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Agriculture, Conflict and Stability: A call for renewed focus on protection and conflict sensitive programming in agriculture and food and nutrition security*

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War disrupts all stages of human nutrition: the production, procurement, preparation, allocation and consumption of food. It may therefore lead to severe malnutrition or famine, which, nowadays, is one of the main causes of disease or death in situations of armed conflict. Olivier Coutau, Diplomatic Adviser, ICRCⁱ

It is very clear to us that agriculture has the potential to become a major source of employment, most especially for the thousands of our citizens, especially women and youth who, as casualties of the war, lack essential skills, but who can learn to farm the land. Our objective is to consolidate them into a productive and dynamic entity for national development. Jobs in the farming sector is one of the means of accomplishing that aim... We can become a post conflict success story building upon our agriculture activities. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of Liberiaⁱⁱ

This paper calls for a paradigm shift in strategies for agriculture and food security for at risk populations in protracted crises. Such strategies should be based on a deep analysis of conflict and its impact on agriculture, as well as the impact of agriculture on the dynamics of violence and peace. This is important for more complete engagements with the breadth of dimensions and the full meaning and roles that agriculture represents in societies, from economic development to individual well-being. We posit that these factors have not been sufficiently addressed in food and nutrition security strategies in protracted crises, which instead tend to focus on technical and **economic aspects rather than less tangible (and more “tricky”) socio-political dynamics.**

We call for a greater emphasis on four aspects of the relationships among agriculture, conflict and stability and related implications for food and nutrition security:

1. Conflict prevention through agriculture
2. A protection agenda for agriculture in protracted crises
3. The regeneration of the fabric of societies through agriculture during and after protracted crises
4. A robust knowledge management and research agenda

Properly understanding the dynamics of agriculture, violence and stability are important for engaging constructively in preventing and mitigating the risks of conflicts in protracted crises that are associated with resource stress, for promoting peace and security during conflict, and for post crises peace consolidation. There are different implications at household, community and state levels; an integrated approach and overall strategy is necessary. Understanding food security issues—and therefore how to resolve challenges to food and nutrition security—has to integrate all these levels and be based on a sophisticated knowledge of the crisis, the food security related economy (access, availability, utilization, stability) as well as historical socio-cultural specificity. Failure to take these aspects into consideration (particularly for policies, institution building and assistance strategies on food and agriculture system) risks exacerbating or re-creating the root causes of conflict.

Livelihoods

According to Ellisⁱⁱⁱ

A livelihood comprises the assets (natural, physical, human, financial and social capital), the activities, and the access to these (mediated by institutions and social relations) that together determine the living gained by the individual or household.

Livelihoods, therefore, are a reflection of what people do (strategies) and using what they have (assets) given a prevailing governance context (policies, institutions, processes/trends). The structure of livelihoods reflects how people negotiate within households and across societies to access and deploy assets in structured strategies to realize life objectives. Food and nutrition security is an outcome of the livelihood efforts of individuals, households and communities that depend on crops, livestock, fish, forests and other natural resources, as well as the consumers who rely on their combined production.

Assets, the foundation on which livelihoods are built, are important for their productive or economic value, and also because they give meaning to life. Take, for example, the status associated with a large and healthy herd of cattle or the satisfaction of eating what one produces. Asset access, livelihood strategies, and livelihood outcomes and objectives are not homogenous across or within households. Rather, intra-household allocations of money, food, water, health care and other resources reflect the distribution of power in the household as well as customs and norms based, for example, on generational and gender attributes. As a result, women and girls are often exceptionally vulnerable in protracted crises, given their triple burden of production, reproduction and social roles.

There are a range of processes both formal and informal, and spoken and unspoken institutions, traditions and policies that govern how (and which) individuals use assets—and for what purposes. This governance environment both impinges upon and enables access to and control over assets.^{iv} It influences the portfolio of livelihood strategies pursued by both groups and individuals.^v This governance context for livelihoods is in continuous evolution, affected by incidents in recent times as well as trends from the more distant past, and by local, regional and international developments. Pre-conflict formal and informal policies, institutions and processes in the agriculture sector—including ill-advised development interventions—can exacerbate the risk of violent protracted crises, e.g., investment policies, land tenure, labor regimes, taxation, etc.

Livelihoods, Violence and Protracted Crises

Agriculture and the rural economy play exceptional roles **in people's survival in protracted crises**. The resilience of their livelihoods is the first—and sometimes only—line of defense, but livelihoods are profoundly affected by protracted crises. Those who have limited capacity to buffer myriad and sustained threats are often the most affected, causing the marginally food secure to lapse into malnutrition and the impoverished to slide into destitution.

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The resilience of communities is particularly important in protracted crises when state institutions are challenged, weak or insufficient.^{vi} The nature of violence in protracted crises arises from deliberately hostile policies, institutions and policies, engendering not an enabling but rather a proactively disabling environment, especially for agriculture. This includes the **aggressive “taxing”** by non-state actors of crops; recruiting (or abducting) rural labor into armed forces, militias and rebel groups; blocking livestock migration routes; poisoning water systems; burning standing crops as a tactic of war; mining roads; bombing markets; providing free reign to fighters to pay themselves through livestock raiding; etc. Notably, all of these are specific violations of International Humanitarian Law (see box, right). Protracted crises have been marked by specifically violent measures from state institutions, including forced displacements, ethnic cleansing and genocide, with catastrophic implications for food and nutrition security for both rural and urban populations.

