

Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies

**HUMAN SECURITY:
A FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT
IN CONFLICT AND TRANSITION**

Jennifer Leaning, M.D., S.M.H.
Sam Arie, M.Sc.

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Abstract

Human security is a concept that dates back to the Enlightenment. Various strains of meaning, spanning a focus on individual rights and a preoccupation with territorial integrity of states, have accompanied its use in many settings. In the last 25 years, the term has increasingly been applied to political, social, and economic inputs required to create security for individuals and communities. Most recently there has been growing interest in assessing the usefulness of this concept in the design of policies to provide relief and stabilization in areas emerging from war and conflict.

In that transitional context this paper argues for a new definition of human security based on identifying those factors that protect and promote human well being through time. This argument builds on the capabilities analysis of Sen and Dreze, incorporates the vulnerability model described by Webb, and employs the psychosocial needs framework of Amoo. Noting that the provision of basic material supports is essential but not sufficient, the definition of human security advanced here insists on the additional importance, for individuals and communities, of fulfilling three basic psychosocial dimensions: a sense of home and safety; constructive family and social supports; and acceptance of the past and a positive grasp of the future. These three psychosocial dimensions (referred to in shorthand as home, community, and time) are evaluated in a number of settings, primarily in Africa. Suggestions are provided, based upon this concept, for humanitarian efforts in refugee and immediate post-conflict settings.

The paper further argues that ways of measuring human security along these three dimensions are more easily approached through the use of negative indices, or threats to human security. The negative indices proposed here are social dislocation (for home), dynamic inequality (for community relationships), and high discount rate (for positive sense of the future). It is noted that further methodological effort is needed to refine the metrics to be used in these indices. Whether this concept and its proposed indices could prove useful in identifying trends in human security (or threats to human security) in the immediate post (or pre) conflict setting will require further empirical work, through retrospective case studies and prospective observation and analysis.

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Our intellectual debt extends to the many authors referred to in the paper but we wish to note in particular our reliance on the capabilities analysis of Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen and our appreciative use of ideas advanced by Sam Amoo, Mary Anderson, John Burton, Peter Marris, Emma Rothschild, Frances Stewart, Peter Uvin, and Patrick Webb.

The task of synthesis and application, however, is original and we take responsibility for any errors that may be found.

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1. Introduction

The changing nature of conflict calls for a new approach

The last decade of the twentieth century witnessed a profound change in the nature of conflict around the world. Observers celebrated the declining number of inter-state conflicts, just as a proliferation of complicated intra-state disputes, conflicts and emergencies began to take hold. These situations have presented an altogether different class of crisis, and in case after case the international community has been unable to recognize, forestall or even mitigate the effects of a rapid collapse in human security.

In this paper we revisit the idea of human security. We argue that a narrow focus on material resources has prevented analysts from identifying the true sources of vulnerability or resilience in a population, and we set out a conceptual approach which pays due attention to the psychological and social bases of community stability. In other words, we aim to engage the recurring question of what makes conflict more likely in one place rather than another by exploring the underlying conditions or factors that support constructive coping mechanisms in the face of threats or hazards. How was it that peace could ‘break out’ in Mozambique, a hotbed of insurgency and ideological confrontation, while in Rwanda, long viewed as a model of development, unmanageable violence lay so close beneath the surface of society?

Our findings suggest that these complex situations are best explained by a composite model of human security. For a society to be resilient, we find that it need not necessarily be rich. Instead, what is required is a core bundle of basic resources – material, psychological and social – which together ensure a minimum level of survival. These core inputs establish a floor from which human development efforts can then push off. If no such floor exists, development gains will be short lived and illusory, and the potential for conflict will be high. By contrast, if minimal material inputs can be guaranteed and if efforts can be made to shore up basic social coping capacities, societies will be more stable and less prone to fragmentation, violence and atrocity.

In particular, we identify three areas of psychosocial stability, arguing that individuals and communities have greater resilience when their core attachments to *home*, *community* and *the future* remain intact. These links underpin a sense of identity and facilitate participation in the constructive collective project, the foundation of a successful community or nation state. When these attachments are undone – as they are when populations are uprooted and dislocated, when families and communities are broken up, and when arbitrary violence and discrimination render the future distant and unpredictable – individuals turn to other sources for participation, recognition and empowerment. These sources take the shape of identity groups formed around race, religion, geography or age and are characterized by an ideology of resentment and an aggressive stance towards established institutions and processes. When sections of a population identify more readily with these groups than with the collective enterprise, credible dispute resolution becomes unlikely and the paths to violence and disorder are manifold.

The composite model of human security offers a clearer perspective on this process than has been available to date. We argue that by including indicators of psychosocial continuity in a *balanced scorecard* of human security, a scorecard that would also contain measures of access to basic material resources, we would improve our ability to recognize those dynamic changes in a society that carry the potential to spark conflict.² With such enhancement, we would be better placed as an international

² For the origins of this idea in business, see Kaplan R, *The Balanced Scorecard - Measures That Drive Performance*, Harvard Business Review 1992.

community to identify the sources of crisis at an early stage and better equipped to offer support and intervention before conflict arises.

Outline for this paper: developing the composite concept

The strategy for this paper, then, is to set out a new concept and to show how it can be applied to a range of different situations. We begin, in Section 2, with a review of recent approaches to human security and attempt to identify their common elements: we find that ‘human security’ approaches are distinguished by a focus on individuals rather than nation states, and by a multi-dimensional approach to definition. The most successful interpretations also make the link between human security and the stability of the nation state; they do not, in general, underestimate the difficulty of measuring and recording human security and few suggest that this could be done with a single-indicator framework.

In Section 3 we draw on these observations and develop a new model of human security, paying more attention to the psychological and social elements of community stability and identifying three overlapping areas of psychosocial resilience (home, community and the future). Discussion of measurement strategies suggests that we must (a) focus on *dynamic changes* in any of these three areas, and (b) pay special attention to the *inverse indicators* of security. These inverse indicators – brought together on the ‘balanced scorecard’ – will be designed to capture the level of detachment or dislocation from home, the extent of destructive tension between community groups, and the degree of pessimism about the future. In this way, we can use the human security approach as a model for *threat assessment*, in recognition of the fact that the need to anticipate crisis often holds greater priority than the need to foretell prosperity.

In Section 4 we begin to apply these lessons to select cases from Africa. The examples of Rwanda and Mozambique highlight the relevance of population dislocation and of rising inequality between groups, while discussion of the situation in Nigeria and Somalia shows the importance of inter-group inequalities and widespread lack of confidence in the future. These examples are necessarily brief, but at a general level they confirm the appropriateness of our threefold division.

In the annex to this paper, we discuss the various ways in which the new framework can be used to guide humanitarian policy in the field. However, this paper remains predominantly theoretical. At this stage we have sought to establish some very broad points about the *nature of resilience* and the *type* of indicators we might use to measure it. We draw attention to the non-material elements of security, and take a first step towards a paradigm focused on people rather than resources. We have yet to start in earnest on the task of application, but when we do, we expect to find important lessons in many different fields. For example, we will want to know more about how human security depends on race, gender or age, and how culture affects our assessment of vulnerability – from Asia to Africa to Latin America.

At present, however, our ambitions are modest. We hope to have shown that as a concept, ‘human security’ offers an appropriate new focus on individuals and communities, while as a tool it offers a practical avenue towards effective measurement of civil and economic stress. If worked through correctly, this new understanding may deliver substantial improvements in our capacity to analyze and describe society, may also improve our ability to deploy resources for humanitarian intervention, and ultimately, therefore, may help reduce human suffering.

2. History of the concept of human security

THE POLITICAL USE OF THE TERM “HUMAN SECURITY” dates from the Enlightenment, when notions of individual liberty and freedom were advanced to counter the dictates of government. Incorporating themes of human rights and individual well being, the term collided in 19th century political discourse with the rise of the nation state, and as regional alliances were formed – to enforce particular global regimes – the term began to be used to describe collective strategic security, enforced through diplomatic or military action. (C.f. Rothschild 1995, Hafterdorn 1991)

This is the sense in which the term was employed for most of the 20th century. However, in recent years the intellectual focus has subtly returned to the individual and his community – from the perspective of this paper, a critically important shift. In this section, therefore, we take the time to explain and analyze the major recent contributions, and to draw some early conclusions on terminology and focus. *However, for readers who are already familiar with the history of the term, it may make sense to jump ahead directly to Section 3 – where our own substantive recommendations begin.*

2.1 Human security since 1975

In the last 25 years, discussion of human security has begun to incorporate insights from the peace and disarmament debate, assessments of the impact of demographic change, and critiques of economic development. Conceptualization of security has therefore moved beyond preoccupation with the territorial integrity of nation states, and has been reinvigorated by the recognition that concerns for the individual – such as human rights, gender equity and a minimum social entitlement – have much to contribute to our understanding. In the nuclear debate, for example, it has been argued that the stability and well being of communities and nations rests as much on factors associated with human development, economic growth, and democracy as on acquisition of a weapons arsenal. (Palme Commission 1982, Barnett 1981)

The relationship between national security and demographic change has also attracted attention. Mass migration, rapid population growth, and sudden changes in population growth rates have each been seen to threaten the stability of a nation, reminding us that the security of people and their states are interconnected. It is in the context of this debate that we have outlined our principal argument: namely, that population movement, public health, gender relations or social conflict in general can and should be addressed using a human security framework, not least because this framework focuses our attention on the actual people involved and the human costs of policy making. **(For applications and examples, see Box 2.1 and Annex A)**

In the area of development assistance, planners in the 1960s and 1970s slowly developed an approach that became more attentive to local capacities and strategies for empowerment. This movement reflected the influence of post-colonial liberation struggles and the articulate critique of previously established development truths. (Fanon 1963, Schumacher 1973, Kent 1987) and was sustained in the 1980s and 1990s by a second wave of critical analysis of international development (see Section 3). In 1994, it was further accelerated by the UNDP Human Development Report, which set out explicitly to promote a view of human security as grounded in the most basic economic and social well being of individuals and populations.

BOX 2.1 SECURITY IMPLICATIONS OF MIGRATION

Security of states affected by insecurity of populations

A growing number of analysts in demography, political science, and international relations have begun to discuss the connections between the movement of peoples and the security of states. Among questions of principal interest to these scholars are these that carry import for human security:

- In settings of economic stagnation, technological backwardness, and unresponsive political systems, does rapid population growth tend to be associated with a rise in internal dissent? How important are size changes in the 15-24 age range, and could they serve as an indicator of potential social conflict?
- In countries with histories of chronic ethnic tension, do intermixed settlements of people with different ethnicities heighten the prospects for ethnic conflict? Under what circumstances might partition or population separation be considered a reasonable mitigating option?
- How does rural to urban migration affect the social and economic stability?
- How do population-driven pressures on land, in the context of poverty and underdevelopment, translate into ecological marginalization and political unrest?
- To what extent are refugee patterns associated with changes in the internal security of the state?

Weiner and Russell, citing Goldstone, note links between demographic change and state stability:

“While overall population growth or increases in density generally do not lead to violent conflict, Goldstone notes that the presence of a youth bulge has been found to be a major factor in political conflicts, especially when those youths are relatively highly educated and urbanized, with low employment prospects. Specific demographic variables (youth bulge, urbanization/development ratio, life expectancy, and adult and infant mortality) are useful predictors of political violence, but it is also the case that violent conflicts can have large and long-lasting effects on demography— creating shifts in age and gender composition, marriage and birth rates, and population distribution that increase the potential for renewed conflict in the future.” (Weiner and Russell 2000: 15)

Teitelbaum addresses the potential for conflict posed by this youth bulge:

“Popular opposition is particularly easy to mobilize among the young, those who are not yet attached to families and careers, and who have the idealism and energy to seek radical change. Revolutions have historically occurred in societies that had a marked ‘youth bulge— that is, a relatively high proportion of the population age fifteen to twenty-five compared with the population age twenty-five and older. A recent study of demographic, economic and political causes of state failure from 1950-1990 similarly found that major ethnic conflicts were far more likely to break out in countries with a marked ‘youth bulge’ in their population.” (Teitelbaum 1995: 261-262)

A Rand study of demography and national security finds that how a society deals with “resource-consumption practices” is key in determining whether the youth bulge contributes to internal dislocation and migration. (Nichiporuk 1999: 39) There is good reason to argue, then, that demographic questions and security questions are intricately linked and are thus best addressed together.

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2.2 *The Human Development Report 1994*

The Human Development Report 1994 argued as follows:

The concept of security has for too long been interpreted narrowly: as security of territory from external aggression, or as protection of national interests in foreign policy or as global security from the threat of a nuclear holocaust. It has been related more to nation-states than to people ... who sought security in their daily lives. For many of them, security symbolizes protection from the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards. (UNDP 1994: 22)

The threats to security listed here were deliberately chosen to reflect seven distinct categories of human insecurity (health, food, economic, personal, community, political and environmental) and to show that the concept being proposed was “all-encompassing” and directed towards “freedom from fear” as well as “freedom from want” (ibid: 24). This definition of security was therefore “people-centered” and “universal”, and consisted of “interdependent” components. To establish this concept “through early prevention”, the report advocated the use of early warning indicators of human distress such as crime rates, road traffic accidents, pollution, and income inequality (ibid: 30). These indicators are now regularly included in annual issues of the UNDP Human Development Report.

The UNDP definition of human security was put up for discussion at the Copenhagen Social Summit in 1995, but no formal consensus was reached. Although the conference declarations included a commitment to "promoting social integration by fostering societies that are stable, safe and just", the proposed human security definition was perceived at the Summit as too broad, too idealistic, and as threatening traditional concepts of national security. The negotiations concentrated on striking a balance between national sovereignty and global action: the EU countries argued for increased leverage on national policies in the name of social development, while the G-77 countries held firmly to the importance of “territorial integrity and non-interference” which the universal and all-encompassing elements of human security appeared to undermine. (Earth Negotiations Bulletin, IISD 1995)

2.3 *The contribution of Canada and Japan*

Since 1995, the leading contributor to the human security dialogue has been the government of Canada, which has incorporated a safety-oriented definition of human security into its official foreign policy objectives. The Canadian approach (see **Box 2.2**) owes a great deal to the 1994 UNDP conceptualization, especially in terms of the focus on individuals and the threats they face. A summary document published by the Department for Foreign Affairs states that “the litmus test for determining if it is useful to frame an issue in human security terms is the degree to which the safety of people is at risk.” (Govt. of Canada 1999: 5)

The Canadian and UNDP approaches to human security both arrive at human security from dissatisfaction with traditional national security perspectives, and they both stress a mutually reinforcing relationship between human security and human development with clear implications for active policy:

Human security provides an enabling environment for human development. Where violence or the threat of violence makes meaningful progress on the developmental agenda impractical, enhancing safety for people is a prerequisite. (ibid: 7)

In the context of war and civil conflict, the Canadian emphasis on population safety takes on specific international policy implications. Key policy targets in the realm of preventive diplomacy

have included the Ottawa Convention on Anti-personnel Landmines and the Rome Treaty for the creation of an International Criminal Court. These two initiatives, as well as an expressed interest in strengthening international humanitarian intervention, reveal the sense in which the Canadians may place higher priority on protecting the human security of individuals and groups than on shoring up national sovereignty.

The Japanese vision of human security acknowledges the increasingly important role of individuals and non-state actors but places most emphasis on establishing human security through enlightened national strategies aimed at promoting economic development and individual self-reliance. In a recent policy speech, the Japanese State Secretary for Foreign Affairs noted that the trend towards thinking within a human security framework

. . . does not in the least diminish the significance of the state as the basic component of international society; states will of course continue to retain their territorial sovereignty, democratic legitimacy, and enforcement power under the law. But it is becoming increasingly important to address these challenges to human dignity from the standpoint of protecting the interests of individual human beings, with each individual exerting his or her own initiative.

(Takemi 1999)

International projects proposed under the Japanese umbrella of human security include extension of micro-credit schemes; promotion of basic education; provision of social safety nets to vulnerable populations within Asia; support for conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction through economic development and reconciliation efforts; and the establishment of a human security fund administered through the UN to support a range of economic assistance measures. (ibid.)

In summary, the Canadian approach to human security defines one view of the discussion in the international arena about the priority to attach to issues of population protection in war and complex emergencies. The Japanese approach acknowledges acute insecurity crises but offers a strategy aimed at economic development and conflict prevention.

