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1 INTRODUCTION¹

This article attempts to clarify the conceptual confusion underlying current discussions of linking relief and development. The confusion takes the form of competing intellectual frameworks, often using similar words in different ways. It arises partly because the subject is developing rapidly; but also because different analysts are concerned with different kinds of shock in different kinds of situation. The article builds on earlier attempts to classify sources of risk and disaster-types (Buchanan-Smith and Maxwell in this volume). However, it concentrates on trying to sort and order the many different ideas in circulation about the cause and impact of livelihood shocks.

At first sight, the picture is indeed bewildering. Should household vulnerability be defined in terms of 'entitlement' (Sen 1981, Swift 1989), of 'capacity' (Anderson and Woodrow 1989) or of 'capability' (Watts and Bohle 1993)? Are capacity and vulnerability two sides of the same coin? And can 'vulnerability' itself be understood in terms of 'resilience' and 'sensitivity' (Oshaug 1985, Bayliss-Smith 1991)? Can the new discussion about 'coping' and 'adaptation' (Corbett 1988, Davies 1993) be related to earlier debates about 'screws', 'ratchets' and 'spirals' (Chambers *et al.* 1981, Chambers (ed.) 1989)? How useful are any of these ideas to practitioners and policy-makers?

It may be too early to produce an all-inclusive synthesis, but a preliminary framework is possible. The article presents a simple classification to link the competing paradigms. Far from being simply theoretical, it can provide a practical guide to activities which link relief and development, both by those who live in affected communities and by those outsiders who have some responsibility for dealing with emergencies. The key element is that, during an emergency, affected people have crossed a threshold where their behaviour becomes different, so requiring different responses from outsiders.

Before turning to conceptual frameworks, a word is needed about disaster-types and the nature of shocks.

It is notable that the terms 'emergency' or 'disaster' are used in different ways. A phrase used by many is that they reflect 'development in crisis'; similarly, sociologists refer to disasters as 'social crisis periods' (see references in Winchester, 1992). Other definitions, however, are more general. Thus, in the words of a recent UNDP Working Paper, 'disasters occur when a hazard interacts with vulnerability' (UNDP 1994). Similarly, 'Disasters can be defined as crises that overwhelm, at least for a time, people's capacities to manage and cope' (Anderson and Woodrow 1989:1). Or, 'a situation of hardship and human suffering arising from events which cause physical loss or damage, social and/or economic disruption from which the country or community is unable to fully cope alone' (UNICEF 1986: 3)

These definitions would place many parts of the world in an 'emergency': where infant and maternal mortality rates are high, and there are large number of landless, indebted people without access to clean water, satisfactory diets and adequate housing. In these circumstances, people are continually passing over the threshold of disempowerment, for example because of disease. However 'relief' is not organised for them by outsiders, because definitions of emergencies do not overlap.

Recognizing this confusion, an agency like UNICEF makes the distinction between 'silent' and 'loud' emergencies (UNICEF 1986). Most discussion of linking relief and development has been concerned with 'loud' emergencies, which are publicly recognized as such. In practice, 'silent' emergencies associated with extreme poverty probably affect more people. More important, many loud emergencies are rooted in poverty, so that silent emergencies need to be tackled if loud emergencies are to be avoided.

Emergencies have been classified into four types (Buchanan-Smith and Maxwell in this volume): i) rapid onset emergencies, such as earthquakes and floods, causing crises that are usually temporary; ii) slow onset emergencies triggered by natural

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disasters, such as drought, where the emergency does not usually last for more than a couple of years; iii) permanent emergencies, characterized by widespread structural poverty and the need for more or less permanent welfare and continual food relief, and iv) complex political emergencies, associated with internal conflict. This classification covers both 'loud' and 'silent' emergencies.

Within all types, an important starting point for analysis is the research and field experience showing that poor people usually expect some contingencies in their lives and plan for them as best they can, as an extension of their existing portfolio of survival skills (Mortimore 1989; Davies 1993). However, as a result of 'shocks', a number of things will change irreversibly, such as families selling off productive assets, communities and families disintegrating, housing destroyed and epidemics triggered (summarized graphically and effectively in Frankenburger 1992).

Shocks can be many in type and a comprehensive summary of these (in terms of sources of risk to household food security) is provided by Maxwell and Smith (1992), reproduced in this volume in the article by Buchanan-Smith and Maxwell. The rows in the table identify the different sources of entitlement to food: productive and non productive assets, human capital, and income and claims. The columns identify different types of risk leading to shocks: natural, market, state, community or other (such as conflict). The main impact of a drought shock will be to affect the capacity of the household to turn productive assets into command over food. It could also affect productive capital by lowering the water table or causing livestock deaths. Conflict, as a further example, can affect all sources of income entitlement: destroy productive capital, lead to theft of non productive assets, destroy (murder) human capital, destroy crop income and disrupt and uproot communities and their social systems.

