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Conflict and poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa: an assessment of the issues and evidence[1]

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1 The nature and extent of conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa

Armed conflict is arguably now the single most important determinant of poverty in Africa; certainly of the concentrated forms of poverty that develop when populations are displaced, livelihoods vanish and safety networks break down. SSA stands out from other developing regions in terms of the sheer number of conflicts, their persistence and massive impact on the lives and livelihoods of civilians as well as combatants.

To be sure, many SSA countries were already poor before armed conflicts commenced. But we argue that war and poverty are in a dynamic and mutually reinforcing relationship. Not only has armed conflict been a major determinant of poverty in SSA. Poverty has amplified conflict's impact and made civilians more vulnerable. And in turn poverty and inequality remain among the major sources of conflict.

Yet, the linkages between conflict and poverty remain poorly documented and inadequately understood – despite their cardinal importance and a history of warfare that in some countries extends back to de-colonisation and earlier. The first concerted attempt to estimate the social and economic impacts of conflict was UNICEF's *Children on the Frontline* (Asrat *et al.* 1989; see also Green 1987). But it is only during the 1990s that conflict has begun to be addressed seriously by international development agencies and donors (OECD 1998; Coletta *et al.* 1996a and b; World Bank 1998); and even then the tendency has been to regard it as an exogenous shock, rather than an integral aspect of state failure and development crisis.

Part of the reason for this past reluctance to address the causes and consequences of armed conflict was political. Donors and international agencies did not want to be accused of trespassing on the 'internal' political affairs of African states, which jealously preserved their sovereignty. The desire to avoid political controversy was all the greater in a Cold War context in which the donors' own policies and practices (including arms transfers, military assistance programmes and other forms of support for authoritarian regimes) had sometimes contributed to the spread, not the limitation, of conflict (de Waal 1997; Luckham 1985).

Added to this have been the systematic ambiguities of categorisation and measurement associated with the analysis of conflict. Its effects on poverty, as we shall contend below, are especially difficult to document because it tends to be associated with the breakdown of states and in consequence of the systems of data collection on which conventional estimates of poverty depend. More broadly state failure enormously complicates the policy problems associated with the formulation and delivery of pro-poor policies.

Green (1997) defines war as 'generalised, sustained violence afflicting most or all of a State and potential conflict as endemic outbursts of lower level, less generalised violence likely to lead (or lead back to) full scale conflict'. The most systematic assessment of the economic and social impact of conflict currently available (Stewart and Fitzgerald 2001; Stewart *et al.* 1997; Stewart 1993) focuses, as we shall, on civil wars or internal conflicts. To be sure, all wars destroy value, lives and livelihoods. But during international and liberation wars these negative impacts may be offset by the strengthening of the state,

the mobilisation of productive resources and technological advances. Civil wars typically do not generate these positive effects. Rather, governments and their opponents tend to be driven into cycles of attrition in which there is an unsustainable depletion both of public wealth and of individual livelihoods (Collier 1995: 1).

Stewart *et al.* (1997) contrast civil from international conflicts on the basis of three criteria. First the major participants on different sides are groups within a state.[2] Second they are distinct from criminal violence, since the goals of participants are political, namely to challenge or uphold government authority. Third they involve large-scale violence, distinguished according to an admittedly arbitrary cut-off point of the loss of at least 0.5 per cent of the 1990 population during the two preceding decades.[3]

Although such criteria are needed to delimit the scope of inquiry, each is open to question. The state itself has come into question in many recent African conflicts. The latter have developed important international and regional dimensions: including cross-border flows of arms, combatants and refugees; interventions by neighbouring African states or external powers; and 'humanitarian' interventions and emergency assistance. In the Great Lakes, the Horn and Central Africa it is a moot point whether there is a series of interlocking 'national' conflicts or rather a single zone of conflict in which both the armed forces of national governments and non-state armed formations cross national boundaries at will. Likewise the boundaries between national, local and regional economies have also to a considerable extent dissolved. The contemporary conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) illustrates how many different actors can be involved in a seemingly 'national' conflict (see Box 1).

Furthermore, the distinction between 'criminal' and 'political' violence has become more and more blurred (see Reno 1998; Bayart 1999; Collier 2000). In some cases formal state military hierarchies have fragmented into competing armed factions, or they compete with a confusing variety of non-state armed formations, each terrorising and pillaging civilians in order to secure livelihoods and acquire wealth (Somalia, Liberia and Sierra Leone being among the most egregious examples: see Ero 2000). Even where the leaders of these armed groups seek political power, it is often in order to enjoy the fruits of office rather than because they are motivated by broader political or developmental concerns. The ensuing collapse of the state's monopoly of legitimate violence has given rise to both an informalisation of warfare itself and to distinctive parallel war economies, crowding out formal economies, and introducing distortions into informal markets as well.

Finally, the scale of the killing, though often massive, is an extremely crude proxy for the human and other costs of conflict. Most estimates of fatalities, especially civilian fatalities, are subject to wide margins of error, as we shall see below. The use of arbitrary cut-off points can result in neglect of conflicts of lower intensity, or confined to particular localities or regions within a state, which may nevertheless cause

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2 Even though as Stewart *et al.* (1997) recognise, such conflicts almost always have international dimensions. Ramsbotham and Woodhouse (1996) argues that the latter are so crucial that 'international-social conflicts' is a better term than either 'civil wars' or 'internal conflicts'.

3 Though arbitrary, this is an improvement on the conventional cut-off point used by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's annual *SIPRI Yearbooks* and by Sivard's *World Military and Social Expenditures* (various years) of more than 1000 conflict-related deaths per annum.

prolonged insecurity. For us the real crux of the matter is how wars damage **civilian** lives, livelihoods and social capital.