BOX 2.2 CANADA'S DEFINITION OF HUMAN SECURITY

The Government adopts a safety-oriented interpretation for foreign policy

"In essence, human security means safety for people from both violent and non-violent threats. It is a condition or state of being characterized by freedom from pervasive threats to people's rights, their safety, or even their lives. ... From a foreign policy perspective, human security is perhaps best understood as a shift in perspective or orientation. It is an alternative way of seeing the world, taking people as its point of reference, rather than focusing exclusively on the security of territory or governments. Like other security concepts – national security, economic security, food security – it is about protection. Human security entails taking preventive measures to reduce vulnerability and minimize risk, and taking remedial action where prevention fails." — (Govt. of Canada, 1999: 5-6)

Reference

Govt. of Canada (1999) Human Security: Safety for People in a Changing World, Ottawa: Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

2.4 *The King/Murray approach, and the UN Millenium Report*

One problem associated with an approach to human security that hovers close to traditional development strategies is that it may fail to capture the important psychosocial elements of vulnerability and resilience. This problem is also evident in those discussions that equate insecurity with some inverse measure of poverty, albeit adjusted for risk or weighted in other ways. In a paper entitled “Rethinking Human Security”, Gary King and Christopher Murray proposed a “simple, rigorous and measurable definition of human security” expressed as:

the expected number of years of future life spent outside the state of ‘generalized poverty’. Generalized poverty occurs when an individual falls below the threshold in any key domain of human well-being.

(King and Murray 2000)

The important step involved here is the inclusion of a lifetime perspective, which is necessary for any conceptualization of security that addresses vulnerability over time, but the authors advance the idea through the device of an aggregate human security index, a device also proposed in the background papers to the 2000 UN Millenium Report. The difficulty with a single outcome measure of this sort is that it may be so close to a weighted poverty measure or an aggregated development index that it cannot identify the particular components of *current and acute threats* to well-being, or to recognize short run changes in risk and vulnerability. Nonetheless, the idea of a ‘single indicator’ is discussed by many people and occupies a significant portion of the current debate on human security.

2.5 *Human security indicators: the direction from here?*

Looking back, there seems to be great consensus on the value of the human security approach but little agreement on what that approach should entail. The Millenium Report argued for “a more human-centred approach to security” but did not offer a formal definition of how this should be articulated or measured. (UN 2000:43) Looking ahead, the challenge is to build a definition of human security that can be translated into a measurable set of indicators in the field – that is, indicators for assessing risk and vulnerability at the individual and community level.

2.6 *Summary*

There have been several different important approaches to understanding human security. Each has distinctive advantages and disadvantages, but all share a core focus on individuals and communities rather than states and nations, on social and psychological well-being as well as provision for material needs. Most also stress an instrumental role for human security in promoting or enabling human development.

These common core elements have several immediate implications. First, if human security and national security are closely linked then individual and group insecurity may threaten the security of the nation state itself; therefore, national policy makers have an acute interest in understanding human security. Secondly, if the security of one state is linked to another, the international community has a similarly increased interest in promoting the human security – that is, in promoting the security of citizens the world over.

In the following section we propose a working definition of human security that acknowledges these subtle changes. We begin to build a framework for national and international policy making that will support an improved capacity for monitoring human security and for intervening – when necessary – to protect vulnerable communities and to ease recovery from crisis and conflict. We continue to focus on the

individual and on the close links between human security and human development. We stress the need to go beyond material needs analysis by recognizing the critical *psychological and social components* of personal and community resilience, and we stress the need to be proactive rather than reactive in recognizing the signs of insecurity.

3. A New Definition of Human Security

Outline of the Argument

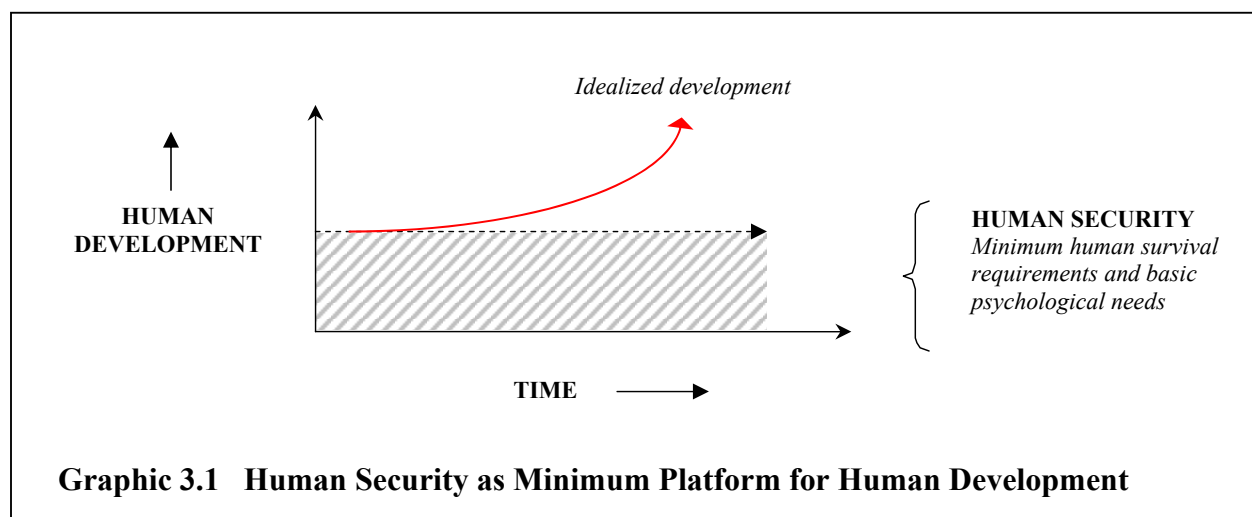
In this section we move forward the general observations of Section 2 and lay out a new conceptual approach to human security. We begin by asking what *type* of concept we need, and argue for a composite, capability-based concept that includes both material and psychosocial resources. We then look at the *content* of the human security idea and attempt to say what we think those resources are. We focus almost exclusively on the psychosocial side, where we identify three overlapping domains and three connected indicators of security. In the final part, we summarize our arguments and propose an appropriate working definition.

Overview: Human Security requires a composite bundle of basic resources

The concept of human security developed here deliberately includes the social, psychological, political, and economic factors that promote and protect human well being through time. Its key components reflect not only the need to ensure human survival at any point in time, but also the need to sustain and develop a core psychological coping capacity in populations under stress. Eventually, a conceptualization that addresses these dual needs will provide policy guidance in two areas:

- a) how to secure minimum levels of survival (with water, food and shelter) and provide minimum levels of protection from life threats;
- b) how to support basic psychosocial needs for identity, recognition, participation, and autonomy.

We believe that to secure these two components of human security is also to secure an essential platform for human development. In other words, we see human security as establishing the floor, the starting point from which human development efforts then push off. Concentrating on a secure base offers immediate benefits in terms of threat management and economic stability, and also stands to improve the effectiveness of long term development efforts. For a human being to have human security, he or she must have a bundle of basic resources, both material and psychosocial, that constitute an indivisible set of necessary inputs and conditions for stability and well-being. This bundle has to be achieved before human beings can be expected to be receptive to or capable of participating in any development strategy. In short, human security must be attained prior to and as a pre-condition for the successful implementation of a human development strategy. (See **Graphic 3.1**)



3.1 Capabilities, coping, and vulnerability

We argued above that human security should be thought of as a composite, capability-based concept. We begin here by tracing the conceptual connection to the capabilities approach in development economics. This approach, first outlined in the context of ‘social security’ by Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen, stressed the importance of social functionings as well as biological health. Drèze and Sen argued that to lead a secure life people relied on appropriate psychological as well as material relationships. Specifically:

[T]he object of public action can be seen to be the enhancement of the capability of people to undertake valuable and valued ‘doings and beings’. This can extend from such elementary capabilities as the ability to avoid undernourishment and related morbidity and mortality, to more sophisticated social capabilities such as taking part in the life of the community and achieving self-respect.

Dreze and Sen 1989: 12

This statement appears to endorse the fulfillment of basic psychosocial needs as an early and crucial part of the human development progression, and we have followed this approach in our own thinking about human security. It is important to note the main features of the argument we have drawn from and to include in the overview the clear links we see to the closely related concepts of *coping* and *vulnerability*.

Capabilities

The capabilities approach relies on an Aristotelian concept of *human functioning*, which in its modern form is discussed as the capability of an individual to attain a minimum standard of living or other desired development outcome. Focusing on *capacity to function* rather than on the simple provision of goods allows us to develop a flexible analytic process: since individuals and local circumstances differ, the inputs required to secure an acceptable standard will also differ. Drèze and Sen conclude:

The focus on capability helps to clarify the purpose of public action. The object is not so much to provide a particular amount of food for each. ... A more reasoned goal would be to make it possible for all to have the capability to avoid undernourishment and escape deprivations. ... The focus here is on human life, as it can be led, rather than on commodities as such.

(ibid.: 13)

Coping & vulnerability

This background is important if we are to understand recent treatments of vulnerability. Patrick Webb has discussed ways to prepare individuals to function effectively when threatened with internal or external hazard, and deploys the notion of ‘coping’ to arrive at a similar theoretical stance. Webb maintains that vulnerability to disaster should not be thought of as an absolute state or condition, but rather as the combined impact of a threat and the possible adaptive reactions it provokes. He suggests a schematic definition along the lines of

$$\{\text{VULNERABILITY}\} = \{\text{HAZARD}\} - \{\text{COPING}\}$$

where it is intended to capture the idea that vulnerability can be expressed as the net impact of the hazards one faces offset by the mechanisms one has for coping with them. (Webb 2000: 35-6) Such coping mechanisms can be seen as contributing to what Drèze and Sen call one’s capacity to function. (This connection is most strong when coping mechanisms are considered in their most positive forms--those that encourage constructive attachments and generative economic behavior--and it is in this light that we construe the concept throughout this paper.)

This line of thinking about hazards and coping mechanisms has an interesting and important implication. If vulnerability results when exposure to hazard is high and when an individual or group’s coping capacity is poorly developed, then vulnerability is in some sense the inverse of security. The significance of this is more than mere semantics: Webb’s simple equation shows that the level of vulnerability (or insecurity) depends positively on the scale of hazard, but *negatively* on the level of coping. If our objective is to assess vulnerability, then we find ourselves on the lookout for the *absence* of coping strategies, just as much as – traditionally – we have searched for the *presence* of hazards and threats. Webb summarizes:

Assessing vulnerability is like trying to measure something that is not there. It is an absence of security, basic needs, social protection, political power and coping options that defines the problem and makes the search for a visible reference point a difficult task.

(Webb 2000: 36)

This argument offers direction for the *measurement and monitoring* of human security. We must do more than theorize about the nature of security: we must be able to recognize and identify situations that support it, and – as this section has argued – situations that do not. **(See Box 3.1)** As we move into discussion of the core components of security, we will refer back to the idea of measuring absence and will actively develop the idea of a ‘negative indicator’; that is, an indicator that rises when security collapses.

BOX 3.1 ASSESSING VULNERABILITY: THE CASE OF GENDER

How gender can be seen as a risk factor

“Assessing vulnerability is like trying to measure something that is not there. It is an absence of security, basic needs, social protection, political power and coping options that defines the problem and makes the search for a visible reference point a difficult task.” (Webb 2000:36)

This search is probably least difficult with regard to gender. Although in different contexts it is possible to point to different demographic, social, or political groups who emerge as vulnerable according to this list of “absent” attributes, women are almost always over-represented as members of these groups or as constituting a group in themselves. From the development perspective, women tend to sediment to the lowest levels of poverty, in part due to their structural exclusion from access to resources and means of production (through illiteracy and discriminatory laws regarding property, land-holding, inheritance rights) and in part due to their social and political isolation as beings whose rights and privileges are inferior to and defined by a male hierarchy. (Tinker 1991) Recognition of these constraints has led to incorporation of gender issues in all phases of development strategies advanced by most donor agencies and institutions. (See USAID ADS 200 series and OECD/DAC guidelines 1998.)]

The impact of war

War and civil conflict exacerbate these constraints and introduce new ones. Political disorder and upheaval strip women of traditional physical and social protections, exposing them to sexual violence and predation. Conflict laced with gross atrocity routinely inflicts sweeping sexual assault on women. Concern that forced migration and flight extract an independent and additional toll on women (mediated through their roles in bearing and caring for children) has been substantiated in the high excess death rates found in recent mortality surveys conducted in the Democratic Republic of Congo 1998-2000. (Roberts, 2000) Policies to address these risks that women face in war are beginning to infuse the strategic programming of humanitarian relief agencies. The damage can be inflicted rapidly and on a broad scale, however, forcing the strategic choice of preventive intervention (not yet attempted on any described geopolitical scale) or an after-the-fact approach of mitigation and rehabilitation. Here the human security perspective may hold promise, in that efforts to reconstruct a sense of home and personal protection, inclusion in a caring community, and a positive take on the future may over time help to release women and their families from the physical and psychological weight of their past experience.

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3.2 *Content: the core components of human security*

Human security has two kinds of component: minimum material inputs to sustain survival and core psychosocial supports. Our discussion at this stage focuses on the latter, simply because the former has been extensively explored and developed elsewhere. (Clay and Stokke 2000) When we set out our recommendations for application (Annex A), we necessarily include both elements, but at this stage the most important task is to explain and underscore the importance of basic psychosocial needs.

Basic psychosocial needs

As Peter Marris has noted, linking psychology and social science in the study of human behavior has not been a customary part of the academic exercise:

Our theories of human behavior split into largely independent systems of thought: psychology and social science. . . . We rarely explore the interaction between each unique human actor and the social systems of which she or he is part. Yet, surely this interaction ought to be at the foundation of any theory of human behavior. How can we begin to understand ourselves except as creatures of the societies from which we learned the language itself to think about ourselves? And how can we understand society except as a network of patterns of relationship which each of us is constantly engaged in creating, reproducing, and changing? We need a way of thinking about the interaction between unique human beings and the social relationships they form, not only because our theories are crippled without it, but because without it we cannot articulate clearly many of the gravest causes of social distress. (Marris 1991)

Those engaged in the work of promoting human development and economic development have long been concerned with how people behave and how their behavior can be influenced in ways that foster or enhance individual and group well being. Drawing from insights in psychology, it would seem that to understand human behavior in any context, including periods of crisis and transition, it is necessary to look to see whether certain basic human needs, psychological and social, are being met. A vast literature on this topic is succinctly integrated in Sam Amoo's discussion of ethnic conflict in Africa, where he lists four basic psychosocial needs – for identity, recognition, participation, and autonomy. (See **Box 3.2**).

A few definitions:³ Identity, at the level of the individual, means that a person knows who he is; knows where he came from socially and geographically; can lay adequate claim to a history and a set of possessions; and can prove or establish these facts without much fear of challenge from external groups or authorities. Recognition is the certainty that these facts of existence and history are acknowledged and accepted by others within a network of family and social relationships. Recognition confers dignity. Participation, for the individual, is the opportunity and capacity to engage with others in economic, political, or social relationships, networks, and enterprises. Autonomy, an attribute of empowered being and standing in the world, speaks to a person's ability to determine his own path, independently think about and shape his own future, and resist confinement in subject, victim, or passive modes.

Critics of the development perspective (going back to Franz Fanon, 1963) have increasingly come to realize that fulfilling these basic psychological and social needs is essential to the collective mission of the state. If the state, or the public sector, cannot meet these needs, people will seek fulfillment

³ See discussion in J.B. Aceves, J. Burton, and P. Marris

elsewhere, leading to potentially divisive and disruptive consequences, ranging from individual alienation, the rise of ‘horizontally’ competing subgroups, or outright civil conflict. (Stewart 1998) Yet as relevant and compelling as these ideas may be to people active in humanitarian and development work, the major difficulty has been one of translation and implementation. How do we frame and package ideas about psychological and social needs into strategic and operational parameters for planning and action in the field? Further, how can this be done to good effect in a cross-cultural context or in societies torn by war for generations? We clearly need to do more than identify the importance of the psychosocial domain: we need to suggest specifically how an overarching concept of human security might incorporate these issues into a framework, and how that framework can be practically applied to policy and operations.

BOX 3.2 "UNIVERSAL BASIC NEEDS"

Universal basic needs include psychological and social resources, as well as material

In a 1997 paper for the UNDP emergency response division, Amoo discusses the need for a new paradigm in understanding ethnicity and conflict in Africa, arguing that the dominant intellectual paradigms of the 1980s and 1990s have proved inadequate. It is not sufficient, he says, to view poverty or underdevelopment as the main cause, nor to simplify conflicts into ideological struggles or ‘tribal’ clashes that need to be consigned to history by a process of rigorous modernization:

“The problem with such theories invoked to explain ethnic conflicts in Africa is that, while they contain some validity, they almost completely ignore core motives and elements in ethnic conflicts: the roles of fear and group psychology, and the importance of symbolic controversies which are often less comprehensible to the ‘outsider’. The sheer passion which surrounds ethnic conflicts demands that any explanation of the phenomena should do justice to the realm of such feelings. ” (11)

Denial of needs as an underlying source of conflict

This reasoning leads to a human needs theory of conflict, which attributes causation to the ignoring or suppressing of “basic socio-psychological human needs” such as identity, security, recognition, participation and autonomy. (c.f. also Burton 1990: 23) Amoo stresses that “any political system that denies or suppresses these human needs must eventually generate protest and conflict” (12), concluding:

“Sources of conflict in Africa are located in basic human needs for group (ethnic) identity, security, recognition, participation and autonomy, as well as in the circumstances, policies and institutions of political and economic systems that attempt to deny or suppress such basic needs. ” (13)

In this paper, we extend this descriptive explanation into a set of normative recommendations for conflict prevention and preparedness. We argue that the need for ‘security’ in the full sense will include the other four socio-psychological needs (identity, recognition, participation, and autonomy), and should take priority in foreign assistance programs to areas prone to inter-group tension and generalized state failure.

