

**IN PURSUIT OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS
(MDGs) IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED COUNTRIES IN AFRICA: An
Uphill Challenge and Policy Lessons.**

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CPRD	Centre for Policy Research and Dialogue
DFID	UK Department of International Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GLR	Great Lakes Region
GNP	Gross National Product
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UN-NADAF	United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa
WHO	World Health Organization

**IN PURSUIT OF THE MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs) IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED
COUNTRIES IN AFRICA:
An Uphill Challenge And Policy Lessons**

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Emanating from the 2000 landmark United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) bind countries to do more in the assault on inadequate incomes, widespread hunger, gender inequality, environmental degradation and lack of education, health care and clean water. The target date for the Goals is just eight (8) years away. Progress towards achieving the MDGs in the so-called top priority and high priority countries to which many African countries belong, is challenging.

The Paper discusses the hitherto levels of intervention and concludes that these are still too insignificant to make a meaningful impact by 2015 in particular as regards Goal 1 (Poverty Reduction) and Goals 4 and 5 (Reducing maternal mortality ratio by three-quarters; reduce by two-thirds, the under-five mortality rate). Overall, the picture depicts that achieving the MDGs, even in countries with huge amounts of “relative peace dividends and democratic dispensations” remain a major challenge. Africa in general, and African countries affected by violent conflict in particular are unlikely to make any significant progress towards many of the MDGs. That may seem to be stating the obvious. Yet it is useful to study other countries’ experiences and derive lessons. To that effect, the paper examines the fundamental differences between the objectives of the MDGs and those of the UN Development Decades (1960s, 1970s, 1980s); analyzes the causes and dynamics of conflicts in Africa and their consequences; establishes links between violent conflicts and poor development; and the impact of aid on human development in conflict-affected countries. On the basis of literature and country reports review and field experiences in relevant countries in and outside of Africa, this Paper provides some policies that could be adopted, even during conflicts, to make progress towards achieving some of the MDGs. These include among others, reducing economic and human costs of conflict, support to countries through their crises, going beyond humanitarian relief to development, adopting “new paradigm” for capacity development characterized as nationally-owned and country-driven and supported by technical cooperation.

Policy changes are also required in donor countries as regards aid, trade and technology transfers (Goal 8). Countries affected by violent conflict do not have investments required to reach critical thresholds in infrastructure, education and health-which are very critical ingredients for achieving Goals 1-7.

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ACHIEVING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN CONFLICT COUNTRIES: An Uphill Challenge and Policy Lessons

I. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Millennium Declaration is reproduced as follows: “We recognize that in addition to our separate responsibilities to our individual societies, we have a collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level. As leaders we have a duty therefore to the entire world’s people, especially the most vulnerable and, in particular, the children of the world, to whom the future belongs” (UN 2000a). At the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000, the world leaders committed their nations to strengthening global efforts for peace, human rights, democracy, strong governance, environmental sustainability and poverty eradication, and to promoting principles of human dignity, equality and equity. The above quoted Declaration was born out this commitment.

The related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), made up of 8 Goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators, address many of the most persisting failures and shortcomings of human development.

The MDGs provide building blocks for human development, with each relating to key dimensions of this process. Equally, the MDGs also reflect a human rights agenda as follows: rights to food, education, health care and decent living standards, as enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Progress towards achieving the MDGs in many African countries is extremely slow. The levels of intervention are still too insignificant to make a meaningful impact by 2015 as regards Goal 1: Poverty eradication. Similarly, reducing the maternal mortality ratio by three-quarters are unlikely to be attained by 2015 with current efforts. Overall, the picture depicts that achieving the MDGs, even in countries with relative huge amounts of “peace dividends and democratic dispensations” remain a major challenge. The question is, is progress towards achieving the MDGs possible or feasible in countries embroiled in conflicts? This paper attempts to examine the fundamental differences between the objectives of the MDGs and those of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd UN Development Decades (19960s, 1970s and 1980s) and analyze the type of policies that could be adopted even during conflicts to make progress towards achieving some of the MDGs.

II. CAUSES AND DYNAMICS OF CONFLICTS IN AFRICA

Post cold war era has witnessed the emergence of new wars, often violent civil wars over control for state power and its resources. They have been variously been described as ethnic or resource-motivated wars and violent conflicts. Berdal and Morlon (2000) argue that economic motivations and “lootable” resources have become the driving force and are fuelling wars in Africa. Similarly, Ross (2004) notes that the presence of lootable or primary commodities may not trigger conflict, but definitely

increases or prolongs conflict. Another related school of thought is that non-lootable resources, such as oil, gas, deep-shaft mineral deposits tend to be associated with separatist conflicts, which are often caused by ethno-political grievances over inequitable resource or revenue sharing and exclusionary government policies.

Kankwenda (2006) in his discussion on the root causes of conflicts in Africa, despite the complexity in the causality of the conflicts, groups the causes of the conflicts in Africa in four categories and relate these to the following four dimensions of the system of government on the continent.

- ✚ The first category of cause has to do with political governance which among others defines or establishes the relationship between the ruling classes and the rest of the people, and therefore the relationship between public institutions and the people, and where the political systems in place were military or militarized, autocratic, led by single party or state party regimes, with strongmen controlling or brainwashing the rest of the population ideologically.

Under those circumstances, and in confronting the political opposition and social demands, the government had no other response than oppression and militarization of politics, sometimes on the basis of cultural, ethnic, regional or religious exclusion.

This forced some leaders and their followers to form armed groups with the aim of seizing political power. The absence of political or democratic governance seems to be the cause of conflict.

The second category concerns the “exclusion and marginalization” politics that is the refusal or inability of governments to manage the multi-cultural and multinational aspects of African countries.