A party to the conflict cannot “attack, destroy, remove or render useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, such as foodstuffs, agricultural areas for the production of foodstuffs, crops, livestock, drinking water installations and supplies and irrigation works, for the specific purpose of denying them for their sustenance value to the civilian population or to the adverse Party, whatever the motive, whether in order to starve out civilians, to cause them to move away or for any other motive.” **Additional Protocol I, art. 54(2).**

The violence witnessed in protracted crises may seem random, but it can be “functional” (i.e., useful for those controlling and benefiting from it) and “specific” (i.e., infused with meanings or “messages” related to personal, economic or political agendas).^{vii} Protracted crises are perpetuated through systems of inequality and exploitation that can be interpreted as extremely violent but nevertheless (perversely) rational responses to the inequalities, opportunities, and stresses.^{viii} Table one considers a range of types of violent threats to livelihood systems and the related implications for agriculture and food and nutrition security.

Table 1. Violent threats and implications for agriculture and food and nutrition security^{ix}

Violent Threats	Some Implications for Agriculture and Food and Nutrition Security
Physical violence, torture, abduction, detention, sexual violence	Diminishes labor force for agriculture production and marketing; harmful to child carers; forces people into hiding or outmigration from productive areas
Restrictions on movement, including checkpoints and curfews; restrictions on access to resources and markets	Limits time available to spend on agriculture production and marketing; increases the cost of food; limits cropping choices (in favour of low-maintenance crops) and related restrictions on nutritional diversity; Limits mobility as an important livelihood strategy (e.g., for accessing water, pastures, fields)
Forced displacement, both short-term and extended	Tensions with host communities over impacts of displacement on land, markets, etc.; Loss of access to productive land; unable to protect assets that remain in home areas; dependency on food assistance (and related limitations on nutrition diversity); disruption of social relations (for access to credit, informal self-help labor groups for tillage and weeding); long-term displacement eroding indigenous/traditional knowledge transfer processes for maximizing production and coping with threats to agriculture; Engaging in farming closer to displaced persons or refugee camps; Hiding cultivation in forests
Attacks or theft of	Loss of crops due to burning of fields; loss of storage buildings; loss of seeds

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Violent Threats	Some Implications for Agriculture and Food and Nutrition Security
civilian assets such as houses, land, and food, or extortion or exploitative practices	and other planting materials; loss of farm equipment; loss of livestock; poor or no return on labor (indentured servitude, e.g., in exchange for protection); loss of crops, livestock, etc. due to extortion; increased cost to purchase food (markets disrupted); Loss of crops/livestock due to raids by armed forces; burning of crops, forests, etc., due to counter-insurgency tactics (reducing areas for cover for rebels, etc.); Racketeering by armed forces exacting food or assets; Attacks on marketing, communication and transportation systems; Farming, collecting firewood or wild foods in unsafe areas ; "clandestine" agriculture
Disruption to property and land rights; Loss or theft of personal documentation	Permanent loss of land tenure; Loss of homes; Loss of storage facilities; Raiding and seizing of livestock; loss of access to grazing routes (governed by customary or formal law); loss of access to services
Discrimination on the basis of social status, including gender, ethnicity, age, etc.	Disproportionately difficult to access labor, credit, agriculture extension, animal health services, etc.; vulnerable to land seizures; Land, livestock not protected by community; can promote outmigration; increased reliance on dangerous or illegal livelihoods;
Landmines and other Unexploded Remnants of War	Reduced cropping areas; reduced access to grazing areas; reduced access to water sources; physical injury to people and livestock; reduced access to hunting grounds; increased presence of predators, vectors (tsetse fly), invasive species, poisonous snakes, etc.; prevents return from displacement to home areas for cultivation.
Forced recruitment into fighting forces	Reduced labor availability for agriculture production and marketing, especially by youth; increased labor burden on the aged, elderly and infirm; contributes to militarization of society

Given such threats, household and communal (e.g., commons, woodlands, water, etc.) assets are eroded through the many ways that households use them for coping with long-term stress. This increases poverty and decreases resilience when household options become increasingly delimited as a result of asset loss. For example, land is often abandoned in the course of forced displacement and extended migrations. Farming equipment may be sold in desperation in order

Some communities living in protracted crises have gone to the extent of requesting the UN *not* to provide food aid rations for fear that this would induce violent raids. For examples of attacks timed to coincide with UN distributions during the **second Sudan civil war**, see **"The OLS Review"**. Karim, A. et al. (1996), 'Operation Lifeline Sudan: A review', (Geneva: Department of Humanitarian Affairs).

to meet minimum subsistence requirements, when other coping mechanisms fail. Livestock herds may be initially diminished and eventually exhausted due to recurrent, violent attacks and raids. Accumulated debt from multiple years of coping with protracted crises can lead to increased distress sales of assets under the threat of violence (and at a poor return).^x