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3.3.1 *The three psychosocial domains of human security*

The four basic human needs for identity, recognition, participation, and autonomy can be seen as involving core connections to self, to others, and to a sense of time. In an attempt to move from the level of concept to the level of practical assessment, we sought to find perceptible aspects of human relationships that would tell us whether or not these basic human needs were being met. In this way we arrived at three key relationship areas that capture the main meanings of identity, recognition, participation, and autonomy. These areas or domains of psychosocial relationships can be grouped under three headings:

- (1) *Relationships with location* (a sustainable sense of home and safety; providing identity, recognition, and freedom from fear)
- (2) *Relationships with community* (a network of constructive social or family support; providing identity, recognition, participation, and autonomy)
- (3) *Relationships with time* (an acceptance of the past and a positive grasp of the future; providing identity, recognition, participation, and autonomy)

These three sets of relationships overlap and reinforce each other: having a sense of home allows one to feel linked to a geographic and social community, as does knowing something about one's history, and so on. The fact that the three areas overlap does not detract from their usefulness as independent categories of understanding and assessing the human condition, or the condition of human security. In fact, we believe that these categories support a more rigorous analytic approach, and that they will – eventually – facilitate preemptive measurement. We first explain why this is the case, and then show how each category contributes to the working definition of human security.

Psychosocial domain #1 – Sense of Home/Attachment to Place

The numbers of people who are no longer home in this world is vast. In terms of 'voluntary' economic migration, millions of people have been moved from their traditional lands to make way for large development projects and at least 70 million people have left their countries of origin to seek work elsewhere. (Weiner 1995) Forced ('involuntary') migration is a constant phenomenon in the history of disaster and war. In Africa, one can trace community disruptions and displacement back to the great ravages of the slave trade. In recent years, the international community has found its resources stretched by attempting to meet the needs of millions of people who have been driven from their homes through some mix of political oppression, drought and famine, and communal strife or civil war. In 1999, approximately 14 million people are refugees, another estimated 21 million people are internally displaced within the borders of their own countries, and an unknown number of people are trapped, in place, in circumstances that have suddenly turned hostile. (US Committee for Refugees 1999)

Here we raise two main questions to highlight the relevance of a sense of home to those forced to flee because of war or conflict or to those caught in the (often) harsh circumstances of economic migration:

- (i) How does dislocation from home, arising from economic factors or threats to safety, affect basic human needs for identity, recognition, participation, and autonomy?

- (ii) What are the issues involved in providing protection, restoring a sense of safety, to people who have fled from war or conflict zones?

Sense of home and basic human needs

We have employed the concept of home somewhat interchangeably with the notion of sense of place, to denote, in Hobsbawm's sense, the adult social construction of a place of attachment (the German *Heimat*). (Hobsbawm in Mack 1993: 62-63). There is a significant literature on this topic in the fields of environmental psychology and urban planning and architecture, although within this body of work there has been no study, to the best we could find, of refugees or internally displaced peoples in Africa.⁴ (See **Box 3.3**) What stands out from this literature is that a sense of home, and a sense of place, is considered a most important buttress to the human sense of identity and "rootedness" in the world, a crucial constant across all cultures that have been examined. This sense of place appears to rest on human attachment to specific physical surroundings, to the relational groups he or she has established in that place through time, and/or to the memories carried throughout life reflecting back on that place, and time. For those scholars whose focus is the West, insights from Proust figure prominently. It is noted that for many cultures, Western and non-Western, this concept is recounted with more depth and elaboration in fiction, memoir, and poetry than in the social sciences.

Another important observation is that this sense of home, or of place identity, is sometimes more discernible in its absence, since it usually exists as a "background awareness" in the human psyche that we (as holders of this awareness and as observers of it) tend not to be able to envision or describe until it has been torn away. Once bereft of home, individuals or groups may cling even more tenaciously to their sense of roots and elaborations thereupon, or may experience grave and enduring difficulty in establishing another, adequately authentic notion of who they are and where they came from. A noted urban planner wrote of the U.S. experience with home:

In childhood we form deep attachments to the location in which we grew up and carry the image of this place with us for the remainder of our lives. Features of the childhood place have been shown to influence many later decisions—where to live or how to arrange the home, for example. . . . In old age, as active social links fall away, we are notoriously dependent on the stability of our physical surroundings. An abrupt move can literally kill an aged person unless it is carefully prepared for and softened by the carriage of personal property and the maintenance of social ties. (Lynch 1984:277)

The difficulty in re-establishing one's identity and sense of home is often exacerbated in the setting of war, invasion, or forced migration by disruption of community connection, loss or confiscation of identity papers, destruction of civil records of property ownership and vital registration data, and separation of families. A recurring theme among refugees in the Balkans is their ongoing sorrow that family photographs and other memorabilia have been destroyed. Efforts at family reunification in Rwanda post-genocide have been hampered by the fact that many of the separated children were abandoned or taken from their families at pre-verbal ages, and they now cannot tell social service authorities who they are or where they came from. The durability of losses like these can be seen in the stories now accompanying the brief family reunifications allowed 50 years after the Korean War.

The consequences of losing this buttress to identity, this sense of being rooted in the world, are variously examined in the sociological and clinical literature on grief and loss:⁵ depression, anxiety, difficulty

⁴ The argument we draw upon has been developed principally by the following experts in the field: H.M. Proshansky, A.K. Fabian, R. Kaminoff, S.M. Low, I. Altman, R.B. Riley, D. Pellow, B. Brown, D.D. Perkins

⁵ See J.Bowlby; C.M. Parkes, J. Stevenson-Hinde, and P. Marris; A. Mack; B. Flynn; R. Mollica, K. Erikson

concentrating, difficulty planning for the future, restlessness, inability to form stable relationships, inability to trust. Many studies of refugees in camps have noted increased levels of depression and high incidence of

BOX 3.3 MEANING OF PLACE AND HOME IN AFRICA

In the environmental psychology and urban planning literature, no firm generalizations emerge about African notions of attachment to place or home.

Migration and its influence

Some cultures are almost entirely and constantly migratory, others follow a pattern of semiannual transhumance, others are completely sedentary. Migrations sometimes take place between radically different environments and other times through environments of fairly uniform ecological and visual character. Does the importance of place and the attachment to it vary with such factors? (Riley 1992:26)

Suggestions for further exploration would point to the following possible issues: attachment to place, as a geographical location, may be less important than attachment to key possessions, such as livestock, or key relationships, such as family members and social networks. Thinking about forced migration in Africa, where many of those forced to flee are pastoralists, the loss of one's animal herds or flocks may be as potent as loss of ties to a particular location. (Robinson 2000) Men interviewed in Niger when asked to name their favorite possessions insisted on "my fields" or "my children" to the apparent disappointment of the ethnographers seeking more materialistic responses. (Belk 1992:52) Studies of Africans in transnational settings also suggest that in certain conditions members of a diaspora may be able to establish a psychological "ethnoscape," (Appadurai 1991) where they can recreate mobile landscapes of community and meaning regardless of where they are placed geographically. (Robinson 2000)

Kinship and sense of place

In a study of the meaning of the African compound in Ghana, it was noted that:

African group loyalty is based in kinship, and its locus is the group's land. Among traditional African societies, the group's ancestral land is considered sacred. . . . For the Asante of south central Ghana, the spiritual dimension to land and the ownership of houses, in combination with a closely knit social system, result in the equivalence of land rights and loyalties with the social structure (Pellow 1992:192)

The Stranger in African society

Anthropologists and sociologists have explored the concept of "the stranger" in African society. This concept highlights social and historical complexities latent in African notions of kinship, ethnic group, caste, tribe, region, and citizen. The operative conclusion for those engaged in managing interactions between refugees or internally displaced peoples and their host communities is that in general African groups are wary of including strangers, variously defined, into their social and political community. Although this literature has not yet looked at receptions given large groups of refugees or IDPs in recent times, recent instances of high thresholds set by African states for citizenship suggest that issues of immediate receptivity, as well as longer term acceptance, may prove problematic.

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post-traumatic stress, but these assessments are addressing a wide array of losses and traumatic experiences, of which loss of home or dislocation is only one. A particularly thoughtful account that attempted to get at the more discrete mental health consequences of dislocation noted:

The common consequences of dislocation include impoverishment, malnutrition, increased morbidity, dependency, and the breakdown of community norms and mutual support systems. Dam and resettlement projects mean not only a loss of home and identity that comes from a sense of place; they can obliterate generations of practical cultural knowledge and effort. . . . (Desjarlais et al 1995:138)

In the context of refugees from political violence, this study also suggested that “anger regarding separation from one’s homeland to be one of the strongest and most widespread responses” [and agreed with Eisenbruch] “to propose recognition of the phenomenon of ‘cultural bereavement’ as a discrete diagnostic condition. (ibid:142). In this vein, despite all the difficulties of realization and enforcement, there is an internationally recognized value to the right not to be moved, and the right to go home. As Weiner notes, quoting Mrs. Ogata from a 1993 speech: ‘The right to remain, and the right to return home in safety and dignity, must be given equal importance with the right to seek asylum.’ (Weiner 1995:165.)

Much work lies ahead to identify the psychosocial implications for people who are forced to leave home, or whose homes and possessions are destroyed; or who must construct a welcome and integration into societies new to them. One major general finding in the literature is that dislocation increases one’s likelihood of depression, anxiety, fear, and, depending on circumstances of resettlement, learned helplessness. (Desjarlais:141) Whatever further generalizations might be made would have to be modified for particular cultures and historical contexts. Yet despite the absence of much empirical information, it is clear from the work to date that attachment to home or place has myriad connections to the psychosocial capacity of individuals and groups to weather and adapt to flight, dislocation, and forced migration.

Protection of populations (home as a safe place)

Fundamental to sense of home and location is the certainty that once home, one is safe. In Amoo’s list of basic human needs, he included security in the context of security from attack, or safety in the face of hostile forces. We have chosen to situate this discussion of physical security in the category relating to home, because in our view safety is a core attribute of any definition of home as well as being necessary to any more general concept of human security.

Threats to physical safety and well being are prominent characteristics of forced flight from home and temporary settlement in refugee camps or as IDPs. Flight exposes individuals and groups to great risk of fear, hunger, exhaustion, dehydration, disease, attack, robbery, torture, sexual assault, kidnap, and death. Temporary settlement, without adequate safeguards, creates its own risks. Seen in this way, flight is not a benign option and when undertaken constitutes one of the more immediate and hazardous aspects of civilian response to war.

Traditional norms of population protection, enshrined in the Geneva Conventions, are flouted routinely in today’s conflicts. Many irregular armed forces are entirely ignorant of the Conventions or its terms. Further, in these communal wars when combatants specifically target civilians as part of their war aims, the combatants perceive the Geneva Conventions as not merely irrelevant but as impediments to their strategic pursuit. The consequences for civilians are many and far-reaching, including breakdown in all methods to protect civilians from assault and serious violations of medical neutrality, mistreatment of prisoners, and interference with delivery of humanitarian aid.

A further complexity is that the duration of these conflicts, and the ongoing humanitarian involvement of the international community, imposes a longer time frame for population protection than that initially envisioned in the Geneva Conventions. Cessation of formal military hostilities does not bring an end to the expectation and the need for the international community to maintain order, provide humanitarian assistance, and protect stigmatized groups from reprisal. This humanitarian time frame, determined by imperatives of public order and public health, creates for itself a much more complex political terrain. Not only are tenets of international humanitarian law active in these settings but also the norms of international human rights. As noted recently in a discussion of these issues for a predominantly medical audience:

Children need caring adults; terrified refugees need to be able to feel safe; people from diverse cultures seek respectful space for religious practice; women in camps should not be forced into prostitution. (Bruderlein and Leaning 1999)

Protection in today's terms thus brings with it the requirement to attend to the human rights and dignity of the affected populations. (ICRC 1998)

A key issue in recent discussions that relate to human security is how the international community can protect targeted populations, trapped or internally displaced, without resort to force. In addition to a number of preventive activities, such as diplomatic efforts to settle disputes peacefully, early warning mechanisms attached to diplomatic pressures, or humanitarian initiatives to supply essential life supports, several suggestions for the creation of "safety zones" within countries have been advanced. (Weiner 1995:164)

For these to prove effective, however, either the warring parties must respect the provisions of the Geneva Conventions that affirm the neutral and protected status of civilians, or the international community must be prepared to use military force to establish viable parameters of protected areas. (Bruderlein and Leaning 1999) A suggested list of principles to use in determining whether force may or may not be necessary to ensure population protection has been elaborated recently. (Bruderlein 1998) The key point is that if agreement between the warring parties cannot be reliably established and monitored, or if the conflict is essentially based on ethnic antagonisms (where such agreements tend to break down at once), adequate population protection cannot be assured without the introduction of substantive armed force.

Much of the responsibility for establishing a sense of safety for people who have been forced to flee from war has fallen on the NGO community and international agencies like UNHCR, whose functions are constrained by mandate and capacities. When external force is not required to cement an agreement between warring parties, it is possible to introduce measures that can provide substantial relief from fear and abuse: humanitarian corridors for delivery of medical care and transport of humanitarian aid; delivery of targeted relief assistance at key times and locations; arranging for the safe exit of a population trapped by hostilities. When states have seen the need to intervene, either under Chapter 6 or Chapter 7 mandates, the results, in terms of population protection, have been mixed. There is still no international consensus on how to define thresholds of risk linked to escalation strategies for intervention.

Negative indicator: Social dislocation

War and economic forces can cause marked social dislocation when they force people to leave established social ties and familiar territory or travel long distances, often to wind up at a destination but never then to truly settle down. We introduce here the concept of social dislocation as representing a potentially measurable aspect of threat to this domain of human security (a sense of home). An example that has been analyzed from this perspective, the Ghana Volta River Project, suggests the long-term political and economic consequences of moving people against their will. (See Box 3.4)

BOX 3.4 HUMAN SECURITY AND SOCIAL DISLOCATION

Ghana's Volta River Project--a 'prodigiously narrow-minded project' – flouted human security concerns in favor of industrial development and contributed to the political demise of Nkrumah

Large development projects have become notorious for their adverse effects on local populations, and the 1966 Volta River Project (Akosombo dam) is no exception. The reservoir – funded by the World Bank and supported by the United States – submerged 4% of Ghana's land area and directly displaced 80,000 local people (subsistence farmers, fisherman and their families). Caufield describes the resettlement process as follows:

Each family was promised twelve acres of land, though the government announced that it could not afford to replace the markets, hospitals, roads and other public amenities the villagers had enjoyed in their old homes. ...Because there was not enough land for the oustees to practice their traditional form of agriculture, the government decided to promote more intensive, Western methods of farming. Farmers were assigned specific crops... though these never materialized. When widespread starvation threatened, the United Nations had to intervene, providing emergency food relief to the resettlement sites for six years. (Caufield 1996: 80-81)

Dislocation, separation, and marginalization

The impact is clearly open to analysis in the human security terms: oustees are separated from their homes, from their traditional social structures and from their constructive grasp of the future (through the loss of production). The traditional and relatively 'secure' social structure is dismantled without replacement through the modern collective enterprise, leaving the displaced populations marginalized and vulnerable. Scudder reports the particular conundrum of leadership in such cases:

If the leaders try to oppose the relocation, they usually fail [and] they lose their credibility. If they're for the relocation, they lose their credibility because inevitably the majority of the people don't want to move. So at the very time your population moves, you end up with no good leaders. So there's a whole bunch of socio-cultural stresses. . . . The multi-dimensional stress is very significant. (quoted in Rich 1994: 157)

The net result is to create a pool of dispossessed, internally displaced people with few possibilities for constructive livelihood, a special grievance against the state and its 'modern project' and no enduring, legitimate authorities within their own group. The chances that refugees of this sort would turn to crime or become, as in the Ghanaian case, pathologically dependent on external aid were plainly high. Caufield even associates the high costs of the dam and the public dissatisfaction with Nkrumah as factors in his overthrow in 1966, the year the dam was completed. (Caufield 1996: 82)

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For an account of the psychological and social impact of a similar displacement in Haiti, see:

Farmer P (1997) *On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View From Below*, in eds. Kleinman, A, Das V, Lock M, *Social Suffering*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

and in India, see:

Roy A (1999) *The Cost of Living*, New York: Modern Library.