The third category of causes relates to the failure of development governance especially in the distribution of social and economic “cake” of the nation. The situation in Nigeria illustrates this category. From 1970 to 2000 over USD320 billion worth of crude oil was exported from the oil-rich Niger Delta wetlands, accounting for some 90% of Nigeria’s hard currency earnings and making Nigeria a major world oil-producing country. But the 7 million residents of the Delta are among Nigeria’s poorest, and protests against the perceived injustice of extreme poverty in the midst of vast wealth have often disrupted oil production - threatening the country’s economic lifeline and provoking violent clashes among local communities and between activists and the authorities.

The fourth category of causes of conflict concerns environmental governance where the natural basis for economic growth, the environment and natural resources, are plundered by the leaders and their accomplices without due consideration of the protection and regeneration of the environment for the needs of current and future generations. As a result, insecurity for some social groups emerges which can ignite violent conflicts. As observed by Rubenson (1990) “other deeper-rooted sources of

conflict also exist such as growing pressures arising from overpopulation, environmental degradation, which can lead to mass migration, underdevelopment and poverty, mainly in underdeveloped countries”.

In all the group conflicts investigated in the Sahel and Horn of Africa, access to natural and social resources, expressed in terms of justice, fairness, equitable sharing and equal development, was the primary concern of people in arms (Suliman, 1999). While there may be external factors that influence these conflicts and their dynamics, there are mostly and primarily conflicts over governance, identity and resource allocation within a particular state.

It has become evident in Africa that long-running violent conflicts are not confined to the national borders of a given country. The situations in West Africa (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Ivory Coast), Horn of Africa (Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Eritrea), and the Great lakes (Rwanda, DRC, Congo, Burundi, Uganda, Sudan) are all classical cases in point.

Almost all those conflicts have at some stage and to various degrees, involved neighbouring states supporting the relevant dissidents. Local level conflicts have become instruments of politics of destabilization.

Indeed, many of the neighbouring states use these instruments to pursue broader political objectives. In reality it is difficult to distinguish between domestic and external sources of conflict in Africa as witnessed in the Horn and Great Lakes, because of the dynamic interaction between the two.

Africa, given its history and geography and replete with certain ethnic groups typically living in the border areas of two or three countries, can become tribe-in-arms if they feel neglected by their respective governments - in terms of equitable distribution of the national wealth and equal development. Asiedu (2003) drawing on experiences in South East Asia and Southern Africa, suggests that the application of the Growth Triangle/Area concept at the peripheries of relevant countries can be a contributor to peace and security dividends, if in addition to the nurturing of the existing common attributes such as culture, family ties and heritage, the issues of peace and security are purposefully addressed in advancing the goals of the Growth Triangle².

Another refreshing views on the analysis of violent conflicts in Africa are the former United Nations Secretary-General's report on the "Causes of Conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (1998), and "the impact of local conflict on regional security" published in 2007 by the Institute for Security Studies and authored by Tadesse Medhane of the Centre for Policy Research and Dialogue (CPRD) in Ethiopia. The former UN Secretary General's report identified, among others the historical legacies, internal and external factors, economic

² Growth Triangle are transnational economic zones spread over well-defined, geographically proximate areas usually covering three or more countries where differences in factor endowments are exploited to promote trade and investment as well as peace and security.

motivations and the particular situations as the sources of conflict. Medhane's research report concluded among others, that the sources of conflict in Gambella, Ethiopia have been clashes between the two major communities, the Anuak and the Nuer mainly over resources and for socio-cultural reasons.

The report further concludes that the sources of conflict (destruction of traditional values of solidarity on the issue of land use and tenure) have been aggravated in recent years as social and political formations evolve and the role of traditional authorities in preventing and managing conflicts dwindles, and also that although local level competition over natural resources does play an important role in conflicts, this cannot be separated from broader national and regional issues.

The Report on "The Causes of Conflict in Africa" published by DFID argued that it is impossible to distinguish between the root causes of conflict, the secondary causes that enable and sustain conflict and the tertiary causes or drivers that hinder resolution (DFID 2001:16).

It is clear that widespread wars and conflicts in Africa are one of the main reasons for the continent's woes in terms of poor socio-economic performance and political development. The real average economic growth remains dismally below the Millennium Declaration recommended of 7-8 per cent of GDP growth annually that is required to reduce poverty by 2015 (United Nations, 2000a). Although, hunger is most prevalent in South Asia, it is declining while in Africa about one-third of the population is undernourished, and the number is increasing (WFUNA and North-South Institute 2002). The Hunger Goal of halving between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger seems elusive for many African countries. Gender differences in enrolments and dropouts are most severe in Sub-Saharan Africa in addition to South Asia. Gender disparities in schooling which should have been eliminated by 2005 as called for by MDGs still remain a challenge in Africa.

The likelihood of achieving the MDG of cutting maternal mortality by three-quarters by 2015 looks bleak in Sub-Saharan Africa, which accounts for half of the developing world's maternal deaths - with one of every 1,000 live births resulting in the mother's death. Also, Sub-Saharan Africa is very burdened with child mortality, where 17% of children do not reach age five. At current rates the region will not achieve the Goal for child mortality for almost 150 years (Human Development Report Office, 2002).

III. MDGS AND THEMES OF THE 1ST, 2ND AND 3RD DEVELOPMENT DECADES (1960s, 1970s, 1980s) A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Born out of the Millennium Declaration, the MDGs are supposed to knit countries together to do more in the attack on inadequate incomes, widespread hunger, gender inequality, environmental deterioration and lack of education, health care and clean and safe water. Also included are actions to reduce debt and increase aid, trade and technology transfers to poor countries. (Box 1)

Box 1: Millennium Development Goals and Targets (see Page 1 -3)

GOAL1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Target 1: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than USD1 a day.

Target 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

GOAL2: Achieve universal primary education

Target 3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

GOAL3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005 and in all level of education no later than 2015.