The nature of violence in protracted crises can transform some rural livelihood assets into liabilities that threaten food security, reflecting the double-edged role of agriculture resources as both keys to survival and primary attractants of violent attacks.^{xi} This can be thought of as

an **"asset/liability paradox"** whereby livelihood assets transform into life-threatening liabilities, or vice versa.^{xii} This happens when violence results from the perceived or actual ownership or control of assets, such as valued assets (e.g., money, food, land, labor, jewelry, livestock, fishing grounds, crops, timber, food aid, farming implements, cash income, etc.) or resources that may be seen as threatening (e.g., power, status, knowledge, education, weapons, guns, machetes, identity, youthfulness etc.) While the focus of this argument is on those rural households that are trying to

maintain a modicum of production throughout protracted crises (i.e., the non-destitute), even those who may be materially impoverished may still possess (or be perceived to possess) intangible assets that may be valued or threatening.

Examples abound. Being in the sexual prime of life is associated with a risk of HIV/AIDS; owning **cattle attracts raiding by rebels, robbers and militia alike**; **'the bush' and swamps** offer physical protection and physical threats alike; all forms of income are liable to attract the attention of those **who need money**; **success is thought to attract witchcraft by those who envy another's fortune**; etc. The conclusion one draws based on these paradoxes is that individuals, households and other livelihood units must engage in complex strategies of protection through reducing exposure to the types of risks that turn assets into liabilities. However, as the nutrition, health and well-being indicators of populations affected by protracted crises demonstrate, these strategies fail to provide protection on multiple fronts: physical, social, political, economic and (as examined in subsequent sections) psycho-social.

Households coping with violent protracted emergencies will try to protect themselves, homesteads and communities, even as they are forced to take extreme risks for mere survival. This includes efforts to minimize asset-related liabilities, while maintaining enough assets to meet minimum needs. For example, in some rural war zones, farming households try to balance crop production that is adequate for survival but insufficient to attract looting by armed forces and/or by storing food in multiple locations. Sometimes, risks are so great that households may abandon agriculture altogether. Studying Colombia, Ibáñez and Vélez found, for example, that arable land ownership was disproportionately associated with violent attacks and led to selective out-migration among wealthier residents who would be targeted in attacks.^{xiii} In Eastern DRC, populations forced to flee their homes would leave manioc roots buried, in the hope that some food would be available if ever they were able to return home (see also box right).

"The case of eastern DRC reveals that protracted crises can cause considerable shifts in local food systems... These new conditions have forced most households to invest in alternative strategies of survival. This explains why in several regions agricultural production has lost its importance to the advantage of mining or fishing activities; it also explains why some food-producing regions have become food importing areas during the war. These shifts in local food systems have attracted little attention from humanitarian agencies." See 24-25 of Vlassenroot et al. (2005) Food security responses to the protracted crisis context of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Conflict Research Group, University of Ghent.

While some households that have broader and deeper endowments of assets may be less vulnerable (e.g., by having resources to flee unstable areas) than those that have fewer stocks and less diverse capital flows, there are important exceptions. Violent attacks can lead to widespread impoverishment through asset stripping, but poverty is not the only—nor necessarily the most important—source of vulnerability in protracted crises. Following Chambers, powerlessness might be a more accurate concept of explaining vulnerability in violent contexts than material poverty.^{xiv}

Agriculture, Conflict Drivers and Protracted Crises

The literature on the relationships between natural resources and violent conflict is rich, demonstrating complex and non-linear modalities.^{xv,xvi} Arguably, there is less focus on the relationship between agriculture resources and production systems and their respective roles as inadvertent conflict drivers in protracted crises. However, land, labor, water, markets, timber and

other aspects essential to agriculture production and livelihood security have been implicated in the violent dynamics in sustained, protracted crises. Using the Horn of Africa as a case study, the following examples can serve to illustrate these inter relationships:

- Irrigation (Jonglei Canal) was a root cause of the last Sudan war, with attacks made directly on the construction equipment and workers in order to stop the project;^{xvii} the subsequent war saw the violent extraction of high value timber for unregulated sale—often to the benefit of militaries—internationally.^{xviii} High profile disputes and counter-disputes that persist in South Sudan center on cattle.^{xix}
- In the conflicts in the 1980s and 1990s, rebel forces and government armies alike perfected the art of diverting food aid to sustain violent conflicts.^{xx}
- Illegal and unregulated fishing is, to many in Somalia, a root cause of the piracy that affects transnational shipping routes in the Red Sea.^{xxi}
- Government policies, investment programmes, border regimes and climate change are bringing livestock herders and sedentary farmers into conflict as a result of disrupted migration routes, once regulated by principally traditional institutions and now no longer able to be effective in the face of such national/regional/global forces.^{xxii}
- Narcotics for local, regional and international consumption compete with land, water and labor that might otherwise go to food and other cash crops.^{xxiii}
- Agriculture land tenure—both in the form of highly localized land seizures (usually during conflict-to-stability transitions) and conflicts between international investors and disempowered local communities, can increase the vulnerability of poor farmers and pastoralists.^{xxiv}

While there has been over time an appropriate focus on understanding the particular vulnerability of women and girls in protracted crises, there has been less attention paid to threats to young men, including their strategies for managing risks. This has important implications regarding how conflicts are fought and by whom as well as how the basic needs of fighters are met. Young men in protracted crises are drawn from farms to fight (often more to protect themselves than to enrich themselves) for government, rebels, and militia. Agriculture is often at the heart of these dynamics, as the following case study of a community of soldiers from protracted crises in northern Uganda demonstrates.