Indeed some analysts have argued that it is precisely these features – the state's loss of its monopoly of violence, the blurring of the local, the national and the international, the criminalisation or privatisation of warfare, and the targeting of vulnerable civilians – which distinguish the 'new' or 'post-modern' wars of the post-Cold War era from those which immediately preceded them (Kaldor 1999; Kaldor and Luckham 2001; Keen 1997; Duffield, 1991, 1998).[4]

This has led to serious questioning of the conventional portrayal of conflict. Conflict is normally portrayed as a breakdown of 'normal' peacetime economic, social and political development, with 'war' and 'peace' positioned as opposites (Berdal and Malone 2000). It is consequently understood as being 'irrational' and dysfunctional. Yet viewing conflict as a costly disruption to 'normal' peacetime conditions may conceal how organised violence may serve a range of interests and purposes, many of which may also be present in 'peacetime'. Similar processes operate in both peace and conflict; consequently war economies may be a different expression of what constitutes normality in peacetime economies, and war and peace represent different degrees of each other rather than absolute or contrasting stages (Duffield 1998). Hence, one should move away from a view of conflict solely as a state of anarchy or breakdown and ask whose interests it serves. It is arguable that warfare represents not so much the collapse of one system as the emergence of a new one, which benefits certain sections of society, whilst impoverishing others (Reno 2000).

But even if it is essential to ground the analysis of conflict within a broader political economy of development, war and political violence have their own specific dynamics that affect the allocation of power and resources and impact on poverty. As Keen (1997) argues, 'war is not just the breakdown of society; it is the re-ordering of society in particular ways'. The latter frequently includes the death, mutilation, displacement, and impoverishment of large numbers of civilians, as well as the inability of states to provide services to their citizens, including basic physical security and law and order. Emphasis on the 'rationality' of war from the point of view of combatants or political and economic elites should not detract attention from its political, social and economic costs. Even if conflict has its beneficiaries, the suffering of the great majority of citizens of conflict-torn states is overwhelming.

However, one cannot take analysis much further without more detailed and specific analysis of particular conflicts. One should recognise both the important differences among them and the various ways in which African conflicts have been transformed during the post-independence period, which affect their economic and social impact on vulnerable groups and the prospects for post-conflict recovery.

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[4] Another feature of these conflicts which Kaldor (1996; 1999) stresses is that they are fought around cleavages opened up by identity politics on a national, ethnic or religious basis. This has certainly been an important feature of many conflicts, though it has not been the dominant feature of all of them.

Box 1 The complexity of civil wars: the Democratic Republic of Congo

The complexity of civil or internal conflict today is illustrated by the current 'national' conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in which over 20 different actors are embroiled:

	State	Non-State
National	Forces Armées Congolaises (FAC)	Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie (FDD)
		Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie (CNDD – FDD)
		Forces Nationales de la Libération (FNL)
Pro-Kabila		Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)
		Mai Mai
International	Libya	West Nile Liberation Front (WNLF)
	Namibia	Interahamwe
	Sudan	
	Zimbabwe	
National		Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie (RCD) – Goma
Anti-Kabila		Mouvement Libération (ML)
		Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo (MLC)
International	Rwanda	Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola (UNITA)
	Burundi	
	Uganda	

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report*, Zambia and Democratic Republic of Congo, 4th Quarter 1999.

Some of these differences are elaborated in Cliffe and Luckham (1999). For our purposes seven distinctions seem especially crucial and will be elaborated on below: (1) the scale of conflict; (2) its uneven geographical and social impact; (3) historical variations in the nature and dynamics of conflicts themselves; (4) their duration and how over time they become embedded in social, economic and political structures; (5) transformations in the political economy of war and variations in the economic sources of conflict; (6) the problematisation and survival of the state; and (7) the global and regional interconnectedness of conflicts.

1.1 The scale of conflict

The scale of conflict has been immense. No less than 28 Sub-Saharan African states (well over half) have been embroiled in one form or another of warfare during the two past decades; of these, 17 have faced conflicts during earlier periods; and in eight the roots of war stretch back to the armed struggles of the pre-independence era.[5] The extent of the violence has been staggering, with most of it visited upon civilians rather than upon combatants themselves. As can be seen in Tables 1 and 2, in Angola, Burundi,

[5] Including Cameroun, where there was a major anti-colonial insurgency, but (despite some political violence) no major armed conflict since independence.

Ethiopia, Liberia, Rwanda, Somalia and Sudan the fatalities of war have reached the hundreds of thousands, in some cases reaching genocidal proportions. In other countries casualties have been in their tens of thousands, not counting those who have been maimed, traumatised, deprived of livelihoods or forced to flee their homes.

Table 1 War casualties in a selection of Sub-Saharan African countries

Country	1900-1970	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-Present
Angola †	1961 – 75	1976 – 95		1998<
Burundi		1972	1988 – 95	
Cameroun	1955 – 60			
CAR				1996-97
Chad			1980-94	
Comoros †				
DR Congo †	1960-65			1993 & 1996<
Congo				1993<
Djibouti				1990-96
Eritrea †		1974 – 91		1998<
Ethiopia †	1935 1941	1974 – 9, 1976 – 91		1998<
Guinea Bissau†	1962 – 74			1998<
Kenya	1954-56			1991 – 96
Liberia			1985-88	1990 – 97
Madagascar	1947 - 48			
Mali			1988 -94	
Mozambique	1965 – 75 & 1976 – 94			
Niger				1991–96
Nigeria	1967 – 70		1980, 1984	1991
Rwanda †	1956 – 65			1992 – 97
Senegal			1982 (+/-)	
Sierra Leone †				1991<
Somalia			1988 – 95	
Sudan †	1963 – 72		1983 - Current	
South Africa†	1899 – 06	1976	1983 - 94	
Uganda	1966	1970-78	1980 - 1987	1992 <
Zambia	1964			
Zimbabwe		1972 – 79	1983 - 84	

Togo, Ghana, Gabon, Comoros, Lesotho, Mauritania, Namibia, Western Sahara and Zambia have all endured minor conflicts of less than 5,000 casualties since independence

† There is insufficient data available to make a strong estimate for these countries at this time.

