechanisms of ‘transfers, reciprocity and obligations’ which it can dispense towards social control (Mbembe 2001: 75) and the construction of ‘a common material imaginary’ (Mbembe 2001: 55). The 2006/523 government circular on Admission to Grade One in government schools which provide free education is an example. The circular attracted widespread controversy and provoked a tussle between the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka, parliament and the cabinet. It brought into play the alumni of powerful national schools, the Lanka Teachers’ Union, educationists, school administrators and the media. Yet in the contest over the allotment of points to different categories – school alumni, professional parents, residential address, child’s aptitude, etc. – the maximum of ten points granted to children of parents in the military was not seriously questioned either in the petitions to court or the parliament, and only meagerly so in the media. Under previous schemes, five seats per class were held for the children of security personnel (Hettiarachchi *et al.* 2007: 1). Awarding ten points to each eligible military parent meant, therefore, a dramatic increase in their capacity to enrol their children in the best national schools providing free education. The procedures they had to follow also conferred greater authority on the defence establishment charged with vetting and endorsing the applications.

An emerging but already significant social imaginary in Sri Lanka today has therefore installed militarism and the good life as two

public goods, twin rationalities that animate factory floors, privileges and allotments, life and the law. If a new kind of politics in which the voice of virtue became central in eighteenth century European social imaginaries and had fused self-love with love of country (Taylor 2004: 121), a parallel can be seen in Sri Lanka where security is currently marketed as a public good, and martial virtue folds into a promise of the good life uniting both individual and collective desire. These combined forces transact, in turn, acquiescence to gendered violence in sites such as the FTZs.¹³

A reordering of Sri Lankan society is therefore under way, pointing to the entanglement of militarisation, martial virtue, nationalism, transnational capital, and gendered violence as structural features of its social imaginary. The army’s recent successes have bestowed on it an unprecedented aura as a successful and significant agent of a new, emerging Sri Lankan nationhood. It is likely therefore that in the short term at least, the army and its strategists will play a major role in the country’s political sphere and that its soldiers will continue to enjoy socioeconomic capital. However, whether the military will continue in this role is contingent on many factors, including future LTTE strategy. For instance, if the war morphs into long-term, low-level guerrilla skirmishes, this will impact on the army’s current public profile and growth. By foregrounding the Sri Lanka military not as a monolithic but complex institution that has continuously occupied several identities, this article has attempted to show that it is a partner in a far more complex state–military relationship than the one usually assumed; and that these identities carry traces which can be called upon to determine how the current military turn in Sri Lanka will unfold. At the same time, Sri Lanka’s insertion into global capital ensures that its national security regime will continue to protect transnational capital. A compliant labour force that is also consumer-oriented is necessary for the success of this enterprise. At the heart of this matrix are rural Sri Lankan women who experience gendered violence, social stigma and poor working conditions, yet hold to the promise of a good life which can be secured through and by the military. Whatever the outcome of Sri Lanka’s tragic war, these conditions ensure that ‘the public good’ will continue to be maintained and marketed in military terms.

Notes

- 1 *Sunday Times*, Colombo (6 July 2003), Observation report by the commanders of the Sri Lanka army, navy and air force on the proposed Higher Defence Control Act, p. 11.
- 2 The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (Peoples' Liberation Front) comprised of southern Sri Lankan youth-staged armed insurrections in 1971 and 1987–9.
- 3 The Federal Party's call for a *satyagraha* in Tamil-dominated areas in 1961 resulted in the mobilisation of the army in the north and east, as well as in the tea plantations in the central hills.
- 4 One of the responses was the recruitment of a batch of officers from non-elite Colombo schools, the majority of Sinhala ethnicity (SLAC 1999: 163). Today the identity of the Sri Lanka army is largely Sinhala.
- 5 The return to barracks during the 2002–4 ceasefire was resented by some factions within the military. The attitude of disabled soldiers who voiced bitterness at how their sacrifices had been in vain, marks this mood (de Mel 2007: 144–5) Yet despite such disgruntlement, the military leadership bowed to civilian authority with regard to the ceasefire.
- 6 An official ceremony to celebrate this event was held at Independence Square on 19 July 2007 at which the military chiefs handed over a scroll (*thombu*) to the President, reminiscent of the ceremonies held by Sinhala kings when territory had been conquered.
- 7 In Jaffna, regular roundups by the security forces take place of people aged 17–30 and their NICs are removed. These young people are then instructed to collect their NICs at the nearby camp where they undergo interrogation and repeated scrutiny (Mustaffa 2007: 8).
- 8 This policy reversal points to how women's labour is 'the easiest to cheapen' (Enloe 1989: 159).
- 9 *Juki* is the brand of a sewing machine. In the Sinhala language, *kello* means girls.
- 10 The women rarely work for more than five years in any given FTZ after which they return to their villages (Hewamanne and Brow 2001: 22) or migrate internally elsewhere following marriage.
- 11 www.bbc.co.uk/sinhala/news/story/2007/11/071125_woman.shtml (accessed 11 March 2008).
- 12 The Sri Lanka government entered into a controversial US\$500 million bond issue in the open market to shore up the country's foreign exchange reserves and finance the war. Economists have warned of a massive debt burden which peaked to SL Rs3,016 billion in November 2007, a sum higher than the national income in 2006 (*Nation on Sunday* 2008).
- 13 A parallel took place in LTTE-controlled areas where the LTTE marriage bureau arranged marriages among its cadre to reproduce a militarised group imaginary. These marriages were buttressed by special entitlements that amounted 'almost [to] the creation of a special caste of persons' (Samuel, in press). Recently however, requiring cadre for fighting, the LTTE declared a moratorium on marriages until 40 years of age for men and 35 years for women (Jeyaraj 2007b). During its June 2006 recruitment drive it also annulled marriages already contracted by Tamil villagers to evade conscription (Jeyaraj 2007b). By doing so, the LTTE chose to install its own juridical terms, overriding religious rites and civil law.

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Editor Robin Luckham



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Researching the Gendered Silences of Violence in El Salvador

Mo Hume

Abstract All research on violence is informed by silences. In practical terms, an immediate reading of silence may be that it presents an obstacle for the researcher who is dependent on people who are willing to speak out. Another interpretation of silence is that its presence is central to what we know about violence. Silence and the invisibility of gender in mainstream analyses of violence are closely connected. This article reflects on research in El Salvador, arguing that a critical analysis of violence should directly confront the effects of silence and silencing, particularly as they concern violence against women, which is often separated from 'real' violence. It discusses the excuses and localised rationales that work to silence women's experiences of abuse.

No, you keep quiet because you're afraid, right? For fear of things because you have kids and they are out and about, they go to the [football] pitch to play [...] My son goes to work at night and you know that you can't, well, for fear that they might do something to your [loved ones], you know? So even though, erm, you know things, no one speaks about it because the truth is that with those men, well, you are afraid because they don't mess around before they hurt your family. That's the type of fear that comes from speaking about things, so although you know what's going on, you say nothing because you are afraid.

Anon. woman, Soyapango, 2002

In the above quote, an inhabitant of a low-income community on the outskirts of El Salvador's capital city, San Salvador, uncovers some of the tensions in speaking about violence in her locality. Her words indicate how silence is both productive of and symptomatic of the fear and ever-present threat of violence. All research on violence is informed by silences, whether this is discussed explicitly or not. In practical terms, an immediate reading of silence may be that it presents an obstacle for the researcher who is dependent on people who are willing to speak out. Such a reading positions silence as restricting knowledge about violence and actively undermining efforts to challenge it. While this is certainly the case, a less obvious, but no less pertinent, interpretation of silence is that its

presence is central to what we know about violence. Rather than an obstacle to be surmounted, silence can be a useful starting point from which to generate critical perspectives on and, therefore, challenge normative understandings of violence that appear as unquestionable truths.

Reflecting on two periods of research in El Salvador,¹ I argue that a critical analysis of violence should confront directly the effects of silence and silencing. Informed by central questions of feminism, I explore this issue in three ways. First, I address how institutions undermine not only what we (can) know about violence, but also responses to it. Second, I explore how men deflect attention away from their use of violence by invoking widely accepted excuses and blaming women. This takes us to the final point which argues that as long as men and masculinities remain ignored in most analyses of violence, our knowledge remains limited, and normative understandings of violence that fail to uncritically unpack and problematise its masculinised dimensions are privileged. In other words, it becomes so conventional to speak about (public) violence in terms of murderers, gang members and so on, that the gendered character of the violence merits no scrutiny and is not subject to research. Before I engage in this analysis, I will offer a brief overview of my

approach to the research and introduce some reflections on my understanding of silence.

1 Situating a feminist analysis of silence in El Salvador

El Salvador underwent a brutal civil war from 1980 to 1992 and its peace remains characterised by violence and insecurity. Despite much international focus on the country as a positive example of negotiated resolution of armed conflict, the dividends of 'peace' in El Salvador have been largely 'negative' for the country's poor, since little attention has been paid to addressing structural inequalities and poverty (Pearce 1998). Since the cessation of the war, the country continues to demonstrate one of the highest rates of violent crime in the world (FESPAD 2008). Less visible are the high levels of violence in the home that predominantly affect women and children. There are little reliable data about domestic abuse and sexual crimes, which are characterised by silence and under-reporting. In effect, a separation of violence between public and private spheres renders such violence a public secret. People know it exists, even expect it and accept it. Yet, it is rarely singled out for attention in wider debates on citizen security (Hume 2004), with public discussion limited to the women's movement and international organisations.

It is precisely the invisibility of gender in mainstream analyses of violence – both popular and academic – that shaped my research questions. I worked for a Salvadoran feminist NGO from 1997 until 2000, and witnessing the struggles of women in confronting violence in their public and private lives inspired my research questions. Living in El Salvador, it is impossible to escape the everyday panic about issues of security. People speak about crime constantly and often have a story to tell about personal experiences or those of family members and friends. Caldeira (2000: 19-20) argues that 'talk of crime' produces particular understandings of crime that both reproduce and magnify actual problems. Much of it is implicitly about certain types of crime by certain types of people, reinforcing normative and highly discriminatory understandings of violence. It is almost exclusively about crimes that take place in the public sphere. The more I listened to the stories of my research participants, the more aware I became of the complex and often

conflicting ways in which people spoke about different types of violence in their daily lives. I also became aware of what people did not say and how humour, tears and silence combine in the stories people tell about violence. Listening critically to these discursive practices awakened me to different meanings of violence, and alerted me to the importance of local and euphemistic vocabularies. The exaggeration of specific acts of violence was often juxtaposed with the minimisation of certain behaviours. The degree of harm seemed in many instances to be incidental to the interpretation offered. In the noise about violence and crime, certain versions dominate, leaving little room for alternative stories. The effect of this is to silence marginal voices, such as women, the poor and young people who struggle to find a space to articulate their fears and concerns.

It is against the silencing of particular voices that feminism, post-colonialism and subaltern studies have emerged. These critical research approaches confront the effects of silencing on the way knowledge is produced. Addressing the silencing of women's experiences has been a unifying concern for feminists for decades (Aretxaga 1997).² Widely understood as research 'on women, for women', feminist research has always engaged with and problematised issues of male power and violence. Feminist activists and scholars have campaigned on the importance of naming violence and uncovering its 'hidden' dimensions (Kelly and Radford 1990; Kelly 1988). A central task of this feminist project has been to explode the widely held 'silences' that both inform and limit what we know about violence. It follows, therefore, that it is an essential task for the committed researcher to 'listen' out and think about these in a critical manner. In this vein, I argue here that silence should be understood not just in terms of what is not said but also in terms of how people speak about violence and what they are 'allowed' to say (Foucault 1980: 27).

2 The limits of public knowledge and response: silencing gender

Accessing basic data on violence is a challenge. Accessing data that are disaggregated by gender is even more so. Although both access and quality have improved, data collection on violence is inadequate and different state bodies maintain contradictory databases for each crime (Cruz *et al.* 1999). Although I have found accessing public

registers more straightforward today than even five years ago,³ it remains a challenge to find local or gender-disaggregated data. Accessing basic information is difficult from outside state bodies, but even the sharing of information between agencies cannot be taken for granted. One civil servant spoke of ‘institutional jealousy’ with regard to the sharing of statistics (Interview, October 2007). As in other contexts, the silencing and manipulation of data on violence also serves the political purpose of justifying or limiting certain policy initiatives (Shrader 2001).

Important information is collected at the moment of recording details of a violent incident, but mechanisms to transfer data from local to national levels tend to aggregate basic data on age and gender at the local level, thus losing important details for analysis. For example, Oxfam America (2007) show that information on the sex of the victim in rape cases is often recorded as ‘unknown’. This gap hides important gender dynamics of certain types of violence, and it also contributes to misinformation on the scale of non-lethal violence. Jackson (2006) suggests that research on gender issues is often required to present more evidence than ‘mainstream’ research. If even the most basic evidence is difficult to come by, this makes the task of analysing the gendered dynamics of violence all the more difficult.

Linked to this is the huge problem of under-reporting of crimes, especially gendered violence. Lack of information about rights and processes, misinformation or indeed partisan politics at a local institutional level can have a deterrent effect on citizens reporting violence. One man in Soyapango suggested that for a poor person to report a crime was as futile an exercise as ‘throwing salt into the sea’ (February 2002). A group of women in San Marcos suggest that state agencies are highly partisan, and the degree of attention you receive depends largely on who you know. Even officials acknowledged that it was important to ‘recommend’ women to other institutions in order for them to be treated well (Interviews, October and December 2007). Important here is the perception. The perceived association of personal or party political connections with state agencies silences attempts to access services. In turn, this risks undermining attempts between state and civil society groups to forge pathways out of violence.

Another important obstacle to addressing violence against women is the high level of institutionalised patriarchy that serves to reinforce male impunity. In a focus group in San Marcos (October 2007), women suggested that they face a double threat. Police invoke patriarchal notions of the ‘ideal-type’ family to dissuade women from pressing charges against the ‘father of your children’. In return, men ‘punish’ women for speaking out:

You call the police but all the police do is say ‘so Missus, your husband hit you then? But he’s your husband, the father of your children, are you going to leave your kids without a father? No? OK then, forgive him and let him in’.

Is that what the police say?

Yes, and the husband says: ‘Why did you put the cops on me?’ and beats her up again. That’s the reality; he hits us and we can’t do anything about it.