Psychosocial domain #2 – Sense of Community

The importance of community in sustaining the psychosocial components of human security cannot be overstated. Human beings are social animals, each individual forging links to other people in an expanding circle of relationships formed as he or she matures. Through interacting with others, an individual expands his or her own perceptions, develops a system of moral values, finds emotional support, and builds the reasons to continue to stay attached to life. An abiding tenet in anthropology, sociology, and psychology is that action of people in groups, whether competitive or cooperative, has created culture, economic livelihood, and historical meaning for every society that has ever lived on earth. (Marris 1991)

Catastrophes such as war and disaster, inflicting near or total loss of community, have been found to have serious long-lasting psychosocial effects. A classic study of the obliteration of settlement in the Buffalo Creek flood in West Virginia in 1972 revealed that the community itself had become a casualty, constituting a “collective trauma.”

By collective trauma, I mean a blow to the tissues of social life that damages the bonds linking people together and impairs the prevailing sense of communality. . . . a gradual realization that the community no longer exists as a source of nurturance and that a part of the self has disappeared. (Erikson 1975:302)

Analysts of current complex emergencies are concerned with the effects of loss of community but even more so, from a conflict prevention perspective, with what makes apparent communities unravel or come apart. A question of abiding concern relates to identifying those factors that disrupt what appear to be stable and compensated relationships between and among groups, and serve as predisposing, instigating, or sustaining factors in inter-group conflict. A number of variables have been suggested: sudden shifts in relative status; exposure to outside norms; or glimpses of release in the midst of unremitting oppression. These are suggested with the recognition of the contextual importance of chronic material deprivation. Friedman (1999) and others have described how easily the economically dispossessed can turn to ideological protest and group conflict.⁶ But there is also the growing consensus, reached by recent case reviews of current wars and conflicts, that poverty alone, or even income inequality alone, is not a predictor of conflict. (Collier 1999, Elbadawi and Sambanis 2000, International Peace Academy 1999).

Dynamic changes in economics, politics, demography

In terms of economic factors, dynamic changes in qualitative or conditions can prompt people to action. As discussed in the setting of community development in the West, Peter Marris notes that people “are open to choosing differently from their habit” when:

the rewards and punishments change; when, for instance, inflation or economic disaster rob the prudent and conforming of their lifetime’s savings; when conscientious and thoughtful voters find that the people they elected are contemptuous and corrupt; when behavior, once repressed, acquires legitimacy or consistently escapes sanctions. And, perhaps even more than in those circumstances, people have to choose afresh when the ideological confusion of society, the weakness of government and unpredictability of events makes it harder to know what conformity is, or what may be rewarded or punished. (Marris 1987:153)

⁶ From poverty to ideology: the Algerian fundamentalist movement emerged from an association of the unemployed, whose original symbol was the empty couscous sack (Friedman 1999)

Individuals and groups can also be roused to hostile thought and action when their economic or political circumstances suddenly change for the worse or when their circumstances relative to others appear not to be improving. In foreshadowing the turbulent consequences of rising expectations, Charles Dickens put it well:

In the hunted air of the people there was yet some wild-beast thought of the possibility of turning at bay. Depressed and slinking though they were, eyes of fire were not wanting among them; nor compressed lips, white with what they suppressed. . . . For, the time was to come, when the gaunt scarecrows of that region should have watched the lamplighter, in their idleness and hunger, so long, as to conceive the idea of improving on his method, and hauling up men by those ropes and pulleys, to flare upon the darkness of their condition. But, the time was not come yet, and every wind that blew over France shook the rags of the scarecrows in vain, for the birds, fine of song and feather, took no warning. (Dickens 1970:61-62)

In a study of the relationship between demographic trends and national security, Brian Nichiporuk notes how ‘ecological marginalization’ can contribute to social conflict. He finds that demographic pressures on the land can result in a decline in productivity and intensify effects of existing property ownership laws:

The farming of these barren tracts will usually create increasing rates of environmental damage to the region as a whole, leading to a vicious downward cycle of productivity and opportunity in which the lower classes of a developing agricultural country can survive only by damaging the local ecosystem. Fierce resentment against the elite groups that support the property laws that guarantee the continuation of this marginalization of lower socioeconomic classes can cause an upsurge in social violence and, in extreme cases, even lead to the creation of an organized insurgency that aims to destroy the existing order completely. (Nichiporuk 1999:46-47)

The historical literature on popular forms of social protest in Africa may also prove relevant to an analysis of current ways in which inter-group conflict is now taking place in many parts of the continent. Case studies and evolving theories about the role of peasants and their leaders, in settings as diverse as late 17th century Ghana and early 20th century Tanzania, suggest important linkages between criminality and social resistance, and these linkages may be applicable today. Historians describe factors such as rural-urban dynamics, inherited class relationships, pressure on the land, and resistance to externally imposed authorities that fed a broad spectrum of popular protest activities, ranging from banditry to revolution. (Crummey 1986, Allen and Williams 1982) Understanding conflicts in Africa within that framework helps to identify patterns of leadership and recruitment, as well as to recognize issues with the potential to provoke unrest.

Academics and policy experts have also addressed the topic of community in the analysis of international relief and development efforts. They have criticized the ways in which these efforts have disrupted community ties in rural as well as urban areas and have contributed to destructive competition among different social groups. The entire ‘capabilities’ approach to development has evolved in this critical context, where it is urged that strategies to promote development must support local, small-scale efforts of individuals and groups as they aspire to participate and take charge of their own future. This discussion has been linked to the discourse on human rights as presented in the UNDP Human Development Report 2000. (UNDP 2000)

The influence of ethnicity

These economic, political, or demographic variables, whether arising from internal or external sources, can seriously aggravate underlying ethnic or communal tensions. The role of ethnicity in its relationship to inter-group conflict has been analyzed by Eileen Babbitt as hinging on changes in “structural issues” that can exacerbate ethnic divides. She describes them to include:

. . . competition and inequality among groups which can result in real or perceived disparities in privileges and access to political and economic resources. They may also come from new or continuing forms of discrimination whereby access to political or economic advancement is systematically blocked or one’s group is actively persecuted, including prohibitions on the use of language, religion, or other cultural practices that are different from those of the dominant group. (Babbitt 1999:342)

Psychological issues active in the community or society are equally important, in Babbitt’s view, in aggravating or sustaining ethnic tensions. She describes the role of threat and fear, the ways in which groups can be manipulated or incited by leaders, and has a particularly chilling view of the longer-term social consequences (read human security implications) once ethnic tensions explode into open hostilities and violence. In her review of recent experience, “strong ethnic and other intergroup conflict” can cause:

potential long-term problems because it poisons the political and social environment. Once the ‘other side’ has been vilified and dehumanized, as so readily happens in such conflicts, it is difficult to reverse the process psychologically and politically. The ‘us versus them’ mentality is often institutionalized in the state structures. . . . The enormous challenge then becomes not only restructuring such institutions, but also changing the attitude and relationship between the conflicting groups. (ibid.: 340)

As Bernard Kouchner has noted with real asperity, after a year as special representative of the UN Secretary General in Kosovo and despite a vigorous effort to reform institutions and introduce the rule of law, he is still “unable to stop people from being massacred.” (Kouchner quoted in Ignatieff 2000).

Vulnerability introduced by change

Fred Cuny has observed that in disaster situations “high vulnerability is often a direct result of people’s desire for modernity” and that “those who have begun to seek a change in their social and economic status are least equipped to deal with calamity” (Cuny 1994: 4). At such critical junctures people rely on established systems of emotional, social and economic support to carry them through. Those in the process of leaving old networks or building new ones are relatively more vulnerable to isolation or marginalization when threatened by extreme circumstances.

This recognition that different groups are differentially vulnerable and respond in different ways to threats or shocks to their equilibrium goes back to Smith, Ricardo and Marx. It is at the center of any analysis, economic or otherwise, that attempts to explain internal conflict. Although it is understood that elite groups play a key role in initiating power struggles and manipulating support groups (Brown 1996), it is also evident that ‘followers’ take sides in a conflict for clear and identifiable reasons. In other words, all groups in populations are like elites insofar as they respond to private incentives for legal or non-legal behavior, and insofar as the balance of incentives they face depends on the nature and extent of opportunities available to them--economic, social, political or otherwise. The broad concept of human security developed here will thus rest on identifying those individual capabilities and social relationships that successfully promote individual and group resilience and coping in the face of rapid changes in relational equilibrium or external circumstances. The task from the perspective of community disruption

is to identify the types of tension that are potentially destabilizing; the *changes* in environment, circumstance or relationships that introduce those tensions; and the different groups likely to be involved in or affected by such destabilizations, along with what they each stand to win or lose. (Rieff 1997, Anderson 1999, Hinde and Pulkinnen 2000)

Negative indicator: Dynamic inequality between groups

In assessing the disruption of community that occurs in the setting of the crises and transitions now confronting many regions of the world, the concept of ‘dynamic inequality’ may be particularly useful. Infusion of resources, or interventions that upset prevailing inter-group dynamics, can exacerbate fundamental community ties – often manifesting itself in the form of ‘horizontal inequality’. (Stewart 1998; see Box 3.5)

BOX 3.5 HUMAN SECURITY AND HORIZONTAL INEQUALITY

The root causes of conflict lie in the incentives for group mobilization

Stewart argues that conflicts are essentially group activities, usually with instrumental political aims. Groups are formed for different reasons in different countries and at different times, but division usually occurs along lines of shared characteristics such as culture, language and location. Sometimes leaders can incite group mobilization from above, but for this to be effective there must also be bottom-up incentives for people to become followers, and these incentives arise from the uneven distribution of resources or power. Stewart quotes Cohen as follows:

Men may and do certainly joke about or ridicule the strange and bizarre customs of men from other ethnic groups, because these customs are different from their own. But they do not fight over such differences alone. When men do, on the other hand, fight across ethnic lines it is nearly always the case that they fight over some fundamental issues concerning the distribution and exercise of power, whether economic, political or both. (Cohen 1974: 94)

This is the context in which the concept of *horizontal inequality* becomes useful for human security analysis. Horizontal inequality refers to differences in access to resources and power that occur between similar individuals, while vertical inequality measures the differences in distribution between different social classes. The distinction can be blurred, and is treated differently by different authors. In Stewart’s view, high degrees of horizontal inequality increase the risk of open conflict, and confrontation is especially likely when horizontal inequality is combined with low or stagnating incomes and/or a history of past conflict. (Stewart 1998: 35)

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Psychosocial domain #3 - Positive sense of the Future

Human security, to the extent that it is grounded on psychological and social factors, is closely linked to a sense of continuity of these factors through time. Implicit and central to an individual’s positive meaning of identity, recognition, participation, and autonomy are:

- a) the consciousness of strengths that one has acquired from an individual and shared past, and
- b) the confidence that one's own capacities, and the external social and political structures that confer meaning and stability, will persist for some indefinite period into the future.

This consciousness and this confidence have been wrested from millions of people displaced and devastated by recent catastrophes and war.

Uses of the Past

We include in the overall discussion of time a recognition of what meaning people attach to the past. A strong historical sense might hold a community together under stress, but might also be the vehicle through which grievance and conflict are perpetuated. In the context of communal and ethnic antagonisms, Volkan and Itzkowitz describe the notion of a "chosen trauma" as an event that:

invokes in the members of one group intense feelings of having been humiliated and victimized by members of another group. A group does not, of course 'choose' to be victimized and, subsequently, to lose self-esteem, but it does 'choose' to psychologize and mythologize—to dwell on the event Once a trauma becomes a chosen trauma, the historical truth about it does not really matter. (Volkan and Itzkowitz, quoted in Babbitt 1999: 341)

The important point in terms of human security is how and when does commitment to one's group become "a focus of self-destructive hatred – an internal disease that interferes with eventual reconciliation." (Apfel and Simon 1996:14) In this paper, we have embedded the question of time as it relates to uses of the past in the previous section. In that context, negative uses of the past, feeding communal antagonisms, augment and contribute to inter-group inequalities, the inverse measure of human security for community.

Uncertainty about the Future

Here we focus on time as it relates to uncertainty about the future. Perceptions about the future range considerably depending upon one's age, life experience, and belief systems and have enormous implications for how people think about their lives and make choices in the present. The factors we highlight here are economic deprivation and experience of traumatic events. Both of these factors pertain to large numbers of people affected by crisis and protracted conflict in Africa.

Impoverishment and deprivation constrict one's span of control, one's options, one's capacity to command or direct resources. Marris underscores this concern when speaking of the "cumulative burden of uncertainty" that people at the bottom of social hierarchies are required to endure:

At every level of government or economic organization, people seek to displace the uncertainties of their situation on to others. . . . The measure of this control enables them to vary their actions in unpredictable situations so that they still have predictable consequences: and the greater the control, the more likely that these consequences can be made to conform to their purposes. Correspondingly, those with least control have the narrowest range of adaptations open to them, and so the least chance of being able to sustain the purposes which matter to them. Their jobs, their community and their territory cannot be protected against unpredictable variations in demand or levels of support. They have no future that they can call their own. (Marris 1987:158)

Ramphela makes the point that, in addition to poverty, the imposition of physical space constraints, such as those experienced by residents in the migrant hostel system in South Africa, increase the pressures to conform and inhibit a positive stance towards risk-taking that underlies empowered action. Her observations may have relevance to populations forced to exist in refugee camps and cramped IDP quarters:

. . . [P]eople living under space constraints in all the dimensions defined above are constantly subjected to pressure to conform. Their need for acknowledgement and community would seem to be much greater because of their higher insecurity in both material and non-material terms. . . . There is no escape in such a physically restricted environment from physical proximity with others, and constant consideration of the needs of others is necessary due to lack of private personal space. The capacity for risk-taking is correspondingly inhibited. Empowerment in such a situation also entails making risk-taking affordable to people by expanding their perceptions of the space around them as well as actually expanding that space. (Ramphela 1993:12-13)

A foreshortened planning horizon and a tendency to dismiss the value of the future are anecdotally noted characteristics of people and populations who have been forced to experience severe loss, hardship, or violence. Hopelessness, although associated with grief and depression, can also be very rationally based, in that pervasive environmental instability and destruction of reliable structures of social life make it appear wasteful and naive to do anything other than try to survive from day to day.

The unfathomable impact of the AIDS epidemic in Africa will be felt in diminishing all parameters of human security (basic survival inputs, home, community, and sense of the future). There is no strategic or operational usefulness in trying to decide which among these parameters will be most affected, except to point out what might not be immediately apparent: this sweeping and inexorable loss of life will undoubtedly affect how generations in Africa think about and plan for the future. A small insight is offered from the period that experienced the Black Death of 1346-50, when plague ravaged Europe and killed an estimated third of the populace.

Emotional response, dulled by horrors, underwent a kind of atrophy epitomized by the chronicler who wrote, 'And in these days was burying without sorrowe and wedding without friendschippe.' In Siena, where more than half the inhabitants died of the plague, work was abandoned on the great cathedral, planned to be the largest in the world, and never resumed, owing to loss of workers and master masons and the 'melancholy and grief' of the survivors. The cathedral's truncated transept still stands in permanent witness to the sweep of death's scythe. (Tuchman 1978:96)

Development economists have long recognized that a key variable in the economic behavior of groups and individuals is their differing attitudes towards risk, which can be seen as confidence or lack thereof in the future. In order to persuade people to invest and plan, it is known that government must deliver stable and predictable resource flows, and must show how identifiable economic support mechanisms, such as credit and insurance, can be used to smooth consumption during times of volatile income or resource availability. (Deaton 1992) Many chronic and acute calamities have collided in Africa, so that people of several generations have now seen little in their lives but civil war, famine, and now rampant epidemic disease. The enduring psychological effects of prolonged conflict and crisis cannot be over-emphasized. (Desjarlais et al, 1995) Unless people and their leaders can be helped back to a path that allows them to see the future as an opportunity and not a threat, there may be little progress possible. (Schoofs 1999) Lack of hope in the future may have an important impact on whether people will engage in the kinds of behaviors that will promote resolution of conflict and investments in human development. (Caldwell

1999) This was the burden of a recent article on Africa in *The Economist*, entitled “The Hopeless Continent” meaning literally, the place where there is no hope. (*The Economist*, May 13, 2000:24.)

Human development efforts aim to promote the capacity of people to plan, make investments, and engage in enterprise. This intent depends crucially on being able to recognize whether people are in any frame of mind to support this positive stance towards the future. The point here is less how to create that positive attitude than recognizing when it is absent and understanding the factors contributing to that absence. Discerning what is most pivotal in eroding future confidence (such as ongoing war in the countryside), it might be possible to focus on strategies that explicitly aim at shoring up a sense of the future (such as ceasefire negotiations, various empowerment initiatives, efforts to support compassionate communal action, stabilization of ownership and settlement parameters, and feasible as well as practical disease prevention activities).

