

“PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND DISPLACEMENT”

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Displacement is one of the tragic consequences of conflict. As we meet this morning, several million people have been displaced in Pakistan as a result of the counter-insurgency campaign being carried out by the government against the Taliban in the Swat valley and Waziristan. Hundreds of thousands of Sri Lankans face an uncertain future as they are confined to camps following the government’s final offensive against the Tamil Tigers. In fact, over 40 million people have been displaced within and outside the borders of their countries.² But displacement is not only an unintended consequence of conflict. Increasingly it is used as a deliberate strategy by combatant forces. Ethnic cleansing, or its latest variant, sectarian cleansing in Iraq, requires that people be forcibly displaced from their communities in order for one side to be victorious.

While people can be displaced in a very short period of time—2 million Pakistanis in two weeks in June of this year, for example—resolving displacement always takes far longer. Until recently, political and military leaders have thought that a war is over when an enemy has been vanquished or a peace agreement has been signed. The reality is very different. Usually the hard work is just beginning and requires rebuilding societies, economies, and political systems which were destroyed by war, including finding solutions for those uprooted by conflict. This requires political will and commitment on the part of national authorities coming out of conflict and it usually requires financial resources and support from the international community.

¹ With thanks to Chareen Stark for her research assistance and Jamille Bigio for her helpful comments.

² According to the most recent figures available there are 10.5 million refugees of concern to UNHCR, 4.7 million Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA and an estimated 26 million conflict-induced IDPs. See www.unhcr.org; www.unrwa.org; <http://www.internal-displacement.org/>.

Resolving displacement and preventing future displacement is inextricably linked with achieving lasting peace. “Stop the fighting so that we can go home” is a common refrain among displaced communities. Unfortunately, going home is usually more complicated than this.

This presentation focuses on the relationship between peace and displacement. In sum: peace is needed for displaced people to find durable solutions and durable solutions are needed for peace to be consolidated. Or to put it negatively: without peace, there are no durable solutions for displaced persons and without durable solutions for displaced persons, it is difficult for peace to be sustained. This is a theme which has been explored by the Representative of the Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IIDPs) and the Brookings-Bern Project over the past few years.³

I would like to build on this work by looking at the way in which displacement is considered in some of the different approaches or paradigms to post-conflict transitions. Nation-building, state-building, peacebuilding, reconciliation, stabilization, early recovery—these are all terms presently used by different actors in dealing with the multiple challenges of post-conflict situations. But they are not just terms. They are paradigms which determine the way one looks at a particular issue, the solutions one finds, and even the agency or actor expected to take the lead. The paradigm used to approach post-conflict transitions also affects the way that solutions for the displaced are perceived. For example, military actors focusing on stabilization tend to see humanitarian assistance to displaced persons as a way of promoting security while those focusing on early recovery stress the role of returnees in economic development.

Solutions to displacement

Before analyzing different approaches to post-conflict situations, it is important to understand durable solutions for both IDPs and refugees. For internally displaced persons, there are three durable solutions: return to their community of origin, settlement in the place to which they have been displaced or settlement in another part of the country. For refugees, there are also three durable solutions which seem at first glance to parallel those of IDPs: return to their country of origin, local integration in their country of asylum, or resettlement in a third country.

There is often an assumption that returns are basically the same for refugees and for IDPs.⁴ And yet, there are some important differences. Repatriation of refugees usually

³ *Addressing Internal Displacement in Peace Processes, Peace Agreements and Peace-Building*, Washington, DC: Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, September 2007. Walter Kälin, “Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons: An Essential Dimension of Peacebuilding,” Briefing Paper submitted to the Peacebuilding Commission Working Group on Lessons Learned Meeting, 13 March 2008. Elizabeth Ferris, “The Role of Civil Society in Ending Displacement and Peacebuilding,” Statement delivered to UN Peacebuilding Commission, Lessons Learned Working Group, 13 March 2008. *Internal Displacement and the Construction of Peace*, Summary Report, Washington, DC: Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, February 2009.

⁴ This article focuses on internal displacement resulting from conflict.

refers to the physical movement of people from their place of displacement back to their country of origin—though not necessarily to their home communities.⁵ In other words, if an Afghan refugee from Kandahar leaves Iran to return to Kabul, he or she is considered to have returned—even if, in fact, he or she is unable to return to Kandahar because the conditions which caused the refugee flight are still present. Thus a refugee is said to have returned when he or she goes back to the country of origin—even if the returned refugee becomes an IDP—as long as the conditions of voluntary and informed consent are met. The right to return is generally understood as the right to return to one’s country—not necessarily to one’s city, community, or home.⁶