Agriculture and the Militarization of Lango Youth in Northern Uganda

In-depth research on **infantry soldiers in the Uganda People's Defense Forces (UPDF)** was conducted in Lango, an area of northern Uganda, during the conflict and in the months immediately following a ceasefire **between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)** rebels in 2006^{xxv}. The area had been affected by armed conflict between government and multiple rebel groups as well as cattle raids by pastoralist groups based in Karamoja for some thirty years. During the research, the soldiers were based in barracks and their families (including girlfriends, parents, siblings, grandparents, dependent orphans and fostered relatives) lived in a variety of settings in northern Uganda (IDP camps, post-ceasefire transition camps, original homesteads, rented accommodation in towns, etc.) Most of these soldiers came from families that once had rewarding agriculture livelihoods but which had deteriorated over the course of multiple, protracted crises.^{xxvi}

The soldiers provided detailed personal histories. These recounts followed similar trajectories; most had experienced collapses of once-viable agrarian livelihoods as a result of protracted crises, eventually enlisting in the national army when all other livelihood options failed. Importantly, only one of 47 soldiers stated that he had a long-term ambition to join the army; the remainder would have preferred a viable civilian livelihood pathway. By the time many of them decided to join the **army, they described it as a desperate “escape” (indeed, many slipped away in the “dead of night”).** This escape became a means to seize control of relationships in which they had been severely constrained by the norms of Lango society. This was often exacerbated by perpetual relations of dependencies in IDP camps, where they were subordinate not only to elders but also to the humanitarian actors that determined such basic life functions as living arrangements and access to food—the latter always negotiated through senior women, as per the gender policies of some organizations involved in food aid distributions.

War-related losses of access to farm land was an **important driver of poverty at the time of the soldiers’** enlistments in the study on northern Uganda. At one point, the families of 24 of 47 soldiers had abandoned their land, mostly due to insecurity (22) but also because the land was sold (1) or seized without compensation by the UPDF for a detach for local militia (1). A second major driver of poverty was livestock raiding, which spelled for many the beginning of the end of peace and prosperity in Lango: Cattle raids by Karamojong pastoralists had decimated the livestock base by the mid-1980s.^{xxvii} **One-third of the soldiers’ families had lost all of their livestock over the course of the war.** Table two **demonstrates the extent of asset losses experienced by the soldiers’ families** due to violent attacks.

One soldier owned farm land but it was an asset of no value. He explained, “It is abandoned. It is not yet cleared. (Because of) the cattle rustling, the insurgency, I don’t even check it.”

Table 2. Asset Losses due to Violence (62 households, Lango, northern Uganda)

Asset	Total Losses (units)	Total HH Affected (of 62)	Range of Losses (units)	Dates of Attack
Cattle/Oxen	429	25 (cattle)/17 (oxen)	1-60	1985-2005
Sheep/Goats	234	32	1-20	1960; 1985-2006
Buildings	65	30	1-6	1960; 1979-2006
Bicycles	25	22	1-3	1970-2005
Radios	20	17	1-2	1987-2005

An analysis of the livelihood pathways from collapse of agriculture to enlistment in the UPDF suggests that some soldiers joined the national army of Uganda for their own personal *casus belli* that aligned with neither greed nor grievance models of wars in Africa. Rather, physical safety, marginal increases in income, the possibility of job security, and the prospect of living free of the entrapments of IDP camps, pushed or pulled most soldiers into the army. None thought they would get rich as a soldier (“greed”). **Those who signed up** after attacks on their homes, families and friends, generally **did so not to avenge the attacks (“grievance”), but simply in an attempt to avoid the same fate.**

The seemingly stark choices facing youth in northern Uganda were exemplified by one soldier, who had been living in an IDP camp prior to joining the army in 2005. He said **that he had thought to himself, “Let me go away [and enlist] and possibly I will not be a victim the next time when these [rebels] come back and maybe kill me also.”**

The sub-optimal conditions prevailing at the time of enlistment suggest that the cohort felt that their lives were at risk regardless of which path they chose: to remain a civilian, to join the rebels, or to enlist in the army. As one soldier explained:

I joined the army because there was instability in that part of the area and, actually, the army was on the safer side. The army could provide security. (*Interviewer: For you personally or for your family?*) For me personally. The army would be safer and could **provide security on my side... And then next, we could make a living** out of the army... **We would be paid a salary also.**

Having joined the army, the threat of physical violence continued (of course), but for many, so did food security challenges. The research found that most could not support their families in northern Uganda (or sometimes even themselves in barracks) **on a private's salary. Access to** arable land was one of the few avenues of livelihood security available to their families. Farming generated additional food and income, especially for the families that had not been able to relocate to urban areas and could not access related opportunities for trading and other livelihoods. Many soldiers did not have land tenure and had to negotiate access through a surviving parent, most often, their mothers. Soldiers reported that marriage was one way of pressing parents for land transfers. Wives, **therefore, were important as a form of "currency" in social negotiations regarding land access**, but even marriage did not always secure land tenure. Whether engendered by wives or other family members, transfers of food and money to the soldiers represented an insidious type of war economy, a regressive tax on impoverished civilians to support the lowest rank of soldiers. This example represents only a microcosm of the broader exploitative practices of armed forces that literally live off the production of rural populations in protracted crises.