Negative indicator: High Discount Rate

In this context it is useful to think in terms of a negative measure of an individual’s or group’s sense of the future. In economic terms, such a measure is the discount rate, the value you place on something you might possess in the future. (**See Box 3.6.**) When people do not think the future holds much promise, they tend to apply a high discount rate to future goods, and to investments that will yield future goods. Their decisions appear short-sighted, yet from a human security standpoint, life has to start making sense at the local level, and in the present, before people will constructively participate in the collective or state enterprise.

Of course, the discount rate we use here would be an *effective discount rate* – representing the present orientation of vulnerable populations rather than that of well-developed financial markets. Although real interest rates may eventually figure in the ‘balanced scorecard’ (Kaplan, RS and Norton, D 1992), this information would figure as only one of a selected set of indicators, designed to uncover functional discount rates that apply outside of the banking sector. These measures – which might include indirect indicators of informal investment, environmental ‘mining’, family planning and so on – should aim to capture the length of the planning horizon, by measuring the rate at which people trade off their future priorities against more urgent, current needs.

BOX 3.6 HUMAN SECURITY AND THE DISCOUNT RATE

A weakened sense of the future impairs planning and investment

The idea of ‘discounting’— valuing the possession of a certain good more highly now than in the future — can be used as an indicator of pessimism or uncertainty about what lies ahead. The more doubt and fear people experience, the more ready they will be to make (what appear to outsiders) improbable tradeoffs between current and future well-being.

The future holds only jeopardy

For example, the more parents fear that their children will not survive into adulthood, and the more they doubt that their community or social group will support them into their own old age, the stronger will be their incentives to raise large families. This argument risks caricaturing the true fertility decision, but at the societal level, high birth rates can be seen as attempts of one generation to pass on the costs of insecurity to their children, a negative “intergenerational externality” arising from a heavy discount rate. (Birdsall 1994)

Natural resource degradation is also linked to high discounting, and what looks like a development problem may really be a problem of human insecurity. People with short planning horizons and high discount rates, those isolated from the collective, will be more likely to consume resources than invest in them for the future. “A combination of poverty, impatience and risk . . . drives a wedge between the private and the social discount rate. Because of its continuity and risk pooling capacity, a society tends to be less myopic than its individual members.” (Panayotou 1993:51).

Environmental degradation in the developing world can be seen as the desperate action of those left behind in the rush towards global market economies. Globalization in the 20th century led to “alternative ideology backlash.” In the 21st century, Friedman suggests, “all those who can’t keep going are not going to bother with an alternative ideology. Their backlash will take a different form. They will just eat the rain forest.” (Friedman 1999:273)

Only the present has meaning

Villages north of the oil-rich Niger Delta wager with death when they scavenge fuel from disrupted pipelines that occasionally burst into flames. With black market rates for gasoline so high, and the fires infrequent but deadly, it appears worth the risk of dying—as have over 1300 people in 1999-2000. (NY Times 8/11/00:A1, A8). The brother of a young man killed in the July 2000 fire said, “My mother had been telling him to stop the petrol business but he would not hear. The money he was making used to help us in the family. But now that he is dead that money is gone.” A government spokesman said that the vandalism was “driven by poverty and greed. They know the risks. It is very difficult for us to convince people to stop when people already know the risks.” (Boston Globe 7/13/00:A-11).

Highly traumatized populations may carry with them a pervasive sense of ongoing insecurity. In the 1980s, after the mass killings of the Pol Pot regime, efforts to persuade returning Cambodian refugees to plant fruit trees in order to rebuild the economy faltered when people were told how long it would be before the trees could be expected to bear fruit. “Five years? Eight years? How can we think about life, so far ahead?” (Durant 1994)

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3.4 *Measuring Human Security*

The world has become accustomed to the use of measures and composite indices since the UN first introduced the Human Development Index (HDI) ten years ago. Tracking progress in key aggregate social and economic areas of education (adult literacy and school enrollment), health (life expectancy at birth), and economy (GDP per capita), the composite index has been used to rank countries and follow trends in human development over this past decade. In 1997, the UN introduced an inverse measure, the Human Poverty Index (HPI), in order to measure deprivations along these same dimensions of education, health, and economic life. (UNDP 2000:147)

The emphasis on human security in the present discussion as an essential pre-condition for sustainable development suggests that a measurement construct for human security, similar to the HDI, would be helpful to those who plan and evaluate international aid programs. Here we discuss an approach to measuring the two main contributors to human security—basic survival inputs and psychosocial needs fulfillment.

3.4.1 *Methodological Approach*

Human security requires minimum fulfillment of basic survival and psychosocial needs. If conditions have been created that allow human beings a survivable standard of living, then the material rudiments are satisfied. In the material domain, human security sets the floor; human development establishes the stretch. Agreement on what constitutes a minimally acceptable HPI (describing basic survival levels of food, water, and shelter) might come closest to expressing this minimum survival condition for human functioning that fits the human security perspective.

In terms of measuring psychosocial needs, we have chosen to focus on three domains of human security: home, community, and positive sense of the future. These three domains address the three important ways that human beings relate to themselves, each other, and the world. They are anchored and seek safety in a sense of home; they find meaning, identity, and functional support in their relationships with family and community; and they build their lives through time, depending upon their sense of trust in the future and their sense of freedom from the past.

An immediate problem in moving from these concepts to measurement is their relative intangibility. Finding sound and potentially quantifiable ways of measuring a concept so enmeshed in relational aspects of human activity might prove difficult, especially given the relative paucity of data of all kinds in areas of the world where human security is most threatened. We have consequently chosen to be parsimonious and as tactically deft as possible. It is often easier to measure the absence of a qualitative good (like relationship) than its presence; it is sometimes simpler to think of threats to human security, or see evidence of human insecurity, than to be able to assert with real certainty that a given situation reflects human security in action. In scanning the recent literature on development and humanitarian crises, these important domains of human security are prominent in their negative descriptions. Large numbers of people are forced to flee; communal tensions explode; individuals seek their own safety nets and the collective center will not hold. It is these manifest features of gross human insecurity that preoccupy policy makers and analysts—and these features, methodically grouped, are relatively easy to measure.

We propose to use the negative measures of these three domains as the more sensitive way of delineating the presence or absence of these psychosocial dimensions of human security in a given situation. These three negative measures are: dislocation (for home); dynamic inequality between groups (for community); and high discount rates (for a positive sense of the future).

Thus to monitor and evaluate development strategies through the lens of human security is to create a balanced scorecard of measures. Some would be minimum material baselines derived from the standard quantitative measures already used for the HPI. Some would be new measures, aimed at capturing intangible human needs for home, community, and sense of the future, and these would be expressed in the measures of social dislocation, dynamic inequality, and high discounting. With a set of empirically based measures, it should be possible to assess progress in establishing human security, and to anticipate –when necessary – a collapse into instability and distress.

3.4.2 *Qualitative vs. Quantitative Metrics*

Some of the metrics for inverse indicators of human security will be quantitative, such as numbers of people in flight from home, presence of and number of small arms in the population, distribution of landmines. Other metrics will undoubtedly need to remain qualitative, although this aspect does not mean that the indicator or the condition is it measuring is therefore unreliable. When the outcome we wish to detect relates to an individual's feelings, such as a sense of fear, or inclusion in a community, that person's report of his or her own state can be thought of as objective in a non-trivial sense. In fact, when it comes to pain and suffering there may be no other way to specify these conditions. "Economic measures need to be complemented by narratives, ethnographies and social histories that speak to the complex ... human side of suffering." (Kleinman 1993:15) This admonition to seek robust qualitative metrics comes not only from the recognition that some components of human security are really intangible. It derives as well from the realization that the use and application of traditional quantitative indicators can be heavy handed in their structural tendency to average out variation between individuals and across time, and because they may underestimate the extent of positive adaptation. (Drèze and Sen 1989: Ch. 3)

Each of the negative measures could be assessed through a number of different metrics. For social dislocation, one could use, for example, the numbers of miles traveled from home, number of years away from home, number of family ties broken, number of household heads forced into penury, number of landless laborers, number of dispossessed. (Drèze and Sen 1989:5, De Soto 1989, Kaplan 1994:33) We do not attempt here to specify in any systematic way the actual metrics to use within each measure. Much further conceptual and technical work would need to be done to develop a robust set of metrics for each measure, susceptible to uniform application around the world.

Although development and testing of these measures and metrics will entail time, attention, and financial resources, the resulting index scorecard might help target personal risk and collective vulnerability in ways that remind decision makers to pay attention to social and psychological fault lines as well as to economic and political boundaries. Webb summarizes the reasoning behind this approach:

"Vulnerability analysis is not based on standardized algorithms – indicators and benchmarks will never be fixed. The challenge is therefore to determine when and for whom local conditions are becoming untenable, and what the appropriate response should (or should not) be. This requires more than assumptions about the characteristics of people thought to be in harm's way; and it cannot be achieved in a short space of time or at short notice. It must be based on an investment that yields incremental understanding of the context that frames people's lives in the daily process of development." (Webb 2000:43)

3.5 Summary & Working Definition

Here we have elaborated the conceptual background to the idea of human security, noting its two components of basic survival inputs and basic psychosocial fulfillment. We have made preliminary suggestions for ways of understanding these psychosocial components, their presence and their absence, through the categories of home, community, and time. Human security emerges as an underlying or instrumental condition, necessary but not sufficient for sustained human development. Where human security exists, individuals and societies are able to harness the social and economic benefits of constructive inter-group interaction. Where human security does not exist, societies are vulnerable to various threats, succumb to distortions introduced by defensive (non-trusting) behavior or destructive inter-group tensions, and ultimately fail to achieve peace or prosperity. An number of these societies descend into war, often fueled, as shown in the recent World Bank study, by the opportunity for one group to capture deep and rich resources. (WB 2000)

There is an obvious distributional implication of this reasoning, but the human security approach asserts that the goods to be distributed are not simply economic or political. Instead, they are those that support an individual's capacity to feel a sense of safety, identity and recognition in a community, and to have confidence that participation and empowerment are plausible and durable opportunities.

As summary to this elaboration, we propose the following working definition of human security:

Human security is an underlying condition for sustainable human development. It results from the social, psychological, economic, and political aspects of human life that in times of acute crisis or chronic deprivation protect the survival of individuals, support individual and group capacities to attain minimally adequate standards of living, and promote constructive group attachment and continuity through time.

Its key measurable components can be summarized as: a sustainable sense of home; constructive social and family networks; and an acceptance of the past and a positive grasp of the future. It is suggested that these components can be best measured by trends in their inverse indicators (social dislocation, dynamic inequality, and discount rate) according to metrics and units that will require further specification.

4. Case examples: human security and threat assessment

In this section, we explore the use of human security measures for threat assessment. We emphasize the concern that intervention of any kind (development, humanitarian, post-conflict transition) can sow the seeds of its own demise, and that all human improvement activity is fluid and requires regular impact evaluation. We suggest that development and humanitarian aid may perversely reduce human security, and that reductions in human security will emerge as an increased likelihood of social unrest. However, attention paid to the key elements of the human security concept (home, community, and sense of time) will allow policy makers an early window on this unwelcome dynamic.

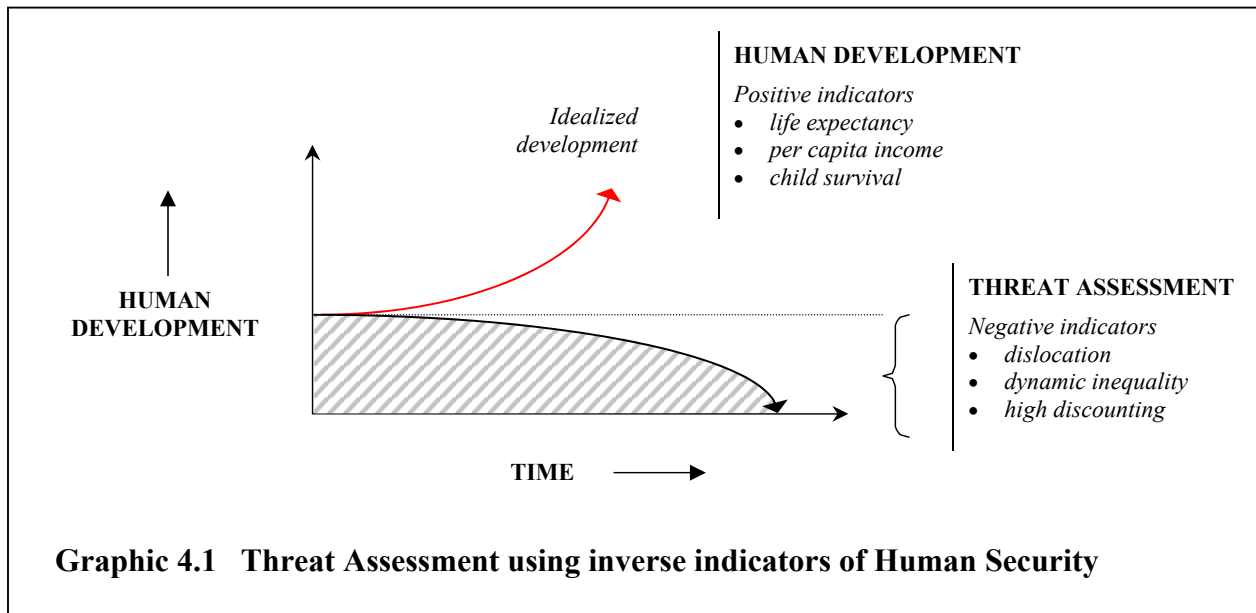
Our aim is therefore to outline a surveillance capacity: that is, to identify a set of practical measures that could be used to ‘take the temperature’ of a community or region, in terms of its propensity to erupt into social unrest or inter-group conflict. In particular, we propose that a human security assessment be oriented towards assessing trends in human insecurity, the inverse of human security, by tracking and then evaluating trends in dislocation (home), inter-group inequality (community), and discounting (time). These indicators will improve our ability to recognize insecurity, to diagnose its sources and where possible to prescribe early and appropriate intervention.

4.1 *Human security measures for ‘early warning’*

Early warning activities are limited by practical constraints in three general areas: information, resources and political space. (Mock 2000) Our suggestions, however, begin at a prior stage: we encourage agencies to recognize that action in the field may well aggravate pre-existing tendencies towards conflict, and suggest that they view conflict intervention in Africa as an enterprise that brings resources and distortions to situations already marked by high social and political tension.

In other words, it is possible for donor actions to exacerbate underlying tendencies for conflict. From the human security perspective, these conflicts are more likely to occur when the dominant economic and political actors do not attend to the key relational inputs to human security—home, community, and a positive sense of the future. To the extent that donor agencies can monitor these inputs, we submit that they will be in a position to gauge whether their own actions or those of other parties are undermining or shoring up human security.

On this basis we suggest that donor agencies and other actors in the field institute an appraisal mechanism that monitors for the presence of and trends in the negative indicators of human security: social dislocation, dynamic inequality, and high rates of discounting. Such monitoring might help reveal that a region is slipping into increasing social instability, or that the region is not yet ready, in one important dimension or another, to move into the next phase of evolution from transition to development. (See **Graphic 4.1**).



Case example #1: Rwanda

Understanding how inter-group inequality destabilized a state

The Rwandan genocide of 1994 can be traced to many factors, including the failure of the judicial system and the failure of economic policy. At a more general level, however, these failings contributed to a widening division – and a heightened sense of resentment – between the major ethnic groups, a division that had grown slowly over many years. When the state was buffeted by external shocks – including an RPF invasion from Burundi and a collapse in world markets for coffee – this social division became a fault line along which society would quickly fragment.

Peter Uvin claims that foreign assistance helped to widen this division. Development projects, he argues, provided a healthy source of income for the well-connected but did little to promote human development among the poor. In fact, the inflow of funds actively worsened their position by widening inequality between ethnic and regional groups. This is confirmed by Alison Des Forges, who claims that the “short-lived and superficial” period of prosperity that preceded the genocide was, in reality, characterized by deep ethnic and economic divides. She writes:

The imbalance in wealth and power was a question not just of the usual urban-rural disparities but also of increasingly evident discrimination against Tutsi and against Hutu from areas other than the ‘blessed region,’ that is, the northwest. Habyarimana had established a system of quotas, supposedly to assure equitable distribution of resources and opportunities to all Rwandans. In fact, officials used the system to restrict the access of Tutsis to employment and higher education, and increasingly to discriminate against Hutu from regions other than the north.

(Des Forges 1999:45-46)

Habyarimana's quota system turned ethnic differences into economic differences, with most of the state's resources (including overseas development aid) being focused on one region and one ethnic group. Moreover, even the device of setting up a 'development project' was used to intimidate and marginalize non-favored groups, whose lands were bought under compulsory purchase orders and who consequently found themselves displaced and dislocated by their own state government.