There have been important efforts to mandate refugee return to one’s **community** of origin and not only to the country. For example, some peace agreements, notably Annex VII of the Dayton Peace agreement, specify that refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina have the right to return to their “homes of origin.”⁷ Security Council resolutions have recognized and affirmed the rights of such persons to return to their former homes, not only in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but also in Croatia, Georgia and Kosovo.⁸ In spite of these important legal precedents, it is generally understood that for refugees, return means return to one’s country of origin while for IDPs, return always means return to the community of origin.⁹

While refugees can be said to have returned when they arrive back in their home country, it isn’t always easy to know when internal displacement has come to an end. The Brookings-Bern Project, together with Georgetown University, developed a *Framework for Durable Solutions* which seeks to provide guidance about when displacement can be said to have come to an end. The study found that, “Internal displacement does not generally end abruptly. Rather, ending displacement is a process through which the need for specialized assistance and protection diminishes.”¹⁰ The *Framework* further suggests that durable solutions are achieved through both the processes and the conditions of durable solutions. In general, the *Framework* states, “It is important to consider whether:

- 1) The national authorities have established the conditions conducive to safe and dignified return or settlement elsewhere;

⁵ The right of an individual to return to his or her country is also recognized in international human rights, as in article 13 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 12 (4) of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as in regional human rights instruments.

⁶ However, in legal terms, the right of a person to return to their original place of residence can be deduced from the right to liberty of movement and the right to choose one’s residence as embodied in Article 12 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Similarly, the former Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities affirmed “the right of refugees and displaced persons to return, in safety and dignity, to their country of origin and/or within it, to their place of origin or choice.”⁶

⁷ http://www.ohr.int/dpa/default.asp?content_id=375

⁸ See Walter Kälin, *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement: Annotations*, Revised edition. Washington, DC: American Society of International Law, 2008, p. 127.

⁹ It should be emphasized that returning refugees also have the right to freedom of movement within their country of origin, including the right not to return to their community of origin.

¹⁰ *When Displacement Ends: A Framework for Durable Solutions*, Washington, DC: Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, June 2007, p. 9.

- 2) Formerly displaced persons are able to assert their rights on the same basis as other nationals;
- 3) International observers are able to provide assistance and monitor the situation of the formerly displaced; and ultimately,
- 4) The durable solution is sustainable.”¹¹

The quality of the process leading to durable solutions is a key element in ensuring its sustainability. The decision of IDPs and refugees about whether to return or to opt for another solution must be voluntary, i.e. made in the absence of coercion and based on full and accurate information; moreover, they must be allowed to participate in decisions affecting their future in order that they can be responsible actors in the recovery process.¹² An important difference between refugees and IDPs is that refugees’ choices are limited by the actions of governments other than their own; for example, a refugee’s choice to either integrate locally or resettle to a third country depends on decisions by the host government or the government of the country to which resettlement is contemplated.

The *Framework* makes it clear that ending displacement does not require that all of the needs of IDPs are met or that their social, economic, cultural and political rights are all completely guaranteed. Rather, “The end of displacement is achieved when the persons concerned no longer have specific protection and assistance needs related to their having been displaced, and thus can enjoy their human rights in a non-discriminatory manner vis-à-vis citizens who were never displaced.”¹³

Although return of IDPs and refugees are both important, the patterns of returns for IDPs are different than those of refugees, whose returns are often later, organized rather than spontaneous and have an international component to their return. While national authorities are responsible for IDPs finding durable solutions, solutions for refugees typically involve at least one other government (and more in the case of resettlement) as well as international organizations, principally UNHCR.

Transitions

After a conflict has come to an end—whether through an internationally-brokered peace agreement or through other means— there is a transitional period before peace, security, and stability can be said to have been restored. Everyone seems to agree that during the transition a number of interconnected challenges must be addressed simultaneously. To name a few:

Security:

- The demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of combatants
- Reduction of violence and establishment of security
- De-mining

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10

¹² Walter Kälin, “Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons: An Essential Dimension of Peacebuilding,” *op cit.*

¹³ *Framework for Durable Solutions*, p. 10

- Security sector reform (police, military, penal)
- Establishment or re-establishment of the rule of law, including judicial systems

Economy:

- Reconstruction of infrastructure, homes, and property destroyed in the conflict
- Restoration of public utilities, livelihoods and job-creation
- Reestablishment of banking, currency, trade, investor confidence

Political transitions:

- Establishment or reestablishment of governmental capacity so that services can be delivered to the population, including re-establishment of health, educational and social security systems
- Installation of an interim government, drafting a new constitution, organizing of elections
- Instituting measures of transitional justice

Social:

- Re-establishment of social norms and institutions, including traditional means of conflict-resolution
- Family reunification, refugee repatriation and return of IDPs
- Reemergence of civil society
- Reconciliation and restoration of trust between communities which may have been in conflict

These and other tasks are challenges which must be carried out more or less simultaneously. It is usually not possible to say ‘let’s wait until the economy is functioning properly before we organize elections’ or ‘it’s more important to de-mobilize our troops than to re-open schools.’ In fact the various challenges are often inter-related. It is easier to de-mobilize insurgent forces, for example, when the economy is booming and jobs are available. It is not possible to restore agricultural production until mines have been removed from agricultural areas. It is easier to get ordinary citizens to give up their weapons when security has been restored and the judicial system is functioning.