This vignette exposes how levels of institutional collusion with men actively limit the options available to women. In order to speak out and to challenge these normative, gendered frameworks, women must feel safe. Despite local authorities’ legal remit, the fact that women perceive them as protective of male privilege actively dissuades women from speaking out and seeking justice. The context of wider violence means that local authorities are overwhelmed, under-resourced and unable to cope with the levels of violence in society. A group of women from Soyapango, interviewed in March 2002, indicated that they would not intervene in cases of violence in the home for fear of what might happen to them: ‘We are afraid to call the police because they might see you and thump you’. When I asked a group of women in San Marcos in October 2007 how they respond in cases of violence against women, they replied:

Advise her, give her advice [on what to do].

Advise her? Anything else?

See if the institutions ... orient her, help her.

And if she is a member of your family?

Support her, accompany her too.

And if she is a neighbour?

See what you can do for her; take her to an institution that can help her.

So the community gets involved if there is a case of domestic abuse, everyone realises it is happening?

First you call the police, and then you help her.

One of the most basic lessons of social research is that respondents often offer researchers the answers they think they want to hear, rather than what corresponds to usual practice. The conversation continues:

I have a question, is that what you actually do or is that what you should do?

That is what you should do.

What do you actually do?

The opposite.

And what is the opposite?

You keep quiet.

And why do you keep quiet?

Because of fear, because of shyness, because we don't know that we can help. All of this is because of the lack of trust in the authorities. That is why the battered pregnant woman has to take the first step and not us because if not, we get ourselves in big trouble and they are fine. It's just as the saying goes: between family and a married couple, you don't get involved.

There was a clear distinction between what these women perceive as the 'correct' response and what is actually done in practice. The underlying issue here is the perceived privacy of family life, unfortunately summed up in the popular phrase cited above. Prevailing gendered norms and attitudes have negative implications for both raising awareness of the problem and its prevention. This not only silences women's claims to citizenship but closes down a deeper analysis of the problem that transcends the public/private divide. Speaking out risks getting into 'trouble' and shifts responsibility from perpetrator to victim. It is to issues of responsibility and blame that I now turn.

3 Blame and responsibility

It is not unusual in accounts of violence for narrators to look for someone to 'blame'. Apportioning blame can help make sense of violence, but also works to silence questions of responsibility and accountability. In defence of their own actions, men repeatedly pointed to their mothers as the figures that 'taught' them how to be men. Many of the interviewees' fathers were absent or themselves abusive. In interviews with men, they often referred to women's violence and its role in reproducing machismo. I was concerned that this not only silenced women's experiences and interpretations of violence, but that it invoked a partial reading of the problem. While talking informally to a group of men in El Boulevar, they stated that violence against men was more of a problem than violence against women in the community: 'Here, the women are terrible', they laughed.

Although a flippant remark, the sentiment implicit in the statement caused me to reflect upon how I was approaching the research. After an initial concern with masculinities, I realised that I needed to speak to women in order to achieve a more comprehensive (and critical) analysis. Scheper-Hughes (1995: 411) argues that there is 'little virtue to fake neutrality in the face of the broad political and moral dramas of life and death'. While this may be more an obvious concern in situations of political conflict, it presents a challenge to all research on violence. It is in this vein that Liebling (2001: 428) reminds us that violence talk is a 'constant form of moral discourse' and researchers make judgements. The process of 'judging' violence is far from straightforward and highly subjective, engaging with issues such as rapport, the researcher's own biography and how well the interviewee presents his/her rationale. Elsewhere, I have argued that researchers should not situate themselves outside the process of judgement, but should challenge their own feelings and emotions with regards to the research process (Hume 2007a). We must, as Robben (1995) warns, be aware of the pull of 'anthropological seduction' when research participants try to convince us of their 'rightness'. Apportioning blame to women is not incidental. It is suggestive of a tendency among certain groups to blame others in order to deflect attention from their own use of violence and promote their own rationales. In the case of

violence against women, it is also indicative of social attitudes that trivialise the problem and silence women's own experiences and interpretations. Attitudes that hold women responsible for violence continue to have currency among younger generations. One boy in a school in Soyapango commented in May 2002:

In the whole country there have been a lot of rapes ... even of men, even men are raped and [men] look at women all provocative like because women even wear mini skirts and you can see almost everything and that tempts the man and he goes and f...cks her and worse if he is drunk or on drugs, he grabs her more.

Within this logic, women are to blame because of their dress. Men invoke a range of such strategies to justify and excuse their behaviour. Research that fails to explicitly challenge such attitudes risks reaffirming male power. Cavanagh *et al.* (2001: 695) speak of the 'exculpatory and expiatory discourses' that dominate men's narratives of violence. Central to such narratives is the two-fold objective of 'mitigating and obfuscating culpability while at the same time seeking forgiveness and absolution'. Many interviewees made a distinction between the 'odd slap' and repeated abuse. Key to men's narratives was that they were not the worst. There was usually a case they knew about: a neighbour or friend whose use of violence was more severe. Although some men spoke of the physical and psychological violence they had used, this was often minimised by language – 'problems at home' – or by seeking to explain their behaviour due to the influence of drugs, alcohol or provocation. An important criticism of feminist research on violence is that men impose their own definitions of violence in order to neutralise or minimise women's experience of abuse. Research on women has also highlighted that they too tend to minimise their own subjections to abuse (Kelly and Radford 1990).

As researchers, we must be alert to the power of localised interpretations and be wary of the hegemony of normative explanations. A woman recounts her neighbours' experiences:

Since I have been living here, I know of about three women ... It usually happened because the husband drank. When he came home drunk, he would start to beat her; he threatened her with a machete. I remember one December one of my neighbours came here because

he came home about 10 at night. She arrived all bruised because her husband had been hitting her and my mother had her stay here.

(Anon. woman, San Marcos, December 2008)

None of these women reported the abuse to the authorities. It is a challenge for the researcher, then, to separate issues of blame from issues of cause. It is also essential to challenge the widely accepted 'myths' of violence: the normative understandings of violence that people believe to be true (Hume 2008). It is not uncommon for violence against women to be associated directly with the consumption of alcohol and many men and women in the communities blame alcoholism for violence against women and children. The focus on men's drinking, while clearly a problem, obscures the fact that many men use violence without the 'mitigating' effects of alcohol or drugs (Cavanagh *et al.* 2001). Research shows that out of a total of 361 men who were reported to the authorities, 220 were in a 'normal' condition when they committed violence and 122 had been drinking (Oxfam America 2007: 11). By naming drinking as the cause, alcohol rather than violence becomes the problem. This has particular ramifications for developing strategies to move beyond violence. It also silences the violence embedded in gender relations that marks the experience of many women. Missing from these stories of violence is a critical analysis of men.

4 Missing men: whose voice counts?

During my research, I was struck by the apparent routinisation of violence within the family compared with what policymakers often think of as 'real' violence in the streets. Respondents repeatedly assessed violence against women and children as 'normal'. Although the scale and degree of abuse within families is an obvious area for concern, I found its apparent 'normality' even more disturbing. This is more than a linguistic nuance. The positioning of public violences as separate and different has implications for policy.

Feminists have challenged this arbitrary separation between 'real' violence and violence against women (Stanko 1990). The struggle to have domestic abuse and sexual crimes recognised and legislated against has been a central struggle of feminism, yet there is still an implicit minimisation of the effects of such

violence in relation to its more 'public' forms. The gendered dynamics of 'real' violence are rarely considered in policy debates. Instead, domestic abuse is popularly regarded as 'private' and a problem to be resolved within the context of the family, while the gendered aspects of violence between men is rarely singled out for critical attention.

As in most contexts, in El Salvador it is young men who dominate in statistics of both perpetrators and victims of violence and crime. In the 'talk' of violence, most people seemed to agree that young male gang members were the key protagonists in El Salvador's post-war violence wave (Hume 2007b). Their masculinity and the gendered dimensions of these crimes are rarely problematised, except in specific studies of masculinities (Hearn 1998). While it may be mentioned in passing that youth gangs are predominately made up of young men, this gendered aspect of gang violence is seldom considered worthy of emphasis or analysis (Hume 2007c). Ignoring that men predominate as 'doers' of violence, and also as its principal victims, silences the critical analysis of men's power in relation to women and other men (Hearn 1998).

Throughout the research, men and women alike emphasised that the use and experience of violence appears bound up with dominant notions of what it means to be a man (Hume 2004). Women in a focus group made direct linkages between machismo and violence:

It results in violence against women. Because of their machismo, men think that you can't disrespect them, they lift us up, they push us about, they beat us, and it is all because of their machismo.

(Anon. woman, Ahuachapan, December 2007)

In general terms, all men (and women) interviewed agreed that violence against women was widespread in their neighbourhoods: 'it is rare the home that is not affected by it' (Focus group, Soyapango, March 2002). This exposes an interesting tension. Domestic abuse is not strictly invisible, but it is regarded as private. It is not silent, but silenced. This distinction is important. Most of the women I spoke to testified to having been subjected to violence at the hands of their current or previous partners. One elderly woman in a focus group in Soyapango, declared: 'I no longer have the problem of a husband. He's

dead'. This sentiment was shared by other women whom I interviewed, who also no longer had the 'husband problem'. The routinisation of violence can become so entrenched in everyday relations, it is almost expected as an inevitable and culturally sanctioned element of growing up or being a woman. This provokes a different type of silence to simply not speaking about an issue. Women are expected not to make a fuss. As one woman emphasised, 'it is the simple fact of being a woman'.

It is important to challenge how different silences that surround violence are reinforced by political and social structures. Many women are subjected to violence on a daily basis from their fathers, brothers and husbands, not to mention wider society. The degree of violence women are subjected to, however, is not universal. For some, it was part of systematic physical and psychological abuse at the hands of partners, whereas others mentioned specific episodes of physical violence. Despite important changes in legislation, women are still expected to 'keep the peace' with regard to men's use of violence. This is not to say that attitudes are not changing, with more women reporting violence, but challenges remain. The real power of silences lies in the way they naturalise particular understandings of violence that privilege certain groups. The separation of public and private expressions and the disinterest in violence's gendered dynamics not only obscures important characteristics of violence, but silences a deeper analysis of the problem.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, I have argued that it is necessary to foreground the issue of silence as an integral part of research on violence. Silence is more than what is not said about violence. It is also how violence is talked about and the masculinist norms that inform 'violence talk'. I have addressed overlapping issues in this article: the arbitrary separation of violence against women from consideration of 'real' violence; the gaps in our knowledge of violence and the excuses and localised rationales that work to silence and indeed justify women's experiences of abuse. Central to this has been a critical appraisal of men's role in reproducing violence.

In this sense, addressing silence becomes not just a challenge to research but also the scaffolding

on which knowledge is constructed. Many initiatives that work to end violence against women address precisely the challenge of breaking the silence. Unless we move towards a

more critical analysis of silence as multidimensional, meaningful and more than just what is not said, our knowledge and actions will always be partial.

Notes

- 1 The first period of fieldwork was doctoral research that addressed violence and gender in two low-income communities in Greater San Salvador, while the second project refers to research carried out in conjunction with Oxfam America on women's perceptions of responses to gendered violence in San Marcos and Ahuachapan.
- 2 I am not suggesting here that there is a singular feminism; much debate has gone into

highlighting the range of feminist perspectives. For recent critiques, see Jackson (2006) and Stanley and Wise (2000).

- 3 The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has a programme on challenging violence and they maintain a website of research on issues of crime and violence at: www.violenciaelsalvador.org.sv and the Central American Observatory on violence contains state statistics for different types of crime, at: www.ocavi.com

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INCLUSIVE PEACE AND SECURITY

Editor Robin Luckham



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Quantitative Methods in Contexts of Everyday Violence

Patricia Justino, Jennifer Leavy and Elsa Valli

Abstract The analysis of violence from an individual or household perspective is arguably one of the most challenging research areas in social science. Outbreaks of violence affect the core of human relations and social norms. They occur in non-linear cycles, and co-exist at different levels of social interaction within the family, the community or the state. Analysis of this complexity cannot be restricted to one social science discipline or method of analysis. This article reflects on an innovative methodology adopted to capture the experience of living with violence in communities in Brazil, Jamaica, Mexico and Nigeria. The methodology confronted disciplinary boundaries by encouraging close dialogue between quantitative and qualitative researchers in violent settings, and creating processes for learning and sharing. This article describes the methodology, presents the main results of the quantitative analysis and reflects on the challenges and lessons.

1 Introduction

The analysis of violence from an individual or household perspective is arguably one of the most challenging research areas in social science. Outbreaks of violence affect the core of human relations and social norms, disrupting livelihoods, socioeconomic security, health and the formation of group interactions and social networks. They occur in non-linear cycles, where times of violence and peace do not necessarily represent opposite ends of a continuum, but rather co-exist – often simultaneously – in different degrees of intensity and at different levels of social interaction within the family, the community or the state. This complexity cannot evidently be restricted to the boundaries of one social science discipline or method of analysis.

This article reflects on an innovative methodology adopted by the Violence, Participation and Citizenship (VPC) group of the Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability¹ to capture the experience of living with violence in communities in Brazil, Jamaica, Mexico and Nigeria that made use of quantitative methods of analysis implemented within qualitative research processes.² This methodology has confronted different disciplinary boundaries by encouraging

close dialogue between quantitative and qualitative researchers in violent settings, and creating processes for learning and sharing. The novel aspect was to implement the quantitative instruments within the qualitative process and not as a parallel methodology. This article describes the methodology used, presents the main results of the quantitative analysis and reflects on the challenges and lessons presented by the methodology employed in the different case studies.

2 Methodological approach

Some of the most relevant insights into why individuals and groups engage in violence and the processes that lead to the onset of violence have been gained from localised qualitative research undertaken by sociologists, psychologists and anthropologists (Chatterji and Mehta 2007; Hume 2007; Jaffrelot 1996; Moser and McIlwaine 1999 and 2004; Pearce 1986). Their work relies on contextualised studies and qualitative information gathered through participatory and ethnographic methods.

Quantitative analyses of the causes and consequences of violence at the individual and household levels have only started to emerge recently due to improvements in the availability

and collection of systematic and comparable micro-level datasets (Justino 2008). However, with the exception of recent research on civil wars (Kalyvas 2007; Petersen 2001; Weinstein 2007; Wood 2006) and urban violence (Moser and McIlwaine 2004), few studies combine large quantitative surveys and qualitative methods of analysis to research the outbreak, consequences and processes of violence at the micro-level. This absence is due to the difficulty in applying traditional methods of micro-level quantitative analysis in violent contexts, notably the implementation of quantitative surveys based on random samples of individuals, households and communities (Justino 2009).