Legend: casualties

500,000+

100 - 500,000

50 - 100,000

10 - 50,000

<10,000

Table 2 Percentage of population killed in 15 SSA countries

Country	Period	Casualties†	% of Population	% of Pop. Per Annum	Source
Angola *	1961 – 1975	55,000	...	...	HDI, 1994
	1976 – 1995	750,000 -1.5 mil	5 – 10%	0.2 – 0.5%	WMSE, 1996
Burundi *	1972 – 1973	110,000	3%	3%	MSF, 1988
	1988	10,000	2 %	2%	UNSTAT, 1980; 1998
	1993 – 1995	170,000 +/-	5 – 10%	2.5 – 5%	WMSE, 1996
Chad	1980 – 1987	7,000	0.2%	0.003%	UNSTAT, 1990
	1990 – 1994	6,000	0.1%	0.025%	WMSE, 1996
DR Congo	1960 – 65	100,000	0.6%	0.12%	UNSTAT, 1970
	1996 – present	...	...	...	WMSE, 1996
Congo *	1993	2,000	...	...	WMSE, 1996
Eritrea	1974 – 1991	75 – 150,000	6%	0.35%	UNSTAT, 1980; 1990
	1998 – present	10,000 +/-	0.3%	0.3%	
Ethiopia	1974 – 1991	575,000	1 %	0.005%	HDI, 1994
Ethiopia – Somalia	1976 – 1979	40,000	0.1%	0.003%	UNSTAT, 1950, 1980
Ethiopia – Eritrea	1998 – present	10,000 +/-	0.02%	0.02	WNSE, 1996
Liberia	1985 – 1988	5,000	0.3%	0.1%	WFP. 1996
	1990 – 1996 +/-	150 – 200,000	8 – 10 %	1.6 – 2%	WMSE, 1996
Mozambique	1965 – 1975	30,000	0.3%	0.03%	UNSTAT, 1980; 1998
	1976 – 1995	1,050,000	7.5 – 10 %	0.4 – 0.5%	
Rwanda *	1956 – 1965	105,000	4%	0.4%	UNSTAT, 1970; 1998
	1992 – 1997	500,000 – 1.5 m.	5 – 8 %	1 – 1.6%	WMSE, 1996
Sierra Leone	1991 – present	31,000	0.7%	0.08%	UNSTAT, 1998
Somalia *	1988 – 1995	355,000	9 – 10%	1.28 – 1.4%	WMSE, 1996
South Africa	1976	1,000 +/-	0.0005%	0.0005%	WMSE, 1996
	1983 – 1994	16,000	0.004%	0.000036%	UNSTAT, 1990; 1998
Sudan	1963 – 1972	500,000	4%	0.44%	HDI, 1994
	1983 – present	1,500,000	8 – 10%	0.5 – 0.6%	WMSE, 1996
Uganda	1971 – 1979	310,000	2.5%	0.3%	SIPRI, 1996
	1980 – 1987	315,000	2%	0.3%	UNSTAT, 1980; 1990
	1992 – present	...	...	...	WMSE, 1996

* All of these countries experienced conflicts that have re-ignited (or were never fully terminated); their casualty estimates refer to dates shown in Table only. †'Casualties' is a slightly misleading term, as it is difficult to distinguish between which conflict-attributed casualties are a result of fighting itself, famine, displacement or health service collapse, etc.

(1) Officially catalogued casualties, both military and civilian, are taken from SIPRI, WMSE and UN.
(2) UNSTAT population figures are taken from average population at mid-point of the conflict, controlled for population growth during that period (UNSTAT, 1960; 1970; 1980; 1990; 1998).

These are just broad orders of magnitude since all estimates are (of necessity) extremely crude, not only varying between each other but also being based upon differing assumptions about causes of death, especially among civilians.[6] Breakdowns between military and civilian fatalities are not always available; though estimates made in individual conflicts suggest that between 40 and 80 per cent have been civilian (Sivard 1996).

Another compelling indicator of the scale and social impact of conflict is the statistics for the numbers of refugees and displaced persons which we shall present later in our analysis (see Table 8). Existing estimates number Africa's refugees (those who cross international boundaries) and internally

[6] Existing estimates are not only inconsistent between each other, but also are internally inconsistent as to whether they cover only violent deaths, those arising from conflict-induced starvation and disease, or some broader guesstimate of deaths which would not have occurred in the absence of conflict (Keen *et al.* 1996).

displaced people (IDPs) at between eighteen and twenty million people in 1996 (Bennet, 1998). These are almost certainly conservative estimates, due to the enormous difficulties of putting figures to the numbers of IDPs.[7]

According to both these indicators – war fatalities and those forced to flee their homes – SSA has been by a considerable margin the most conflict-affected region during the past two decades. Ten of the 24 most war-affected countries considered in a recent study of the causes of humanitarian emergencies between 1980 and 1994 are African, and four of these (Liberia, Angola, Mozambique and Somalia) are ranked within the five most severely affected (Nafziger and Auvinen 1997: 17–19).[8]

1.2 The uneven geographical and social impact of conflict

The geographical spread of conflict has been uneven, between different parts of the African continent, between different African states and also within them. The latter (i.e. intra-national differences in the regional spread of conflict) are seldom adequately documented; nor are their effects sufficiently considered. A broad distinction can be made between countries in which hostilities have extended over all or most of national territory, as in Mozambique, Liberia, Sierra Leone or Somalia; and those where it has been confined to particular regions, like southern Sudan, the Saharan periphery of Mali or the current conflict in northern Uganda.