The Rwandan example highlights two of the three dimensions of human security: unequal distribution of assets between ethnic and regional groups and the dislocation of minorities from their home areas. If these signs had been recognized early on, perhaps the international community would have identified the sources of tension and would have been quicker to cease funding the counterproductive assistance programs that had "financed much of the machinery of exclusion, inequality and humiliation." (Uvin 1998:231) Whether external actors could have found other ways to help reconcile groups, redistribute the privileges of the public sector and defuse destructive tensions will always remain an open question. In the event, analysts relied on the 'development' approach and mistakenly pictured pre-genocide Rwanda as a model of progress. This more narrowly technical assessment deprived the international community of whatever ability it might have had to predict, prevent or mitigate the crisis that eventually ensued.

Case example #2: Mozambique and Nigeria

Using social dislocation or shifts in inter-group equality to explain or predict

Used historically, the negative human security measure of social dislocation could be the lens through which to explain the vulnerability of Mozambique to external manipulation in the peak years of its civil war. Against a background of community disruption dating from the slave trade and the Portuguese *colonato* policy, the forced collectivization policy of the Frelimo government "split families and uprooted people" (Posthumus 1999) and provoked unrest and resistance, which fed into the foreign-funded Renamo movement. The rebels gained ground and themselves began a process of forced population dislocation as part of their tactics of terror and oppression. This, and the sweeping dispersal of landmines by both sides, distanced people throughout the country from their homes, their livelihoods, and any chance of return to productivity in the near future. In this context, the success of the peace agreements is attributable to the selection of policies – de-mining, disarming, demobilization, resettlement – that brought people back home to their land.

Looking forward, were social dislocation and shifts in inter-group equality established as predictors or important substrate conditions in crisis generation, then one should take even more seriously the current situation in Nigeria. There the migration of the Christian minority from northern provinces of Nigeria could be seen as a sign both of intensifying inter-group hostility and destabilizing effects within areas of in-migration. The fact that migration overlaps directly with communal separation—those leaving are Christian and those entering are Muslim—raises concern along two dimensions of the human security axis. Attention to the numbers who are crossing these provincial borders, what gaps and concerns this two-way migration is creating, signs of friction at border crossings, and the economic and social impact in resettlement areas would be, from the human security perspective, an exercise of paramount policy importance for the future stability of the Nigerian state.

Case example #3: Somalia

Gauging uncertainty through the effective, population discount rate

The case of Somalia offers a contrasting example. A grass-roots constitutional process is slowly emerging after decades of cold war manipulation, governmental collapse, and years of war and instability.

Economic activity has led the way, such that even in the absence of regulation and authority, local markets have burgeoned and people have prospered. Traders are clamoring for relief from uncertainty, for a consistent system of tax collection rather than bribing brigands, for economic and political relationships moderated by an administrative network – and here the idea of discounting comes into play. In the midst of the hope that this boom brings, there is a willingness to *invest*: that is, to defer consumption to the future and to make choices based on long run optimization. Quotes from Somali businessmen and economists in a recent news article reveal that their hope for the future is closely linked to the possibility of good governance:

The thing is, it's a lot better to pay a tax than to go through what we are going through. . . . You have to provide everything for yourself. You have to collect the garbage on your own street. . . . Security is the doorstep for development. . . . Lack of government is not good for the economy and the business environment. (NY Times, 8/10/00:A4)

If these quotes reflect a widespread mood, the effective discount rate in Mogadishu is not so high – and the time is propitious to take further steps to reduce uncertainty and shore up the willingness of people to take steps to invest in the future. From a human security perspective, it is important to move quickly now in Somalia to help maintain hope and promote investment in the future.

However, we also need to take account of the bias against change created by the ongoing situation of insecurity and uncertainty. In a time of instability, the country suffers but some individuals nevertheless prosper. As these individuals become more and more influential, change becomes more and more difficult. In Somalia, dissenting warlords have a strong incentive to maintain the status quo and will attempt to spoil peace-building efforts, even though such efforts are to the common good.

These arguments have been well established elsewhere. (c.f. Keen 1998, Stedman 1997, World Bank 2000) What we bring to the debate is a theory that links the short run economic rents these parties make to the effective discount rate of the population. When the future is uncertain, people's decisions are not only distorted but *are distorted so as to favor the present*. As the discount rate rises, so rises the general willingness to pay a premium for basic, survival goods such as food, water and shelter. As the discount rate falls, market distortions weaken and we can expect the short run profits of warlords and spoilers to diminish. This general and empirically based observation suggests that the discount rate serves two purposes. On the one hand, it may serve as an indicator of the strength of vested interests (vested in the *status quo*), but on the other it may offer a channel for intervention: programs that increase confidence in the future are likely to initiate a virtuous cycle of increasing willingness to invest, decreasing willingness to pay short term rents to those with crisis power, and thus also long run improvements in the prospects for reform.

4.3 Summary

In this section we have attempted to show how the working definition developed in section 3 can be applied to policy in situations of crisis and transition. We have shown how each of our three dimensions of human security can be used to analyze and understand situations of conflict and transition, and have argued that they can be used as an effective framework for intervention policy. Threats to human security can be monitored using inverse human security indicators that reflect social dislocation, shifts in inter-group equality, and high discount rates.

These comments, however, are necessarily broad: in the annex to this paper, we discuss a range of specific options for intervention which this general approach suggests, and explicitly discuss the different ways in which the human security concept stands to add value. *Readers interested in field implications*

are encouraged to read the annex to this paper, where our findings for program planning are summarized.

5. Conclusion and Summary Recommendations (Boxes 5.1 – 5.2)

The Human Security Model offers a new way to understand conflict and a new framework for designing and assessing policy. We have argued that the new framework significantly improves our ability to anticipate, diagnose, and mitigate the sources of social tension by requiring that we redirect our attention to the psychosocial origins of conflict. In particular, we believe that surveillance should focus on dynamic social changes and should analyze the impact these changes have in three overlapping domains: sense of home, sense of community, and sense of time.

Our specific recommendations are summarized in Boxes 5.1 and 5.2. We have argued that the international community should explicitly target human security in advance of crisis, and that this implies deliberate monitoring of psychosocial indicators as well as conventional metrics of material well-being. Agencies should develop their ability to recognize dynamic changes in both of these areas and should compile a broad range of indicators within the framework of a ‘balanced scorecard’.

Using this scorecard to inform decision-making will require experience and judgment. The approach seeks to focus attention on the health and survival of vulnerable populations and on their minimum requirements for stable persistence through time. With this focus, the international community stands to improve its strategic capacity and operational effectiveness.

It is worth repeating that human security does not denote everything valuable in life. It defines a core concept that refers to the critical elements of being human and being secure. People who have human security are resilient in the face of shocks and have effective mechanisms for coping with a range of vital threats. However, they are not necessarily healthy, wealthy, joyful or long-lived. These predicates lie in the realm of human development, for which human security stands only as a pre-condition.

Yet as an approach to human distress, the working definition advanced here has a broad reach. It can be distinguished from the narrow, operational concepts of back-to-basics humanitarianism that are currently in favor. Instead, the proposed definition of human security offers an ever-broadening perspective on world affairs, and on how the international community can assess and respond to the continuum of need, deprivation, and hazard that enmeshes over half the world’s people.

Box 5.1 Policy Recommendations for Crisis and Transition

- 1) In advance of crisis, public action should *target human security* by identifying and alleviating the sources of psychological and social stress.
- 2) During crisis, emergency relief objectives should provide basic survival inputs and should seek to protect populations from short run threats. However, agencies should recognize that ‘survival inputs’ include non-material resources, and that the window for material assistance is relatively brief.
- 3) During transition, interventions should guard against heightening tension between groups and should focus on building habits of respect for dignity and fairness. Every effort should be made to avoid creating or magnifying existing social divisions.
- 4) At all times, agencies should focus on the three domains of psychosocial stability. They should encourage resettlement through disarming and de-mining initiatives, they should strengthen community ties through participatory and egalitarian service delivery, and they should seek to support a positive sense of the future by restoring the rule of law and the credibility of police authority, by reconstructing infrastructure, and –ultimately – by encouraging investment.

Box 5.2 Policy Recommendations for Monitoring and Evaluation

- 1) *Dynamic threats* to human security should be identified by monitoring the *inverse indicators* of the three human security domains: social dislocation, shifts in inter-group equality, and effective discount rates.
- 2) Planners should construct a *balanced scorecard* for human security, incorporating measures of minimal material inputs for survival as well as select indicators of psychosocial security.

Annex
Lessons for Policy in Crisis and Transition
Findings from USAID/CERTI research

A. Lessons for Policy in Crisis and Transition

USAID strategies and policies for development and humanitarian response⁷ incorporate insights gathered from a robust assessment and evaluation process and from attention to the accumulating critical literature: local capacities are sought and enhanced wherever possible; attention is paid to human rights concerns; focus is applied to abating destructive social tensions; emphasis is given to introducing the rule of law; efforts are directed at creating new incentives for leaders and followers to turn to peace-building initiatives, and the volatile nature of post-conflict settings is well recognized. In the specific arena of crisis and transition⁸, current USAID strategies and policies also demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the issues as discussed in the accumulating and increasingly sophisticated literature: domestic capacity constraints; lack of civil society infrastructure; psychosocial trauma and alienation; donor fatigue; need to link emergency and transition response; need to address immediate and root causes simultaneously. USAID operating principles in crisis and transition arise from a long tradition in relief and development: local responsibility; international accountability and strategic coordination; relief reinforcing development and development to avert disaster; programming and practice aimed at multiple sectors with an emphasis on capacity building, information systems, and local collaboration and reconstruction.

⁷ USAID 1997—U.S. Development Assistance to Africa Over the Next Decade: Anticipated Needs and Appropriate Responses. Report to the Senate Appropriations Committee, May 1997. Available at <http://www.usaid.gov/regions/afr/10year.html>

USAID 1998—Draft Report: Complex Emergency Response and Transition Initiative (CERTI) Planning Meeting. Baltimore: USAID.

USAID 19__a – USAID Strategic Plan, available at http://www.info.usaid.gov/pubs/strat_plan

USAID 19__b – USAID’s Strategies for Sustainable Development, sectoral strategy documents available at http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/strategy.htm

USAID 1999—Testimony of Vivian Lowery Derryck before the House International Relations Subcommittee on Africa, April 29, 1999. Democracy in Africa 1989-1999: Progress, Problems and Prospects. Available at <http://www.usaid.gov/regions/afr/testimonies/derryck429.html>

USAID 2000—Guide to Gender Integration and Analysis: Additional Help Annex to ADS 200 Series, Washington, D.C.: USAID.

USAID 2000—Office of Transition Initiatives, Results Review FY 1999, Bureau for Humanitarian Response, Washington, D.C.: USAID.

USAID 1996 – Office of Transition Initiatives Strategic Plan: 1997-2001, Washington: USAID/BHR/OTI, available at http://www.dec.org/partners/dexs_public/content.cfm?Rec_no=97102

⁸ As documented in crisis and transition plan (USAID, 19__c) and as summarized in presentation by N. Mock, Tulane CERTI meeting April 19, 2000, Arlington, VA.

USAID 1999—Proceedings of the International Consensus Forum on Health and Human Security in Conflict and Transition Settings, April 15-17, 1999, Harare: USAID. Available at <http://payson.tulane.edu/CERTI/HarareForumreport/CERTI-Harari/Default.htm>

A.1 Value added by Human Security approach

We see three general benefits from applying the human security perspective to current USAID strategies and policies, with special reference to crisis and transition in Africa.

- a) **Descriptive:** There is a need for USAID to be able to describe its overall efforts in human security terms, if only to enter the discussion now underway in the international community. The application developed here would thus serve a conceptual and diplomatic purpose. This descriptive aspect will be dealt with in section A.2.
- b) **Prescriptive:** The human security perspective allows us to frame, at a high level of generality, focused on strategy and policy, an annotated list of interventions that may promote efforts aimed at anticipation, prevention, and sustainability in the field. The list presented in section A.3 is derived from reported lessons learned and insights from the field. None of the listed items have been rigorously assessed or validated. In a non-rigorous sense, this proposed list could be used as the basis for developing a more comprehensive gap analysis, identifying areas where the human security perspective and USAID strategies and policies now diverge. Since it is possible that many of these suggestions are in fact reflected in USAID country or sectoral programs, and since a survey of such activities is outside the scope of the present paper, a formal gap analysis is not attempted here.
- c) **Threat assessment:** The human security perspective, as expressed in a measurement scheme, can be used to monitor and evaluate progress in shoring up or undermining human security. We propose that human security measures will be most useful in their inverse mode, as measures of human insecurity, in an overall effort at threat assessment. This aspect will be discussed in section A.4.

A.2 Description of Current Policy from Human Security Perspective

USAID's strategic objectives in the areas of economic growth, democracy, provision of basic social services (health, education, and environment), and humanitarian response track very closely with the seven elements of human security enunciated by UNDP in 1994. This congruence appropriately reflects the analytic consensus that human security and human development are tightly related approaches to the same end: promotion of individual and collective well-being over a sustainable time frame in the face of a multiplicity of threats. These strategies are briefly described here not only to show that they indeed do affirm the tenets of a human security approach but also to suggest the background strategic context in which USAID crisis and transition efforts have evolved. There are positive and negative implications of this evolution, in that situations of crisis and transition can sometimes usefully be addressed through a framework of sustainable development, and sometimes cannot be. The useful and positive aspects of this vision of sustainable development are addressed below. The potential negative aspects are described in section A.4.

- a) **Economic growth:** A key facet of USAID development strategy is to promote broad-based economic growth and agricultural development. The human security approach is consistent with these aims. Broad based economic growth and agricultural development are likely both to reduce poverty and to reduce insecurity by lowering the degree of "conflict-proneness" attributable to low incomes and/or stagnating economic conditions. (Stewart 1998:35) If one accepts the general argument that conflict arises from destructive competition between groups, then when the economy is growing broadly all groups stand to gain. Members of every group would be experiencing some improvement in incomes and so would be less likely to be dissatisfied and or to identify with non-state causes such as crime or insurrection.

- b) **Democracy and good governance:** USAID strategic objectives for democracy and good governance are consistent with the long-run pursuit of human security. Transparency and participation in government empower people to begin to shape their own societies. A consistent and fair application of the law dampens cycles of reprisal and permits people to move out of relational modes ridden with corruption or torn by conflict. Linkage to human rights concerns implies a recognition of basic human psychosocial needs for identity, autonomy, recognition, and participation.
- c) **Basic social services:** Provision of basic social services and protection of the environment can act as “social shock absorbers” and can “equip and empower the poor to embrace change.” (Vandermoortele 2000) Improved health care and education directs assistance to individuals and communities, rather than nations, and over time permits people to achieve a minimum level of functioning. This infusion of supports and resources can help people manage through times of rapid transition and to some extent compensate, in terms of absolute improvements in quality of life, for the discontinuities and losses that in the short term may result from economic growth and democratic reform.

There are two reasons why a human security perspective would place a priority on provision of basic social services. From a capacities point of view, such investment in human capital can also have important indirect influence on the way that people accept their past, grasp the future, and form constructive social and economic relationships through time. In terms of outcomes, in many developing countries receipt of basic social services may represent people’s only major contact with the public sector. These contacts offer opportunities for strengthening the relationship between individuals and the collective, deepening their sense of identification with the state, and increasing their own perceived returns to participation in which might otherwise be perceived as the distant state’s modernization project.

- d) **Humanitarian response:** USAID strategy in humanitarian response has focused on providing, in terms of our definition of human security, the modicum of life supports to sustain survival. It has undergone an important evolution since 1996, when the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) expanded its role in meeting the specific need for “post crisis programs which go beyond the traditional relief or humanitarian assistance.” (USAID 1996) This step, taken in recognition of the political and social fragility of post-crisis situations and their propensity to degenerate back into conflict, reflects a human security perspective in its focus on abating destructive social tensions and creating new incentives for leaders and followers to turn to peace-building initiatives.

A.3 Suggestions for USAID Policy on Crisis and Transition from Human Security Perspective

We advance here three general comments on an approach to crisis and transition that we believe would expand an overall attention to human security issues. We then describe in more detail a set of suggested interventions, from the human security perspective, for the crisis phase and for the transition phase. We note again the caution that these suggestions have not been rigorously evaluated but derive from review of the literature and received experience from interaction with many humanitarian and development professionals over the years.

A.3.1 Three general comments

(1) Distinction between the crisis and transition phase

The approach taken by USAID to compress the two phases of crisis and transition into one of “mitigation and transition” (Mock 2000) clearly has merit, in that prevention and early warning activities are difficult to accomplish in the practical realm and response often occurs in the midst of crisis. However, this compression elides over a crucial distinction the human security perspective would introduce between these two phases. In the crisis phase, the human security needs are for survival supports and strengthening sense of home (principally through population protection and to some extent re-instatement of identity). In the transition phase, the human security needs continue to place priority on stabilizing population protection but extend into building a sense of community and a positive view of future opportunity through the infusion of basic social services (with a major emphasis on health care).