People involved in forms of violence and conflict are either averse to answering questions related to their experiences – for fear of retaliation, particularly among interpretation, or reluctance in reviving painful memories – or will try to use the research process itself to advance their causes.³ In addition, both perpetrators and victims of violence tend to hide and change their identities, making the tracing of social and political transformations difficult (Belousov *et al.* 2007; Justino 2009; Lee and Renzetti 1990). Outbreaks of violence destroy documents and infrastructure, displacement is frequent and often not registered, making it difficult to follow households into new locations. Researchers and subjects of research in contexts of violence often face considerable security problems and ethical challenges (Justino 2009; Wood 2006). The use of standard survey methods in large samples of individuals and households may therefore result in high non-response rates or inaccurate answers, as answers to more sensitive questions depend on the establishment of strong bonds of trust between interviewee and interviewer, something for which traditional survey methods may not allow space, time or resources. In addition, random sampling of representative individuals or households in conflict contexts is often difficult as conflict events tend to be highly clustered geographically and among certain types of individuals.

This project attempted to address some of these shortcomings by bringing together aspects of quantitative and qualitative methods that complement each other in the design of the research process, and the collection and analysis of the information. This article reflects on some

of the quantitative results obtained thus far. The team of researchers employed qualitative methods typically used in in-depth studies of conflict contexts, to apply a questionnaire. This was designed to capture quantitatively fundamental aspects of violence and links between communal living and socioeconomic welfare at the individual level across a sample of 646 people in four distinct communities (229 respondents in Brazil, 187 respondents in Jamaica, 85 respondents in Mexico and 145 respondents in Nigeria). The questionnaires were implemented within the qualitative process itself, having first been discussed among the research participants and then implemented within the various communities, in some cases by the very same participants (Cortez Ruiz, this *IDS Bulletin*). Baseline data were collected on individuals, households and communities being researched by the VPC teams in Brazil, Jamaica, Mexico and Nigeria, using questionnaires containing a mixture of open and closed questions, adapted to the local context and to the particular focus of the study in question.

The main objective of the questionnaire was to build a database that was comparable between the various case studies. A ‘master’ questionnaire was adapted by the field researchers for the local context. This gives us a mix of information on violence comparable across countries where the same questions were asked everywhere, as well as data that are context-specific. In particular, the Jamaican data is heavily context-specific due to the child-focused nature of the research (Moncrieffe, this *IDS Bulletin*).

The questionnaire contains several modules. Modules A-D refer to key socioeconomic characteristics of individuals and households, module E includes information on community-level variables and module F contains information on violence across space and time. A particular emphasis of Module F was on establishing ways of capturing quantitatively notions of chronic violence at the micro-level in each of the communities where research has taken place. We analyse these results in more detail in the next section.

The questionnaire was implemented using two different sampling methods, both largely purposive. In Brazil, Jamaica and Mexico, the

Table 1 Gender and age distribution of respondents

	Brazil	Mexico	Nigeria	Jamaica
Gender				
Male	97 (42.4%)	39 (45.9%)	83 (57.2%)	82 (43.9%)
Female	131 (57.2%)	37 (43.5%)	36 (24.8%)	99 (52.9%)
Missing data	1 (0.4%)	9 (10.6%)	26 (17.9%)	6 (3.2%)
Age				
Young (up to 30)	93 (40.6%)	21 (24.7%)	45 (31%)	
Adult (30–50)	67 (29.4%)	37 (43.5%)	67 (46.2%)	
Old (over 51)	62 (27.1%)	8 (9.4%)	32 (22.1%)	
Missing data	7 (3.1%)	19 (22.4%)	1 (0.7%)	

questionnaire respondents were part of the qualitative component of the project. This was to enable us to link directly the quantitative analysis and the results of the qualitative research at a later date. In order to increase the sample size, participants in the qualitative part of the research in Brazil and Mexico were asked to nominate other community members to answer the questionnaire. In Nigeria, the research team chose to select individuals from the local community where research took place, but who were not necessarily part of the qualitative research. None of the samples chosen was representative of their community, region or country. In order to facilitate trust among those being interviewed, interviewers were mainly

members of the community. In the Jamaica case, the interviewers and interviewees were children. Table 1 shows gender and age distributions of respondents across the four countries.

3 Perceptions of violence in four communities

The experimental design of the research itself, not least the combining of quantitative and qualitative methods, presented many challenges, and lessons from the research process make a valuable contribution to micro-level research on violence. Unsurprisingly, our greatest challenge was the presence of missing values, due to respondents electing not to respond to particular questions or sections of the questionnaire. This was for reasons of security, fear and reluctance in

Table 2 Community relationships and unsafe places

	Brazil	Mexico	Nigeria
Do you have good relationships with other community members?			
Yes	221 (96.5%)	49 (57.7%)	126 (87%)
No	7 (3.1%)	5 (5.9%)	15 (10.3%)
Missing data	1 (0.4%)	31 (36.5%)	4 (2.8%)
Have you ever had any quarrels/disagreements with other community members?*			
Yes	50 (21.8%)	31 (36.5%)	33 (22.8%)
No	177 (77.3%)	39 (45.9%)	108 (74.8%)
Missing data	2 (0.9%)	15 (17.7%)	4 (2.8%)
Are there any places in the community where you feel unsafe?			
Yes	86 (37.6%)	24 (28.2%)	54 (37.2%)
No	138 (60.3%)	4 (4.7%)	79 (54.5%)
Missing data	5 (2.2%)	57 (67.1%)	12 (8.3%)
Total	229	85	145

* For Mexico this question is slightly different: 'Are there places in the community where there are problems of violence?'

Table 3 School relationships and unsafe places

	Jamaica
Do you have friends at school?	
Yes	181 (96.8%)
No	3 (1.6%)
Missing data	3 (1.6%)
Do you feel safe at school?	
Yes	82 (43.9%)
Not all the time, but generally	69 (36.9%)
No	32 (17.1%)
Missing data	4 (2.1%)
Do you feel safe in your community?*	
Yes	90 (48.1%)
Not all the time, but generally	36 (19.3%)
No (or rarely)	31 (16.6%)
Missing data	30 (16%)
Total	187

*We added the category 'Rarely' (only 3 answers) to the category 'No' (28 answers).

revisiting traumatic events. Nonetheless, the response rate was relatively high (see Tables 2–8), giving us a rich dataset that provides valuable insights into experiences of living with violence in the study communities.

One of the most notable findings, shown in Table 2, is the fact that in general, respondents across the four communities felt they have good relations with their neighbours and other community members. This is not to say that

Table 4 Episodes of violence in the community

	Brazil	Mexico	Nigeria
Do you remember at least one episode of violence?			
Yes	158 (69%)	37 (43.5%)	138 (95.2%)
No	41 (17.9%)	4 (4.7%)	7 (4.8%)
Missing data	30 (13.1%)	44 (51.8%)	0
Were you affected by that episode of violence/conflict?			
Yes	110 (48%)	16 (18.8%)	53 (36.6%)
No	27 (11.8%)	33 (38.8%)	84 (57.9%)
Missing data	92 (40.2%)	36 (42.4%)	8 (5.5%)
Do you think violence is a problem in your community?¹			
Yes	105 (45.9%)	47 (55.3%)	70 (48.3%)²
No	116 (50.7%)	11 (12.9%)	49 (33.8%)
Missing data	8 (3.5%)	27 (31.8%)	26 (17.9%)
Total	229	85	145

1 For Mexico the possible answers were 'no, sometimes, often, always'. We grouped 'sometimes, often and always' in the groups 'yes'. For Nigeria, the question is qualitative, not like the others which require a 'yes' or 'no' answer, asking 'How much of a problem is violence in this community?'

2 In this case, we considered as 'No' all the answers of 'not much of a problem' or 'not any more'. This variable is based on our personal interpretation of the answers, as in some cases we had to make decisions about whether to consider the answer a 'Yes' or 'No'. Many of those interviewed answer 'not any more' or 'less than before' so it is not always easy to understand whether violence is still a problem (or is just less than in the past) or if it is not a problem any more.

Table 5 Children's attitudes towards and involvement in violence – Jamaica

	Yes	No	Missing data
Do you think that it is sometimes necessary to be violent?	57 (30.5%)	96 (51.3%)	34 (18.2%)
Has anyone who lives in your house been a victim of violence?	56 (30%)	99 (52.9%)	31 (17.1%)
Has any member of your family died as a result of violence?	50 (26.7%)	107 (57.2%)	30 (16%)
Have any of your close friends died as a result of violence?	48 (25.7%)	109 (58.3%)	30 (16%)
Have you ever been involved in a fight?	93 (49.7%)	63 (33.7%)	31 (16.6%)
– with a weapon	26 (13.9%)		
– without a weapon	67 (35.8%)		

violence is not felt acutely by people or that community relations are not affected by outbreaks of violence. In line with other studies (Lederman *et al.* 1999; Colletta and Cullen 2000; Chatterji and Mehta 2007), we found that social

cohesion is negatively affected by violence: people feel unsafe in many areas of the community and perceive violence to be a real problem in their daily lives. But our strongest finding is that in general people seem to draw

Table 6 Violence in Nigerian communities, by region and religious affiliation

	Total	Region			Religion	
		Kaduna	Kano	Plateau	Muslim	Christian
Have you been affected by episodes of violence?						
Yes	53 (36.6%)	24 (52.2%)	8 (16%)	21 (42.9%)	22 (28.6%)	30 (44.8%)
No	84 (57.9%)	19 (41.3%)	37 (74%)	28 (57.1%)	50 (64.9%)	34 (50.7%)
Missing data	8 (5.5%)	3 (6.5%)	5 (10%)	0	5 (6.5%)	3 (4.5%)
Were you directly affected?						
Yes	43 (29.7%)	22 (47.8%)	5 (10%)	16 (32.7%)	17 (22.1%)	25 (37.3%)
No	81 (55.9%)	22 (47.8%)	26 (52%)	33 (67.4%)	49 (63.6%)	32 (47.8%)
Missing data	21 (14.5%)	2 (4.4%)	19 (38%)	0	11 (14.3%)	10 (14.9%)
Were you injured due to the violent events?						
Yes	9 (6.2%)	3 (6.5%)	1 (2%)	5 (10.2%)	3 (3.9%)	6 (9%)
No	106 (73.1%)	37 (80.4%)	25 (50%)	44 (89.8%)	57 (74%)	48 (71.6%)
Missing data	30 (20.7%)	6 (13%)	24 (48%)	0	17 (22.1%)	13 (19.4%)
Did you lose any work/earnings/assets due to the violent events?						
Yes	55 (37.9%)	24 (52.2%)	7 (14%)	24 (49%)	25 (32.5%)	29 (43.3%)
No	34 (23.5%)	6 (13%)	5 (10%)	23 (46.9%)	20 (26%)	14 (20.9%)
Missing data	56 (38.6%)	16 (34.8%)	38 (76%)	2 (4.1%)	32 (41.6%)	24 (35.8%)
Has any member of your household been directly involved in any other type of violent event?						
Yes	33 (22.8%)	16 (34.8%)	3 (6%)	14 (28.6%)	15 (19.8%)	18 (26.9%)
No	85 (58.6%)	20 (43.5%)	30 (60%)	35 (71.4%)	48 (62.4%)	36 (53.7%)
Missing data	27 (18.6%)	10 (21.7%)	17 (34%)	0	14 (18.2%)	13 (19.4%)
Do you foresee violence again?						
Yes	44 (30.3%)	20 (43.5%)	12 (24%)	12 (24.5%)	11 (14.3%)	33 (49.3%)
No	88 (60.7%)	18 (39.1%)	33 (66%)	37 (75.5%)	59 (76.6%)	28 (41.8%)
Missing data	13 (9%)	8 (17.4%)	5 (10%)	0	7 (9.1%)	6 (9%)
Can there be lasting peace in this community?						
Yes	116 (80%)	36 (78.3%)	41 (82%)	39 (79.6%)	61 (79.2%)	54 (80.6%)
No	14 (9.7%)	6 (13%)	4 (8%)	4 (8.2%)	6 (7.8%)	8 (11.9%)
Missing data	15 (10.3%)	4 (8.7%)	5 (10%)	6 (12.2%)	10 (13%)	5 (7.5%)

Table 7 Violence in Brazilian and Mexican communities

	Yes	No	Missing data
Mexico			
Did you have violent episodes in your family?	24 (28.2%)	59 (69.4%)	2 (2.4%)
Is there any problem related to alcohol consumption in your family?	31 (36.5%)	44 (51.8%)	10 (11.8%)
Brazil			
Did you have to escape from here for any reason?	24 (10.5%)	196 (85.6%)	9 (3.9%)
Have you been directly involved in a violent episode?	8 (3.5%)	131 (57.2%)	90 (39.3%)
Has anyone in your family been involved in any violent episode?	11 (4.8%)	184 (80.4%)	34 (14.9%)

solace and strength from their community relations.

The Brazil, Nigeria and Mexico surveys reveal similar patterns in terms of respondents' relations with their fellow community members, with sometimes large majorities rating them as 'good'. The Mexican survey exhibited a large number of missing values, but once these were taken into account, of those who did respond, 91 per cent felt their relationships with fellow community members were good. The analogous question in the Jamaican survey was whether or not the respondent had friends at school – with 97 per cent stating that they did (Table 3).

In terms of feuding and conflict with other community members, 22 per cent of Brazilian respondents, 23 per cent of Nigerian respondents and a slightly higher 37 per cent of Mexican respondents reported arguments with their neighbours. These estimates vary across different gender and age groups. In Brazil and Nigeria, a higher proportion of women and young people than men reported quarrelling with other community members, whereas for Mexico, the figures showed a higher percentage for men and those over 30 years old.⁴

Community-level violence is widespread. Table 2 shows that many people feel unsafe in some parts of their community; in all cases, the majority of those feeling unsafe are women and young people under the age of 30. By contrast, of the Jamaican children who were interviewed, girls seem to feel safer than boys at school.⁵ In addition, as Table 4 shows, 95 per cent of Nigerian respondents and 69 per cent of Brazilian individuals can remember at least one

violent episode in their community. Almost half of Brazilian and Nigerian respondents perceived violence to be a problem in their community, while more than 50 per cent of Mexican respondents felt this to be so. The percentage of women reporting to have memories of episodes of violence is higher than for men in Brazil, Mexico and Nigeria. A similar pattern is found for the linked question, which asks whether the respondent was affected by the episode of violence. More women report having been affected by violent events, with the exception of Mexico, where the percentage is slightly higher for men. The age variation is small.⁶

The picture of community violence coming out of the Jamaican questionnaires, shown in Tables 3 and 5, is perhaps the most striking of the four surveys. An alarmingly high proportion of children felt unsafe – either always, or some of the time – both at school and in the community. Only 44 per cent felt safe at school and 48 per cent in their community. The number of relatives that respondents report as having died because of violent episodes is very high and some of the responses to the violence questions are rather unsettling. Very high numbers of people lost relatives and friends who were involved in fights, and many of these respondents stated that they think violence is sometimes necessary. Almost half of the children interviewed had been involved in fights, of which more than one-quarter had involved a weapon.