Agriculture, Recovery and Protracted Crises

The previous section provided examples of some of the relationships between agriculture and violent processes with profound implications for food and nutrition security, including militarization, **asset stripping and conflict drivers. Here, we provide a brief overview of agriculture's** more optimistic function in protracted crises, that is, of providing resources that are important for the regeneration of societies during and after protracted crises. Anthropology and psychology are two disciplines that provide rich **analysis of agriculture's role in** individual and social recovery. We posit that the formal institutions of humanitarian action and development work for agriculture do not pay sufficient attention to these fields.

Agriculture literally brings new life to shattered homes and communities, serves as a motivating rationale for bringing people together when conflict has torn social networks asunder and re-starts a key economic engine to drive recovery. Research has demonstrated that it is possible and feasible to monitor psycho-social impacts using, for example, a Sense of Coherence scale. One application of this approach to an EU-funded FAO programme in the North Caucasus reflected the multiple contributions of different types of agriculture programmes to the recovery process, including for social regeneration:

[I]n addition to the economic gains, the greenhouses were highly valued by the beneficiaries for their social and psychological benefits. Greenhouse horticulture appeared to be providing a sense of purpose and emotional healing as previously unemployed young men worked in their family's greenhouse. Similarly, beekeeping beneficiaries spoke openly of how the project was significant for them by giving them an elevated status within their communities. Production of

honey provided good income and a reason for positive interactions among neighbors. Several beneficiaries stated that they also found beekeeping to be a “comforting” activity.^{xxviii}

Lastly, the management of death, disease and misfortune is defined within socially prevailing contexts. In some rural settings, agriculture and natural resources play key roles in supporting social rehabilitation and protection, providing livestock for rituals, grain for sacrifice, cash for religious services, and a socially healthy, morally acceptable environment for burials. In the northern Uganda research, the management of proper death and burial ceremonies required financial outlays ranging from feeding those who attended funerals to purchases of cement for sealing graves. This latter investment can require several years of capital accumulation. In addition, the dead hindered access to natural and physical assets. In some instances, numerous graves were **found “intercropped” within farming plots near households** while in other cases, the unburied dead (especially those who had died violently and remained *in situ* due to displacement of living relatives or inadequate incomes for proper burials) precluded cultivation or construction of any kind in the fields as long as the bodies remained.

For example amongst the Lango of northern Uganda, it is customary that graves must be placed close to homesteads so that the *tipo*^{xxix} of (especially recently) deceased relatives can maintain a close watch on the family. Improper care of *tipo* invites misfortune that, in turn, requires investments in ritual exercises that consume income, livestock and other assets. These are important forms of socio-political assets (and liabilities) not usually considered in food and agriculture sectors but which can have important ramifications at the household level, including being part of the modalities through which individuals, households and communities find peace and social healing. **For the very poor, they may represent a form of “trade off” between food security and spiritual security** (e.g., when crops and livestock are ritually sacrificed).

Implications for An Agenda for Action in Protracted Crises

Risk-sensitive management of agriculture and natural resources can hold the key to social regeneration for recovery and lasting and sustainable peace and stability, and furnish foundational conditions for sustainable development. Based on the arguments in this paper, we conclude by calling for four areas for consideration for an action agenda:

1. Conflict prevention *through agriculture*
2. A protection agenda *for agriculture* in protracted crises
3. The regeneration of the fabric of societies *through agriculture* during and after protracted crises
4. A robust knowledge management and research agenda