GOAL4: Reduce child mortality

Target 5: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.

GOAL5: Improve maternal health

Target 6: Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.

GOAL6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases

Target 7: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Target 8: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

GOAL7: Ensure environmental sustainability

Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources

Target 10: Halve by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water.

Target 11: Have achieved by 2020 a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

GOAL8: Develop a global partnership for development

Target 12: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system (includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction - both nationally and internationally)

Target 13: Address the special needs of the least developed countries (includes tariffs- and quota-free access for exports, enhanced programme of debt relief for and cancellation of official bilateral debt, and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction)

Target 14: Address the special needs of land-locked countries and small island developing states (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and 22nd General Assembly provisions)

Target 15: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term.

Target 16: In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth.

Target 17: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries.

Target 18: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications technologies.

Evidence suggests that many countries, in particular in Africa, will fall far short of the MDGs in the eight (8) years to 2015.

First, there are about 59 or 60 so called “top priority and high priority” countries where failed progress and very low starting levels undermine many of the Goals. Second are “countries progressing well towards the Goals” but with deep pockets of poor people being left behind. Countries in conflict are found both in the first and second groups.

For many donors, the financing of the MDGs has provided the principal rationale for the aid increase. Although the projected increases (25%) fall far short of the 50-100% additional aid resources which some have estimated to be needed to meet the MDGs (Zedillo 2001, World Bank 2002, OXFAM 2002), the combined commitments (ODA contributions towards the 0.7% of GNP target level, and the USA’s aid increase through the Millennium Challenge Account) will put significant new funding at the disposal of many poor countries.

Top Priority and High Priority Countries for the each Millennium Goal.

Countries have been identified as “top priority” or “high priority” for each Millennium Development Goal on the basis of their capacity to meet the relevant goals.

Top priority countries are those countries where urgent action is needed to meet a Goal. In these countries entrenched human poverty is combined with failing or reversing progress (see matrix). These are the countries that are in crisis for each Goal, and where the world’s attention and resources must be focused.

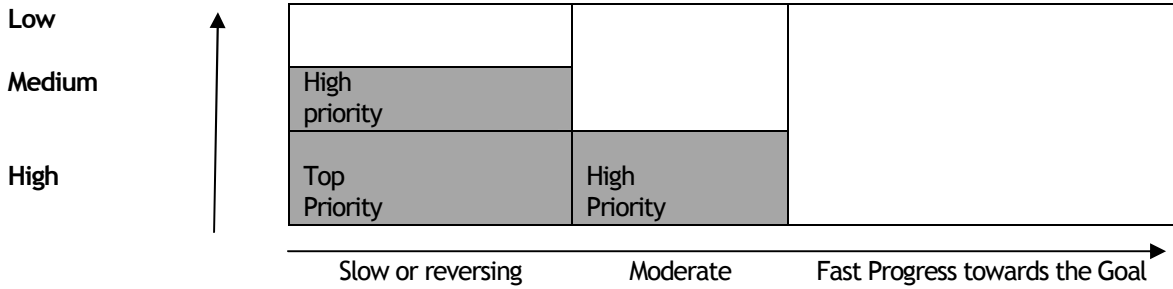
High priority countries are those where the situation is less desperate but still requires significant improvements in progress.

Data on top and high priority countries across the Goals are shown in matrix below.

Table 1: Top Priority and High Priority Countries

	Top Priority Countries	High Priority Countries
Sub-Saharan Africa	25	13
East Asia and Pacific	0	4
South Asia	1	1
Arab States	3	3
Latin America and the Caribbean	1	3
Eastern Europe and the CIS	1	4

Level of Human Poverty (in Goal)



Source: Human Development Report office.

Progress towards the Goal

As shown in the Table 1, there are 31 such countries, of which 25 are from Sub-Saharan Africa. Another 28 high priority countries face serious challenges across the Goals. Here too, many (13) are from Sub-Sahara Africa.

The major themes of the first, second and third development decades (1960, 1970s, 1980s) were accelerating economic growth and advancing other economic goals - such as employment, industrialization and international assistance. Goals for literacy, schooling, health, and water and sanitation were set from the early 1960s into the 1990s, culminating in the 2000 Millennium Declaration. UN goals have often been described as overly ambitious and hardly achieved. For Africa the 1980s was a “lost” decade because of what was achieved or rather not achieved in that decade. As example, goals like accelerating economic growth, where there has been insignificant mobilization for implementation by the international community, increasing developing countries’ industrial production was very limited to a very small number of countries in Africa. Indeed, deindustrialization of Africa commenced in the 1980s; eliminating or reducing hunger and malnutrition by 2000 did not happen in most of Africa. In fact the number of undernourished people in Sub-Saharan Africa rose by 27 million in the 1990s. Increasing official development assistance to 0.7% of rich countries’ GNP starting in 1970 has been a shocking failure; assistance has actually fallen as a share of GNP, and in the 1990s only four countries achieved the 0.7% target (Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden). Sadly, also, eradicating malaria (WHO Declaration 1965) and the “global” anti-malaria of the 1960s largely bypassed Africa.

Despite the “failures” progress has been made on several fronts. Notably, eradicating smallpox; eliminating polio; eliminating guinea-worm; expanding immunizations and reducing child mortality.

While the objectives of the first, second and third UN Development Decades mostly focused on economic growth, the MDGs place human well-being and poverty reduction at the centre of global development objectives. While 1980s was a “lost” decade for Africa, 1990s was a “disappointing” one. The United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) was adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 1991. It was a compact of mutual commitments by African countries and the international community. The goal of UN-NADAF was to accelerate

the transformation, integration and diversification of African economies, reduce their vulnerability to external shocks, strengthen them within the world economy and enhance their self-reliance. On balance, according to an independent panel news conference at UN Headquarters in 2002, the performance of African economies during that decade “has been negative”, the causes of which were both external and internal. “The decade was characterized by tremendous terms-of-trade losses” noted the Chairman of the panel. “The resource flows that were supposed to help accelerate the growth of the region did not materialize. Donor commitments were not met”.