Yet this distinction is by no means clear-cut. Even in countries seemingly wholly consumed by conflict, the latter's impact has been geographically uneven. In Liberia, for instance, nutrition surveys carried out in different parts of the country at different times showed considerable variations in child malnutrition, both between insecure and less insecure regions, and as the conflict shifted back and forth between fighting and relative peace (see Box 2).

At the same time conflicts originating as more localised insurgencies have tended to defeat the efforts of governments to contain them. Protracted conflicts such as those in Eritrea and Tigray under the Ethiopian *Derg* and the present war in Southern Sudan have slowly drained national economies of resources and sapped the capacity of national governments to govern effectively. Yet at the aggregate impact has been all the greater where conflicts have penetrated core regions that are strategic for the governance and productive potential of the country, rather than being confined to more peripheral areas: this was arguably the crucial contrast between the fighting in the Luwero triangle that completed the ruin

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7 Also our figures provide only a snapshot. The estimates for individual countries vary considerably from year to year; but the broad picture for the continent as a whole has remained more constant.

8 Afghanistan (placed first) is the only non-African country. Nafziger and Auvinen (1997) use a composite indicator based upon the numbers of military fatalities and the numbers of refugees, both standardised in relation to population. In leaving out civilian casualties and internally displaced populations (both because the figures are much more conjectural), they arrive at an indicator which may be more reliable, but does not fully factor in the human costs. Where civilian casualties and IDPs are included, African countries would no doubt be ranked just as high if not higher on their list.

of Uganda's economy before 1986 and the current violence in the north, which has so far only marginally dented the country's reputation as an economic success story.

Box 2 Liberia's child malnutrition rates

Liberia's conflict, begun in 1989, included harassment, looting, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, rape, murder and massacre of civilians including children (USDS 1996; Africa Watch 1994). There were gross human rights abuses and economic exploitation by the various warlord armed factions, including conscription of child soldiers and forced labour. Large areas of faction-held territory became deserted or severely depopulated, with food production collapsing (Outram 1998; FAO 1996). The scale of the flight was enormous; as early as 1991, 80 per cent of Liberians were either refugees or internally displaced. Monrovia, Liberia's capital, swelled from 400,000 before the war to 1.3 million in 1995. The conflict had a catastrophic effect on food production; rice production fell by between 60 and 80 per cent in the first three years of the war (FAO 1996). International humanitarian food aid, delivered to safe haven areas, was able to partially supplement immediate food production losses. A significant proportion of the civilian population experienced severe declines in their food entitlement, though by how much is still open to conjecture. A recent evaluation of WFP food aid programmes has noted the absence of systematic nutritional surveillance data, food security monitoring and data on household coping-strategies.

As can be seen in the Table below, warfare was not continuous, but took place in phases. Moreover, its impact tended to be less severe in the safe-havens controlled by ECOMOG than in areas dominated by the warlord factions. Very broadly speaking, people who reached or remained in the ECOMOG zones found a degree of physical safety, food, some safe water, shelter, medical care and schooling, though even they were at risk when the fighting spread. Liberians who were unable to leave factional areas remained directly at risk from all the dangers of war, lost access to medical and educational facilities and were less easily reached by food aid. This is reflected in the Table, which shows variations between phases of the war and between ECOMOG and faction-controlled areas. Other studies suggest still more severe levels of malnutrition, particularly outside of the ECOMOG areas; the MSF has claimed severe child malnutrition rates of between 60 and 90 per cent in some regions (Weller 1994; UNHCR 1993).

Liberia: estimates of acute malnutrition among children under five, 1990–95

Dates	ECOMOG controlled areas	Outside ECOMOG
First War Dec.'89-Dec. '90	35% (1 survey)	32% (1 survey)
First Lull Dec. '90-Aug. '92	5% (1 survey)	11%, 13%, 13%, 35%, 51 % (5 surveys)
Second War Oct. '92-July '93	4%, 9% (2 surveys)	39% (1 survey)
Second Lull July '93-Sept. '94	-	7%, 7%, 10%, 40% (4 surveys)
Third War Sept. '94-Aug. '95	4%, 7%, 7%. 7%, 10% (5 surveys)	56% (1 survey)
Third Lull Aug. '95-Easter '96	-	3%, 6%, 32% (3 surveys)
Post-Fourth War Monrovia July '96	15% (1 survey)	

Outram (1997), utilising UNICEF nutritional status surveys

1.3 Historical transformations in African conflicts

There is a shortage of parsimonious explanations of conflict as opposed to the long shopping lists of causes and precipitants, which feature in all too many attempts to account for it. Moreover, the nature of Africa's conflicts has varied, as well as changing from one historical period to the next. An added complication is that conflicts themselves have transformed political, economic and social realities. Thus the factors which sustain present conflicts are not necessarily those which originally 'caused' them.