In the Nigerian communities, violence and conflict seem connected to religious factors and events, for example the implementation of *Sharia*, and to elections. As Table 6 shows, there are also regional patterns. Violence appears to

affect slightly more Christians than Muslims – almost half of Christians and 29 per cent of Muslims had been affected by episodes of violence, and a greater proportion of Christians were also ‘directly’ affected – 37 per cent compared with 22 per cent of Muslims. Despite their apparent greater involvement in violence, Christian respondents are relatively more hopeful of a ‘lasting peace’ in their community. Regionally, Kaduna exhibits the greatest proportion of respondents affected by episodes of violence, while Kano region has by far the lowest incidence of reported violence. Not surprisingly, Kaduna residents are also far more likely to foresee violence again (44 per cent compared with 24 per cent in both Kano and Plateau Regions), although this does not seem to diminish their optimism for the future. They are just as likely as Plateau residents to consider lasting peace in their community to be a possibility despite their relatively higher levels of experience of violence.

Findings from Brazil, in Table 4, show that 110 respondents have been affected by violence. We believe that the higher level of positive answers to this question in the Brazil case is partly due to the type of violence prevalent, with some of the neighbourhoods surveyed being severely affected by street violence and drug-traffic (Wheeler, this *IDS Bulletin*). It is clear from the Brazilian questionnaires that violence is a problem in these communities, and people were quite afraid of talking about it. This came through quite strongly in the responses to the more qualitative questions. The violence in these areas is street violence, mainly driven by drug trafficking, and this appears to have a big impact, acting as a constraint on lifestyle and everyday life. Nevertheless, as shown in Table 7, in only 3.5 per cent of cases did respondents state that they had been directly involved in episodes of violence. Just 5 per cent reported that at least one household member was involved in any type of violence. However, in these few cases, respondents explained neither the episode nor the role of the household member in the episode.

From the qualitative answers to some of the survey questions, we were able to identify two main causes of violence in Mexico: domestic violence and political violence. Violence seems to be quite widespread in the domestic environment, with 28 per cent of respondents

Table 8 Satisfaction with community living

Brazil

How do you feel about living here?

Like it	113 (49.3%)
Don't like it	18 (7.9%)
More or less likes	59 (25.8%)
Like it a lot	35 (15.3%)
Other	2 (0.9%)
Missing data	2 (0.9%)
Total	229

Mexico

Are you happy to live in this community?

Yes	77 (90.6%)
No	3 (3.5%)
Missing data	5 (5.9%)
Total	85

Nigeria

How do you rate living in this community?

Like it a lot	105 (72.4%)
Don't like it	24 (16.6%)
Indifferent	9 (6.2%)
Missing data	7 (4.8%)
Total	145

Jamaica

How do you rate living in your community?

Like it a lot	52 (27.8%)
OK, not a bad place to live	67 (35.8%)
Don't like it most of the time	32 (17.1%)
Hate living here	14 (7.5%)
Missing data	22 (11.8%)
Total	187

reporting violent episodes in the family, often linked to problems of alcohol consumption (Table 7). From the qualitative answers in the questionnaire, we can infer that politics appear to play an important role in the life of those interviewed and this is also often linked with violent episodes in the community.

Despite contextual differences in levels and intensity of violence, on the whole, people across the four communities are happy to live in their community. Questions on satisfaction with living in one's community were worded differently according to location but with remarkably similar

results, shown in Table 8. Mexican respondents were asked whether they were happy to live in this community: 91 per cent responded 'Yes'. Both Nigerian and Jamaican respondents were asked to rate living in their community: 72 per cent of Nigerian respondents 'like it a lot', compared with just 28 per cent of Jamaicans, although a further 36 per cent of Jamaican respondents considered their community to be 'OK, not a bad place to live'. When asked how they felt about living in their community, a total of 90 per cent of Brazilian respondents answered positively to the question: 49 per cent like to live in their community, 15 per cent 'like it a lot' to live in their community and 26 per cent 'more or less like' to live in the community.

4 Methodological lessons

The research undertaken in the four case studies has revealed some important advantages in combining different methods of analysis to understand contexts of violence. The researchers obtained a high response rate from respondents and the implementation of the various questionnaires was overall quite smooth. The precision of some of the answers was however affected by a variety of factors, mainly related to the sensitive nature of the material. Understandably, research on violence will always be met with reluctance in addressing more personal questions. This problem was lessened to

some extent by the fact that the interviewers were local members of the community, known to the respondents. It was also mitigated by applying questionnaires within the context of qualitative or participatory processes, and within the framework of relationships that these processes had already established.

Despite these caveats, we feel we have obtained enough quantitative information to richly supplement the qualitative results. In particular, emerging themes identified above indicate some important issues for future social research on communities repeatedly exposed to violence. Notably, the quantitative results suggest that daily violence does not necessarily reflect upon, or at least impinge on, community relations. Even if they do not feel completely safe, people carry on with their lives and continue engaging in relations with their neighbours, friends and relatives. Recent research on urban violence has suggested that civic engagement may be a powerful counteraction to the outbreak of violence in communities prone to conflict (Varshney 2002). Our results show that high levels of social interactions and community goodwill can coexist with different levels and intensity of violence. This opens very interesting research paths on the links between citizenship and violence that deserve further exploration.

Notes

- 1 For more details on the research of Violence Citizenship and Participation thematic group of the Development Research Centre, see Pearce, this *IDS Bulletin*.
- 2 For contextual information on violence in these four communities, see Wheeler, Cortez, Moncrieffe and Abah *et al.*, this *IDS Bulletin*.
- 3 This is of course not exclusive to individuals in violent contexts. All forms of private and

- sensitive information are difficult to research. This is discussed more extensively by Nleya and Thompson, this *IDS Bulletin*.
- 4 Data available from the authors.
 - 5 Data available from the authors.
 - 6 Data disaggregated by age and gender is not presented due to space constraints but is available from the authors.

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Editor Robin Luckham



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Crime and Social Cohesion in the Time of Crisis: Early Evidence of Wider Impacts of Food, Fuel and Financial Shocks

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Abstract Economic crises have a series of impacts on society and security, depending on their severity, and on people's capacities to cope with and adapt to stresses on livelihoods and community relations. This article highlights findings about how local-level security and social relations have been affected by the global food, fuel and financial shocks since 2008. Based on original research from a qualitative and participatory study in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya and Zambia in early 2009, it discusses local perspectives on how crime and social cohesion have been affected across ten case study communities involved in the study. It identifies a number of common directions of change categorised here as broadly 'crime'. It is suggested that crime and social cohesion are important potential indicators of the impact of economic crisis. The article concludes with a discussion of the poverty, political and governance implications of crisis-driven impacts on crime and social cohesion.

1 Introduction: untangling the impacts of complex compound crises

A widely learned lesson from history is that economic crises can have seismic effects on society and security. This article looks at some of these from the perspectives of rural and urban people living in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya and Zambia. It is based on original research into the global economic crises, including the food and fuel crises that dominated 2008, and it focuses on the crime and social cohesion impacts. These include that livelihood adaptation strategies have left people at or over the edge of legality, and concerns about youth criminalisation and the provision of policing and security. Inter-group and community relations show signs of strain after economic shocks, particularly the food price crisis; there are also signs that community support mechanisms, including local charity, have faltered under this strain. The article concludes with some discussion about the importance of monitoring the wider social impacts of crisis: the insights this will provide should not only aid

understanding of how crisis is being experienced and mediated, but also offer potential insights into supportive interventions. Crucially, both crime and social cohesion impacts have immediate consequences for people's wellbeing, as well as the more enduring potential consequences for economic development, governance conditions and politics.

1.1 Which crisis? Experiments with people-centred monitoring in five countries

The research on which this article is based was a pilot study commissioned by the UK Department for International Development which aimed to: (a) provide 'real-time' data on the human impacts of the food, fuel and financial crises and (b) test an approach to participatory and qualitative monitoring. Details on country and site selection, as well as more detail on the research findings, can be obtained in Hossain *et al.* (2009). The research was undertaken in rural and urban communities, one each in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya and Zambia, during February 2009. Methods included a mix of

qualitative and participatory tools and techniques such as focus group discussions and case study research; in most cases, the researchers had prior relationships with the community through earlier research. The social impacts of the crisis were a specific area of focus.

The value of the research was chiefly that it demonstrated the scope for rapid snapshots of the experience of economic crisis that would go beyond and humanise the macroeconomic statistics that dominate measurement of impact. In addition, as this article shows, it enables an exploration of the non-economic dimensions of economic crisis that quantitative monitoring methods are unlikely to capture. It also highlighted the complex nature of the multiple crises being experienced. Particularly crucial was that the exploration of experiences of crisis shed light on how the impacts of the food and fuel crises were undermining capacities to cope with the global financial crisis, which in February 2009 was still only beginning to be felt in some poor developing country communities.

The limitations of the approach are primarily of scale, and include the constraints to generalisation due to the qualitative, community-based approach. The findings are illustrative rather than representative. In recognition of these important limitations, the present article does not claim to represent conditions in all contexts, but to highlight processes and routes through which crime and social cohesion have been affected in the ten communities in the study, and to indicate broader lessons about the impact of economic crisis on crime and social cohesion in developing country contexts.

A key finding of the research was that even as the global financial crisis was beginning to strike developing countries, many communities were reeling from the effects of the food and fuel crises. Food prices had not come down everywhere, nor by enough to bring them down to pre-2008 levels. The research found that global crises were being compounded locally by adverse climate conditions locally (drought in Kenya and Jamaica, localised flooding in Indonesia, cyclone and floods in Bangladesh, heavy rains in Zambia) and difficult political transitions (post-election violence in Kenya, a caretaker interregnum in Bangladesh); these

additional factors were contributing to uncertainty around agricultural production and local economic decline. Compound, complex crises were found to be interacting with each other, making it difficult to disentangle their impacts on people's lives.

These local accounts of how the crises were being experienced offered insights into how the food, fuel and financial crises were unfolding in poor developing countries. The situation was different everywhere, but everywhere were signs of strain. Many people were trying hard to adapt their livelihoods. There was support from within communities, as well as some valued government and faith-based support. But many people were reporting not being able to make ends meet: managing food, health and educational needs was proving to be a struggle, and not only for the very poorest; many middle class people were also reported to be finding the high prices difficult to cope with. For some, particularly children, there were impacts that looked set to be irreversible, because they were dropping out of school to earn or because their parents could not afford fees, books, or breakfast. As this article discusses in more detail, the ties that bind communities together were showing signs of unravelling, as people were getting together to save or celebrate less than they used to. While there was evidence of neighbourly support, some believed this was declining. In all five countries, people believe crime rates have risen. From the worst-hit communities were reports that children and the elderly were being abandoned by people no longer able to cope. In terms of social protection, people reported that some government programmes were working well. The most widely heard complaints included that these covered too few people with too little support to make a difference. Other schemes were not reaching the poorest. And much assistance – including from religious institutions and NGOs – was considered to be unpredictable or even to be declining.

2 Crime in a time of crisis

2.1 Livelihoods at the edge of legality

Reports that the economic shock of high food prices was prompting diversification into new economic activities were common in all the communities. In many instances, this involved a shift into informalisation: traders and food sellers reported shifting into unbranded or repackaged goods. This suggests a rise in

unregulated sales of food items, with considerable scope for adulteration and contamination. Poor women in the community in Dhaka, Bangladesh, had carved out a niche in sales of rejected vegetables as prices rose and remained high throughout 2008; this included selling food items that had been rejected as unfit for sale, and, reportedly, of items stolen from wholesale deliveries to markets. In the Kingston communities in Jamaica, people were reportedly finding 'novel ways of hustling': one strategy reported was that of 'goose men' who accept sales commissions and then over-charge for the product, to increase their commission rates.

Men in the rural Kalimantan village in Indonesia, had responded to the downturn in the rubber trade on which their livelihoods had depended by travelling to another island to engage in illegal gold mining. Having borrowed funds to finance the travel and mining equipment costs, they encountered official raids and some were ultimately driven back to Kalimantan, having lost more than they had earned by mining gold. By contrast, in rural Bangladesh, cross-border smuggling of fertiliser became highly lucrative at the height of the fuel prices, when fertiliser costs peaked. Landowners in the rural community in Naogaon complained that smuggling had become so common a livelihood strategy there that agricultural wage labour rates had been driven up, in response to the labour shortage that resulted.

In Dhaka, Bangladesh, the unregulated end of the garments industry was reporting to be thriving since the start of the global financial crisis in the final quarter of 2008. This was seen in the good trade among many small sub-contractor factories, whom garments workers claimed were as, if not more numerous than before, and hiring as many, if not more workers. These smaller factory units are mainly sweatshops that do not comply with labour and social standards of production; workers complained that these were factories in which managers 'misbehave with workers and beat and abuse them ... They will hire you instantly. But there is no job security there. After ten days they may fire you'. In the peri-urban Jakarta community, the global downturn was also bringing regulatory weaknesses in the protection of workers' rights to the fore; there were reports that workers who had been laid off were

experiencing difficulties claiming their entitlements from the labour outsourcing companies through whom they had been contracted.

In many communities, people felt that petty theft was on the rise. In the Jakarta community, motorcycle and mobile phone theft was reported to have risen. This was the only community in which it was possible to triangulate these findings with reference to official crime statistics. There, local police confirmed that there had been a rise in reported crime in the previous three months (up to February 2009). While there was a seasonal element to this – crime rates often rise in the period preceding the major Eid festival – the police noted that the rise was over and above seasonal increases. This suggested that economic crisis was driving rises in rates of reported crime.

2.2 Substance abuse and antisocial behaviour

Concern was expressed in all the countries about criminalisation and/or substance abuse among youth, directly attributed to the pressures of the crisis. In Kenya this was associated with concerns about how unmarried youth were being excluded from relief. Raised levels of drug abuse were reported in Bangladesh, Jamaica, Zambia, and Kenya, and rising alcohol abuse was reported in Zambia, Kenya and Indonesia. In Zambia, young focus group participants chewed *khat* throughout the session. A man in Nairobi said that:

A man in hunger cannot afford leisure. Even if one drinks beer, it is not for leisure as before, but just to kill the stress.

Other focus group participants in Nairobi said that the lethal local brew 'kill-me-quick' was replacing the beer that people used to drink for leisure. While in some contexts this was seen as merely an antisocial or wasteful way of coping with the stress and frustration of coping with crisis, in Kenya and Jamaica there were concerns that this was connected to a growing involvement in the drugs trade among young people in these communities.