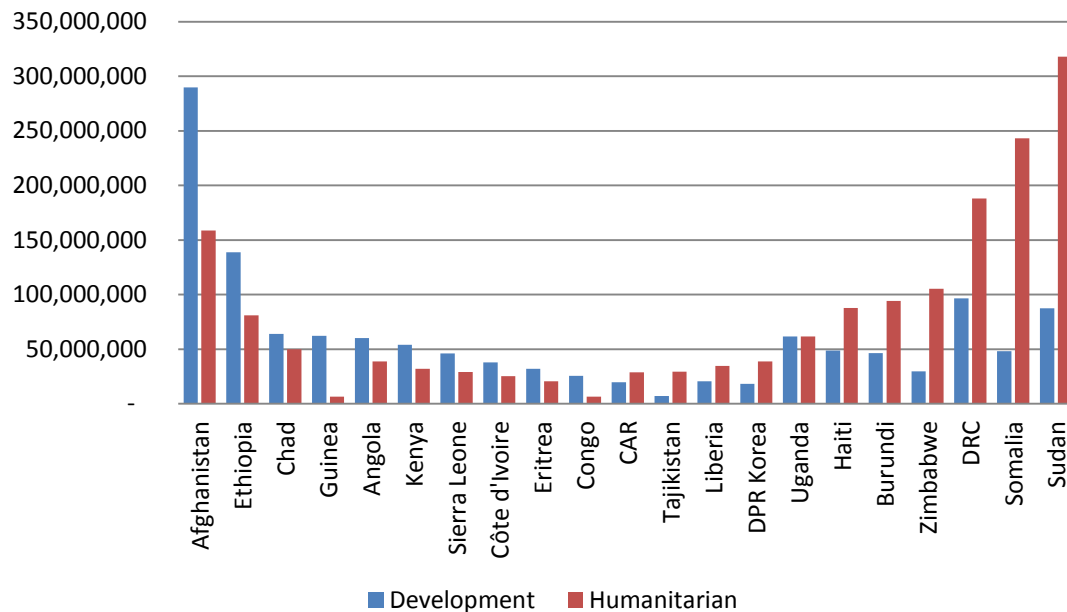
There is a need for greater emphasis on conflict prevention and mitigation in humanitarian, development and investment strategies in the agriculture sectors for food security. Focused efforts are required to use humanitarian resources to engage more vigorously with the twin pillars of humanitarian action, i.e., providing assistance *and ensuring protection* of vulnerable groups by civilian authorities, militaries and/or humanitarian agencies, including FAO. Given the range of agriculture resources and institutions associated with violence in protracted crises, post-crisis reconstruction of the agriculture sector should specifically reduce the risk of future violence including, for example, the management of investment strategies and land tenure.^{xxx}

Using FAO projects from 1974 to 2011 as an example, Table 3 demonstrates that most countries affected by protracted crises have had robust assistance engagements, dominated over time

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either by development as compared to humanitarian assistance (left hand side) or, vice versa, with humanitarian support outranking development assistance (right hand side). Embedded in a larger context of multi-hazard risk reduction, opportunities for conflict prevention present themselves before, during and after complex emergencies. This implies a need for risk sensitive programming within and across the aid architecture governing both humanitarian and development streams.

Table 3. Total Humanitarian and Development Investments by FAO in SOFI 2010 Protracted Crises Countries since 1974 (excluding Iraq)



The implications of the resource allocation patterns entails sustained development investment **before, during and after protracted crises**. FAO's development investments in countries affected by protracted crises demonstrates that this—perhaps contrary to expectations—is the general trend (see Table 4). However, the protracted nature of some conflicts is particularly damaging to development investment levels in the final years of conflict (Column 5). Humanitarian assistance during protracted crises quickly outpaces the level of pre-crisis development, a trend that is sustained for at least five years after conflict by at least a 2:1 margin.

Table 4. FAO Average Annual Development and Humanitarian Investments in Select SOFI 2010 Countries* Before, During and After Conflict (USD)

	5 years pre conflict	2 years pre conflict	During the conflict	During the conflict (5 last years for long conflicts)	2 years post conflict	5 years post conflict
Development average	8,554,524	9,604,379	13,963,702	5,424,721	18,500,201	14,795,881
Humanitarian average	6,638,392	7,190,593	10,622,066	17,019,674	41,904,402	30,232,860
Average Total	15,192,916	16,794,971	24,585,768	22,444,394	60,404,602	45,028,741
Humanitarian as % of Development	78%	75%	76%	314%	227%	204%

* For SOFI countries with an identifiable post-conflict period: Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Uganda and Zimbabwe

There is a particular need to provide viable livelihood options for youth in conflict zones so that governments and aid organizations do not inadvertently condone the narrow life choices facing (especially) young men in war, choices which represent significant risks of death through violent encounters or the social ostracization often associated with violent livelihoods. Processes to promote the viability of the livelihoods of all who are displaced by and during protracted crises, men and women alike, is essential for stabilization. This includes measures to ensure a return to a safe environment, e.g., facilitating small groups of IDPs to negotiate the return of assets, to see if other groups have settled down, and to check the status of demining and the state of services (education, health), etc.

Based on case studies of agriculture in protracted crises that focused on Afghanistan, Sierra Leone and South Sudan, Longley et al^{xxxii} **recommend that, “Interventions should be designed according to the broader political and security environment and based on an understanding of vulnerability that incorporates notions of powerlessness.” We concur. In this paper, we have argued, that powerlessness to protect assets (rather than asset poverty alone) is an appropriate indicator of vulnerability to the consequences and implications of protracted crises.**

The arguments presented have important implications for the concept of protection in the midst of war in an era when civilians are as likely to be targeted in times of conflict as are soldiers. It is telling that the young men studied in northern Uganda who would be prime targets for abduction, assault and murder turned not to the national judicial or police systems—or to the humanitarian community—for protection but rather looked to the one institution where they felt safest from falling victim to rebels: the army. That the army was perceived as the safest option can be read as an indication of the extensive failure of protection of civilians and their (especially rural-based) resources by local, national and international institutions. It can also be seen as a condemnation of rebels and of others (including raiding pastoralist groups, criminals and army forces) who attack civilians and their assets.