Do global goals like MDGs make a difference in the lives of the population? While MDGs have been widely acclaimed, inspiring new energy for action against poverty, they are not widely appreciated as being merely benchmarks of progress towards the broader goal of eradicating human poverty. The MDGs are not a new model for development in spite of the fact that they reflect consensus on key global development objectives, and perhaps more significantly the priority placed on each of the goal is to be determined by national development strategies. Developing countries have been pursuing most of the MDGs for decades long before they (MDGs) were formally launched. What is required is the political will and new political momentum and resources for faster progress on reducing human poverty.

Success should not be measured by achieving the Goals on time which is almost impossible for many poor countries given the inadequate resources and capacities and natural catastrophes like disease outbreaks drought, floods, etc. What will be appreciated more, is the progress made towards the Goals.

For Sub-Saharan Africa, achieving the Goals remains a huge challenge, and unless things improve it will take the sub-region until 2129 to achieve universal primary education, until 2147 to halve extreme poverty and until 2165 to cut child mortality by two-thirds (UNDP Human Development Report, 2003). The challenges have their deep root causes, reversals and stagnation experienced in the 1990s in many areas essential to the Goals. The statistics attest to this. While in the 1980s only four countries experienced reversal in the Human Development Index³ (HDI), the number climbed to 21 in the 1990s. Worldwide some 54 countries were poorer in 2003 than in 1990, with over 30 of those countries found in Africa. In Sub-Saharan Africa an additional 74 million people ended the 1990 decade in extreme poverty (World Bank, 2002)

Behind these reversals have been elusive economic growth, and the devastating HIV/AIDS epidemic. The 1990s also saw declining development assistance from rich countries; increasing debt overhangs in poor countries and drops in the prices of primary commodities, which several poor countries depend on for the bulk of their export revenues. More specifically, Sub-Saharan Africa saw dramatic drops in per capita aid in the 1990s (from USD34 in 1990 to USD21 in 2001) (OECD, Development Assistance Committee 2003a). Of the 49 least developed countries, 31 receive less aid today (8.5% of their average GDP than in 1990 (12.9%).

³ Human Development Index is a summary measure based on the ability of a country’s citizens to live long and health life, be educated and enjoy a decent standard of living.

The Goals provide an entry point for the civil society organizations to have an important role as watchdogs, monitoring those responsible for delivering results and shaping democratic debates on economic and social policies in poor and neglected communities. Evidence on the ground seems to suggest that open debates on policy choices has been inadequate, leaving people more vulnerable to populist rhetoric, and many of the civil society organizations/groups who have started to engage with the Goals are suspicious of them. (WFUNA and North-South Institute, 2002).

Linking MDGs and Human Development

Achieving the MDGs is for all practical purposes achieving the human development objective on a sustainable basis. The Goals address many of the most enduring failures of human development and provide building blocks for enhancing key capabilities for human development, with each relating to a particular dimension of the process.

In drawing a link between the MDGs and human development approach, three points become evident. While the MDGs are human development goals, they do not reflect all the key dimensions of human development.

Additionally, the MDGs highlight the “distance” to be travelled, while the human development approach focuses on how to reach these goals. And, while human development is concerned with equity and distribution and attempts to understand the causes and effects of inequality, the MDGs indicators are, on the whole, inequality-neutral (UNDP, 2001).

Box 2: The Relationship between Human Development Goals and the Millennium Development Goals

KEY CAPABILITIES FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	CORRESPONDING MDGS
Living a long and health life	<i>Goals 4, 5 and 6:</i> reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and combating diseases.
Being educated	<i>Goals 2 and 3:</i> achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality (especially in education) and empowering women.
Having a decent standard of living	<i>Goal 1:</i> reducing poverty and hunger.
Enjoying political and civil freedoms to participate in the life of one’s community	Not a Goal but an important global objective included in the Millennium Declaration.
ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	CORRESPONDING MDGS
Environmental sustainability	<i>Goal 7:</i> ensuring environmental sustainability.
Equity - especially gender equity	<i>Goal 3:</i> promoting gender equality and empowering women.
Enabling global economic environment	<i>Goal 8:</i> strengthening partnership between rich and poor countries.

IV. LINKS BETWEEN VIOLENT CONFLICTS AND POOR DEVELOPMENT.

This chapter outlines some of the basic socio-economic (human development) indicators to bring to the fore, the links between conflicts and poor development. The drop in many countries' HDIs signals a problem which may have different forms and complexities. Table 2 shows countries that saw a drop in the HDI in the 1980s and 1990s. The general situation that has emerged from Africa is that those countries that live in peace and security have been able to generate economic growth, albeit modest and a reasonable measure of social progress. This picture also reflects those countries' key indicators of progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

Table 2: A drop in HDI in selected Countries during 1980s and 1990s.

PERIOD	COUNTRIES
1980 - 1990	Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Guyana, Zambia.
1990 - 2001	Armenia, Belarus, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Ukraine, Swaziland.

Source: Human Development Report 2003, UNDP

The index usually moves steadily upwards, though usually slowly because three of its key components (literacy, enrolment rates and life expectancy) take time to change. As such when the HDI falls, it indicates crisis, with nations depleting their basis for development, that is people.

The following quotation, covering the effects of violent conflict, summarizes, in the context of Liberia, how conflict acts to undermine human development.