Children and youth becoming involved in criminal economic activity were also reported. Again in Nairobi, a headteacher told the following story of criminalisation among schoolchildren:

A copper bell belonging to our school was stolen by one of the students and sold to a scrap metal dealer at an industrial area at a cost of KSh20. The bell was very valuable to the school since it was bought when the school was first opened. We pursued the issue with the chief and after investigations we learnt that the boy had sold it to a middleman who then sold it off to the dealer. By the time we got to the dealer, the bell had already been smelted. I received threats from the middleman that I would be raped should I pursue the issue further.

Children in Nairobi were also reported to be carrying criminals' guns for a fee of KSh25.

Girls and young women were said to be increasingly entering into sex work in Kenya and Zambia. In Lusaka, youths reported a rising number of girls and young women entering sex work as one of the most significant problems facing their community, caused by poverty and unemployment, family problems and low income, and the pressure 'to look good'. Among the effects they detailed included HIV/AIDS/STIs, children being born out of marriage, and school dropout. In Nairobi, youth had also witnessed a rise in sex work, involving girls as young as 14, as well as boys. Teachers in Nairobi attributed the rising number of schoolgirl pregnancies to hunger, as girls were believed to have been exchanging sex for food and snacks. In the research community, there had been 13 pregnancies in primary schools in 2008, a figure which teachers felt constituted a rising trend.

2.3 Policing and security

There were some indications that the provision of policing and security had also been affected by economic crises in these communities. The impacts of crisis on the state of policing were traced most directly in Kingston, where people had the following to say:

More police are on the road but the police are also hustling.

I asked one policeman for money and he said 'when him done run the road' [taken bribes from drivers]. More police hustling since the crisis. Dem a di biggest hustlers, tief and extortionists. Nuff a dem a criminal who get license to become police. They wear knapsack and go around collecting.

Over the last year, problems with police have become worse.

In the Kingston communities there was no strong sense that crime rates were rising, even though people were generally agreed to be 'hustling' and 'going on the juggle' – finding ways of earning a living that were not necessarily within the law. It is possible that this is because rises in criminal activity are not being felt locally but involve acts perpetrated in other locations. Control by powerful 'dons' in these Kingston communities had maintained local order according to local rules without any inter-group violence in the previous five months:

Under community rules and regulations, there is to be no violence against women, no [thieving], no raping, no disrespect to elders, no telling tales to Babylon, no homosexuality (though we have it here a lot; all bad man too). If you are found in the act, you get flogged. People use sticks and big boots. If two women fight, they get beaten too.

In the Nairobi community, local security was also being provided by what appeared to be criminal gangs. Business owners reported paying a mandatory daily fee of KSh20 to a group called the 'Maasai' to ensure the security of their business. That this group was reported to have prevailed in recent clashes with the feared *mungiki* militia group¹ gives a sense of the degree of violence and control exerted on the local community under study.

The burden of coping with insecurity and ineffective law and order in poor communities may be exacerbated by economic crisis, as they add to financial strains that for some households are already unbearable. This was brought home in the case of one Dhaka household which was struggling to continue fighting a case against their former landlord who had raped their, then, 13-year-old daughter the year previously. Her father and uncle had raised the Tk100,000 (US\$1,450 at May 2009 rates) so far needed to fight the legal battle, but in so doing left the family destitute. They had moved to the slum in which they were interviewed to cut expenses, the girl had been removed from school to try to contribute to the family income by working, and her mother was now working in a garment factory; meanwhile her grandmother had returned to the village to try to raise the money to keep her younger brother in school. But the food price crisis had added to an already difficult financial and law and order situation, and the future of the legal case was uncertain.

3 Social cohesion

3.1 Inter-group and community relations

There were incipient signs of social tension between social groups, most notably in the Nairobi community. The most tangible signs of growing tensions emerged in relation to majority Christian views on a feeding programme for practising Muslims:

Although we are suffering as youth in [the Nairobi community], and our parents and friends are struggling, the Muslims always have food. Every Friday, the mosque opposite provides food and even clothing. This support is only for Muslims. We have been to the mosque a few times dressed in buibui² like the other Muslim women and managed to get food. It seems the people at the Mosque found [out]. We are told they cannot give food to kafirs. A few weeks back our friends, young men, were caught dressed in buibui like women; it was embarrassing, but we must survive. (FGD participant, Nairobi)

The exclusion of people of other faiths from the support provided by Muslims seemed to generate animosity and intense hostility. Some people argued that when there is support from the church or government there is no discrimination, yet Muslims were seen to be encouraging discrimination, and possibly using food to convert desperate residents to the Islamic faith. Also in Nairobi, there were accounts of young boys being sold to Asian traders for sex in exchange for food; such reports highlight how deprivation has heightened awareness of socioeconomic differences along religious or ethnic-cultural lines, creating social tensions.

In both the rural Bangladesh and the Jakarta community, there was a tendency to deny that minority social groups were disadvantaged compared with the majority. In both communities, the impression that was conveyed was one of social harmony, despite difference. This may indeed be true under non-crisis conditions, although what appears to majority and powerful groups as social harmony may also be containment of social tension or divisions.³ In both those communities, there were minority groups that were disadvantaged with respect to official social protection schemes. In rural Bangladesh, the indigenous *Shaotal* population is typically excluded from government programmes, the benefits of which are in the hands of local government representatives who

seek to maximise political capital from their distribution. Church- and Christian faith-based organisations were known to provide some social services to this group, however. And the *Shaotal* population has a political history of mobilisation around their rights in this part of Bangladesh. In the Jakarta community of Gandasari, migrant export sector workers were generally excluded from the rice for the poor and cash transfer schemes from which some longer-term residents benefit. While this was not a community featuring the exclusion of all migrants – other non-natives had received considerable help from local officials and community leaders, including the right to live on public land – there was a distinct sense of separation between the temporary residents and the more permanent inhabitants. In both rural Bangladesh and Jakarta, there was ample scope for social tensions to arise around the distribution of resources for coping with crisis.

In Bangladesh, Indonesia and Jamaica, there were also signs that social practices that had previously cemented the social capital between groups were declining. The decline of the *arisan* or rotating savings scheme in the rural Indonesian site (see below) also affected attendance at the *yasinan* or weekly group recitation from the Koran, which had been conducted at the same time, and which was an important regular social event. Many people said they no longer attended. To date, however, community members noted that there had not been any conflict among the participants, and there were other signs that a sense of solidarity within the community was strong; this social harmony was attributed to a shared reliance on rubber farming, and fairly strong adherence to common religious practice. However, as the impacts of the global financial crisis in the form of low rubber prices persisted into the fifth month, people were concerned that the community's harmony, mutual understanding and safety would begin to be affected, and that practices of giving credit and helping each other were at risk as the financial situation continued to worsen.

Changes in social participation were not noted in the Jakarta site; there, people said they were still managing to contribute to, for example, funeral costs, borrowing from family members if necessary, in order to meet this important social

obligation. But in rural Bangladesh, people noted a decrease in the number and scale of major social events such as weddings or *milads* (prayer and sermon sessions to mark anniversaries or important events). There were fewer such big occasions now held, fewer people were invited, and the food was less lavish when they did occur. Together with the reported decline in private and informal charity in some contexts, these changes in social behaviour signal a growing inability to finance the rituals and practices that bind societies together.

3.2 Credit

Customary savings and credit groups appear to have been most important in the rural Indonesian and both the rural and the urban Jamaican communities. No such groups were mentioned as prominent potential or actual sources of support in either Bangladesh or Zambia. However, in both rural Indonesia and Jamaica, these customary modes of rotating savings and credit appear to have suffered during the current crisis. The Jamaican practice of ‘throwing partners’ involves a group of like-minded community members who agree to collectively save on a regular basis, with an agreed banker and period of time between ‘draws’. In Kingston, some investors in a financial services company that had crashed in early 2008 were reported to have invested their *partner* money in the company. Other views were that the practice was struggling during the downturn:

We used to survive by throwing partners. Now, we don't have the income to save to throw partners. You see partner a throw, you have to know where the money is coming from or else you may start the partner and can't maintain it.

The partner thing don't work well like last time. Without jobs, it's impossible.

The view was similar on the other side of the world in rural Banjar, Indonesia, where *arisan* had to date been the main source of capital in the community. *Arisan* are customary groups that bring together between tens and hundreds of community members, who agree to save a fixed amount, usually starting at around Rp5,000 each, which are raffled off weekly. Most community members are members of an *arisan*. The weekly *arisan* meeting has to date been a major event in this community, and also involves a *yasinan* or

Koran recitation. However, recent changes include the postponement and even the disbanding of some *arisan*. In one case, a group that had only conducted the raffle twice was terminated, and the winners of the *arisan* funds were asked to return the funds. Others have increased the timetable to once every two or four months, which seems to be more manageable for people during a period of financial strain.

3.3 Charity

Informal sources of support, in particular loans and gifts from neighbours, relatives and local shops, stalls and food vendors were relied on by many at the height of the food crisis. Migrant remittances may also fall into this category of charitable support, particularly where payments are occasional support to poor relatives in times of household crises such as illness or death, rather than regular payments. However, there were some findings that indicated that informal private charity had been hit hard by the crisis. The experiences of women earning a living as beggars in rural Bangladesh were indicative; they reported the following changes since the crisis: (a) a halving of the amounts of rice they used to earn regularly by begging;⁴ (b) a decline in other charitable gifts (clothes, cash); (c) competition with other poor and even lower middle class people over wild foods gleaned from public and private lands; and, (d) a matter which greatly offended these women's sense of personal dignity, a rise in aggressive and rude responses to requests for alms. Other people reported that it was less possible than before to depend on neighbours and relatives for support, because all were suffering from the food and fuel crisis. One reason that informal support may have declined is that food and fuel prices appear to have hit middle-class or relatively affluent groups in these communities fairly hard.

Informal private charity may have been hit particularly hard because many middle class people are in formal sector occupations where cash incomes are relatively fixed over the short to medium term; by contrast, informal sector traders, people involved in the extra-legal economy, and even manual wage labourers in some sectors have seen their nominal incomes rise, even if in real terms they remain absolutely worse off, their decline in purchasing power has been somewhat less precipitous. Informal charity appears to be highly elastic, and quick to decline

when middle class incomes drop. In Bangladesh women engaged in begging reported that wealthy people had brushed off their requests for assistance with reference to government programmes to which they are, at least in theory, entitled.

The impacts of crisis on charitable giving were not all negative, however. Near the Dhaka community, a charitable feeding programme at the tomb of a Sufi saint was reported by the manager to have received more donations at the time when food prices were at their peak, when they were feeding some 550 people daily. Most charitable donors to the tomb are themselves poor, and the manager speculated that it is because political and economic crises make people feel more vulnerable that they depend more on extra-mundane (spiritual and religious) means to help them through crises; this is why donations rise during crises. One pilgrim the researchers met during the research had brought a goat as an offering. He was a poor man, like most of the other two million pilgrims each year. It had taken him six months to save the money to pay for the goat, and he had brought it because he had vowed to sacrifice a goat in return for his daughter's recovery from her illness. Donations from poor people like this pilgrim were reported to have kept the food service and other charity activities of the tomb going during the crisis, and donations had almost doubled over the period 2005–6 to 2007–8.

4 Conclusions: why crime and social cohesion matter for development

The research discussed above does not claim to be representative, even of the countries in which it was conducted. It may not be possible to generalise about the likelihood that economic crisis will lead to rising crime and declining social cohesion in poor communities. However, the evidence presented here provides credible illustrations of the routes through which serious shocks to food security, as occurred throughout the world in 2008 and continue to occur well into 2009, can result in informalisation and more seriously, a criminalisation of livelihoods, as well as undermine the bases and forms of social connectedness in communities.

There are at least three reasons why the impacts of economic shock on crime and social cohesion levels matter centrally to crisis coping and

development prospects in the recovery period. The first is that levels of crime and social cohesion are likely to be of central significance because of their immediate or short-term impacts on people's wellbeing. Participatory approaches to understanding the experience of poverty such as the *Voices of the Poor* study have consistently identified crime and violence as prominent features of the experience of poverty in its more multi-dimensional senses, or illbeing.⁵ Similarly, it is now widely recognised that livelihood strategies for adapting to and coping with food insecurity crises depend more on community-based support than is typically documented.⁶

A second reason these broader social impacts matter is their potential economic and poverty impacts in the medium term. There are good reasons to believe that social fragmentation during protracted economic downturn will have enduring effects on societal responsibilities for children, the elderly and the very poor. In the current crisis, there were signs from Bangladesh that the local elites who bear customary responsibility for supporting the very poor were abandoning those responsibilities, and re-defining the role of state and NGO programmes to replace them in those roles. The sense of uncertainty bred by rising crime is also likely to have enduring medium-term impacts. In one particularly telling instance, a farmer in the rural Kenyan community in the study explained his hesitation about planting food crops, despite the high prices he could expect to earn from them:

I have been growing maize, beans and other crops ... I have been sacrificing a lot in terms of minimising expenditure in order to buy fuel only to find my crop stolen from the shamba. This kind of theft was unheard of in the period before 2007. It has been brought about by lack of food since those that steal do it to feed themselves and their families and not for commercial purposes.

A third reason crime and social cohesion impacts are likely to be of more enduring significance in the crisis recovery period is the potential longer-term impacts on politics and governance conditions. While reported rising crime rates in these communities are an insecurity phenomena of a significantly lower intensity than found in conditions of conflict and civil war, there are parallels with the impact of economic shock on the shift into semi-legal and criminal livelihood

activities that are worth attending to. In her analysis of the micro-level factors that shape the relationship between poverty and violent conflict, Justino points out that relatively little is known about how ‘micro-level economic factors and decisions influence the start of violent conflicts’, and that strategies for adaptation for survival may include ‘adopt[ing] forms of livelihoods that may lead to severe poverty traps but avoid famine ... or may lead to a life of crime and violence (or both) (Justino 2009: 3–4).

With Justino’s reminder that we are yet to fully understand the ‘micro-level economic factors and decisions’ that influence the start of violent conflicts, it is worth recalling the political effects of the current crises so far. The current crisis (including global food price inflation) has already witnessed a considerable amount of political turmoil. While no source for the much-cited figure that 30 countries had experienced demonstrations or what are loosely called ‘foot riots’ since 2008 could be found, a five-minute internet search found credible references to such protests in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guinea, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Mauritania, Madagascar, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Pakistan, Philippines, Senegal, Somalia, Uzbekistan, and Yemen. Two West African countries and Haiti saw governments topple as a result of the food and/or financial crises in the last year. In Bangladesh, the siege of barracks and gruesome massacre of army officers by their subordinates in February 2009 was initially explained by frustrations around inadequate pay in a time of food inflation.