These distinctions have bearing on response strategies, policies, and objectives; and certainly shape the resources and personnel brought to the field at these times. For this reason, we suggest that at the policy level USAID insert a somewhat brighter line between these two phases.

(2) Common policy to pursue in both phases

Having argued that these phases are distinct, we also point out that the common thread of resource infusion underscores the need to maintain a consistent policy aimed at minimizing increases in inequality among groups. There are four aspects to this common policy:

Emphasize egalitarian distribution

Distribution of limited public resources should be firmly egalitarian, at least in the horizontal sense and in the short- to medium term, in order to reduce the short run negative impacts of resource infusion. Aid that fails to include significant groups in the distribution of benefits risks sparking resentment and a range of forms of protest.

As subsidies or supports that can serve to offset the results of other initiatives, the provision of aid or of basic social services may also reduce the risk of horizontal or inter-group conflict. Donor projects should attempt to align private and public incentives by offering to share the benefits as widely as possible. (Klugman 1999)

Foster inclusion

Efforts in this direction must first identify those groups at risk of exclusion, defined according to region, ethnicity, religion, gender or other characteristics. Those who feel most insecure, most excluded, may well reject collective efforts to bring them into the process and, having further excluded themselves, move towards disruptive behavior. Winners and losers often focus on non-financial impacts relating to the basic human needs of identity, recognition, participation, and autonomy. These needs are most likely to be met by programs that are egalitarian, decentralized, and geared to local specifics.

Shore up local capacities from the beginning

Relief efforts in crisis and transition need to identify the non-material impacts of what people have experienced and must be prepared to evaluate their long-term effects. (Lederach 1997) People in crisis and transition need not only to be helped to reduce the impact of hazards they face (through emergency

relief), but also to enhance or rebuild their fundamental mechanisms for coping with calamity and loss. This point, reached in an analysis of Operation Lifeline in the Sudan, is one of Larry Minear's five conclusions for humanitarian action:

Fifth, ordinary people have an indispensable role in humanitarian action. The most essential initiatives are those which are taken by the people themselves. Their coping skills offer more hope for survival than the wizardry of relief specialists. While there are situations requiring outside assistance—and the Sudan was without doubt one of them—indigenous capacities are best enhanced by working to assure an environment free of violence and intimidation in which those capabilities can be exercised to the fullest. Local people themselves are ultimately the real lifeline. (Minear 1991:157-8)

Support attention to human rights

Even in the initial weeks of a crisis response, attention to human rights issues may be influential, if not generative, in terms of helping set people on a path towards positive habits and expectations. People notice whether humanitarian aid is organized and distributed in accordance with respect for human dignity, fairness, and cultural integrity. An evolving tenet within the NGO humanitarian community is that the stance and conduct of the relief worker and agency will establish the model of relationships and the tone of interactions between the external actor and the people in need. (Sphere Project 2000)

(3) Improve training and procedures for expatriate personnel (with a focus on health care providers)

The connection between human security and improving aspects of expatriate function in the field is that local people are likely to be better protected and better treated when the international staff are well trained and well supported in terms of psychological and organizational readiness. People of marginal qualification and experience when deployed in demanding situations may make poor decisions with poor outcomes for the affected population. A number of administrative enhancements would reduce this potential: (McCall and Salama 1999)

Insist upon common basic skills and protocols

- Require that all medical personnel in all agencies sent to practice in a particular locale be screened by common criteria, in a process that involves an oversight medical review board. Minimum criteria would include active license, no past serious infractions and no outstanding ones, good health, and excellent recommendations from reputable institutionally based physicians stating that the person is well trained and experienced in delivering the kind of care he or she will be asked to do in the field of assignment
- Require that all medical personnel deployed to these areas receive basic instruction and proof of certification in the theory and application of mass casualty triage and delivery of care in austere circumstances (where need outstrips resources).
- Define and insist upon common protocols for blood collection, screening, and transfusion (these protocols will have to conform to various cultural norms and different technical capacities in given areas, but the protocols should recognize these variations and still suggest best practices)

- Establish in each area a medical audit team, organized by the medical teams from the NGOs and IGOs on site, to conduct weekly assessments of practice process and outcome in each of the clinic and hospital sites where care is being delivered

Establish common guidelines for expatriate exit strategies

The time to agree upon an exit procedure is in advance of a deteriorating security situation. Among the many issues that intrude are the risks to local people when the international staff depart. Resolution of these issues is best discussed in advance, when people are not under duress. In the interests of fairness and informed consent, attention to the safety of local staff and the families of local staff must be built into any exit strategy, and the plans should be shared with local people at the time of their hiring, when they can factor that plan into their decision to apply for or sign up for that assignment. Among the minimum elements of any strategy are the following:

- Establish a coordinated strategy, to the fullest extent possible, with other major international agencies and organizations in the field
- Designate an in-country headquarters and alert system in event of emergency
- Identify in advance a number of common safe assembly points (linked to adequate security and transportation options)
- Develop and distribute a list of key “do’s and don’ts” relating to strategy and procedure for exit that all organizations have agreed upon

Develop mechanisms to support psychological strength of expatriate staff

A number of programs are now in place within international agencies and NGOs to address a growing recognition of the need for staff psychological support. In addition to human resource interventions aimed at psychological assessments and debriefings, key points of relevance to the cognitive vigor and emotional integrity of health care personnel include practical suggestions about rest, sleep, and frequent rotation of assignments. Health care staff should not be scheduled to work 24-hour shifts. Clearly emergencies may intrude but the routine should be structured to allow for adequate sleep. Personnel assigned to triage functions tire easily and should be given frequent breaks in the day. Immersion in settings with high patient volume and serious levels of acuity are also very stressful and demand frequent rotations out of the field to prevent staff burn-out. (Barron 1999)

Provide a safe procedure for reporting human rights abuses

A major ethical, psychological, and procedural dilemma for health and other relief workers in the field is the question of what to do about witnessed or reported abuses of human rights. Few field personnel are well versed in what constitutes an abuse of human rights or international humanitarian law; even fewer work within organizations that have established guidelines and protocols for what to do when offenses are encountered in the course of delivery of services. Since outright public condemnation at the time of ascertainment places the humanitarian enterprise and the field workers themselves in significant risk of reprisal, the suggestions are these:

- Provide a minimum curriculum in IHL and human rights to all relief workers deployed in CHEs

- Develop with NGOs and IGOs a generic protocol for reporting allegations of human rights abuses up the chain of command within the organization to headquarters staff who have been briefed on how to relay or further deal with the information
- Make sure that all field workers are aware of this protocol and encouraged to use it, adapting it as necessary for organizational purposes or local circumstances

A.3.2 Suggestions for response in crisis phase

The characteristics of these crises, in terms of their impact on human populations, determine the human security priorities we attach to strategies and policies for response. Several key impacts have been noted: mass population dislocation; high levels of insecurity for the affected people; high levels of insecurity for the responders; gross human rights abuses with serious health consequences; and widespread destruction of infrastructure, including that infrastructure supporting local and external health care delivery (utilities, buildings, transportation, communications systems, records and record-keeping capacity).

In advancing these suggestions, we assume that fundamentals of USAID response and transition (operating principles, programming, and practice) are in effect. Within the human security perspective taken here, the emphasis is placed on assessing and ensuring emergency and public health care (including psychological supports). Another list of suggestions could be usefully generated from the viewpoint of supporting livelihoods and group economic activity.

Some of these suggestions are ones that USAID can do unilaterally or in coordination with other donors and agencies. Some will involve direct interaction with the military. The term “military” is used here very generically; a number of variables relating to relative competencies and political agreements would determine which branches of the world’s military, and which services, would best be involved.

We have grouped these suggestions according to the human security framework presented here: basic survival supports (food, shelter, water); home (issues of population protection and issues of identity, recognition); community (issues of participation); and future (faith in the future, empowerment, sense of autonomy).

Basic survival supports

Develop techniques for counting large and rapidly moving populations

The international community lacks robust technology for counting large and rapidly moving populations, as when huge numbers of people rushed border crossings (Goma in the summer of 1994 and Kosovo-Albania and Kosovo-Macedonia in April/May of 1999) or swept through forested areas (Eastern Zaire in November / December of 1996).

This inability then leads to many other deficiencies (particularly in assessing food and water requirements of the population) and also contributes to serious political disagreement between and among agencies and governments. Given the possibilities for infra-red, satellite, and other technologies under development or already deployed in the private and military sectors, the following suggestions are advanced:

- Identify and adopt best practices in technological surveillance for counting large numbers of people in movement

--To the extent the technology permits or could be improved upon to permit, use it to distinguish between men and women, and adults and children.

Establish procedures for anticipatory siting of refugee camps

In several recent CHEs, vast refugee populations have encamped in crowded camps in unsuitable locations. The political and security issues of siting, in terms of distance from international borders, have been given attention in UNHCR guidelines but questions of social and environmental viability have not been sufficiently addressed, particularly in an anticipatory mode. Although the following suggestion about advance siting and direction of population flow could be challenged on the basis of its costs or political volatility, the examples of Goma and Kukes serve to remind us of the political, financial, and human costs of not taking a more pro-active stance.

– Anticipatory siting: In the early stages of crisis escalation that might lead to population flight and the need for international humanitarian assistance, send an international team (consisting of a civil engineer, water and sanitation specialist, agronomist, and public health expert, along with UNHCR officials and local leaders from the host areas) to identify where suitable population encampments might be sited. Options other than camps, such as host families or community placements, should be factored in. (Van Damme 1995)

– Designation, direction, and crowd control: If and when the occasion arises, those responsible for humanitarian response (UNHCR, others in the international community, and host areas officials) should implement the recommendations of this team and deploy adequate security forces to direct the refugees to the designated sites.

– Regional planning: A similar team could be convened at the regional level, charged with the task of developing overall anticipatory guidance to the UN and the states of the region, regarding suitable potential sites for refugee settlement and border areas for refugee transit, in the event of an outbreak of disaster or crisis in the region. These site determinations would be based on social geography and environment, building on what we know about likely terrain for population passage and suitable terrain for population encampment or settlement. This identification could be accomplished without great risk of political embarrassment or injury, if it were presented as a precautionary planning move—embedded in an all-hazards disaster plan that addressed all likely disaster and war scenarios, as well as all probable sites of exit, entry, and settlement.

Home/Population protection

A number of options can be employed to protect populations in crisis and transition, short of the use of international force in a “non-permissive” environment. These options include: education in observance of the Geneva Conventions, negotiation of humanitarian zones, introduction of techniques for mass crowd control, disarming and de-militarizing refugee camps, reducing the size of such camps, and combating sexual violence.

Expand observance of the Geneva Conventions

In view of the widespread ignorance and direct defiance of the Geneva Conventions on the part of many combatants in today’s conflicts, efforts aimed at after-the-fact notification of rules and guidelines are necessary but insufficient.

A more proactive strategy includes the following:

- Support campaigns throughout the world to teach all levels of society (children and adults, civilians as well as military) the essential values and behaviors described in the Geneva Conventions.

Negotiate humanitarian zones

Humanitarian zones are established within the boundaries of international humanitarian law (IHL) and specify areas where civilians can be protected from attack and receive medical and humanitarian aid on a relatively short-term basis. They can be useful in conflict settings provided the warring parties agree to abide by the designations, the areas themselves are demilitarized, and they do not attempt to shelter one ethnic group from the other. (Bruderlein 1998) Hospital and clinic compounds are examples of what should routinely be designated humanitarian zones under IHL. Insistence on this point by members of the international community can have practical positive consequences. One example occurred late in the war in Mogadishu, in December 1991-January 1992, when the relief agencies in the city banded together and gained the agreement from all warring factions to ban the presence of armed soldiers on hospital grounds. The groups involved were MSF, ICRC, Save the Children, and International Medical Corps. By mid-January, signs declaring the areas to be de-militarized were posted on all hospital entry gates and walls and incursions into the hospitals had effectively ceased. This intervention had a marked effect on improving the sense of safety for both patients and staff. (de Waal and Leaning 1992)

- Insist that all health care facilities be designated humanitarian zones, in accordance with IHL.

Improve mass crowd control

What is known about techniques of crowd control from the work done by domestic civil security forces throughout the world (for mass rallies, religious events, international games) should be transferred to UNHCR and other relevant agencies for application in large refugee camps.

- Convene representatives from relief agencies with world experts on crowd control in order to address best practices for predicting violence or riots, quelling disturbances early, separating troublemakers from the surrounding population, disarming an individual person.

Disarm and de-militarize refugee camps

A problem different in scale and approach is what to do with heavily armed subpopulations in large refugee camps. These groups, once ensconced, pose a real danger to refugees, the stability of the refugee enterprise, and the acceptability of the refugee concept by host and regional neighboring states. Current reliance on the security forces of host nations has not proved adequate in many settings.

- Explore the political and tactical feasibility of establishing a special international unit with appropriate mandate, training, and resources charged with disarming and maintaining order and population protection within and surrounding large refugee camps.

Reduce the size of refugee and displaced persons camps

It is widely recognized that camps over about 10,000 per site become progressively unmanageable as numbers increase beyond that point. Imposition of order in the interior of the camp becomes the province of those who are armed and claim ties to old hierarchies; distribution of food and services to vulnerable

elements becomes difficult; assessment of rationality and fairness of distribution programs becomes impossible. Criminal elements can take over and black markets, prostitution, drugs, and weapons trade all thrive deep in the camp center.

- Using techniques of advance planning and crowd control referenced above, take measures to ensure that populations do not in the future form camps of the very large size seen in the Great Lakes, the outskirts of Mogadishu, and elsewhere

Identify and institute best practices for reducing sexual violence in the refugee camps

Sexual violence, predatory behavior, domestic abuse, and prostitution are all part of continuum of behaviors that makes life in a camp oppressive, dangerous, and profoundly unhealthy--in terms of spread of STDs, AIDS, incidence of unwanted pregnancies, female and child injury, and abandoned infants. A number of innovative methods have been used for distributing condoms, for educating women in their own health and health rights, for creating safe houses or safe areas within camps--but these need to be sought out and compiled for wider application.

- Accelerate the identification, testing, and deployment of best practices in protection of refugee women and children

Home/identity

Develop protocols and agreements for possible evacuation of the seriously ill and injured, as appropriate

Arbitrary decisions about whom to designate for evacuation out of the area unravels community group spirit and support for the expatriate medical mission. In general, it is arguable whether evacuation out of the local area in these very violent settings is even a good idea from a cost-benefit standpoint, since the effort diverts resources that could be used to salvage a greater number of less seriously injured or ill people. (Richter et al 1993, Southall et al 1996)

- Convene in advance meetings with local and expatriate health personnel to determine a protocol specifying the type of injuries and conditions to be considered for evacuation out
- Arrange in advance the reception sites and make sure that these sites have the resources needed to deliver and sustain the necessary levels of care
- Specify as part of the protocol what will be done with family members

Introduce programs to cope with psychological distress at an early phase

Refugees exposed to violence and loss of family, home, and community are traumatized in a number of ways. Boredom and sense of uselessness once in camps are also pernicious factors. Although assessment techniques are in development, none are widely validated or widely available. Seasoned observers estimate that refugees can be grouped in one of three categories with regard to severity of psychological distress: 1) a minority are seriously disturbed and mentally ill; 2) another minority are minimally affected by the trauma of their recent past lives; and 3) a majority are moderately affected by these issues and can be assumed to be experiencing some degree of depression, anger, and despair. (Harvard 1994) Early attention should be given to this majority group, with proposed approaches focused on larger groups and communities, rather than on individuals. The combination of measures may include specific mental health interventions (such as post trauma counseling) but such services should be only be part of a

broader package aimed at establishing human security in terms of autonomy and self-sufficiency. In other words, although human security objectives can be psychosocially defined, practical behavioral interventions may be sufficient to meet them. Examples include:

- Bring people into activities early on and maintain a high level of activity
- Enlist adolescents in peer group support and in teaching and mentoring younger children
- Begin schools, games, arts and crafts, and music
- Promote all possible and appropriate opportunities for children to establish long-term attachment with adults, whether related adults or adults who will continue with them back to their country of origin
- Promote religious activities as requested by the refugees
- Begin an oral and written history activity, allowing refugees to tell their stories to a safe and friendly group of others, led by an experienced facilitator

These actions should take place in the context of having established provision for population protection as noted earlier. It is unwise and counter-productive to begin these activities until people are safe from external attack.