The World Bank notes that while each post-conflict situation is unique, evaluations of many war-torn societies have identified a number of common features. Some of these characteristics are also found in non-post-conflict countries, but their impact in post-conflict countries is usually more pronounced and the ability to address problems significantly curtailed.

Dominance of elites:

Particularly the military, but also an oligarchy of government and the wealthy.

Fragile peace-consolidation processes:

Including continuing local rivalries between former enemies that breed political instability. In addition, the culture of violence inherited from war coupled with an abundant availability of weapons may give rise to widespread criminality.

Lack of confidence among socioeconomic actors:

Owners of capital may be reluctant to invest in sectors where it is most needed, that is, in fixed productive assets such as agricultural infrastructure.

Weak judicial, financial, fiscal, administrative and regulatory capacities of the state:

This depends on the pre-conflict situation as well as the extent to which public institutions have been affected by the war. In Somalia, for example, government and public institutions virtually disappeared over several years.¹⁴

Post-conflict situations thus face major challenges which need to be addressed simultaneously—precisely at a time when the institutions to take the necessary action have been weakened. I invite you to think about the difficulties that major developed countries—countries with high governmental capacity operating in stable political environments—have in dealing with the present global economic crisis. Now think about situations where the government is far less capable and stable and is dealing not only with economic issues, but also with major political and military challenges as well as helping refugees to return home and ensuring that war criminals are punished. It is a daunting challenge and we need to appreciate the pressures these governments face.

Transitions and timing

We have usually tended to approach issues of conflict and post-conflict situations in linear terms, involving a series of steps from one discreet stage to another:

Conflict ⇔ peace

Peace-making ⇔ Peacekeeping ⇔ Peacebuilding

Displacement ⇔ durable solutions

Although there are probably no ‘typical’ experiences, a common pattern seems to be that peace-making efforts are undertaken while the conflict is taking place. These efforts are followed by formal negotiations which in turn lead to peace agreements. Once the fighting has come to an end, peacebuilding can begin as well as returns (or other solutions) for the displaced. Humanitarian agencies depart, development actors arrive, and mechanisms for transitional justice are established.

But these processes are both more complex and more dynamic than this. They unfold unevenly over time and usually not in clear linear patterns. Unfortunately, they can also work at cross-purposes. Internally displaced persons may return to their homes before conflicts have come to an end. Humanitarian assistance is often needed after peace agreements have been signed.

¹⁴ Interworks and the World Bank, “The Transition from War to Peace: An Overview,” April 1999. <http://www.interworksmadison.com/WorldBankmodulenoc.pdf>

Furthermore, peace-making can occur on different levels, setting the stage for peacebuilding. This has implications on the role of displaced populations in peacebuilding, as Steve Utterwulghe illustrates with his description of work with internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Angola. He concludes that peacemaking and peacebuilding are not sequential phases, but rather concurrent ones. In fact, he argues that supporting IDPs’ involvement in peacemaking can enhance their work in peacebuilding. The Centre for Common Ground in Angola prepared and supported IDPs to play an active role in peacemaking—via theater, dialogue and training. IDPs were taught about their rights and 20,000 Angolan IDPs were trained on the Guiding Principles of Internal Displacement. This enabled IDPs to insist on their rights when it came time for them to find solutions. These activities also paved the way for them to play leadership roles in their communities when they returned to their places of origin.¹⁵ Involving IDPs in peacemaking is a way of building a community-based constituency for peace both during and after their displacement.

Alternative paradigms

The term ‘post-conflict transition’ is a relatively neutral one. But during this transitional period, different actors stress different processes which (not surprisingly) require that they play particular roles. All actors acknowledge that post-conflict transitions require a number of activities to occur simultaneously, but they emphasize diverse priorities and envisage differing roles for international actors. They have various perspectives in terms of how ending displacement relates to the necessary transitional processes.

Alternative paradigms for understanding the change process focus on different elements. In the sections below, we explore four paradigms—nation and state-building, peacebuilding, stabilization, and early recovery—comparing them in terms of focus, responsibility and the consideration given to ending displacement. The chart below provides a quick comparative summary.

Displacement and Post-conflict transitions: alternative approaches

Approach	Main focus	Who is (primarily) responsible?	Role of displacement
Nation-building	Creating national identity, confidence	Domestic political actors	Returns help build national identity
State-building	Governance, state capacity	National governments, with external support	Returns contribute to legitimacy of political system
Peacebuilding	Reconciliation	Domestic political and social actors, with international support	Finding solutions for the displaced, contributes to peacebuilding

¹⁵ Steve Utterwulghe, “Conflict Management in Complex Humanitarian Situations: Peacemaking and Peacebuilding Work among Angolan IDPs,” *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2004.