“to state the obvious, war kills people, increasingly civilians rather than combatants. Armed groups may specifically target individuals or particular groups to eliminate them. Additionally, the most vulnerable in society are usually the ones who suffer the most from violence, particularly women, children, minorities, the rural population and the poor. They are usually the most ill-prepared to face violent attack and the consequences of armed conflict, like having access to health and education services, or paying for security. Even when the conflict is over, certain people remain at risk, for example demobilized guerrillas” (Chapter Four: National Human Development Report, 2006: Human Development Costs of the Liberian Conflict).

Much of the HDI decline in the African countries in the 1990s can be traced to two major factors: the spread of HIV/AIDS, which has caused major drops in life expectancies even in peaceful countries like Botswana and Zambia; violent conflicts which killed millions, mainly civilians, spread HIV/AIDS among the populations and destroyed infrastructure, health facilities and livelihoods. HIV/AIDS impact on HDI is terribly huge. By killing and incapacitating adults in the prime of their lives, it can derail development.

Military spending in Sub-Saharan Africa fell during the decade, from USD 9.3 billion in the early 1990s to USD 7.1 billion in 1996. This figure rose sharply in 1991 and 2000, to an average of USD 9.8 billion (official figures). Angola spent 3.1% of GDP on the military compared with 2.7% on education. Sierra Leone spends 3.6% of GDP on the military and 1.0% on education. This partly explains the dismal position of these two countries as far as HDI are concerned.

In the so-called top priority and high priority countries (most are in Sub-Saharan Africa) and in particular where there are violent conflicts, progress towards the MDGs is still insufficient. These countries are either making progress from low levels of development or achieving low or negative progress from high levels (UNDP, HD Report 2003). No single factor can explain the undesirable situation of the countries where progress towards the MDGs is slow or inadequate. However, the ones from Sub-Saharan Africa share common characteristics. Many have weak policies, economic decline and human poverty. In 23 countries more than 5% of the population has HIV/AIDS, and in 9 violent conflicts occurred in 1990s. During 1990-2001 there were 57 major armed conflicts in 45 locations worldwide, and Sub-Saharan Africa has been hit the hardest, although no developing region has been unaffected (Steward 2003, Marshall, 2000). Furthermore, in addition to the tragic direct effects, collapsing economies and infrastructure have taken a further human toll.

Is it possible for countries in violent conflict to make good progress towards the Goals? Some countries such as Indonesia and Sri Lanka have experienced major conflicts yet continue to make good progress towards the Goals. Two reasons explain these seemingly unlikely successes, according to Marshall (2000), Stewart (2003), UNHCR (2000). The first reason has to do with good policies even in times of conflict whereby governments continue to provide services for all people. This can make a significant difference in human outcomes. Secondly, conflicts often do not involve the entire countries but are “restricted” to specific parts. In this case the impacts of war may not be reflected in national social indicators. Human development is likely to be lower in areas that suffer from conflict than in areas not directly affected by it. Disparity in socio-economic indicators between relatively peaceful countries and those in or emerging from conflict is shown in Table 3, 3a, 3b (*Annex*).

The relationships between conflicts and poor development can go both ways. Economic and social hardships, particularly when accompanied by sharp inequalities across groups and areas, can bring about violence. Similarly, conflicts are often major causes of weak economic development, leading to health crisis and destruction of infrastructure, among others. In Columbia, the HDI is lowest (less than 0.710) in some of the areas where conflict has been most violent as against HDI of 0.77 in the other parts of that country. Also in Nepal low HDI (less than 0.200) areas are located in the northwest and some parts in the north, where the Maoist uprising is based (UNDP, 2003).

Box 3: “A rising tide lifts all boats?” High Human Cost and HDI

The HDI measures achievements in terms of life expectancy, educational attainment and adjusted real income. HDI is not in any sense a comprehensive measure of human development. It does not for example, include important indications such as respect for human rights, democracy and inequality. What it does provide is a broadened prism for viewing human progress and the complex relationship between income and well-being. HDI highlights the very large gaps in well-being and life chances that continue to divide our increasingly interconnected world. It was US President John F. Kennedy who coined the adage that *“a rising tide lifts all boats”*. But when it comes to human development, the rising tide of global prosperity has lifted some boats faster than others - and some boats are sinking fast. The average person in Norway (at the top of the HDI league) and the average person in countries such as Niger (at the bottom) certainly live in different human development districts of the global village.

Some countries have an HDI rank far below their income rank, while others invert this relationship. In Sub-Saharan Africa, Tanzania has an average income one-third that in Angola but a similar HDI rank - an outcome that reflects the high human cost of conflict in Angola.

The collapse of government without the emergence of substitute structures led to adverse human and economic war outcomes, for example, in Uganda. On the other hand, countries able to reduce the human and economic costs of war and in some cases even make progress towards development targets, did so only when all households on both sides of the battle line, has access to food, basic health care and primary education, as happened in Mozambique, Guatemala and Sri Lanka (Stewart 2003; Fitzgerald 2001).

Flexible approaches to service provision are essential using NGOs and other relevant structures. During the war Mozambique experimented with mobile clinics and classrooms when health and education buildings became war targets. In El Salvador both sides halted fighting on three different occasions to allow for child immunizations. In order to prevent price escalation of food and improve the nutritional status of people in war-affected areas Nicaragua subsidized and rationed food.

V. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND PROVISION OF AID IN CONFLICT COUNTRIES

Some 60 countries are in or recently recovering from such conflict - many of them among the top and high priority countries. Any serious attempt to launch a successful campaign to achieve the MDGs must pay special attention to conflict-affected areas. For example, MDG related to health is undermined by HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases often spread ferociously in conflict-affected areas. In some militaries of Sub-Saharan Africa more than half the soldiers are HIV-positive. Maternal and infant mortality often increases substantially in war zones, with health services and facilities destroyed and childbirths during flight (Stewart, 2003; Fitzgerald 2001).