In protracted crises situations, there is a vital need to reinvigorate the protection agenda for food and nutrition security by applying a protection framework to agriculture and natural resource-dependent populations, resources and systems, drawing on the provisions enshrined in International Humanitarian Law that are particular to agriculture.^{xxxii} Here, we adapt a common definition of protection to suit the agriculture, food and nutrition communities to encompass *“all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual with respect to agriculture and food and nutrition security in accordance with the letter and spirit of the relevant bodies of law.”*^{xxxiii} There are encouraging examples of this type of analysis. **For example, FAO’s analysis of the West Bank** that considered the relationships between food security and land confiscations given restricted movement of sheep herders and violence.^{xxxiv} **FAO’s ten-year old seminal publication of The Right to Food in Emergencies** remains a valid and powerful reference on the range of specific legal provisions on which to draw for an invigorated protection agenda.

Protection is realized as much in advocacy to uphold and enforce laws and norms as it is in action. In DRC, where women IDP were allocated poor community lands far from villages and were often attacked on the way to their fields, it was found that small livestock or having a vegetable garden **close to the dwelling (or “garden in a bag”, “garden on the roof”)** could produce food and income without exposure to danger. It is imperative that the humanitarian community adapt the means of providing assistance for agriculture, food and nutrition security *as protection* in highly volatile environments, in order to avoid endangering beneficiaries by their presence (e.g., in Afghanistan,

where reprisals were common against communities benefitting from aid) and finding ways to strengthen the resilience of the vulnerable, including both the poor and the powerless.

At this time, such efforts represent but a slim portion of humanitarian strategies for agriculture, rural populations and food and nutrition security, and comprise an even narrower margin in the realm of development, especially pre-conflict. Instead, focus on the technical and economic aspects still predominates, leaving the less tangible (but more “tricky”) facets of the relationship between agriculture, conflict and stability, damagingly under-addressed.

End Notes

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- ⁱ World Food Summit: Five years later: remarks by ICRC. See: <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/005/Y4172M/rep2/ICRC.htm>
- ⁱⁱ Sirleaf, E.J. (2010), “The Role of Agriculture in Post-Conflict Recovery: The case of Liberia,” Remarks at the Symposium on Global Agriculture and Food Security, 20 May 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201005240880.html>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Page 10, Ellis, Frank (2000), *Rural Livelihoods and Diversity in Developing Countries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) xiv, 273.
- ^{iv} Page 39, Ellis, Frank (2000), *Rural Livelihoods and Diversity in Developing Countries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) xiv, 273.
- ^v Page 8, Hobley, Mary ‘Unpacking the PIP Box’, (updated January 2001) <www.livelihoods.org>, accessed November 26, 2004.
- ^{vi} FAO and WFP (2010) The State of Food Insecurity in the World: Addressing food insecurity in protracted crises (SOFI 2010), Rome. Available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1683e/i1683e.pdf>
- ^{vii} Page 476 of Kalyvas, Stathias N. (2003), ‘The Ontology of “Political Violence”: Action and identity in civil wars’, *Perspectives on Politics*, 1 (3), 475-94; page 2135 of Lautze, Sue, et al., (2004), ‘Humanitarian Governance? Assistance, protection and global governance networks in complex emergencies’, *The Lancet*, 364 (9451), 2134-41; and Richards, Paul (2005), ‘New War: An ethnographic approach’, in Paul Richards (ed.), *No Peace, No War: An anthropology of contemporary armed conflicts* (Oxford: James Currey), 1 - 21.
- ^{viii} See Duffield, Mark, (2001), *Global Governance and the New Wars: The merging of development and security* (New York: Zed Books), Turton, David (1997), ‘War and Ethnicity: Global connections and local violence in North East Africa and Former Yugoslavia’, *Oxford Development Studies*, February 1997; 25(1), 77-94, and Reno, William (1998), *Warlord Politics and the African States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner) 257.
- ^{ix} Based on page 6 of Longley, Catherine and Maxwell, Daniel (2003), ‘Livelihoods, Chronic Conflict and Humanitarian Response: A synthesis of current practice’, (London: Working Paper 182, Overseas Development Institute), 44
- ^x For a case study of the implications of debt in a protracted crises, including putting girls into marriage at younger and younger ages as a way of repaying debt, see Lautze, Sue, et al. (2002), ‘Qaht-E-Pool “A Cash Famine”: Food insecurity in Afghanistan 1999-2002’, (Washington and Medford: The United States Agency for International Development and the Feinstein International Famine Center).
- ^{xi} Lautze, Sue and Raven-Roberts, Angela (2006), ‘Violence and Complex Humanitarian Emergencies: Implications for Livelihoods Models’, *Disasters*, 30 (4), 383-40; Duffield, Mark (1993), ‘NGOs, Disaster Relief and Asset Transfer in the Horn: Political survival in a permanent emergency’, *Development and Change*, 24, 131-57; Keen, David (1994), *The Benefits of Famine: A political economy of famine and relief in southwestern Sudan 1983 - 1989* (Princeton: Princeton University Press); and Reno, William (1998), *Warlord Politics and the African States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner) 257.
- ^{xii} Schafer, Jessica (2002), ‘Supporting Livelihoods in Situations of Chronic Conflict and Political Instability: Overview of conceptual issues’, (London: Overseas Development Institute), 58.
- ^{xiii} See page 663 of Ibáñez, Ana María and Vélez, Carlos Eduardo (2008), ‘Civil Conflict and Forced Migration: The micro determinants and welfare losses of displacement in Colombia’, *World Development*, 36 (4), 659-76.
- ^{xiv} Le Billon, Philippe (2000), ‘The Political Economy of Resource Wars’, in Jakkie Colliers and Christian Dietrich (eds.), *Angola’s War Economy: The role of oil and diamonds* (Institute for Security Studies: Pretoria), 21 - 42.
- ^{xv} For a nuanced collection of case studies, see Collier, Paul and Sambanis, Nicholas (2005), *Understanding Civil War: Evidence and analysis (Volume 1: Africa)* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank) 2 v.
- ^{xvi} Cramer, Christopher (1997), ‘“Civil War is Not a Stupid Thing:” Exploring growth, distribution and conflict linkages’, (London: SOAS Department of Economics Working Paper), 31.
- ^{xvii} See page 48 of Johnson, Douglas H. (2011), *The Root Causes of Sudan’s Civil War: Peace or truce (revised edition)* (Oxford: James Currey) 234.
- ^{xviii} For more examples of forest extraction to the benefit of armed forces see De Jong, W. et al (eds) *Extreme Conflict and Tropical Forests*, Springer, Dordrecht, 186.
- ^{xix} See Jok, Madut Jok (2001), *War and Slavery in Sudan*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.
- ^{xx} See, for example, Prendergast, J. (1996) *Frontline Diplomacy: Humanitarian aid and conflict in Africa*, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, 164.
- ^{xxi} See page 5 of Middleton, R. (2008) *Piracy in Somalia: Threatening global trade, feeding local wars*, Briefing Paper October 2008, Chatham House, London.
- ^{xxii} For a strong review of farmer-pastoralist formal and informal mediation processes, see Turner, M. et al (2011) “Conflict Management, Decentralization and Agropastoralism in Dryland West Africa” *World Development*, 40(4): 745-757.
- ^{xxiii} See, for example, Bradley, A. V., and A. C. Millington (2008) “Coca and colonists: quantifying and explaining forest clearance under coca and anti-narcotics policy regimes,” *Ecology and Society* 13(1): 31. Examining this relationship closely in Afghanistan, Lind et al (2009) found, “Why do production decisions change? Opium is more drought resistant than wheat, the main alternative crop, and opium does not require road transportation. Military activities that destroy infrastructure such as irrigation and roads therefore make opium relatively more profitable. Hence, farmers and local warlords shift to opium because it is less affected by the fighting and can more easily be produced and sold in the new conflict environment.” See Lind, Jo Thori, Moene, Karl O. and Willumsen, Fredrik, *Opium for the Masses? Conflict-Induced Narcotics Production in Afghanistan* (March 2009). CESifo Working Paper Series No. 2573. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1357242>.
- ^{xxiv} See FAO and CFS (2012) *Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security*, FAO, Rome, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i2801e/i2801e.pdf>