2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

A better understanding of the sources of risk facing poor people has been associated with an expansion of efforts to analyse the interaction between social processes and disasters. For example, the well-known and path-breaking work of Sen (1981) helped to change the perception of famines from one where supply was seen as the main problem (physical lack

of food) to one where access to food and therefore of power and power over assets was predominant.² The food security literature has spawned a great deal of conceptual work in relation to famine (Dreze and Sen 1989; Swift 1993). Now the importance of conflict in emergencies is generating new thinking among researchers and agencies, although this has not yet been integrated into the current state of the art.

A good example of conceptual diversification is the use and application of the terms 'vulnerability' and 'vulnerable'. These are being used more and more frequently; and, probably as a result, with less and less accuracy or consensus over what they should really mean. 'Vulnerability' does have a precise meaning for certain groups concerned with disaster management. Traditionally, it has been used most in the area of natural hazards (single cause 'events'), with applications such as mapping of floods and risk zones for earthquakes. For engineers and planners, it is a mathematical function, representing the extent to which a particular entity (typically a physical structure) is likely to be damaged by a given event (Downing 1991). Epidemiologists have been concerned with vulnerability to disease: characteristically, they compile social vulnerability indices, using information on social pathology, economic status, education, health access and status. They have also extended vulnerability concepts to patterns of vulnerability to disease, and factors that affect recovery, rehabilitation and exposure (Downing *ibid.*).

In the field of food security/famine (Downing, 1991, Borton and Shoham, 1991), a well-accepted definition of vulnerability is: 'an aggregate measure, for a given population or region, of the risk of exposure to food insecurity and the ability of the population to cope with the consequences of that insecurity' (Downing 1991).

These definitions are all broadly consistent. However, the use of the term 'vulnerability' has expanded, to involve a wide range of elements and situations. It has been described as insecurity, exposure to risks, hazards, shocks and stress, difficulty in coping with contingencies, and linked to net assets.

The concept of vulnerability is being extended to services, infrastructure and institutions. Several researchers are examining what 'political' and 'institutional'

² See Winchester, 1992 for a useful description of the way outsiders' perceptions have changed.

vulnerability mean in the face of collapsed governance during conflict emergencies, but no consensus has yet been reached on appropriate indicators.

Thinking about vulnerability has been linked to other ideas about entitlement and capacity by Anderson and Woodrow. They suggest that: 'Development is a process through which people's physical/material, social/organizational and motivational/attitudinal vulnerabilities (or capacities) are reduced (or increased) (Anderson and Woodrow 1989: 12).'

This formulation provides three important pointers to policy. First, crises will continue to occur periodically. They only escalate into disaster situations, however, when they outstrip the capacity of a society to cope with them. Families and communities usually cope with regular seasonal contingencies (called the 'screw effect' by Chambers *et al.*, 1981). Secondly, communities may be vulnerable or strong in a number of ways: in terms of organization or motivation as well as materially; and development or disaster assistance projects will only be effective over the long term to the extent that they identify and respond to particular vulnerabilities and capacities of a community. Moreover, successful projects will differentiate among the vulnerabilities and capacities of particular groups in a community (e.g. women or the poorest of the poor). Thirdly, by focusing on capacities as well as vulnerabilities, and on organization and attitudes as well as the material realm, projects will naturally emphasize the use of local resources, including indigenous knowledge, and the participation of the community.³

Despite this clarification, there remains a plethora of conceptual frameworks. Table 1 is an attempt to identify common ground. It is based on the available literature and reflects various compromises: the four columns (A - D) should only be read vertically as lists, but these four lists have a logical progression from left to right.

Column A lists terms used for different types of events. These events confront households (Column B), which will have some resources, or repertoire to withstand the negative effects of the event (or for a few, to profit from it). Anderson and Woodrow distinguish between physical/material capacities (what productive resources exist), social/organizational (what are the relations and organization among

the people?) and motivational/attitudinal (how does the community view its ability to change?). Their proposal for the use of the word 'capacities' was in a practical inventory sense, to encourage relief workers to realize that people were not 'helpless victims' but had many resources even at the time of the emergency and that these resources should form the basis of the recovery. It is important to consider 'capacities' always in conjunction with vulnerabilities, the use of this latter term encouraging relief workers to look beyond 'needs'. It is therefore a sort of 'balance sheet'. The capacities-vulnerabilities framework has been used by many NGOs, most widely by those linked to the Canadian Council for Relief and Rehabilitation.