Frances Stewart⁴ states that “crisis prevention is essential for poverty reduction, and policies aimed at reducing political violence are needed for all low-income countries, given their propensity for violence”. While Stewart’s statement is valid, it is also true that in violent conflict situations, preventive diplomacy and military measures, supported by humanitarian aid, are useful for moderating conflict, ending hostilities and starting both peace negotiations and development work.

Following conflict, the most pressing task is to reintegrate former combatants, IDPs and refugees into society and enable them to engage in productive activities under area-based rehabilitation and reintegration schemes implemented at the community level. The objective here is to have disparate elements of the population work together, to cultivate trust, and to engage them in productive activities such as agriculture to improve food security, micro-credit schemes or infrastructure rehabilitation. Even in conflict situations, studies confirm the usefulness of facilitating access by the target communities to basic services in such areas as health, education, water supply and sanitation (source...).

PRODERE’s⁵ evolution from a humanitarian programme to a development initiative is noteworthy. With its emphasis on community participation, it provided a foundation for a human development process in areas where unsustainable territorial development plans has been applied, often in response to the exigencies of the “national security doctrine” (UNDP, 2002). In the context of relief-development continuum, the PRODERE experience demonstrates that it is critical and feasible to go beyond the resumption of traditional development activities, and to reassess and provide the basis for a people-centred development process with its potential effect on reaching some of the MDGs.

Provision of aid to countries in or recovering from conflict has raised a very important issue or a certain degree of controversy. A number of donors refuse to support the “top and high priority” countries because resources could be diverted to fund war efforts. Evidence, however, shows that denying aid to such countries results in greater human suffering and does not hasten the end of conflict (Stewart, 2003). Supporting the state’s authority is equally critical because when the state collapses, undermining human well-being the economy goes down with it. Contrary to many schools of thought, several countries have demonstrated notable success in sustaining the provision of essential services during conflict - or even improving them, achieving significant human development gain, as in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Sri Lanka. In many of these cases, NGOs, local communities and foreign humanitarian organizations have played important roles by reaching people in need.

Aid allocations based on policy selectivity may be well-intended but will help only countries with good policies and strong institutions. Countries with poor policies and weak institutions, because of or due to conflict, will be left behind. It is exactly these

⁴ Stewart, Frances: Tackling horizontal Inequalities, Proceedings from a World Bank Conference, World Bank, Washington, D.C. 2000

⁵ Programme for Displaced Persons, Refugees and Returnees in Central America

countries that need not only financial resources but also support in the form of technical cooperation to strengthen policy and institutional capacity.

While that does not require huge amounts of financing, it represents an important element of external assistance once this is done right. For many countries, strengthening policies and institutions - reforming governance - is where they need the most outside assistance. Building such capacity should be a focus of development aid, though not a dominant portion of the financial resources allocated. What is required is technical cooperation for capacity development, which should be the indispensable complement of finance, developing capacity to absorb and manage resources within the broader development process.

Technical cooperation has a mixed record. It has been much more effective at “GETTING THE JOB DONE” than at “Developing National Capacity”. Several evaluations have found that once external support ends, project activities end as well and whatever capacity was developed dissipates. These findings are very critical especially for post-conflict countries and those in conflict for fear or returning to hostilities once “peace” or “peace-restoring” projects have come to an end.

For several years, donors and recipients have debated the underlying constraints to capacity development and sought more effective approaches. The conventional approach of sending foreign advisors to train national staff members can undermine the self-confidence of national staff. And sending national staff abroad for degree oriented training can increase brain drain.

A more recent work by UNDP points to a new paradigm and new principles for capacity development that recognize that capacity matters as much for development as do economic policies, that capacity is not just individual but institutional and societal, and that knowledge cannot be transferred but must be learned. A paradigm of capacity development established in the broader context of transformative development, the framework of which is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: A New Paradigm for Capacity Development

	Current Paradigm	New Paradigm
Nature of development	Improvements in economic and social conditions	Societal transformation, including building of “right” capacities.
Conditions for effective development cooperation	Good policies that can be externally prescribed	Good policies that have to be home-grown
The asymmetric donor-recipient relationship	Should be countered generally through a spirit of partnership and mutual respect	Should be specifically addressed as a problem by taking countervailing measures.
Capacity Development	Human resource development, combined with stronger institutions	Three cross-linked layers of capacity; individual, institutional and societal
Acquisition of knowledge	Knowledge can be transferred.	Knowledge has to be acquired.
Most important forms of knowledge	Knowledge developed in the North for export to the South	Local knowledge combined with knowledge acquired from other countries - in the South and North

Countries in conflict are in many cases dependent on aid, and donors according to the pledge made at the 2002 Conference in Monterrey, sent a clear message to the effect that they will channel more resources to countries that demonstrate a commitment to reducing poverty by adopting pro-poor policies, taking steps to improve governance and achieving results in the right direction - rather than just stating economic governance, substantial financial injections are likely to be wasted. Similarly, without democratic governance that gives voice to people, development efforts will not empower poor people. Aid given in the absence of above preconditions, motivated by interests other than eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development, it is argued, has little impact (OECD, 2003d⁶). The MDGs cannot be achieved if selectivity means no help, especially for countries in conflict or post-conflict countries, where strong governance institutions are absent or weak.

VI. LESSONS LEARNT AND POLICY LESSONS

General policy prescriptions are difficult to pinpoint given the complexity and heterogeneity of war affected economies. The impacts of wars may be similar but war aims are dissimilar. War aims may include depriving certain regions of essential services like the case in Sudan. Conflicts may also weaken governments to such an extent that they become incapacitated to provide services to any group (Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Liberia). In other cases war is waged for non-lootable resources, such as oil, gas and deep-shaft mineral deposits. This usually tends to be associated with separatist conflicts, which are often caused by ethno-political grievances over inequitable resource or revenue sharing and exclusionary government policies.