There is little interest in or understanding of these protests. In the current crisis, food riots seem to be seen as an automatic, almost physiological response to acute food insecurity. See this description of financial crisis ‘contagion’ by a leading New York University economic forecaster in the blogosphere:

If cargo trade stops, the wheat doesn’t get exported. If the wheat doesn’t get exported, the mill has nothing to grind into flour. If there is no flour, the bakeries and food processors can’t produce bread and pasta and other foods. If there are no foods shipped from the bakeries and factories, there are no foods in the shops. If there are no foods in the shops, people go hungry. If people go hungry their children go hungry. When children go hungry, people riot and governments fall. (Roubini 2008)

But food riots are a political phenomenon, a barometer of political opinion and capacity to mobilise. While elite observers often assume that mass protests of this kind are stirred up by outside rabble-rousers with their own political agenda, there are better reasons to believe that they emerge out of or are informed by a shared political ideology about the responsibilities of government or the authorities during episodes of food crisis.

While it involves a considerable stretch to detect political and governance impacts of this higher order in this local evidence of rising crime and declining social cohesion, it is known that perceptions of public safety shape attitudes towards democracy (Fernandez and Kuenzi 2006; Pérez 2003/4). And there are reasons to believe that political trust in poor, risk-prone societies rests considerably on governmental capacities to support people during crises (Hossain 2008). In brief, faith in democratic governments can be at stake during economic crisis. Monitoring the wider social impacts of economic crisis, with a particular focus on crime and social cohesion, is thus about tracking factors that affect poor people’s immediate, medium- and longer-term capacities to cope and to live well. The combination of the potential short-, medium- and long-run impacts of crime and social cohesion, for poverty and for politics, suggests these are important indicators of the development impacts of economic crisis in poor countries.

Notes

- * This article is based on research conducted by partners, the partners included: Mamunur Rashid, Bayazid Hasan, Nabil Zuberi and Sheikh Tariquzzaman of BRAC Development Institute in Bangladesh; Rizki Fillaili, Widjajanti I. Suharyo, Bambang Sulaksono, Hastuti, Herry Widjanarko, Sri Budiayati, Syaikhu Usman, Nur Aini, and Faisal Fuad Seiff of the Social Monitoring and Early Response Unit (SMERU) in Indonesia, Joy Moncrieffe (IDS), Paulette Griffiths-Jude and Nellie Richards in Jamaica, Grace Nyonyintono Lubaale of Mpereza Associates with Peter Otienoh Orwa, Elizabeth Kariuki and Maurice Owino Ligulu in Kenya, and Mwila Mulumbi of Civil Society for Poverty Reduction, Lusaka and Wala Mubitana in Zambia.
- 1 For more details on the *mungiki*, see *The Economist*, 'Next Machetes, Then Machineguns?' 12 March 2009.
 - 2 A garment that covers the head and body worn by Muslim women; a local variant of the *burkah*.
 - 3 During focus groups with women in the Jakarta community the researchers noted a visible tendency for the discussions to be dominated by the permanent villagers; migrant worker women were notably more hesitant and reluctant to speak. Views on social harmony within the

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community, could easily reflect the relative power of permanent local residents, many of whom are landlords of migrant workers.

- 4 In Bangladesh and across parts of South Asia, begging does not generally attract the level or type of stigma it does in contemporary Western societies; for many, giving to beggars can be a spiritual act which brings religious blessings. Widows and people with disabilities may be able to survive on the income from begging, as had been the case for the group of beggar women involved in this research.
- 5 In her review of participatory explorations of poverty and illbeing, Brock (1999) found that crime and violence and fear of crime and violence were significant sources of illbeing for poor people. The participatory 'Consultations with the Poor' exercise conducted for the *World Development Report 2000/1* also identified crime as a major source of illbeing for the poor. However, the final Report contains relatively little discussion of this point. One advisor to the participatory research process, Robert Chambers, noted that while the police had emerged as an important institution affecting poor people's wellbeing, this point had been excluded from the final report.
- 6 See Adams (1993); Corbett (1988); Davies and Hossain (1997).

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INCLUSIVE PEACE AND SECURITY

Editor Robin Luckham



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Social Contracts, Networks and Security in Tropical Africa Conflict States: An Overview

David K. Leonard

Abstract In this *IDS Bulletin* we present fieldwork from articles covering the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Mozambique and Somalia to show that assumptions derived from the classical social contract theorists frequently lead the international community astray as it attempts to rebuild these African states. The historical social contract for most Africans is not between the state and individuals but with communities. When it comes to security, there are two contracts and two bargains to consider instead of the single one of classical presumptions. The *contracts* are (i) community governance structures with local families; and (ii) the state with community governance systems, with supplemental ties to individuals. The *bargains* are (iii) the regime with the military; and (iv) the state with the international community. The military is frequently a source of predation on communities rather than of protection. The dynamics of these contracts and bargains can be in conflict with one another, leading to a situation where governance is multilevel and networked. The presence and importance of international actors in the networks changes policies and indirectly affects politics, but it does not threaten the integrity of the state as an institution itself, which instead is rooted in the processes of the other three compacts.

1 Introduction

When a county descends into violent domestic conflict, obviously its security is challenged. But the threat is not only to the security of the state or even to the physical protection of its citizens from violent aggression. As long ago as the English Civil War philosophers recognised that conflicts and other human acts that lead to a significant diminishment in other aspects of a community's wellbeing also shorten lives and thus are dangers to human security as well (Hobbes 1939 [1651]). Thus the threats and conflicts to be considered include not only violence itself but also ones to the resources and livelihoods on which communities are dependent. In the communities most affected by the civil wars in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Mozambique,¹ Sierra Leone and Somalia modern medicine disappeared, the future livelihoods of young people were diminished when their education was disrupted, and malnutrition increased, such that in Sierra Leone, for example, children even died from a lack of salt (Leonard and Samantar 2011; Mushi 2012; Vincent 2012). These casualties of war are

as fatal as the more obvious wounds produced by bullets and cutlasses. Even though Thomas Hobbes did not feel a government owed its citizens prosperity or justice, he did feel that a state that could not protect its subjects from life-threatening insecurities such as these had no right to expect their obedience.

All governance is co-produced. Even if the law assigns sovereignty and suzerainty to one actor, that law is but one of the multiple resources that are needed for effective rule. And different actors possess those varied resources and supply them with greater or lesser degrees of compliance. For example, it matters whether taxes are paid willingly or evaded (Liebermann 2003). And even the lowliest workers may provide their labour enthusiastically or reluctantly (Barnard 1968 [1938]). Thus the effectiveness of *all* governments relies upon numerous actors at multiple levels within and beyond the state, connected to one another and the various functions of governance through complex and divergent networks (De Herdt 2011).

If all governance systems are multilevel and networked to some degree, this reality is even more pronounced for countries that are emerging from prolonged periods of civil violence. In this research we have been concerned with the subset of conflict and post-conflict countries located in Tropical Africa. And scholars have long remarked on the unusually large gap between what they have called 'juridical' and 'empirical' sovereignty in parts of that region; the international system grants the privileges of statehood (including international legal recognition and the last word over development assistance) to many countries that in fact are unable to exercise the monopoly over their full territory of the legitimate exercise of force that the concept of statehood requires (Jackson and Rosberg 1982; Katzenstein 1996; Weber 1947).

When a conflict or post-conflict country is unable to exercise 'empirical sovereignty', no one institution or even set of institutions is in charge. Authority is negotiated in complex and fluid sets of relationships between institutions that range from peasant villages to the metropolises of the industrial world. Whether or not the erosion of sovereignty in Africa is judged to be good or bad, it is a practical reality and must feature prominently in any attempts to understand and improve conflict management on the continent. The question therefore is not whether or not a particular type of sovereignty *should* exist but what new concepts can be proposed to better fit the current situation and improve it. Networks are one of those concepts.

The networks governing a country gripped in conflict or recently emerging from it will include not only its national government and its key economic and military actors but also other countries, international organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and local level systems of governance. The former, national set of actors will have lost power and coherence, sometimes to the extent of threatening the collapse of the state itself, which opens the way for a much more significant role for the latter set. In this era of United Nations and regional peacekeeping missions and of bilateral and multilateral development assistance, the impact of internationals is widely acknowledged. In addition, however, a key finding of recent research (including our own) is

that local-level systems of governance (including churches) generally are the key building blocks of social order in a post-conflict situation – for they usually were the only units managing and resolving disputes during the conflict period (Manor 2007; Bastian and Luckham 2003).

Neither the diffusion of core responsibilities in conflict states to both local and transnational non-state actors nor attempts to build state capacity directly are likely to slow or halt; neither are the fundamental tensions between the two trends likely to dissipate. As such, we must attempt to understand the implications of networked governance for institution-building in weak and fragile states.

We start by using social contract theory to look at the local-level building blocks for the reconstruction of social order and then turn to an examination of the changes and operation of the other networks engaged in governance.

2 Local governance and the social contract

Local governance structures most often have undergone considerable change during the conflict – for example, inequalities become larger, patronage more prominent, and the influence of the 'purveyors of violence' greater (Leonard and Samantar 2011). Thus the 'building blocks for peace' are not reflected accurately any longer in the classical anthropology texts on the social systems in question. A correct understanding of the evolution of these 'primary' governance systems under conflict and what can be expected of them subsequently is fundamental to the success of efforts to create peace and rebuild general social order.

African states that have collapsed into prolonged violent conflict severely test the ways of thinking used by those who want to help restore their populations to security. Those who populate the international organisations and donor agencies who come forward to provide assistance have never lived for long themselves in such conditions – certainly they didn't keep their families with them. And the same is true of the academics and consultants who advise them. The instinctive response of internationals is to recreate the state as it has existed in Europe since the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia. The international community has helped to prevent the complete collapse of some states, but without

necessarily creating durable conditions for the efficient performance of the whole political system. It sometimes has helped some regimes extend their control over large territories but frequently has not yet succeeded in stabilising the various internal systems of governance that really sustain the state. Thus, on the basis of this project's fieldwork in the DRC, Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and the former Somalia, we submit that the international community is struggling with inadequate conceptual tools.

Generally when Westerners confront collapsed states in Africa, Thomas Hobbes and the social contract are in the background. They presuppose that the structures of the central state must be restored in the first stages of any solution, for, as Hobbes had it, life without it is 'nasty, brutish and short' (Hobbes 1939 [1651]).² Also, they implicitly assume that the state must have failed³ because the social contract it had with its citizens has been broken and that the recreation of order will require its restoration (multiple conversations with donor staff; OCDE 2008).

Neither of these assumptions is wholly without merit. But we will show that they need to be reformulated to meet the conditions of contemporary post-conflict Africa. First, Hobbes was right that states are *capable* of providing the highest levels of human security and that in their absence predatory violence by competing armed groups is likely. But some states themselves create predation and insecurity and there are non-state forms of governance that can provide better than they do for safety and economic development. The DRC, Sierra Leone and Somalia all have been subjected to extreme predation by the state at certain periods in the last quarter of a century and many parts of Somalia demonstrate alternative forms of governance today (Kamara 2010; Leonard and Samantar 2011; Little 2003; Menkhaus 2006; Prunier 2009).

Second, states do need legitimacy if they are to succeed. The Zaire phase of Congo's history illustrates the point well – without a normative underpinning, the need for coercive or material inducements for compliance spiralled upward until the resources to provide them were exhausted (Etzioni 1964). Zaire probably was no more corrupt than a number of other states that have

survived but, unlike them, in its last 20 years it was seriously deficient in its normative claim on the obedience of its citizens (Young and Turner 1985). As a result, it collapsed when challenged in the aftermath of the Rwanda genocide.

The 'social contract' is a thought experiment, whereby we ask when people would agree to cede authority (i.e. the obligation to obey) to a governing body in return for the social order and other benefits it might provide. The classic social contract theorists (Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant) did not posit that such an agreement was an historical act; for them it was simply a philosophical device. Nonetheless, their thought is based on clear assumptions about how humans behave, on what would lead them to consider authority legitimate, and thus on the principles from which a stable political order would need to be (re)constructed.⁴ Most important for our purposes they assumed that the state was based on a single 'social contract', which in principle could have been consummated between relatively equal, individual citizens. In this Overview we will show that security in the contemporary African state is actually founded on two contracts⁵ and two bargains, in which the key actors are unequal groups rather than autonomous individuals.⁶ Contracts and bargains both are based in exchange, but contracts come to be valued for their own sake and thus create stable obligations, whereas bargains exist only so long as they produce immediate benefits for all parties.

3 The community contract

The fundamental social contracts in Africa are not between the state and individuals alone but by individuals with their communities and by communities with the state. Of course the African state in its contemporary configuration, save for Ethiopia, was a colonial creation and thus came into existence through external force. The colonial state could not be efficiently maintained on coercion alone, however, even with superior military technology; some normative compliance was needed as well. (Significant material inducements were not even considered.) An implicit contract therefore was struck between local 'traditional' leaders (either existing or newly created) whereby they would lead their communities in complying with the writ of the state and the colonial power would protect these authorities from any local

challenges (Oliver and Fage 1966). In this way a necessary modicum of ‘traditional’ legitimacy was captured in support of a ‘legal-rational’ state, to use Max Weber’s terms (Weber 1947). In most of Africa this community sanction continues to underwrite the authority of the state at the local level outside the major towns, even where ‘traditional’ rulers have been supplanted by appointive or democratic systems of governance. Mahmood Mamdani argues that this colonial legacy divides African populations between rural subjects and urban citizens (Mamdani 1996). In Congo, Côte d’Ivoire and Sierra Leone it is clear that many town dwellers and most elites do feel a powerful, unmediated commitment to their contemporary states, which has given these countries territorial resilience (and which was surprising to many external observers of the DRC in the Congo Wars). And *legally* Africans today are bound to their states as individuals. Nonetheless, the informal reality of the community contract and its mediated relationship with the state remains, for non-elite urban Africans are still subject to the authority of their rural communities of origin if they wish to retain land rights there (as most do).

The point then is that the social contract with the state is a mediated one for most Africans in most countries. They owe allegiance to their community and the community has a contract with the state. Today the latter contract continues to provide support for the community’s governance structure and usually would involve its physical security, roads, and access to education and modern health care as well. In post-conflict situations the ‘terms of exchange’ for the contract will have slipped, however, so that just physical security is enough to assure the allegiance of the community’s governance structure.