One may distinguish a number of different (but overlapping) generations of armed conflict,[9] all, in our view, however, developing in their different ways out of the profound legitimacy crises of colonial and post-colonial African states (Mamdani 1996; Kaldor and Luckham 2001). First, there were the liberation struggles of the era of de-colonisation. Second, there followed a series of wars attempting to redefine the national identity and sometimes boundaries of the post-colonial state (the Congo, Nigeria, Eritrea, Western Sahara etc.). Third, a number of conflicts became the vehicle for Cold War rivalries as in the Horn and Southern Africa from the mid-1970s.[10] Fourth, arising from the development crises of the late 1970s/early 1980s there were a number of 'reform wars' waged against postcolonial governments which had lost their popular mandate, failed to deliver development or oppressed large numbers of their own citizens, as in Ethiopia under the *derg* or Uganda between 1979 and 1986. Fifth, these have been followed by the 'new wars' of the post-Cold War era, associated with the fracturing of weak states, together with the emergence of warfare itself as a widely used means of accumulating power and wealth.

The broad assumption of this paper is that most recent SSA conflicts belong to the latter category, not just because they are chronologically 'new', but also because they tend to share the common features referred to on pp 5–6 above. As we shall argue later (see especially Table 5 below) each of these features has major implications for poverty. The de-legitimisation of the state has meant that citizens can no longer rely on it to protect them from violence and plunder (not least by the state's own agents). The privatisation of war and growth of parallel war economies have exposed individuals and households to a whole new series of livelihood risks and vulnerabilities. The civilianisation of destruction – the deliberate targeting of economic infrastructure, social capital and vulnerable civilians – has caused immense social misery to millions of non-combatants.

These adverse consequences of warfare are not, of course, completely unique to new wars. But during the liberation struggles of de-colonisation as well as the reform wars fought by groups like the EPLF in Eritrea or the NRA in Uganda during the 1980s, war was at least tempered by a political agenda, which shaped the goals and methods of the insurgents. The latter built parallel administrations, attempted to mobilise the civilian populations and thus arguably created rather than destroyed social capital, at least in the areas they controlled – partially counteracting the destructive impact of government campaigns against them.

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9 This classification draws upon Cliffe and Luckham (1999) and Clapham (1996).

10 In Southern Africa these conflicts were further intensified through apartheid South Africa's 'total strategy' of destabilising neighbouring post-revolutionary governments in the name of anti-communism, with some collusion from Western powers.

The armed oppositions in some wars during the 1990s have also begun with reformist political agendas – including the RPF's campaign which ended the genocide in Rwanda, or (more arguably) the recent rebellions in the DRC (first against President Mobutu and now against his successor). Yet none have carried out sustained popular mobilisation comparable, say, to that undertaken by the EPLF in Eritrea. Moreover, the conflicts have developed dangerous and unpredictable international dimensions, through the direct military involvement of neighbouring African countries, international arms flows, foreign (including corporate) funding of military campaigns and the movement across national borders of ethnic militias and other non-state combatants.

Of course, one should be careful not to stereotype all African conflicts in terms of a single model of 'new wars'. Yet war itself has a logic which tends to defeat the intentions of those who wage it – even when they do so for the best of political or (in the case of some foreign interventions) humanitarian motives.

1.4 The embeddedness of conflicts in economic, social and political structures

The duration of conflict has been another crucial source of variation. Relatively short and contained conflicts, like Nigeria's 1967–70 civil war, however traumatic the latter may have been for Biafrans whilst it lasted, have created fewer obstacles to national reconstruction. As Collier (1995: 1–5) puts it, such wars may well produce substantial income losses (national output declined by an estimated 24 per cent during the Nigerian civil war). But if they do not result in a serious decline in the country's capital stock – and here one should include social capital as well as productive assets – the effects of conflict will be less profound and should be easier to reverse.[11] Unfortunately, however, most conflicts in Africa have been far more protracted and damaging, not only in terms of the irreversible destruction of productive assets, but also in their impact on political institutions, social capital and the coping strategies available to the poor and vulnerable.

As can be seen in Table 1, Angola, Burundi, the DRC, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda – i.e. the majority of African countries which have experienced major violence during the past two decades – have long conflict histories dating back to the 1970s and earlier. Indeed it seems that violent conflicts and the patterns of behaviour sustaining them have been reproducing themselves over time. A recent study of the correlates of war in developing countries has found that one of the best predictors of 'humanitarian emergencies' (in effect major armed conflicts)[12] in the 1980s and 1990s was conflict in the 1960s and 1970s (Nafziger and Auvinen 1997: 13 and 67–8). Among the best examples of this tendency in an African context are the present hostilities in Angola; the Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict (despite the fact that the leaders of the two countries were on the

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11 The speed of Nigeria's recovery from the civil war, however, was assured not only because of the conflict's relatively limited impact on the country's productive assets, but also because of the far-sighted policy of national reconciliation followed by the Nigerian Federal Government, and by the vast expansion of oil revenues which made it relatively easy to absorb the costs of national reconstruction.

12 Nafziger and Auvinen's (1997) independent variable is 'humanitarian emergencies'. Though they adopt various operationalisations of this concept, they all include armed conflict as a key component.

same side against the Ethiopian *Derg*[13]*);* the re-ignition of the war in Southern Sudan in 1983, eleven years after the settlement of the previous civil war; and the current war in the DRC which has returned the country to the divisive chaos which prevailed in the 1960s following independence.

Explanations vary. Some (like Nafziger and Auvinen 1997 themselves) argue that patterns of political violence tend to become embedded in economic, social and political structures. Members of the 'political economy of war' school emphasise the vested interests of armed groups for whom warfare becomes a livelihood (Keen 1997; Keen *et al.* 1996; Duffield 1994). Others argue that conflicts recur because of the continued failure of governments and political elites to tackle the underlying conditions (including underdevelopment and poverty) that give rise to them (Cliffe and Luckham 1999; Ake 1995). But whichever of these explanations is correct (and this varies from case to case), it is apparent that conflicts are seldom 'resolved' following the conclusion of peace agreements.