Analysis of the 25 countries that hit hardest by conflict between 1960 and 1995 indicates substantial variation in the human and economic cost of war. Ethiopia, Liberia and Uganda suffered higher infant mortality rates during the conflict than in pre-conflict years. On the other hand, El Salvador and Mozambique has rated below their regional average even during war (Stewart, 2003; Fitzgerald 2001).

The findings suggest that policies can be adopted even during conflicts to reduce human and economic costs which in turn may help countries in conflict situations stay on course as regards making progress on MDGs.

Reducing the human and economic costs of conflicts may be attained through:

- Mechanisms such as essential services should be maintained even with the rising military spending that usually accompanies war. Slashing basic social service budgets should be avoided in order to avoid unpredictable breakdowns in delivery systems.
- Mechanisms such as subsidy and rationing of food to avoid price escalation and food insecurity and improve nutritional status of people in war affected regions should be used.

⁶ OECD 2003d. "ODA Prospects after Monterrey: Update". Note by the Secretariat. Paris

- Food delivery through schools and clinics may be considered to help promote school attendance and reduce incentives for children to become soldiers or prostitutes.
- Government should maintain fiscal revenue. More specifically, institutional structures used in revenue collection need to be maintained throughout the war and so should tax rates prevailing before the conflict.

Maintaining fiscal revenue in wartime economies is generally difficult because of increased military spending. According to Stewart (2003) and Fitzgerald (2001), Nigeria, Sri Lanka and Sudan succeeded in sustaining revenue levels, as a percentage of GDP, during their conflicts.

- Runaway inflation should be prevented because escalating inflation creates uncertainty and panic. This leads to private sector speculation. Escalating inflation also makes public budgetary and financial control very difficult. Price liberalization during conflicts, given low supply elasticities, is a main contributor to escalating inflation as was the case in Mozambique where such liberalization led to massive increases in the price of essential, rationed commodities such as maize, cooking oil and sugar.
- To secure foreign exchange resources, policies, both national and international, should aim to finance productive imports by keeping open and assisting export markets and providing aid and loan support for such imports. National policies should also ensure through import controls, that available foreign exchange resources are used to acquire essential goods such as medicine and agricultural inputs.
- To avoid disincentives to export, policies should maintain a competitive real exchange rate despite all the difficulties faced by conflict-affected countries in managing their balance of payments under conditions of uncertain export income and aid commitment. Similarly, control over nominal exchange rates given the inevitable macroeconomic disequilibria of war. In Angola, for instance, inflation rose from 160% to 246% between 1991 and 1992 impacting negatively on the poor and related HDI.
- The analysis of the subject matter brings out a number of issues that hold lessons for all concerned for improving the environment that makes progress on the MDGs possible even in conflict affected countries. The MDGs challenges that countries in conflict situations and those with peace dividends face are as varied as the countries' capacities and other characteristics.

In Lieu of Conclusions

- The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) addresses many of the persisting failures of human development. Unlike the objectives of the first, second and third UN Development Decades (1960s, 1970s, 1980s) which mostly focused on economic growth, MDGs place human well-being and poverty reduction at the centre of global development objectives. Similarly unlike earlier development goals, the MDGs set requirements for the donor countries. These are summarized in MDG 8 (Develop a global partnership for development).
- Overall, the available country reports show that achieving the MDGs remains a major challenge for many of the countries, mainly because of lack of adequate supportive and enabling environment and the required resources for the necessary social and economic investments. According to the Zambia MDG Status Report for 2005, for example it was unlikely that the country would attain three of the MDGs by 2015, suffering from hunger, reducing maternal mortality by three quarters: and integrating principles of sustainable development into its policies and programmes.
- The MDGs Report for a post-conflict Liberia gives a gloomy picture of what is likely to happen in the absence of drastic changes in policies, strategies and programmes. Under the prevailing situation, four goals (reduce Child Mortality; Improve Maternal Health; combat HIV/AIDS, Extreme Poverty) are unlikely to be achieved while four others could probably be achieved provided the supportive environment is strengthened.
- For the so-called top priority and high priority countries most of which are found in Sub-Saharan Africa where entrenched human poverty and failed or even reversing progress have set in crises, achieving the MDG's present's especially difficult and different challenges. Almost across the board, the story is one of the stagnation. Economies have not grown, half of the relevant population live in extreme poverty and one-third in hunger, and about one-sixth of children die before the age of five - the same as a decade ago. The other predicaments of these countries are related among others to HIV/AIDS and violent conflicts.
- Violent conflict is a key stumbling block to achieving the MDG's. Among the top and high priority countries for achieving the Goals, thirteen (13) experienced serious conflict in the 1990s. Surprisingly, some countries have experienced conflict yet continue to make noteworthy progress towards the Goals. The countries in question include Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Mozambique and Uganda among others.
- During the 1990s Mozambique and Uganda averaged per capita income growth of more than 3% a year. At the same time, Mozambique reduced its hunger rate from 69% to 55%, with Uganda reducing HIV/AIDS infection rate for eight consecutive years in the 1990s.