Stabilization	Security	Military, external civilian actors, local political/military	Solutions for the displaced contribute to security
Early Recovery	Economic development	International humanitarian and development actors, national governments	Solutions require economic opportunities; returnees can contribute to economic development

Nation- and State-building

Among political scientists, nation-building is defined as the process of encouraging a sense of national identity within a given group of people, a definition that relates more to socialization than state capacity. The terms nation-building and state-building are often used interchangeably, but scholars generally agree that state-building refers more to the structures of the state, while nation-building refers to the population, as linked by language, history and cultural identity.

Mary Lun defines the difference between the two as:

“Nation-building is the indigenous and domestic creation and reinforcement of the complex social and cultural identities that relate to and define citizenship within the territory of the state. State-building is the restoration and rebuilding of the institutions and apparatus of the state, particularly through building capacity and providing the essential infrastructure for the state to function. Nation-building is an essential indigenous political process that relies for its legitimacy on leadership from within the country.”

Lun argues that external support in nation-building is limited and can undermine the sovereignty and integrity of the emerging nation-state while state-building is a technical process that can be made more effective through external technical assistance.¹⁶

When state-building is viewed as an activity carried out by external actors, it is controversial due to the overtones of imperialism and colonialism implicit in the idea that state capacity can be built by international actors. And experience has shown that it is difficult for international actors to provide tangible support to nascent state-building strategies in poor and post-conflict affected countries. There seems to be a consensus that lessons of how to effectively support state-building have yet to be learned and strategies remain undeveloped in key respects. Common critiques include inadequate strategies and

¹⁶ Mary Thida Lun, “Reconnecting joined-up approaches: Nation-building through state-building,” Overseas Development Institute, SPIRU Working Paper 25, April 2009, p. v. See also: James Dobbles, Seth G. Jones, Keith Crane, Beth Cole, DeGrasse, *The Beginner’s Guide to Nation-Building*, Rand Corporation, 2007. <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG557/>

a lack of coordination, staffing weaknesses, and often inadequate and/or poorly-timed funding. Recent examples include Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Timor Leste, and Iraq where international bodies (or the US government in the case of Iraq) took over the reins of government for a transitional period.

Thus, nation- and state-building are terms that are often used by political actors and lead to a conclusion that donor governments and international organizations can play an important role in building up the capacity of the state in the period following a conflict. The emphasis here is on political actors and on state institutions.

Displacement and nation- and state-building:

The return of refugees and internally displaced persons is central to both nation and state-building in post-conflict situations. The re-creation of national identity requires the return of citizens displaced by the conflict; the re-establishment of plural societies particularly requires the smooth reintegration of those who were displaced because they were minorities of one kind or another. When refugees and IDPs can return to areas where their ethnic or sectarian group is a minority, this is a clear indication that the nation itself is being rebuilt. Thus in Iraq, when Sunni refugees return to areas where Shi'a are in the majority, this is not only an indication that security has improved in certain areas, but also a reassertion that multi-sectarian communities are possible. It is also an indication that refugee/IDP returns can reverse sectarian cleansing and supports the idea of a national identity which is dominant over sectarian identities.

For those focusing on state-building, the return of refugees and IDPs, “signifies that the population has confidence in the state’s ability to reconstruct order.”¹⁷ Returns are also a concrete indication that the state cares about its citizens who were displaced and is able to provide the necessary support to enable them to return and reintegrate into society. A state’s legitimacy is undermined when a significant percentage of its population lives outside its national borders or remains displaced within its territory. When two million Iraqis prefer to live in uncertain exile in neighboring countries rather than to return to Iraq, they are making a judgment about the capacity of the state to protect and provide for them. Thus, the presence of refugees is a particularly visible international sign of the state’s weakness. IDPs are usually a less visible reminder and the return of IDPs is rarely accorded the same importance to states emerging from conflicts as refugees.

Peacebuilding

According to the 1992 UN *Agenda for Peace*, peacebuilding consists of a wide range of activities associated with capacity building, reconciliation, and societal transformation. It is a long-term process that occurs after violent conflict has either slowed down or come to a halt. It is therefore the phase of a peace process that takes place after peacemaking and peacekeeping.¹⁸ However, as Barnett et al point out, the concept of peacebuilding has

¹⁷ Sarah Petrin, “Refugee return and state reconstruction: a comparative analysis,” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper no. 66, UNHCR, August 2002.