1.5 Transformations in the political economy of war and the economic sources of conflict

Many recent analyses of armed conflict give pride of place to its economic determinants and functions (Keen 1998 and 2000; Berdal and Malone 2000; see also the comprehensive bibliographic review by Le Billon 2000). Partly this reflects changes in methods of analysis and partly changes in the nature of conflicts themselves in Africa and elsewhere. Broadly speaking, almost all the different generations of African conflicts characterised in section 1.3 above (even to an extent the 'new wars' of the post-Cold War period) arose from deep crises of state legitimacy, aggravated by failures of governance, as well as economic dislocations (Cliffe and Luckham 1999). But powerful economic incentives for continuing or renewing violence emerged as conflicts became embedded and were sustained over the longer-run by national and regional war economies (although the liberation wars in South Africa, Namibia, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Uganda were important exceptions.) The genesis of armed conflicts, to simplify drastically, was to a large extent political. Their reproduction has been increasingly economic (nevertheless in practice it is not easy to disentangle economic from political drives and incentives).

Three linked distinctions have been made among different forms of economically motivated violence. First, between top-down violence, mobilised by elites and bottom-up or subaltern violence (e.g. that of armed civilians, vigilantes or ordinary soldiers from the ranks). Second, between violence mediated via the state, where economic goals are furthered by controlling or seizing control of the state – or indeed by opposing it – and direct violence unmediated by the state (such as warlord extraction of protection money from aid agencies, or violence between ethnic groups or clans over land or livestock). Third, between violence driven mainly by 'greed' – essentially the expectation of profit from the forcible

[13] Though for a short period in the 1980s the main liberation movements – the EPLF in Eritrea and the TPLF in Ethiopia – were in a virtual state of war with each other before resuming their common struggle against the *Derg.*

appropriation and control of productive assets (Collier and Hoeffler 2000; Berdal and Malone 2000) – and that motivated by 'grievance' based on past or present deprivation and inequality (Stewart 2000; Uvin 2000).

These distinctions permit one to consider a number of propositions about the changing character of African conflicts. First, it would seem that increasingly top-down or elite violence has shifted outside the confines of the state. During the first two or three decades after independence, developmental (and neo-patrimonial states regimes) controlled access to economic assets and thus sources of political patronage, and had more or less undisputed monopolies of violence. Top-down violence, for the most part, took the form of organised state repression of dissent and maintenance of exploitative economic relations. There was 'structural' or 'silent' violence as some have termed it (Galtung 1976; Watts 1985; Uvin 2000; Chitoyo 2000) rather than open warfare. But by the 1990s regime control of patronage and of violence in several African states had become seriously eroded. Partly this was through the patrimonialisation of the state itself. Partly it was brought on by the acute fiscal crises suffered by many African states during the 1980s and 1990s, aggravated by declining foreign aid flows. And, partly as Ellis (1996) and others have argued, it may have been a perverse effect of donor-promoted political and economic reforms.

Once regimes have started to lose control over government patronage and violence, political entrepreneurs have tended to relocate their activities outside the state and build power bases through alternative means, including the creation of private armies and militias and control over the export of valuable minerals and other commodities. In parallel, the state's means of violence have often been privatised, as disaffected and underpaid soldiers have sold their services, pillaged or became political entrepreneurs in their own right. 'Peacetime' corruption has thus evolved into wartime economic violence: as Alao (1999), for example, reminds us, government personnel, soldiers and business interests were already involved in diamond smuggling before the civil war in Sierra Leone broke out. But in addition the fracturing of the state's monopoly of violence has also opened up political and military spaces in which new armed groups could enter the competition for power and wealth.

During the post-Cold War era, this apparent shift from state-mediated patronage and violence to privatised warfare have been facilitated by access to global markets for commodities and weapons, and by the involvement of certain international private sector interests in African conflicts. The proposition that 'today's successful warlords think globally but act locally' (Duffield 1998: 81) is well illustrated by Charles Taylor's strategy in Liberia. He successfully exploited contacts made with foreign companies when he was a senior official in Doe's government, to gain access to foreign exchange, to physically control territory and to deny resources to opponents. During the 1990s, the area controlled by his NPLF became France's third largest supplier of tropical hardwoods, illustrating the blurring of legitimate and extra-legal parallel activity in conflicts. Taylor himself was increasingly seen as a 'business executive waging a corporate take-over war on Liberia' (Kieh 1992: 130).

Of course, the likelihood of economic violence has increased when the potential rewards have been enhanced. A number of recent wars have been concentrated in resource-rich countries like Sierra Leone,

Angola or the DRC. Privatised violence has been all the more likely when natural resources could be exploited with minimal technology and without the need to control the capital or machinery of the state, for example diamonds (see Box 5). Furthermore, conflict--induced price-changes have presented lucrative trading opportunities for military entrepreneurs, causing economic agendas to become more pronounced as civil wars have developed. New trading opportunities emerge, in response to international sanctions and emergency aid supplies, providing further incentives to use violence to control trade and foreign assistance.