Sen (1981) proposed the concept of 'entitlements' over food, arguing that people starve when their command over available food supplies fell below subsistence needs. Entitlements focus on exchange and terms of trade relationships (which also identify important elements of vulnerability), and households' ownership of physical endowments and the rate at which these could be exchanged for food. The entitlements concept recognizes the links between poverty and famine but focuses narrowly on food and those resources which can be traded (analogous to Anderson and Woodrow's physical and material capacities. In a later publication Sen, with Dreze (Dreze and Sen 1989) did widen entitlements beyond food to social services.

Swift (1993) extends the analysis of entitlements to include claims on assistance in times of food shortage. These redistributive mechanisms had not been included in Sen's earlier formulation. 'Net assets' (which could be positive or negative) is Chambers' shorthand for the state in which a household faces up to a potential hazard. Phillips and Taylor (1990) use the term 'insurance strategy' in the light of food security risks.

The idea of coping ability or 'coping strategies' has been well documented through the 1980s, as the slow onset emergencies have shown a progression of activities in response to declining entitlement to food (Longhurst 1986; Corbett 1988). The three stages of the coping strategies have been generally categorized as insurance mechanisms and non-erosive coping; disposal of productive assets or erosive coping; and destitution or non-coping (de Waal 1989,

³ The capacities/vulnerabilities framework has been used by the Canadian Council for International Cooperation.

A Events/ processes	B Households state	C Determinants of potential impact	D Outcome after the event
Hazard	Capacity (<i>Sen, Anderson and Woodrow</i>)	Vulnerability (<i>Chambers, Anderson and Woodrow, Winchester</i>)	1 Winners who profit (<i>Duffield</i>)
Shock	Entitlement (<i>Sen, Swift</i>)	Exposure (<i>Watts and Bohle</i>)	2 Enduring households who are unaffected (<i>Oshaug</i>)
Stress	Net assets (<i>Chambers</i>)	Resilience (<i>Oshaug, Bayliss-Smith</i>)	3 Resilient households have coped back to where they were before (screws, cycles) (<i>Oshaug, Bayliss-Smith, Chambers et al., Davies</i>)
Risk	Insurance strategy (<i>Phillips and Taylor</i>)	Sensitivity (<i>Bayliss-Smith</i>)	4 Fragile households who are worse off/ratchets/spirals/adaptation (<i>Oshaug, Chambers et al., Davies</i>)
	Coping ability (<i>Corbatt, Longhurst, Frankenberger</i>)		
	Capability (<i>Watts and Bohle</i>)	Potentially (<i>Watts and Bohle</i>)	

Frankenberger 1991). The 'shock threshold' or 'ratchet' is crossed at the point between Stage 2 (which includes sales of livestock for subsistence, sale of agricultural tools, sale or mortgage of land, extended credit and clientage) and Stage 3 (dependence on charity, distress migration by entire family units, migration to relief centres and then starvation).

The recently published conceptual framework of Watts and Bohle (1993) explores, in theoretical terms, the inter-relationship between poverty, hunger and famine. They analyse i) exposure, ii) inadequate capacity to cope, and iii) severe consequences of, and the linked risks of low and limited recovery (resilience) from crises and shocks. Vulnerability is thus defined in terms of exposure, capacity and vulnerability. The theoretical analysis of Watts and Bohle adds to entitlement to include power/institutional relations and the social relations of production and class. Therefore, their use of 'capacities' is the broadest used to date.

The list in Column C is inextricably linked to Column B. Column C identifies the terms broadly used to capture the 'Determinants of the Impact: how household resources 'face up to' and deal with the events and processes. In many formulations, Columns B and C are different sides of the same coin although the literature does not always lead to such a tidy outcome. Broadly, researchers in this area have asked: how vulnerable is the household? Because of its importance as a pivot in understanding the impact of disasters, 'vulnerability' has already been reviewed in some detail in this section. In a useful advance to understanding, vulnerability has been divided into 'resilience' and 'sensitivity' (Bayliss-Smith 1991). Resilient households can absorb a threat without serious modification, and are not easily destroyed. Sensitive systems respond rapidly to interventions, but there is always a risk of rapid negative as well as positive outcomes.

Four types of outcome have been identified in the literature on disasters (column D). First are the 'winners', who profit from the outcomes of a disaster. These have been given surprisingly little attention in the literature, certainly at micro level (Duffield 1994). But wealthy households are able to take advantage of low prices for livestock, hoard grain, buy up land being sold by desperate victims and, in some circumstances, appropriate land and assets through violence.