Time (Positive sense of the future)

Build in support and training for local health care personnel

Much of the emergency and public health care delivered in CHEs supplants and tramples on what remains of local health care resources. Outside international teams are brought in, often along with elements of a new delivery environment, with the aim of maximizing efficiency and quality. Although the local impact of this strategy has not been studied, it is worth questioning whether this practice demoralizes and dampens local initiative, accelerating the alienation of the local population from the (foreign) healthcare system. From the perspective of deploying relief in ways that support local optimism about future prospects (the human security component of time), it is suggested that current expatriate practices in health care delivery at the acute phase be improved in the following ways:

- Have every medical and health team build in a training component for local health care staff; expand the staffing ratio for those deployed to include a senior person whose main responsibility will be training and integration with local resources
- In conflict settings, teach local people the techniques of casualty first aid, search and rescue (particularly for urban wars), and emergency transport (whatever means are available)

A.3.3 Suggestions for Response in Transition Phase

To envision steps to take in this early post-fighting phase, it is important to remain vigilant, since the key issues that led to the war still smolder. (Lubbers 1998:30-32) The immediate objectives for those designing and managing response efforts in this phase are thus to:

- a) establish an effective process for enforcing and monitoring the ceasefire or whatever stand-down agreement has been reached;
- b) create increased levels of safety for local people of all groups and for expatriates;
- c) introduce the rule of law, by first establishing regime stability, presence, and consistency; and then by building public confidence in due process and administrative coherence;
- d) introduce essential services, such as health care; and
- e) build infrastructure, particularly roads.

Although the following discussion will focus on initiatives in the realm of public health and medical care, the human security perspective would insist on the primacy of the first three steps in terms of prior sequencing. Ceasefire enforcement is outside the scope of this paper. We have discussed population protection in the section on crisis response and will return to it here as well. Because the impact of introducing or failing to introduce the rule of law is so profound, we address this topic, through the lens of human security, before proceeding to health care provision.

Rule of law

Discussions of rule of law in transition implicitly underscore the need to establish a sense of trust among members of the society and a confidence in the consistency and coherence of the police, regulatory, and administrative regime in which the practice of politics and economics can take place. From the human security perspective, measures to support the rule of law are those that also directly shore up individual and social confidence in the future, and thus serve to lower the future discount rate.

Political context and human rights:

Viewed within a political and historical context, rule of law measures (trained police presence, administrative court system, coherent and consistent application of the law, gradual law reform to underscore social fairness) are essential to introduce early in the transition process. (Mani 1997:16). Recent experience suggests that the highest priority in the immediate post-conflict environment is to reduce the level of criminal and reprisal violence, in order to interrupt and/or quell cycles of revenge and a culture of impunity. This task requires significant numbers of trained and equipped police. Without these resources, it will be difficult, as Kosovo is proving, to create a sense of social order, bolster public confidence in the safety of the new regime, and begin to model habits of public accountability and integrity. Other measures involved in rule of law deployment will not be successful if this first priority has not been met. The recent criticism leveled by Medecins sans Frontieres against the UN civil administration in Kosovo underscores the minimum requirements for law and order as a pre-requisite in the early transition process.

The action of the international community in Kosovo is ineffective. There is no true environment of security, there exists a climate of impunity. There has been no systematic and effective response to the violence. . . From a medical perspective, we couldn't remain providing medical care for people whose most significant complaint is profound and legitimate fear. (Orbinski 2000)

These suggestions are relevant to the question of the relationship between the rule of law and introduction of human rights concerns. In the transition phase it is crucial to avoid stirring up social divisions; yet the impact of international human rights law can be deeply unsettling to many traditional behaviors and

beliefs in the developing world. Without taking a stand on the academic debate as to whether a rule of law regime must incorporate respect for international human rights, the human security perspective would concur with the gradual, although insistent approach advocated by Norchi, in his recommendations regarding U.S. foreign policy towards pivotal states. (See **Box A.1**)

Incentive to economic investment and specialization

Economists note that specialization of individuals and resources cannot take place if individuals are isolated and do not trust one another. Isolation and mistrust rule out specialization because, by definition, specialized persons need others to supply their requirements. As a result, it becomes essential for producers to trust the system of exchange, which means that the system of exchange must be organized in such a way that it provides security to everybody. The law, and the institutions safeguarding it, are the principal source of this trust. (DeSoto 1989:183) Introduction of the rule of law will thus not only create incentives for economic activity, but will also encourage specialization among individuals – and therefore also interdependence (Lautze 1996:39-40). Specialization and interdependence are important features of social and economic development and also can be seen as instances of human security in action—trust in constructive arrangements through time.

BOX A.1 A HUMAN RIGHTS PLATFORM FOR INTERVENTION

Building human rights in transition and development

In the analytic context of U.S. support for key governments prone to crisis (the so-called “pivotal state” discussion), Norchi made the following case for the preventive impact of human rights initiatives:

Human rights deprivations produce stress, crisis, and weakened platforms. The human dignity dimensions of collapse can be far reaching. Specific measures should enhance stability and prevent collapse. The following are policy components by which the United States could implement a pivotal states human rights strategy, thereby spawning human dignity platforms. (Norchi 1999:334)

In his list, Norchi affirms the OTI mission “to assist countries at a turning point in governance to recover from political crisis” and includes several measures of direct relevance to USAID strategy in humanitarian relief:

- *Identify and support governmental and nongovernmental human rights-enhancing institutions*
- *Apply small amounts of targeted assistance to selected ‘value-creating institutions. Such institutions operate at the grass roots or village level and include rights groups, women’s organizations, and educational groups.*
- *Launch concentrated human rights monitor training for grass-roots organizations.*
- *Support government-sponsored national human rights institutions where they exist. Where they do not exist, their development should be promoted, depending on the context.*
- *Promote the growth and preservation of independent media, including journalist training and international exchanges.*
- *Promote strong and independent judiciaries.*
- *Promote development objectives as human rights goals.*
- *Assist and promote human rights training for police, border forces, and state paramilitary units.* (ibid.: 335)

These measures hold for all countries

Norchi insists, in our view correctly, that US foreign policy should promote a human rights platform in every country in which it is engaged, not just in those that are ‘pivotal’ in the context of priority US interests. As he notes:

The measure of a successful human rights policy is the condition of those who, in the words of James Joyce, are outcast from life’s feast. Many such people live in pivotal states, but many others live in states that dream of becoming pivotal. . . . The danger would be in excluding states that are far from pivotal, states bordering on chaos, where human suffering is bleakest. (ibid.: 336)

Reference

Norchi CH (1999) A Pivotal States Human Rights Strategy, in eds. Chase R et al, The Pivotal States: A New Framework for U.S. Policy In the Developing World, New York: W.W. Norton.

Distinction between rule of law and democracy

Although they are often grouped together as one package of initiatives for the transition period, from the human security standpoint there is a marked difference in time and effect between introduction of rule of law and introduction of democratic participation and electoral processes. Despite its many positives, the introduction of democratic participation and electoral processes raises concerns about timing and impact. In the human security view, there is a minimum level of stability and safety in everyday life that may be necessary before the long-run benefits of democratic governance can be felt throughout society. Several commentators on Africa make this point by describing the essential interdependence of politics and economics in the relatively immature or transitional African states. (Lowry 1999) (See **Box A.2**) Failing to account for this interdependence can aggravate a potential short-term negative effect of pursuing democratic elections and participation: the tendency to encourage destructive political competition among groups. This tendency will be reflected in the proposed human security measure of ‘dynamic inequality’.

In such cases where the impact of an expanded electoral regime might in the short run contribute an added hazard for everyday people, the desired improvements should be more local than centralized, more incremental than sweeping, more attentive to destabilizing consequences, more attuned to communal discords. The human security advocate would place priority on minimizing additional daily economic and political risk to the general populace and call for improvements in adherence to existing laws and regulations, before calling for extension of participation in a reformed system of electoral representation.

Provision of health care

There is an important but limited role for health intervention in the transition phase. Clearly the needs of the population are likely to be great, in terms of surveillance for epidemic disease, sequenced public health interventions, introduction or reconstruction of primary and secondary health care services, initiation of record-keeping and monitoring procedures. It is also likely that local people will see building a health care system as a crucial and valuable early step towards stabilizing a sense of safety, commitment to community well-being, and investment in the future. The human security perspective introduces two cautionary notes, however.

Guard against entrenchment of elite agendas

The provision of adequate health care for a population requires substantial investment in institutions, training, and infrastructure. Such investment should occur in concert with other longer-term measures of social reconstruction and engagement, linked to a strategic overall development plan and process. Absent an overall strategy, interventions run the risk of contributing to structural distortions, crime and corruption, entrenchment of oppressive elites, fragmentation of efforts, and may undermine long-term sustainability. Further, the massive aid and attention the international community devotes to the work of rehabilitation and development serves to confer political legitimacy on whatever governmental authority exists. (Macrae, Zwi, Gilson 1996) In the immediate post-conflict period it is not at all clear that the authorities left standing are those who command the affection of the people or with whom the international community will long want to work. Further, since the health sector often played a pivotal role during the conflict phase, either as a positive feature in supporting the ascendancy of one faction or as a negative contributor to the unraveling and dissolution of community, it will have acquired a political coloration. During the emergency phase, outside relief often skirts these issues, and as an expedient often establishes delivery systems independent of and parallel with local health care systems. In the post-fighting phase, however, more sophisticated attempts to understand and integrate with local health care capacities and histories are absolutely mandatory.

BOX A.2 THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICS IN AFRICA

“You can’t eat democracy”

Olukoshi notes that “real-life situations” in Africa “interpenetrate” formal categories of politics and economics and

[that] the sectors are quite often blended together, so that much of social, economic, and political life in Africa falls into ‘gray’ areas. Actors straddle the formal and the informal, the private and the public, the sphere of tradables and the arena of nontradables, and the state and the market. The reality of straddling. . . dates back a long time. . . . Furthermore, the politics of straddling entails multiple modes of livelihood and multiple identities that, in playing themselves out, complicate political behavior, as well as the task of understanding it. (Olukoshi 1999:462-46)

A key challenge of citizenship today, therefore, consists not just in the restoration of political rights and liberties, but also in the revival of the role of the state in advancing social citizenship. For, as has been pointed out by many commentators, there is a distinct danger of the legitimacy of the democratic project itself being eroded if crucial social livelihood questions are not addressed. As Thandika Mkandawire, paraphrasing sentiments that are growing across the continent, puts it, ‘people do not eat democracy.’ (Olukoshi 456-59)

The current crisis in Zimbabwe underscores the connection between economic life and democratic potential. The centrality of land reform is noted by Odom, reflecting on a number of case studies of democratization: “democracy . . . has little enduring prospect until land reform essentially removes the oligarchy of large landowners from their powerful political position.” (Odom 1992:7)

As Nelson Mandela noted, there is no point in democracy without “real and tangible improvement in the lives of ordinary citizens.” (Mandela 1998)

As important as institutional change is the development of expectations and standards about how people in authority should behave. Insistence on observing such criteria is held to be crucial to the promotion of democratic thought and practice. President Julius Nyerere has defined democracy as a ‘habit,’ which like all habits, takes years to form. Thus, he argues, it is necessary to lay down rules of what is acceptable and what is reprehensible, which, in time, will produce an etiquette of democratic behavior, provided that the leadership itself sets a consistent example of such behavior. (Legum 1986:184)

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Legum C (1986) Democracy in Africa: Hopes and Trends, in ed. Ronen D, Democracy and Pluralism in Africa, Lynne Rienner: Boulder.

Avoid accentuation of inter-group inequality

Although introduction of basic social services, especially health care, is advanced as contributing to the public good, in conditions of scarcity or marked inequality these services can constitute a destabilizing resource inflow. They will tend to be treated as private goods either because of the direct benefits they offer or because of the political status they imply. Highly contested, they can worsen horizontal inequalities, generating resentment among those who do not gain access. Distributing these resources in a centralized or authoritarian fashion can also introduce negative effects by aggravating interpersonal or cultural tensions and by missing the opportunity of including people in their own systems of needs assessment, social distribution of goods, and local governance. As Mary Anderson notes, in a report based on 15 case studies:

International assistance can make conflict worse in two ways: It can feed intergroup tensions and weaken intergroup connections. When aid has either of these impacts, it inadvertently exacerbates conflict. Conversely, aid can help war to end by lessening intergroup tensions and strengthening intergroup connections. (Anderson 1999)

A key problem with the above two main points, however, is that the urgency of the political situation often demands action ahead of a good game plan and before the local situation is well understood. These crises are so volatile that there is a widely recognized need to begin virtually immediately to deploy supports and security, goods and services (including health interventions) in order to give local people a release from intense fear, a renewed sense of hope, and an ease to their suffering.

The suggestions that follow are deliberately constrained by these concerns, oriented to promote human security but not to pre-judge or determine the features of the future society which local people and the international community together must reflect upon, design, and build.

Home/Population Protection

Reduce potential for violence and encourage resettlement

- Make sure that areas are physically safe so people can return home and/or stay home
- Train local personnel in landmine detection, removal, and awareness campaigns
- Ensure that all occupants of refugee camps are effectively disarmed and that there is no arms trade in the adjoining areas

Insist that all health care be delivered in zones of safety and respect for IHL

- Ensure that adequate police or other security is available at all health care units. A sense of compartmentment in the vicinity of all aspects of medical and health care delivery instills a disciplined return to normality for patients, staff, and others and builds community confidence in the possibility of resumption of daily routines. If the health care zone is repeatedly disrupted by violence and violation, however, it will take a much longer time for people to believe that they can dare to trust authority, themselves, or each other.
- All members of the local and expatriate health community and security forces need to undergo fresh instruction in the principles of IHL. The education in itself will spur important debate and discussion and might well lead to practical proposals for easing tensions and gaining access to areas that were previously too insecure.

Participate in demobilization process

Demobilization is one of the first steps in recreating the conditions for peaceable production and exchange. The international community should work closely with local physicians and nurses in designing an exit physical exam for each soldier. This exam should include assessment of mental status and psychological health. The process would help train local health personnel in key physical and mental health assessment skills, would create a vulnerability/strength dossier on each soldier, and would help place him or her in a nest of options for rehabilitation and job training.

Home/Identity

Provide support to the tracing and reintegration activities of the Red Cross and local agencies

Efforts to affirm or establish individual and group identity (tracing lost family members, issuing identity papers, re-creating records) are crucial at this stage. Provision of photographic and computer equipment, materials for maintaining and transmitting records, and communications within and across regions (including email and Internet connections) would substantially strengthen local and NGO efforts at accomplishing identification and family reunification. The health component should include provision of health assessments, preventive health care (immunizations), and psychological support.

Community

Provide support to epidemiologic health needs assessment

Regions suddenly at relative peace after long periods of unrest, war, and migration lack information about the health status and needs of the population now living there. Good information will strengthen planning and program development long into the future. Including local health personnel on the assessment teams builds skills and improves the efficiency and comprehensiveness of the information-gathering process.

Provide support to emergency and public health interventions

Needs assessments may well identify key endemic or epidemic health problems among the human or animal population. Disruption of services and prior routine interventions, such as animal testing and food service inspection, requires an expanded horizon for exploring possible environmental threats. Military and civilian medical and veterinary teams could be deployed with local professionals to address these issues.

Community and Time (Positive sense of the future)

Participate in reconstruction of physical infrastructure

In the initial phase of transition, road and bridge construction will make the most difference in resettlement and economic revitalization. Emergency health delivery can take place in a range of settings but establishing more formal sites for hospitals and health clinics will create useful zones of social and economic activity. Decisions regarding geographic and bureaucratic location (urban/rural, decentralized/vertical health care structure) are pivotal and in the best case should be made only within an overall strategy for social and economic development informed by participation of local community leaders. In the interim phases, however, there will be evident needs to reconstitute old structures as well as provide resources in new areas of population settlement

Participate in physical and mental rehabilitation efforts

The impact of violence on these societies is multifaceted. Victims range from landmine amputees to orphans, subjects of rape and torture to remaining remnants of families, those deracinated from homes to witnesses of atrocity. Population-based needs assessments, design of intervention campaigns, development of strategies that local societies can sustain over time--all of these are issues that the international health communities, civilian and military, can and should take on as key responsibilities. Many different efforts in transition and conflict areas are now underway. There might be benefit in steps to bring groups and agencies together to craft more coordinated and robust strategies.

- Grant people some sense of privacy and control over their own living space;
- Help people establish rituals and ceremonies to define the ends and the beginnings in terms of grief, loss, and attachment; (Brown and Perkins 1992:297);
- Make it possible for people to get on with some aspects of their lives (education, economic activity);
- Allow people as much autonomy and discretion as possible in planning and organizing for their group advancement (landmine awareness campaigns, community action projects).

Participate in training of local health personnel and community leaders

Education in health has many features and levels. Community education in public and family health can serve many purposes of social mobilization in addition to the concrete usefulness of diffusing awareness regarding important health practices. All levels of local personnel, who may have gained some skills during the crisis period but lost touch with others, would benefit from such training. Their enhanced performance will improve health care delivery and cement their standing as key professionals in the community.

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