There have been parallel transformations in the character of subaltern or bottom-up violence. Previously the liberation wars of the colonial era, and post-colonial 'reform wars', like the wars waged by the EPLF and TPLF/EPRDF in Eritrea and Ethiopia, by the NRA in Uganda, by the RPF in Rwanda and by the SPLA in Sudan, were waged against states and regimes that were seen as illegitimate. They usually had clear political objectives, involved the mobilisation of popular support and were waged by insurgent military forces that were well disciplined and often highly effective against the conventional forces of the state. But in recent years, narrower forms of privatised subaltern violence have emerged, and indeed have largely displaced the emancipatory projects of earlier liberation and reform wars. Even governments and movements that emerged from the latter, like the MPLA and its army in Angola, and (more arguably) the SPLA in the Sudan, have tended to become corrupted and patrimonialised shadows of their former selves.

Yet the burning sense of injustice felt by subaltern groups and their disillusion with the state's failure to address their situation has not diminished (Ake 1993). Recent analyses, for instance those by Chingono (1995) and Richards (1995, 1996) focus on the chronic shortage of employment and education opportunities, which caused may youths in Sierra Leone and Mozambique to join rebel movements in search of immediate economic gains, power and status unavailable elsewhere. Keen (1998) argues that in Liberia and Rwanda, the violence not only offered economic benefits, but also an opportunity to vent fury against those perceived to be enjoying unfair economic advantages. The extent to which ordinary people have engaged in such violence has also depended in part on the degree to which they have believed they can escape punishment. Some degree of impunity is likely to arise from the mere existence of conflict, the weakening of the state, and the breakdown of normal mechanisms for punishing crime.

On the face of it recent cross-national statistical studies would appear to support the hypothesis that 'greed' rather than 'grievance' is the most likely cause of civil wars. Collier and Hoeffler (2000) (see also Collier 2000) use primary commodities as a percentage of GDP as a proxy for 'lootable' resources and the percentage of young men in a population aged between 15–24 years together with education levels as a proxy for youth impoverishment, to test the 'greed' hypothesis. To test the 'grievance' hypothesis they use the degree to which a society is fractionalised by ethnicity and religion; inequalities in land ownership, as a measure of economic inequality; degree of political rights; and per capita growth rate of the economy in the previous 5 years, on the assumption that an economy which has experienced rapid decline is more prone to rebellion. The results show that both primary commodity exports and the lack of opportunities

for young men are strongly associated with civil conflict, supporting the greed hypothesis; but (according to their indicators) the grievance hypothesis is not supported.

Nevertheless, it may be worth adding some notes of caution. First, the 'greed' hypothesis presents a somewhat stylised picture that fits some African conflicts (those, for instance, in Liberia, Sierra Leone, the two Congos, Angola and the Sudan) better than others. Second, cross-national analyses have little to say about historical transformations in the character and dynamics of conflict, as analysed earlier. Third the distinction between greed and grievance seems rather simplistic. Many would regard youth impoverishment, for example, as just as much symptomatic of societal inequalities, as of 'greed'. And a number of the indicators of 'grievance' are far from satisfactory proxies for the deep-rooted inequalities and discontents, which in our view have driven many African conflicts.

Moreover, although violence has to some degree been relocated outside the state, the state is by no means irrelevant. In most cases it remains a major perpetrator of violence itself. It also continues to be a major target of violence for groups seeking to appropriate state power. We may illustrate this with two concrete examples. The first is the Sudan, where governments are no longer in control of large parts of the South, and have subcontracted security and repressive functions to tribal militias – which wage war on rebels and extract resources on their own and the ruling elite's behalf. However, the central state and ruling elite still function, all too well some would argue, and are upheld in the final analysis by the military and security apparatuses of the state. Our second example is Liberia. Although during the civil war Charles Taylor managed to establish a virtual state in areas controlled by the NPFL, as well as making large commercial profits, his ultimate goal was always to capture the state itself. By winning the peace, and going through the motions of democratic elections, he consolidated his position and secured enough international legitimacy, to continue and extend the exploitation of Liberia's (and its neighbour's) resources.

In sum, while the narrative of the causes of conflict was until recently dominated by issues of grievance, such as ethnicity and social inequality, existing research shows that economic incentives also have considerable explanatory power for many contemporary conflicts. This is not to suggest that all conflicts are the result of greed and not grievance, indeed, the two usually interact. Yet more attention needs to be paid to the economic sources of conflicts and to the economic agendas that emerge to sustain them as they evolve. In addition to asking why groups support a rebellion, one should ask which groups take advantage of conflict situations for their own purposes, and recognise that conflict may be an opportunity instead of a problem for such groups (Keen 1998). Only by doing this will it be possible to develop effective policy responses, as we shall argue later.

1.6 The problematisation and survival of the state

The problematisation and weakening of the state has often been linked to the transformations in the political economy of war considered in the preceding section. It has both been an important precursor of civil war, and one of the latter's main results. However, the extent to which states have been problematised and governments have lost their capacity to govern - i.e. whether or not they have

remained at least to some extent capable of maintaining physical security, collecting taxes, managing the economy, and providing basic public services – has varied considerably from one country to another. This has made a crucial difference, both to the trajectory of conflicts and to their impacts on the entitlements of the poor.