^{xxxv} All references to northern Uganda and the UPDF are drawn from Lautze, Sue (2010), *Militarised Livelihoods In Uganda*, Thesis, Doctorate of Philosophy, Oxford University, Oxford.

^{xxxvi} Lango was (unlike Acholliland, its northern neighbor) historically relatively prosperous. It is only in years (from the 1980s) that the Lango came to share the extent of misery commonly associated with other parts of northern Uganda: poverty, war, displacement camps, political marginalisation, livestock raids, and underdevelopment.

^{xxxvii} For a full review, see de Temmerman, Els (2001), *Aboke Girls: Children abducted in northern Uganda* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers).

^{xxxviii} Forthcoming, *Hope is the Engine of Life*; *Hope Dies with the Person*: **Analysis of Meaning Making in FAO-Supported North Caucasus Communities Using the "Sense and Sensibilities of Coherence" (SSOC) Methodology**, *Journal of Loss and Trauma: International perspectives on stress and coping*.

^{xxxix} *Tipo* translates as shades or spirits and take on the form of one's shadow while living. The *tipo* flees its owner at death but must be cared for by the living relatives of the deceased.

^{xxx} There are a range of resources to guide such work. See, for example: FAO (2000) Natural Resource Conflict Management and Resolution; FAO 2003 Armed conflicts and Food Security, ESA Working Paper; FAO (ND) Gender-Based Violence and Livelihood Interventions, Dimitra project; FAO, 2003, Policy Options For Socioeconomic Vulnerability Analysis: conflict analysis and long-term development programmes and strategies; etc.

^{xxxi} Page 1, Longely, Catherine, et al., (2007) *Rural Recovery in Fragile States: Agricultural support in countries emerging from conflict*, Overseas Development Institute Natural Resource Perspectives, Number 105, February 2007.

^{xxxii} For an excellent overview of the relevant provisions, see Colula, L. and Vidar, M. (2002) *The Right to Adequate Food in Emergencies*, FAO, Rome. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/Y4430E/Y4430E00.HTM>

^{xxxiii} Caverzasio, Sylvie Giossi (2001) *Strengthening Protection in War*, International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva.

^{xxxiv} FAO (2007) *Strengthening Resilience: Food Insecurity and Local Responses to Fragmentation in the West Bank*. Rome.