The nature of the community social contract is quite important as well. As Mark Button suggests, social contracts are not self-enforcing. They require supporting cultural values and institutions, which will be built in interaction with the contract itself (Button 2008). Thus the local contract has implications far beyond the community itself and powerfully shapes the discourse in the national political system as well. Authority at the local level is closely linked to control of land. In most of Africa peasants work their own land, but they do not have individually transferable ownership of it. Instead they have

use rights (*usufruct* in Latin) but only as long as they occupy and till it (*la mit en valeur* in French). The right to dispose of unoccupied land belongs to the state and the local authority (usually a chief). The *local* social contract as we observe it in conflict and post-conflict countries depends very little on the delivery of ‘development’ services but instead relies on the perception of local citizens as to whether they are being provided with justice, which means both (a) access to land for the purposes of production, and (b) local order that is balanced and not unduly oppressive, especially that judicial fines are in line with local income possibilities.⁷

The traditional authority-holder at the base typically is not representative of the whole community but is the leader of what is considered the ‘founding family’ (usually through clearing the bush, sometimes by conquest). The ‘strangers’ who come after the founding family are given permission by its representative to use the land – which creates value and adds to the strength of the community – in return for which the ‘stranger’ and his descendants are to give tribute and obedience to the scion of the founding family (the chief). So even if the founding social contract might originally have been between a group of relative equals, over time it becomes one between the founding families and the followers (settlers by petition, conquest or slavery).

There are places in Africa where traditional authorities no longer exercise local authority and therefore the occupant is not necessarily from a ‘founding family’. In Kenya and eastern Nigeria chiefs were a colonial creation. But in both countries the administrative chiefs conform in other respects to the analysis we provide here. In Tanzania party secretaries replaced chiefs at independence and the determined egalitarianism of its socialist period seems to have spared it from autochthon (‘sons of the soil’) challenges. In effect they have replaced the chiefs as local authorities. The socialist government of newly independent Mozambique attempted to follow the Tanzanian model of party secretaries but this threat to the still highly legitimate authority of traditional chiefs was one of the causes of the civil war there (Manning 1997).

One of the tensions underlying the local social contract in most of rural Africa is that the land

Illustrative vignettes of community governance

Southern Sierra Leone

The many paramount chiefs are elected for life by representatives of local taxpayers. *All* resident adults are eligible to serve as electors but only descendants of the founding family are eligible for selection. The paramount chief in Shenge is an elderly woman who had a distinguished career in education. But to be elected she had her elected brother deposed by the courts on the grounds that he had been only *adopted* into the founding family (Vincent 2012).

Eastern Congo

Rwandaphone pastoralists were present in the Congo's South Kivu Province by the late nineteenth century, before Belgian colonial occupation. Local acceptance of their being there was based on their providing tribute to the *Bami* (kings) of the already present Babembe, Bavira and Bifulero, payment of which was abrogated in the 1920s. The right to determine who is 'present' on their land remains an important symbolic issue for the 'autochthonous' groups as it relates to the (Rwandaphone) Banyamulenge and has been a subject of occasional violent conflict since the Mulele uprising of the 1960s (Vlassenroot 2002). Babembe land, for example, is not scarce, but the Banyamulenge are pastoralists and come from the high plateau into the former's cultivated fields in the June–September dry season. A fee for this presence has now been negotiated by a political officer from the UN peacekeeping mission MONUSCO, and the problem therefore *should* be solved. But the Babembe elite continue to want the Banyamulenge to acknowledge symbolically that the land belongs to the Babembe, just as it is important to the Banyamulenge that they be recognised as having become genuine *indigènes* through the state's granting their territory a separate administrative status (Mushi 2012).

Somalia

For Somalis the primary provider of personal security is the *diya*-paying group, which comprises about 100 adult males and which negotiates compensation (or exacts revenge) for torts committed on or by outsiders. Islamic courts supplement this *tit-for-tat* justice and are especially important for business contracts. Thus even in Somaliland and Puntland most justice is delivered by non-governmental institutions, giving both clan and Islam centrality to Somali systems of legitimate governance (Leonard and Samantar 2011).

frontier is now largely closed, so that in many places these immigrant families have come to be seen as competitors, not as contributors to the welfare of the founders. There are two types of this conflict – the first, where the settlers have blended into the original community culturally but still retain a subordinate place; the second, where they retain their cultural distinctness, in which case the conflict takes the form of autochthony (a clash over who has the right of priority because of original settlement – the 'sons of the soil'). The second sometimes arises from state intervention to grant group's or individual's land rights in areas where locals regard them as outsiders. Parts of Sierra Leone illustrate the first type of conflict, as the sons of subordinate families now have difficulty getting farms on which they can grow permanent crops (without which they also can't support their

wives) and this led them to provide early support for the civil war there (Jackson 2006; Richards 1998). Congo's South Kivu (Vlassenroot 2002) and western Côte d'Ivoire (Boone 2009; Allouche and Zadi Zadi, this *IDS Bulletin*) illustrate the variant of the second type where there has been initial local consent, while North Kivu and Kenya's central Rift Valley are examples of earlier state interventions. Both of the latter two variants have fuelled virulent xenophobic appeals to the 'true' locals (i.e. the descendants of the first settlers). In western Côte d'Ivoire the perception of young 'sons of the soil' is that chiefs failed to protect adequately their rights to land in their communities, which undermined traditional authority. The consequence was that in this situation the chiefs were less able to contain inter-ethnic conflict in the rural areas of the west than the central state officials in the

nearby towns. Here, then, we see the importance of the community-level social contract because it had been weakened. In Somalia the concepts of descent and clanship by adoption are present but ownership is recognised as fluid and subject to conflict, negotiation and contract – which in some ways is less subject to larger-scale violent conflict than the other two.

The cultural and institutional patterns created by the rural social contract are carried over into the cities as well. In urban Bukavu and Uvira (South Kivu), in the absence of strong policing and with simmering rural conflict, we observed that insecure ethnic groups have tended to consolidate in exclusive neighbourhoods. During periods of conflict, groups also organise their own collective night-watch security. *Mutualités* have developed for all the significant groups in the multi-ethnic towns. These have elected officers (and thus break with the traditional administration practice of appointment by descent). Intra-communal disputes are judged by committees of the ‘wise’ (*sages*) and inter-communal ones are negotiated by the officers between *mutualités*. Those who refuse to be bound by their community’s decisions will be ostracised by it, thereby losing its protection and influence, which can be very dangerous for the lone individual. The pattern that has evolved of kinship-based protection, collective decision-making in a more consensual mode, and intergroup negotiation is very similar to the *diya*-paying⁸ group and clan governance processes that have survived or been revived in Somalia (Leonard and Samantar 2011).

The more difficult conflicts in Africa become rooted in disputes over these *intra*-local contracts. The *inter*-area conflicts, which are played out on the national stage, are more easily managed by negotiation and division of ‘spoils’. (Examples of both types of conflict and the differences in handling them are evident in Kenya and Nigeria.) Note that these *intra*-local conflicts rarely threaten state boundaries, as that is not the level at which the intense conflicts lie. Severine Autesserre stresses peacekeepers in conflict states need to address conflicts at this local level, as they sustain the larger, more internationally visible ones that are directly implicated in state breakdown (Autesserre 2007, 2010).

The local social contract remains hugely important even when its terms are being

somewhat renegotiated. In eastern Congo, Mozambique and Sierra Leone many chiefs were killed during their civil wars and most of the more senior ones fled the rural areas. Some of these chiefs (more so the *Bami* in Kivu, Congo than their equivalent paramount chiefs in Sierra Leone) have not returned to their rural residences after the war, which has weakened their legitimacy. Customary tribunals also are not as active in Congo and Sierra Leone as they were before the war. The fact that the customary tribunal judges depend on fees and fines for their income increasingly has led to their being seen as corrupt – or at least biased.⁹ Alternative, non-governmental dispute resolution services, sometimes tied to the enforcement potential of the magistrates’ courts, are becoming more prominent.¹⁰ Thus the chiefs are less relevant in adjudication now and their legitimacy is somewhat diminished. Nonetheless, it is striking that in Congo and Sierra Leone the role of traditional chief was quickly re-established after the wars and its fundamental legitimacy is not challenged at any level. In Mozambique, where the government had wanted to displace the chiefs, one of the rationales for ‘bringing them back’ was to help re-establish order and it was strongly supported by women’s groups (paradoxically as ‘tradition’ is patriarchal, but it makes sense because they are the first victims, at home and outside of the home). Chiefs continue to control land allocation and only rarely have men who led self-defence militias during the wars been able to challenge their leadership more generally. (In Mozambique, rebel RENAMO¹¹ has been able to gain a role in parliament, but with the support of the chiefs with which they were most closely allied during the civil war.) The social system of the Somalis is non-hierarchical and the title of ‘elder’ is enjoyed by all adult men in a clan *diya*-paying group. The continued civil wars have made the *diya*-paying groups less egalitarian, as the patronage of wealthy businessmen and the militia leaders they support has intruded. But the *diya*-paying groups themselves have become fundamental again to the security of almost all Somalis. So in all four countries the *operation* of the local social contract is being renegotiated but not its existence.

In all four countries we see traditional authorities renegotiating their role as also participating in the competition for control of the modern state. In the former Somalia,

traditional structures of governance and their leading elders have been involved in negotiating successor polities. Their role was particularly central in Somaliland and these elders were appointed to an upper house of its legislature. Similarly, in Puntland these traditional structures continue to select all members of the legislature. On the other hand many elders were perceived as having been bought in the establishment of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia and were discredited as a result (Leonard and Samantar 2011). The neglect of traditional governance structures in the centre and south of Somalia seems to be a major factor in the failure to re-establish order there and in the growth in competition from political Islamists (Leonard and Samantar, this *IDS Bulletin*).

In Sierra Leone democratically elected district councils were recreated after the civil war, probably with the intention of diminishing the authority of the chiefs, whose failing in some regions were seen as having contributed to the conflict. A change in national government has led to increased influence for the chiefs, however, and election to district councils and the national parliament is strongly influenced by the endorsements of chiefs.

In South Kivu (DRC), although the power of traditional chiefs is still respected, there are a number of new leaders who are developing new venues of power attached to positions within a larger polity and this has brought many traditional chiefs to reconsider their role and to use it in order to provide new venues for themselves, their offspring or closely related family members. Chiefs seeking to reposition themselves by capitalising on their traditional authority either can compete directly with these new leaders for elective or appointive positions in the provincial or national legislatures, or they can strike bargains to influence the votes of their subjects. It is hard (even if not impossible) for someone to be elected without the backing of his/her communal base, which is heavily influenced by verbal signals from the traditional chiefs.

In all four countries (as generally in Africa) elected representatives are seen as the ambassadors of their communities (Leonard 2009). No matter whether the local authorities are 'kingmakers' or clients and whether their

position is traditional, appointive or democratic, they powerfully mediate the relationship between average citizens and the state, preserving key aspects of the traditional two-stage social contract.

Mahmood Mamdani in *Citizen and Subject* (Mamdani 1996) implies that we should be moving away from these local social contracts and embracing (the French Revolution) concept of national citizenship. We are inclined to think this is ahistorical, since local-level social contracts persisted everywhere in the world, including the early industrialising world, until at least 1800. It is true that most Africans today see themselves as having an allegiance to their state (even if not always its regime) but this is in addition to their local allegiance and is still most often mediated *operationally* through the local social contract. The challenge therefore is not to end local social contracts but instead to make local governance more responsive and effective without challenging the deep residual legitimacy the traditional authorities have in most localities. At least in post-conflict situations, elected local governments and appointed magistrates' courts may be appropriate but they cannot replace the chiefs. The former two can be as corrupt as the latter and elected representatives rely too heavily on chiefs to mobilise electoral support.

Reform of traditional administration, not its displacement, is probably in order in post-conflict situations. Three related possibilities occur to us. First, *all* local adults might be permitted to elect their chiefs from among the many descendants of the ruling lineage. (This is the Sierra Leone practice, unlike that of Congo where the successor is the child effectively designated by the preceding chief and confirmed by the provincial government. The Somalis do not have chiefs. In Mozambique tradition and party still contend for local leadership in a hybrid system, though the former is now accepted by the government.) Second, chiefs might be asked to renew their mandate every, say, ten years by standing for re-election. (Sierra Leone chiefs serve for life. Congolese chiefs can be removed by the state for malfeasance, but of course this is not a renewal of a local mandate.) Both of these practices would make traditional administration more accountable to those it serves (and therefore less likely to be exploitative) and would help to weed out those who have become old or have proved

incompetent. Third, the practice of chiefs and customary judges deriving their incomes from the fees and fines they charge for their decisions needs to change.¹² This practice exacerbates the already prevalent problem of corruption and enhances the perception that local governance is biased. To achieve this, however, government revenues need to be separated from the incomes of governing personnel – one of the classic steps toward modern bureaucracy that Weber chronicled (Weber 1967). Fourth, throughout Africa, wherever land is becoming scarce, the arbitrariness with which chiefs often allocate it weakens the effectiveness of this critical link in local governance, particularly with young men. But in conflict situations (from strong states like Côte d'Ivoire and Kenya through to the weaker ones of Congo, Sierra Leone and Somalia) central management of the closing land frontier has often been worse and thus is a challenge to governance at all levels.

In practice, Somalia has already adopted the first two points, as leadership of the *diya*-paying group is not hierarchical and most Islamic Sharia court judges are not hereditary. Nor are Sharia courts seen as being as corrupt as other government offices. Thus non-state governance has been resilient in Somalia and movements based on Sharia have special appeal there (Leonard and Samantar, this *IDS Bulletin* and 2011).

4 The military bargain

The effective agreement between an African country's military and its governing regime (and hence the state) is the most problematic and unstable of the four pacts underlying state security. Coups have been notoriously common in independent sub-Saharan Africa. Civilian leaders have found it hard to create bonds of legitimacy with militaries; the result has been not social contracts but bargains of temporary convenience. Even before the rise of the modern state in Europe the identity of military officers there was separate from that of villagers and was closely tied to that of superordinate political authorities. Thus European states and proto-states enjoyed a residual legitimacy from their militaries, particularly in the face of peasant uprisings. The loyalty of the majority of African militaries to their presidents is more likely to be ethnic and based on immediate material advantage. Of course there are exceptions: the presidents of Ethiopia, Rwanda and Uganda came to power at

the head of rebel armies. In Tanzania President Nyerere instituted universal six-month military service, so that career officers command only conscripts (who are driven by civilian concepts of loyalty to the state). The Kenyan military seems to have concluded from its participation in United Nations peacekeeping missions that military interventions in politics are always disastrous; and the Nigerian army developed an identity with the state through defence of its unity in the country's painful civil war and is kept in check now by the widespread view that military rule was a failure.