- Several factors underpin the above-mentioned noteworthy progress. It is true that these countries started with low starting levels and had the most room for improvement.
- This however should not detract from achievements that these countries have made in circumstances that have caused many of their development peers to stagnate or fall backwards.
- If driven by ethnic, linguistic and similar social fault lines, violent conflicts and wars are often “contained” within certain parts of countries to the extent that indicators used to assess national progress towards the Goals may not adequately reflect the living conditions of many inhabitants. This tendency may explain the good overall performance on the MDGs in countries like Sri Lanka and Indonesia. The use of top-down approach, with policy efforts and resources initially focused on groups that are easier to reach such as non-poor people or urban residents. This approach can raise national averages enough to declare the achievement of a Goal or some other target.
- Gwatkin (2002) observes that some governments may be tempted to meet the health Goals by concentrating efforts among the better off, only later targeting people who are harder to reach. For policy makers, putting poor people at the end of the queue for social services is easier and less costly in the short and medium run, according to Vandermoortele (2001). But the false progress that results may prove unsustainable in the long run.
- Top priority countries usually have insufficient resources to overcome structural challenges and fall short of critical thresholds in health, education and infrastructure to achieve self-sustaining economic growth. Corrupt bureaucracy or political or armed conflicts prevent investments needed for economic development.
- Though good economic governance and sound economic policies are needed to escape poverty traps, they are not enough, especially for countries experiencing violent conflicts. Evidence in Uganda suggests that despite the good economic governance and the best commitment and planning at the country level, the MDGs will remain unattainable without substantial financial flows from the international community, which constitute a major part of the role of rich countries in the Millennium Development Compact (Uganda 2002; IMF 2002a, World Bank 2000b).
- Analysis of the 25 countries hit hardest by conflict between 1960 and 1995 point to policies that can be adopted even in violent conflict situations to reduce human and economic costs. Experience in Mozambique, Sri Lanka and Guatemala suggests that countries are able to reduce the human and economic

costs of war and make progress towards development targets when all households have access to food, basic health care and primary education.

- Reducing the economic costs of conflict involves policy decisions that maintain fiscal revenue, prevent uncontrollable inflation, secure foreign exchange resources and maintain a competitive real exchange.
- Evidence shows that denying aid to countries in or recently recovering from such conflict results in greater human suffering and does not hasten the end of conflict (Stewart 2003). The case of Somalia also demonstrates how critical it is for donors to support such countries through their crises, going beyond humanitarian relief to development aid. In 2001 UN Agencies acknowledged that although the humanitarian situation will worsen in 2002, their overall request for relief aid was scaled back from USD130 million to USD83.7 million, “in recognition that the political environment is not yet conducive for a significant injection of transitional and recovery funding” notes a press release from UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator’s Office; (African Recovery Vol.15 No.4 December 2001).
- Somalia’s tragedy may have been worsened by the political fallout of the Afghanistan crisis. US-based Companies involved in transferring remittances to Somalia from Somalis living abroad were closed down because these may have links to “terror networks”. Such remittances may have brought in between USD500 million and USD700 million a year, a sum which was cut in half.

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ANNEX I

Table 3: Disparity in Socio - Economic Indicators between relatively peaceful countries and those in conflict/emerging from conflict
(a) Relatively stable/peaceful countries

Country	Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	GDP per capita (USD)	Infant Mortality (per thousand) 2001	Maternal Mortality (per 100,000 live births) ratio reported 1995	Adult Literacy Rate (%) age 15 & above	Population without improved Water sources (%) 2000	Education Index	HDI
Gabon	56.6	5,990	60	620	71.0	14	0.75	0.653
Cape Verde	69.7	5,570	29	190	74.9	26	0.77	0.727
Botswana	44.7	7,820	80	480	76.6	5	0.73	0.614
Mauritius	71.6	9,860	17	45	84.8	0	0.80	0.779
Ghana	57.7	2,250	57	590	72.7	27	0.64	0.567
Benin	50.9	980	94	880	38.6	37	0.42	0.411
Zambia	33.4	780	112	870	79.0	36	0.68	0.386
Equatorial Guinea	49.0	15,073	101	1400	84.2	56	0.76	0.664
Seychelles	72.7	17,030	13	N/A	91.0	N/A	0.87	0.840
Tunisia	72.5	6,390	21	70	72.1	20	0.73	0.740

Source: Compiled from Human Development Report 2003, UNDP, New York

ANNEX II

Table 3 (a): Social - Economic Indicators for Conflict-Affected African Countries Emerging from Conflict

Country	Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	GDP per capita (USD)	Infant Mortality (per thousand) 2001	Maternal Mortality (per 100,000 live births) ratio reported 1995	Adult Literacy Rate (%) age 15 & above	Population without improved Water sources (%) 2000	Education Index	HDI
Congo DR	40.6	680	129	950	63.7	55	N/A	N/A
Angola	40.2	2,040	154	N/A	N/A	62	0.51	0.363
Mozambique	39.2	1,140	125	1100	45.2	43	0.38	0.377
Rwanda	38.2	1,250	96	1100	68	59	0.43	0.356
Uganda	44.7	1,490	179	510	68	48	0.63	0.42
Sierra Leone	34.5	470	182	1800	N/A	43	0.69	0.489
Burundi	40.5	690	114	N/A	49.2	22	0.43	0.337
Sudan	55.4	1,970	107	1500	58.8	25	0.51	0.503

Source: Compiled from Human Development Report 2003, UNDP, New York

ANNEX III

Table 3 (b): Socio-Economic Indicators for Conflict affected Countries in Asia and Latin America

Country	Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	GDP per capita (USD)	Infant Mortality (per thousand) 2001	Maternal Mortality (per 100,000 live births) ratio reported 1995	Adult Literacy Rate (%) age 15 & above	Population without improved Water sources (%) 2000	Education Index	HDI
Philippines	69.5	3,840	29	240	95.1	14	0.90	0.751
Sri Lanka	72.3	3,180	17	60	91.9	23	0.82	0.730
Guatemala	65.3	4,400	43	270	69.2	8	0.65	0.652
Nepal	59.1	1,310	66	830	42.9	12	0.50	0.499
Pakistan	60.4	1,890	84	200	44.0	10	0.41	0.499
El Salvador	70.4	5,260	33	180	79.2	23	0.74	0.719
Colombia	71.8	7,040	19	120	91.9	9	0.85	0.779
Indonesia	66.2	2,940	33	470	87.3	22	0.80	0.682

Source: Compiled from Human Development Report 2003, UND, New York 2003

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