¹⁸ UN Agenda for Peace, A/47/277 - S/2411, 1992, <http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.html>.

expanded over the years.¹⁹ Former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali originally presented peacebuilding as “action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid relapse into conflict.”²⁰ Since then, the concept of peacebuilding has expanded to include addressing the root causes of conflict, early warning and response efforts, violence prevention, advocacy, civilian and military peacekeeping, military intervention, humanitarian assistance, ceasefire agreements, and the establishment of peace zones. Barnett et al. reviewed the way in which twenty-four governmental and intergovernmental bodies conceptualize peacebuilding, finding important differences in approach and demonstrating the elasticity of the concept.²¹

Within the broader conception of peacebuilding, there are three widely accepted components: (1) the structural dimension, which seeks to address roots of the conflict and often involves rebuilding institutions, strengthening civil society, restoring economic livelihoods, and rebuilding rule of law and judicial institutions; (2) the relational dimension, which focuses on reconciliation, forgiveness, trust-building and future imagining; and (3) the personal dimension, which aims to allow individuals to heal from the psychosocial scars of war and facilitate broader social, political and economic integration.²²

Displacement and Peacebuilding

In our earlier work on IDPs and peace, we analyzed the roles and responsibilities of principal actors and stakeholders in peacebuilding initiatives.²³ We found that a focus on peace suggests that peacebuilding is essential to finding solutions for the displaced and that by finding such solutions, the process of peacebuilding itself is strengthened. If durable solutions are not found for those displaced by conflict, reconciliation is more difficult. In order for returns to be durable, at least three conditions are necessary:

- Ensuring the safety of returnees, including demobilization of armed groups, mine clearance and establishment of the rule of law;
- Returning property and rebuilding homes;

¹⁹ Michael Barnett, Hunjoon Kim, madalene O’Donnell, and Laura Sitea, “Peacebuilding: What Is in a Name?” *Global Governance* 13 (2007), 35-58.

²⁰ UN *Agenda for Peace*, Report of the Secretary-General, para. 21. Available at http://www.un.org/peace/repors/peace_operations/.

²¹ Barnett et al., op cit, p. 35.

²² Maiese, Michelle, “What it Means to Build a Lasting Peace,” July 2003, www.beyondintractability.org/essay/peacebuilding/.

²³ *Addressing Internal Displacement in Peace Processes, Peace Agreements and Peace-Building*, Washington, DC: Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, September 2007. Walter Kälin, “Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons: An Essential Dimension of Peacebuilding,” Briefing Paper submitted to the Peacebuilding Commission Working Group on Lessons Learned Meeting, 13 March 2008. Elizabeth Ferris, “The Role of Civil Society in Ending Displacement and Peacebuilding,” Statement delivered to UN Peacebuilding Commission, Lessons Learned Working Group, 13 March 2008. *Internal Displacement and the Construction of Peace*, Summary Report, Washington, DC: Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, February 2009.

- Creating an environment which can sustain the returns, including restoration of livelihoods and public services.

The return of refugees and IDPs to their communities can contribute to reconciliation at the local level—which is in itself a contribution to peacebuilding in the country. However, this does not happen automatically. In order for return to be sustainable, the returnees must be reintegrated into their communities and the literature on reintegration suggests that this requires much more than the logistical exercise of transporting people back home.²⁴

For example, a study by Tufts University found that, “Return itself is at least in part a continuation of the conflict, rather than solely a product of the conflict’s end.” Thus, some Serb returnees to the Bosnian town of Drvar saw themselves as “reclaiming territory” from the Croats whereas at least some Drvar Croats saw themselves as “protecting the Croat victory.” The study also found that “many people now remember pre-war relations as strained and ‘falsely’ harmonious. Minorities and those most affected by the war in particular will remember examples of slights by the majority ethnic group.” The authors argue that whether this is objectively true is not particularly important. “For these people, a frame of coexistence as ‘returning to pre-war relations’ will not be attractive or inviting: they are not anxious to pursue ‘normal’ relations with the ‘other.’”²⁵

In fact, the relationship between displacement and peace is broader than a focus on peacebuilding, but also includes both the participation of displaced persons in peace negotiations, the extent to which the concerns of displaced persons were addressed in peace agreements.

In our earlier research we argued that the participation of refugees and IDP in peace negotiations is important—and stressed the importance of developing alternative strategies to include their priorities in instances where their participation is not possible or desirable.²⁶ For example, a positive yet rare example of refugee participation at the negotiating table of a peace agreement was in Guatemala— where many of those who participated were marginalized and where women played a noteworthy role. Most peace processes, such as the negotiations around the Dayton Agreement, are carried out by high-level representatives and exclude civil society participation. The result of this exclusion may be an ‘imposed peace,’ lacking the buy-in of affected populations. There are often practical dimensions to this exclusion, such as the location and susceptibility of IDPs to reprisals if they try to claim a place at the table, as was the case in Guatemala. Track two processes can be pursued concomitantly to track one, and may even buttress

²⁴ Elizabeth Ferris, “*Going Home? Prospects and Pitfalls for Large-Scale Return of Iraqis*,” Paper presented at the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration, Nicosia, Cyprus, 30 June 2009.