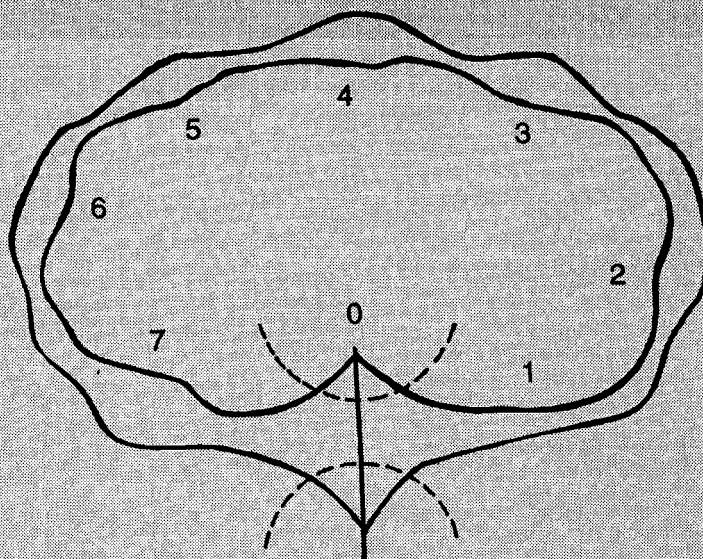
Second, between those who 'win' and those who 'lose', there are those households who are unaffected. These have been identified by Oshaug (1985), in a categorization of three types of household, as 'enduring households', those which maintain household food security on a continuing basis. Despite crises they have sufficient access to food for household needs.

Third, those households which are affected by the crisis, experience hardship but return to normal are identified as 'resilient' by Oshaug; these households experience transitory food insecurity but maintain household food security in the longer term perspective.

The fourth group are those that are worse off following the emergency, probably a high proportion of those affected. They are described as 'fragile' by Oshaug, unable to maintain household food security in the short and long term perspectives. They are affected by what has been described as a 'ratchet' effect, compared to 'normal' 'screw' effects (Chambers, Longhurst and Pacey 1981). In many emergencies, especially those related to conflict, there is no 'back to normal' as if the 'screw' was released. Often people exhaust their coping strategies and become significantly disempowered as a result.

As an aid to analysis and interventions, but not yet a final product, Figure 1 represents some of the types of households or communities in some of the emergency types described in Section 1. This figure provides a guide to activities that link relief and development. In what looks like a ring that is worn on a finger, the width of the band represents the scale of human suffering. There are 'normal' expected seasonal problems every year. The circumference of the ring is designed to accommodate an eight year cycle, based on local wisdom in many parts of the world that famines reoccur every 7-8 years. In years 0 or 8 the level of suffering becomes a shock for some

Figure 1: Contingencies, emergencies and human suffering over a seven-to-eight year cycle.



people, a behavioural threshold is crossed (over the dotted lines). This has been building up in year 7. Rehabilitation efforts including indigenous coping mean that the household in the diagram 'returns to normal'. However, the ring can be modified so that the shock period extends for as long as it occurs.

3 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The tabular review of concepts, terms and descriptors indicates the large degree of overlap between many of the ideas being presented, and hopefully now being tested in the field. The description of elements in Table 1 also shows that actions can be taken to reduce the impact of the event and process. For example: investment in irrigation will reduce the likelihood of a drought shock (column A); or adding to the resources of vulnerable households will strengthen their capacity to withstand shocks (column B). Similarly, the ring in Figure 3 can be used to help plan interventions. Development actions could be carried out, for example in year 3, which would have an impact on reducing the number of people who cross the shock barrier in year 8 (e.g. building a road). Well organized rehabilitation activities in year 1 can also reduce excessive numbers of people in shock. Effective relief activities at the time of the crisis can also reduce the number of people that have crossed the threshold. All of the terms used in Columns B and C of Table 1 are ways of predicting the size and nature of the population group that spills over the threshold.

Different types of shocks and different household types demand varying interventions to strengthen local measures (e.g. statesponsored safety nets). Emergency projects can have a built-in development capacity; development programmes can

be expanded rapidly to provide emergency assistance; and a simultaneous emergency-and-development strategy, where resources (including food aid) can be provided to support employment when household food production collapses or incomes are reduced (World Bank and World Food Programme 1991).

Several countries have been making the development-relief linkage for some time. The 'famine codes' of India are most notable because they have been in place for over 100 years. The codes' actions stay in place all the time expanding and contracting as the need arises. This is a programme of action for local government officials, the organization of relief works, wages and rations and measures relating to cattle and forests. Public works are the most important element. In Bangladesh, improved food management, distribution and prices, early warning systems, feeding programmes and an open government have all contributed to mitigating recent famines. Such positive experiences relying on food aid and imports and an effective rural infrastructure linked with public works have averted famine in Botswana, Kenya, Cape Verde and Zimbabwe.

A recent review of development-emergency linkage projects proposed by the World Food Programme (1992) comes to similar conclusions: support to national disaster mitigation and rehabilitation strategies and programmes through labour-intensive public works that provide simultaneously immediate employment and income, alleviating poverty and strengthening self-help capacity; construction and improvement of infrastructure needed particularly to increase agricultural production, protect the environment, stimulate rural development and strengthen protective measures against drought and other disasters.

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