In the DRC, Sierra Leone and Somalia, however, the civil wars were prompted at least in part by military predation and incompetence. In all three, the government was unable to pay either the army or the police an adequate salary and they proceeded to live off the communities where they were posted – which made them militarily ineffective as well. It is an error to see the military in a failing state as an instrument for the provision of security to citizens. In fact in conditions of instability in Africa, army and police instead tend to be predatory – in which case it may or may not be possible for local authorities to make a purely local supplementary contract with them.

In Congo it is quite explicit in the constitution and law that even the police are concerned with the security of the *state*, not the population (Nlandu 2012). In eastern Congo the situation is even more extreme. What began as a Rwandan invasion to root out the Rwandan Hutu forces that carried out the genocide and threatened the country from nearby refugee camps in the DRC evolved into an occupation of North and South Kivu by a Rwandophone, even if nominally Congolese, national army. This is not the place to describe the complicated process by which this took place. But *Congolese* Hutu came to be combined with the Tutsi in the part of the newly integrated Congo army stationed in North and South Kivu and the two turned their attention from the Hutu *genocidaires* to the local Maï Maï rebels who have consistently resisted the Rwandan invasion. The presence of this army thus exacerbated rather than solved the local security problem and served to delegitimize the national government and UN peacekeeping forces (MONUSCO), which are seen locally as having condoned this development (Mushi 2012).

The fiction that this Rwandophone army was serving the Congo has now disintegrated and the former has returned to the status of a militia and is now fighting both the Congolese army (FARDC – Forces Armées de la RDC [Armed Forces of the DRC]) and MONUSCO.

The more general issue is the relationship that the army and police have with the populations in the areas they ‘serve’. These aspirants to a ‘monopoly over the exercise of legitimate violence’ (to use another concept from Weber) in failing states actually are rarely paid properly or on time and thus must derive their incomes from local resources if they and their families are to survive. In the worst instances they simply plunder the locals without limit. In Sierra Leone people consistently spoke disparagingly of the predation of the ‘sobels’, soldiers who had joined the rebels against the government. In Kivu local chiefs optimally negotiate an agreement with the army and police that the community will provision them as long as they don’t otherwise impose on the people. In between are soldiers and police who don’t murder or rape locals and take only what they really need. (Congolese informants speak of the latter type of predation as ‘well disciplined’.) We found several instances in Kivu where ‘living off the land’ created severe local tensions and petitions from communities that the army be *removed* from their areas (because they found it a source of insecurity, not protection). The chiefs who negotiated local provisioning essentially have adopted an ancient practice – as paying armies (rather than having them live off enemy land) is no more than a century and a half old anywhere in the world. One of the American grievances in its revolutionary war was the British practice of ‘quartering’ individual soldiers abroad on specific families/households, who then were responsible for their room and board. Similarly, Napoleon expected his armies to ‘live off the land’ in the countries he conquered.

Such ‘quartering’ is an unsatisfactory practice, however, as it was for Napoleon in Spain and for the British in the American colonies. Proper provisioning through the national budget is much to be preferred. This can be expensive, however, particularly in the aftermath of a civil war. In Somaliland approximately 70 per cent of the government budget goes to its army, which is the remnant of the forces that won the country’s independence in 1991.

Provisioning and reorienting the military and police has been easier in Sierra Leone, as the original army was completely decommissioned after it joined the rebels and its replacement was trained and financed by the British. Similarly the police in Sierra Leone were reformed with British help to orient them to the protection rather than control of the population (Charley and M’Cormack 2011). But even when the police and army cease being predators, the major instrument of local order (including in Mozambique) is through communal authority. *National* police and army can keep *others* from predating, which *does* improve local security but only by stabilising the predation. They are too sparse on the ground to create full security against local crime. A major issue troubling both the DRC and Sierra Leone is that the ‘customary police’ of the traditional local authorities are not being financed any longer and therefore are not effective.

5 The international bargain

In practice, weak sub-Saharan African countries experience a fourth agreement with the state as well, one that generally is essential to the other three but is destabilising to them as well. Poor countries lack sufficient domestic finances for the roads, health and education that their communities expect in their social contract with the state and their governments also will strain to pay the salaries of their civil and military services without international development assistance. Many failed states in Africa have been infected as well with conflicts from their neighbours and need regional and ‘Northern’ assistance with their attempts to find peace. These forms of aid in effect are bargains and come at a price.

First, the various donors have their own agendas. Some are very much driven by their own domestic interests, such as Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and the USA in Somalia and Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda in eastern Congo. Others are more selfless, such as the UK and Nigeria in Sierra Leone or the UN in all three. Even the benign agendas may be discordant with local priorities, however. For example, the desire of Western powers to support the reconstruction of post-genocide Rwanda is in tension with their desire to bring peace to eastern Congo, where Rwandan activities are a core part of the problem.

Thus, second, international military and budget support is likely to have a shorter time horizon

than the ten years most observers have concluded is necessary for reconstruction (Collier 2007, 2009). And the countries that prove willing to commit troops may have a counterproductive effect, as did Ethiopia in Somalia and Rwanda in Congo.

Third, international efforts at peacekeeping and state reconstruction are focused on *national* institutions and conflicts. The internationals tend to have a very weak ability to understand and support the resolution of purely local conflicts (which may actually be sustaining the larger ones) or to buttress the reconstruction of effective local governance, as is evident in both eastern Congo and Somalia (Autesserre 2007, 2010; Leonard and Samantar, this *IDS Bulletin* and 2011; Menkhaus 2006). Relatedly, the rules of engagement for UN peacekeeping forces limit contact with local communities to a few officers and reduce tours of duty to six months, effectively preventing understanding of local realities. Similarly the expatriates who lead donor organisations and control their purse strings rarely stay in-post for more than a few years, so that they too generally don't understand the subtleties of national, much less local, structures of governance.

Fourth, internationals conceive of rights in terms of individuals rather than collectivities. Thus their interventions have a poor 'fit'. The impact *can* be positive. Women in Sierra Leone are much better off since the war. They paid a terrible price of rape during the war itself, but the post-war reconstruction efforts unleashed a huge amount of female consciousness-raising by NGOs (both local and international) and by the British with the police. The result is that women (at least in the south and east) are much more conscious of their rights today, they are much less willing to accept abuse from their husbands, they are more aggressive about protecting their rights in court and supporting other women in doing so, and the traditional authorities feel (some reluctantly) that they must respect and enforce these new rights. The same efforts are under way in Congo.

None of this is to say that international involvement in conflict and post-conflict situations is unnecessary or generally counterproductive. The huge imbalance between domestic and international military and financial capabilities,

however, gives unusual weight to the internationals. But their imperfect understanding of the national context makes their power clumsy and draws attention away from the local levels to which much more attention must be given if the human security of the populations is to be recreated.

6 Networks

The prominence of international actors in the sustenance and functioning of post-conflict states raises the question of whether they threaten the integrity of the African state itself. There is no doubt that governance becomes more horizontal and the actors involved are more numerous and financially consequential in a post-conflict situation. International actors also change the policies countries pursue and indirectly make their politics more open. We conclude, however, that they do not threaten the integrity of the state itself.

International donors tend to network with one another around subject matters of common interest. Nonetheless their differing visions and competing interests do create space within which the recipient national government is most often able to influence if not determine an outcome – as long as it cares deeply about it and is relatively united itself. Even in the case of Somalia the donors have not been able to coordinate their activities and priorities effectively, despite trying to do so, being located together outside the country in Nairobi, and facing a very weak Somali government (see Schmidt, this *IDS Bulletin*).

During the period of conflict, the work of *humanitarian* international NGOs (INGOs) will be coordinated by UNOCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance), so as to assure fairly good geographic and functional coverage. Local communities and local NGOs come to understand this function of UNOCHA and know to go there to press their needs and the initiatives they would like to undertake.

Humanitarian INGOs themselves do not prioritise community relationships, however. They are there to 'bind up the wounded, feed the starving and shelter the homeless'. Once the crisis of the immediate conflict is gone, they will leave with little or no notice. It is the *development* INGOs which are there for the long term.

The *development* INGOs tend overwhelmingly to operate from strict programmatic priorities, however. National NGOs come to understand these priorities and structure their own programmes accordingly so as to access funding. But then this means that the NGOs also are driven programmatically and are internationally responsive. Communities find it very difficult to identify and understand donor and INGO priorities. Thus we found that in the aftermath of conflict, communities lack networked relationships with all but a few international donors. Even with local NGOs, it is the NGOs that are taking the initiative to establish priorities (as dictated by the international donors financing them).

The major exception to the foregoing generalisation about *development* INGOs and NGOs are the churches, which are embedded in the communities, have an interest in being responsive to local priorities, often already have a long-established service infrastructure in the communities, and are supported by their own INGOs.¹³

With the exception of the comparatively modest assistance received from or through the churches, communities rely on their elected representatives (sometimes through the local council) to identify potential donors to meet local priorities. These elected positions are held by people with elite backgrounds (by local standards) who are able to negotiate the complexities of the world of donor priorities and bureaucratic procedures. Thus even very substantial overseas development assistance (ODA) flows reinforce rather than undermine the centrality of government in the delivery of services to the citizens. In fact, even in relatively strong African states international donors frequently finance civil servants to deliver services and programmes (Brass 2012). The programmatic content and structure of development programmes are heavily influenced by donor priorities, philosophies and procedures (Johnson 2009) but most often communities experience the services as being provided by the state and they therefore reinforce, rather than undermine, the social contract between the central state and local communities (Brass 2010, 2012).

Of course where local NGOs rather than civil servants mediate the international provision of resources for local services, their leaders may

come to compete with government-based elites for local political leadership. So the precise network through which services reach the community will have political and other consequences, even if not for the legitimacy of the state itself. But this is not new, for it was presaged in the colonial period by the competition that schoolteachers gave to chiefs and other traditional authorities (Ita 1972).

Most of these donor-financed NGO leaders have delimited spheres of influence, so that it matters in local politics or in narrow policy domains who they are but not in broader national politics. Again, the major exception here is the churches, which most often do have the national organisations through which to build on their resurrected role as key service providers.

7 Conclusions

The classical concept of the social contract leads us astray in our attempts to provide human security in conflict-ridden countries in sub-Saharan Africa. It causes us to think of bonds of legitimacy between the state and a citizenry of individuals. Instead the foundational social contracts in Africa are between families and their local authorities and between communities and the larger state. Complicating these two contracts are implicit bargains the state has with its military and with the international community.

In addition, the focus of the classical social contract on individuals leads to a liberal set of values that steer us away from the core issues needing attention in African conflicts – the central role that contested community and individual land rights have in the local social contract, the relationship that communities (rather than individuals) have with the state, and the impact that the unstable loyalties of underfunded militaries have directly and indirectly on community security. Montesquieu's 'liberty' and the checks and balance offered by a focus on groups offers a more promising path in state reconstruction (see Leonard, this *IDS Bulletin*, last article).

Post-conflict systems of governance in Africa have become much more multilevelled and networked than they were in the era immediately following independence. Local systems of governance and the resolution of their problems are key to the restoration of order.

Furthermore, the severe resource constraints created by violent conflict make international actors central to the imposition of some semblance of peace – a reality that also makes international actors prominent in the networks that provide resources for reconstruction and development throughout the multiple levels of a country's governance system. The presence of internationals in these networks does mean that a country's president does not have the ability to set priorities and control the distribution of resources in the way s/he did in the first two

decades of independence. As a result it is possible for local leaders, professionals, national NGOs and churches to challenge the president over matters of *policy and politics* in ways that they could not in the early independence era. But we find that these new or revitalised networks do not challenge the state as an institution itself. Ultimately the key *links* in these networks are being provided by individuals and organisations that are embedded in the state and will not challenge its *existence, unity or effectiveness*.

Notes

- 1 Our project also undertook research on these issues in Mozambique, under the direction of Peter Houtzager and Carlos Cuinhane. Unfortunately that work was not quite complete as we went to press but where possible we have drawn on the interim results.
- 2 For examples of such Hobbesian analysis, see (Beichman 2008; Winter 2004).
- 3 The terms used to describe countries hovering on the borders of violent internal conflict are unstable and contested internationally. Some members of the international community establish a distinction between a fragile state, a crisis state and a failed state. Moving from less to more seriously challenged countries, fragile states are vulnerable to internal and external shocks, and domestic and international conflicts. A crisis state is characterised by acute stress and the inability of its governing institutions to manage conflict and shocks. The state is threatened by collapse, war and ultimately the formation of a different state, if no actor succeeds in imposing a new ruling order over the territory. The idea of a failed state is more extreme. It is a condition of state collapse in which the state can no longer perform its basic security functions and has no control over its territory and borders. It can no longer reproduce the conditions of its own existence.
- 4 A fuller consideration of the limits of the classical Western conception of the social contract when applied to African conflict states is found in Leonard and Samantar (2011).
- 5 Of course if we were to consider the functions of the state *beyond* security, the number of contracts might be extended almost to infinity, depending on our level of analysis. The classic work of Barnard (1968 [1938]) as extended by March and Simon (1958) sees all work in and for organisations as based on a quasi-contractual balance of inducements and contributions.
- 6 Rousseau gives more credence to people as social creatures whereas Hobbes' analysis is narrowly individualist (O'Hagen 1999; Tuck 1989; Wokler 2001). However, even Rousseau does not give the importance to community that is necessary in Africa. Ibn Khaldun, the fourteenth century Arab philosopher, comes closest (Issawi 1987).
- 7 Traditional authorities in late colonial and well-functioning independent states generally have been quite active on development matters and surely this is an important part of their social contract with their communities. But in conditions of conflict the terms of exchange in the local social contract seem to have reverted to these more basic aspects of governance.
- 8 *Diya* groups are made up of about 100 adult males in a sub-lineage who exact and pay compensation for torts committed against and by group members (Lewis 1999 [1961]). Such use of ascriptive ties for security and advantage seems common when civil war forces a breakdown in formal governance structures.
- 9 Related evidence for Mozambique is found in Kyed (2009a and b) and Workman (2011).
- 10 A similar development in Ghana is reported by Crook *et al.* (2010).
- 11 Mozambican National Resistance (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana).
- 12 In the DRC fees collected for judgements belong to a decentralised entity (the *chefferie* or *collectivité*). The *Mwami*, as the head of the collectivity, is supposed to receive a wage. Of course the management of fees and taxes collected by the collectivity is patrimonial since the *Mwami* effectively controls how its revenues are spent and these are used to pay his salary. When the *Mwami* has no more land to sell or

other personal resources and when he no longer receives gifts from his prominent subjects, he may end up living like a commoner

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- if the court revenues are compromised.
- 13 For example, for the centrality of churches in Congolese education, see De Herdt (2011).
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