²⁵ The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, *Imagine Coexistence: Assessing Refugee Reintegration Efforts in Divided Communities*, 6 January 2004, pp. 20-21 <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/chrcr/pdfs/imagine.pdf>

²⁶ Gerard Mc Hugh, *Integrating Internal Displacement in Peace Processes and Agreements*, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace and Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, forthcoming 2009.

them, as in the Peru and Ecuador border dispute and the Moldova-Transdnistria conflict.²⁷ While our research did not find instances where IDPs were a specific focus of track two initiatives, IDPs participated with local NGOs for peace in Burundi, Liberia and Georgia. To take Burundi as an example, the participation of organized displaced women in the All-Party Burundi Women's Peace Conference in July 2000 secured a series of their priorities, including the safe return and reintegration of displaced women and children, in the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement signed in August 2000.²⁸

Our research also examined the texts of peace agreements to identify good practices for addressing internal displacement in peace agreements. These good practices centered around: attention to the definitions contained in the agreements in order to guarantee the security of the displaced; safeguarding human rights of the displaced, such as those as citizens in the Mozambique Agreement (Protocol III, Article IV, Paragraphs c and d, October 1992) and documentation as in the Guatemala agreement of 1994; implementation processes such as resettlement commissions, funding mechanisms, and cooperation with the international community; and, the attention to the ever-important issue of compliance, which is often lacking even in cases where positive language is included in the peace agreements.

A focus on peacebuilding and displacement thus focuses attention on the role of displaced communities in peace negotiations, in the way in which displacement is included in peace agreements, and on the ways in which solutions for the displaced are implemented in the post-conflict phase.

Stabilization

Stabilization (or stability operations or stabilization and reconstruction) are terms that are most often used by the military. Initially referring to the need to ensure security in the immediate post-conflict period, where military forces are (obviously) needed, stabilization has come to encompass a range of activities to be carried out by the military and/or civilian operations. "Again and again, those who have fought insurgencies have learned that they cannot win without public support and that they cannot gain that support without improving and protecting local lives and livelihoods."²⁹

Stabilization and recovery operations are defined (by NATO) as the, "Process to achieve a locally led and sustainable peace in a dangerous environment. The military role in this process is halting residual violence and ensuring order and security, including those reconstruction efforts required to repair enough damage to enable restoration of the most essential services." The definition implies that the end-state is more than a victory on the battlefield and reflects recent experiences in the Balkans and Afghanistan.³⁰

²⁷ See *Ibid*, p. 17.

²⁸ See *Ibid*, p. 18.

²⁹ Nora Bensahel, Olga Olikier, Heather Peterson, *Improving Capacity for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operation*, Rand National Defense Research Institute, Santa Monica, California, USA, 2009, p. 2

³⁰ Nelson, Richard C. "How Should NATO Handle Stabilisation Operations and Reconstruction Efforts?" September 2006, http://www.acus.org/docs/061021-How_Should_NATO_Handle_SR_Operations.pdf.

As NATO's definition indicates, stabilization is a broad concept that can be a part of a military intervention, can take place after combat operations, can be a part of counterinsurgency or counterterrorism operations, can be a key component of post-conflict operations or can serve an intelligence-gathering role.³¹ It is important to stress that stabilization operations are now considered a core mission of the US military, just as important as combat operations.³² In fact US counterinsurgency operations now include offensive operations, defensive operations and stabilization.³³

This focus on stabilization has implications for military forces themselves, as Lt. Gen William B. Caldwell made clear in introducing the new Army manual on Stability Operations:³⁴ “this manual, Stability Operations Doctrine, is even more unique. It focuses on the skills and capabilities not typically resident in our military forces. These soft-power skills, rebuilding and reforming of institutions, of governments, revitalizing fragile economies, restoring social well-being will be critical to the future where operating among the people of the world will be the norm. In fact, we call that mastering the human dimension of conflict, because this will truly be the only sure path to success.”³⁵

There is increasing awareness among military actors that successful stabilization and reconstruction involves the collaboration and interdependence of a range of political and humanitarian actors and that there are areas where civilian action must be dominant. “The single most important contribution that U.S. military personnel can make to humanitarian efforts is to ensure a reasonably secure environment that enables relief agencies to operate freely and access needy populations.”³⁶ Interestingly, in the United States, it is military leaders who are in the forefront of calling for the deployment of more civilians to work in economic development, state-building and the other tasks that are essential to stabilization.³⁷

While this poses logistical dilemmas for military actors, it often raises red flags for civilian humanitarian actors who perceive that their security, access, and ability to work depend on being perceived as impartial humanitarian actors—which means keeping their distance from the military,³⁸ as evidenced by the large literature on civilian-military relations. But given the nature of military engagement in today's world, it is likely that the military will be even more important actors in post-conflict situations.

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³¹ Bensahel et al, *op. cit.*, p.5

³² *Ibid.*, p. 6

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 6

³⁴ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-07, *Stability Operations*, October 20088.

³⁵ “FM3-07 Stability Operations: A comprehensive approach to the 21st century,” Transcript of event on DC 27 March 2009, Washington, DC: Brookings, p. 27.

³⁶ Bensahel et al., *op. cit.*, p. 32.

³⁷ See for example, Robert M. Gates, “A Balanced Strategy: Reprogramming the Pentagon for a New Age,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 88, no. 1, January/February 2009.

³⁸ The U.S. Institute of Peace “Reconstruction and Stabilization Operations: The Challenge Before Us” Conference Conclusions of March 22 and 23, 2005, www.crs.state.gov/shortcut.cfm/4C3F.

From the perspective of stability operations, it is important that displaced persons return to their communities or find other solutions if they are unable or unwilling to return. If large numbers of displaced are living in camps, for example they can be susceptible to radicalization and can provide material support to insurgents. Refugee populations can spread conflict to neighboring states. If young people do not have access to education and jobs, they can be a source of instability. But returns carry risks as well. If they take place too rapidly, they can be a destabilizing influence by overwhelming already-fragile public services. The property disputes that frequently result when returnees find their homes occupied by others can also be a source of pressure and instability.³⁹

Early recovery

The term ‘early recovery’ has emerged within the humanitarian community as the latest phase of the long-standing acknowledgement of the ‘gap’ between relief and development. Specifically it refers to the transition in assistance from emergency response to longer-term development.

Early recovery is a multi-dimensional process, guided by development principles, that seeks to build upon humanitarian programs and to catalyze sustainable development opportunities. Early recovery aims to generate to the extent possible self-sustaining nationally owned and resilient processes for the post-crisis recovery, which encompasses livelihoods, shelter, governance, environment and social dimensions, including the reintegration of displaced populations. It stabilizes human security and where the opportunity exists begins to address underlying risks that contributed to the crisis.

The emphasis in early recovery is on economic development and the supportive role which economic development plays in the transition process.

The objectives of early recovery are to:

- (1) Augment ongoing emergency assistance operations through measures that foster the self-reliance of the affected population and meet the most critical needs to rebuild livelihoods.
- (2) Promote spontaneous recovery initiatives by the affected population and mitigate the rebuilding risk through self-help efforts, minimization of secondary risks, etc.
- (3) Establish the foundations for long-term recovery through rebuilding/reinforcing local governance institutions, capacity building, instilling a division of responsibilities among national actors with clear roles and responsibilities.⁴⁰

In fact, relief actors seldom leave immediately once a humanitarian crisis is over (for example, UNHCR often has long-standing involvement with returning refugees and increasingly with returning IDPs.) But humanitarian agencies do tend to either reduce the scale of their involvement or to change the focus of their activities, or both, once a

³⁹ Bansahel, *op cit.*, p. 20.

⁴⁰ Humanitarian Reform, “Early Recovery,” www.humanitarianreform.org/humanitarianreform/Default.aspx?tabid=80

political agreement has been reached. While they may have been responsible for feeding thousands of displaced people in camps, once the camps have been closed and a peace agreement signed, they generally do not see it as their responsibility to continue providing food to people back in their communities. And development actors rarely begin implementing programs as soon as a peace agreement is signed. Just like most IDPs who adopt a ‘wait and see’ attitude before deciding to return, so too many development actors often wait until it is safe and until the war is really, truly, completely over before they move in. Even so, it takes time before long-term plans can be developed. Thus, there is often a gap—between the time humanitarian actors judge that their work is done and it is safe enough for the development actors to implement large-scale programs. I also want to note that this is a time when, in the interests of peacebuilding, state-building, and stabilization operations, there is a need to demonstrate concrete, tangible signs of progress quickly.

In the last decade, there have been other changes on the international level which are not perfect, but which demonstrate a renewed commitment to bring together development and humanitarian actors in new ways, in some cases together with peacekeeping functions. Although integrated missions have been criticized by humanitarian actors as limiting humanitarian space by subordinating humanitarian work to political and peacekeeping missions, they represent an effort to overcome some of the inevitable institutional divisions. Similarly, efforts to bring together humanitarian and resident coordinators (a measure which was again resisted by some in the humanitarian community) was also an effort to prevent parallel coordination measures.

At the level of the donors, the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative was developed with an explicit goal of promoting recovery and long-term development. The Humanitarian Response Index 2007 seeks to measure donors’ activities on the basis of how well they are doing in integrating relief and development. A quick perusal of the indicators they use is interesting:

- Consultation with beneficiaries on design and implementation
- Consultation with beneficiaries on monitoring and evaluation
- Strengthening preparedness
- Strengthening local capacity to deal with crises
- Strengthening resilience to cope with crises
- Encouraging better coordination with humanitarian partners
- Supporting long-term development aims, and
- Supporting rapid recovery of sustainable livelihoods.⁴¹

These indicators, for the most part, seek to capture the extent to which development processes—such as community-based programming and reliance on local capacity—are being used in humanitarian programs.

⁴¹ See Silvia Hidalgo and Augusto Lopez-Claros, *The Humanitarian Response Index 2007*, pp.10-19 for a discussion of these indicators and their associated measures.

Displacement and Early Recovery

Finding solutions for displaced persons is an important component of early recovery. Returning IDPs and refugees represent human capital which can be used in the economic development of their countries. In the best of cases, returning refugees bring with them new skills which they can use to help rebuild their countries as was the case with the return of many South African and Namibian exiles in the mid-1990s. Central American refugees who had spent years in camps—and taken advantage of vocational training programs there—were able to use those skills to good advantage when they returned to their communities. But too often, today’s refugee camps have become warehouses⁴² where people are kept alive but have few opportunities to develop skills or practice self-reliance. Their lives are put on hold for years, sometimes decades. Rather than returning with skills to support economic development activities, refugees often return with high expectations only to find an economic reality which does not provide the necessary opportunities for self-reliance. In Iraq, for example, returnees will face the same living standards as Iraqis who remained behind, although in most cases, they will have fewer resources than those who were not displaced. For example, they are more likely to need housing and replacement of documentation to enable them to access public services. But unemployment remains estimated at 23-38%,⁴³ and as one UN official commented, “If you were to take away the swollen public sector jobs, the unemployment rate would skyrocket.” OCHA reported that “Iraqi families confront significant erosion of livelihoods and destruction of public assets, resulting in dismal levels of basic social services. The full scale of the damage is only now becoming visible. With the conflict grudgingly receding, pockets of severe deprivation are emerging.”⁴⁴

A focus on early recovery directs our attention to the needs of the displaced to find economic opportunities, to restore livelihoods, and to access public services. The extent to which the displaced are able to find solutions will depend on the economic environment of the country—and will contribute to economic solutions.

Concluding thoughts

Peace agreements alone are not sufficient to bring about durable solutions for displaced persons. Sustained attention is needed to create the conditions and support the process by which refugees and IDPs return to their communities. Resolving displacement is a central challenge of all approaches to post-conflict transitions: peacebuilding, nation and state - building, stabilization and reconstruction, and early recovery. While each of these approaches directs our attention to a particular aspect of the transitional period and while each focuses on the contributions of a particular set of actors, they all reach the same conclusion: resolving displacement requires peace, stability, and security. And achieving peace, stability and security requires that solutions be found for those who have been displaced as a result of conflict.

⁴² See for example, the campaign on warehousing of the US Committee on Refugees and Immigrants: <http://www.refugees.org/article.aspx?id=1109&rid=1179&subm=33&area>About%20Refugees>

⁴³ As of January 2009. Brookings Institution, Iraq Index, 25 June 2009, p. 40.

⁴⁴ OCHA, Iraq Humanitarian Update, No. 2, October 2008, p. 3

The particular paradigm used for understanding and responding to the post-conflict period is also shaped by the particular mandates and expertise of international actors. For example, military forces and defense departments use the concepts of stabilization reflecting their security missions while the emphasis on economic development in early recovery suggests an enhanced role for development actors such as the UN Development Program, the World Bank and bilateral development agencies. As Barnett et al. point out, “alternative priorities are shaped not only by their knowledge of how to reduce the risk of conflict but also by a consideration of how they might best and most easily extend their existing mandates and expertise into the postconflict arena.”⁴⁵

Many of the measures necessary to achieve durable solutions for refugees and IDPs are part of broader state-building, peacebuilding, stabilization and early recovery efforts, but they may be insufficient to resolve displacement unless they are tailored to the specific needs of returnees and the communities which receive them. In fact, activities that fail to address the specific needs of IDPs and refugees may benefit non-displaced communities but preserve or even reinforce obstacles to sustainable return and reintegration.⁴⁶ For example, while everyone in conflict-affected communities may be in need of assistance to restore livelihoods, displaced persons often have particular needs for housing in comparison with non-displaced communities. Recovering property or finding alternative places to live is essential for IDPs and refugees to re-integrate into their communities. Obstacles to finding durable solutions for the displaced are also obstacles to sustainable peace. For example, refugees and IDPs are usually reluctant to return to their communities unless they feel that it is safe to do so. Re-establishing security is thus important not only for the broader aims of post conflict transitions, but also for finding solutions for displacement.

⁴⁵ Barnett et al., p. 45.

⁴⁶ See Walter Kälin, “Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons,” *op. cit.*, pp. 3-4.