As O'Sullivan (1997) has shown in detail for Sri Lanka, where the central state remained relatively effective, quite a major conflict appeared to be compatible with continued growth, significant social spending and poverty reduction – although to sustain the latter, resources had to be diverted from investment and development programmes. Only in faction-controlled areas or territory directly contested between the government and rebels were the conditions of life of the poor significantly worsened, and even in these the government still continued to deliver some basic services. Much the same can be argued in relation to the current conflict in Northern Uganda (Matovu and Stewart 2000).[14]

Table 3 Conflict-torn Sub-Saharan Africa[1] during the 1980s and 90s

	Central state seriously incapacitated during conflict[2]	**Central state relatively intact during conflict**
Ongoing or recently-ended large-scale conflicts	Liberia Rwanda[3] Sierra Leone Somalia	Angola Burundi Sudan
Previous large-scale conflicts	Chad Uganda[3]	Ethiopia[4] Eritrea[4] Mozambique South Africa[5]
New large-scale conflicts (began late 1990s)	Congo (B) DRC Guinea Bissau	
Smaller-scale more localised conflicts		*Comoros* *Djibouti* *Mali* *Namibia* *Niger* *Senegal* *Zimbabwe*
Political violence short of war		*Central African Republic* *Ghana* *Kenya* *Lesotho* *Mauritania* *Nigeria* *Togo*

1 Large-scale conflicts include civil war involving more than 10,000 military and civilian fatalities and/or significant incapacitation of the state. Countries underlined in the text are those included in Nafziger and Auvinen's (1997: 18) data set of countries facing major humanitarian emergencies between 1980 and 1994.
2 Central state breaks down, losing capacity to govern during at least part of the period of conflict
3 Rwanda and Uganda still involved in conflicts within their own territory and across their borders.
4 Ethiopia and Eritrea also at war with each other 1998–9.
5 During the apartheid period South Africa was even more in a state of war outside its own borders than it was inside them, and this is not reflected in the figures for its own fatalities

14 Matovu and Stewart (2000) is the only African case study we were able to locate that disaggregates the impact of conflict upon different regions in a comparable way to O'Sullivan's pathbreaking analysis.

But where the state itself has been more seriously problematised or has actually fallen apart, as in many recent conflicts in Africa, a significantly different, more complex pathology has emerged. At least nine African countries, listed in the left-hand column of Table 3, have experienced complete state collapse at one stage or another during conflict; though only in Somalia has this collapse become almost permanent.[15] As we shall show below, the disappearance of normal government tends to be associated with acute physical insecurity and immiseration for ordinary individuals and communities, to lead to the loss of basic services like health and education, and to permit the destruction of physical and social capital. Nor is the situation always much better when some semblance of governance has survived or been restored. Weak, predatory ruling groups may have their own interests in allowing armed groups to proliferate and perpetuate instability; nor do they necessarily give high priority to rebuilding the capacities of the state or to improving the situation of the poor.[16]

We are not asserting that conflict has been the *sole cause* of state collapse. Indeed, in many cases the relationship has been the reverse. The state has steadily atrophied over an extended period, and this incapacity has both led to deterioration in the economy and prevented peaceful management of societal conflicts.[17] In Uganda it was political dislocation undermining government authority during the whole 1971–86 period more than the specific outbreaks of civil war in 1979–80 and 1985–5 which had the worst aggregate effects on personal insecurity and poverty (Matuva and Stewart, forthcoming). Likewise, in the DRC, the atrophy of the state preceded the outbreak of war in 1996 by years if not decades. The government effectively relinquished administrative control over most of its territory, and stopped payments to most employees outside Kinshasa. And at the same time the national economy both stagnated and became sub-divided into a series of weakly linked regional economies.

Nor need warfare, nor even the disappearance of the central state, imply complete anarchy in the war-affected areas. Indeed in liberation and reform wars, the reverse has often been the case. There was greater security in areas controlled by the EPLF in Eritrea or the NRA in Uganda than in most government-controlled areas. However, in the new wars in which the protagonists have controlled territory by force and predation, insecurity and immiseration have become endemic. Even when warlords like Charles Taylor in Liberia have established rough and ready forms of administration in areas they have controlled, they have been oppressive and corrupt, and the lives and livelihoods of those still residing there have remained highly insecure (see Box 2).

The distinction between collapsed states and the surviving (but often partly incapacitated) states listed in the right hand column of Table 3 is by no means hard and fast. Take the example of Ethiopia. The civil war was marked by massive increases in military spending which by the last three years of the

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15 Within the boundaries of Somalia, however, Somaliland is a key exception as it has begun to reconstruct its own separate proto-state which is initiating a relatively successful recovery

16 See in particular Reno (1998) on the increasing convergence between warlords and certain types of African government and Bayart *et al.* (1999) on the 'criminalisation' of the state.

17 See for example Cliffe and Luckham (1999) who consider this phenomena comparatively. Also note Outram (1999), Zack Williams (1999) and Ahmed and Green (1999), which relate them to Liberia, Sierra Leone and Somalia respectively.

war reached 46 per cent of the recurrent budget, 52 percent of imports and 9.7 per cent of GDP (Coletta *et al.* 1996a: 109–115). Conflict severely stretched the capacity of the Ethiopian government to finance the war. Ultimately, the government subsidised the war effort through high taxation, compulsory quotas levied on agricultural producers and of other exactions in cash, labour and war services (Bevan 1994: 7). Agricultural production and GDP per capita declined, investment fell and unsustainable budget and balance of payments deficits developed. Ultimately, the costs of war were imposed upon an already poor peasantry. The war was also a major factor in the 1983–4 famine, an entitlement failure that devastated livelihoods as comprehensively as the direct impact of hostilities. Unlike in Sri Lanka (O'Sullivan 1997), protracted conflict had a significant impact on livelihoods and poverty outside as well as inside the direct conflict zones. It initiated the collapse of the *Derg* regime in 1991. Even so, the state itself was only temporarily dissolved, because the armed opposition had already begun to constitute itself as an alternative political authority able to take control at the centre.

1.7 The global and regional interconnectedness of African conflicts

The problematisation of African states stems in part from recent global and regional transformations, which also deeply influence Africa's conflicts. Of course, these conflicts have always had international ramifications. But what has changed, especially since the late 1980s, has been the scope and nature of their global and regional interconnections.

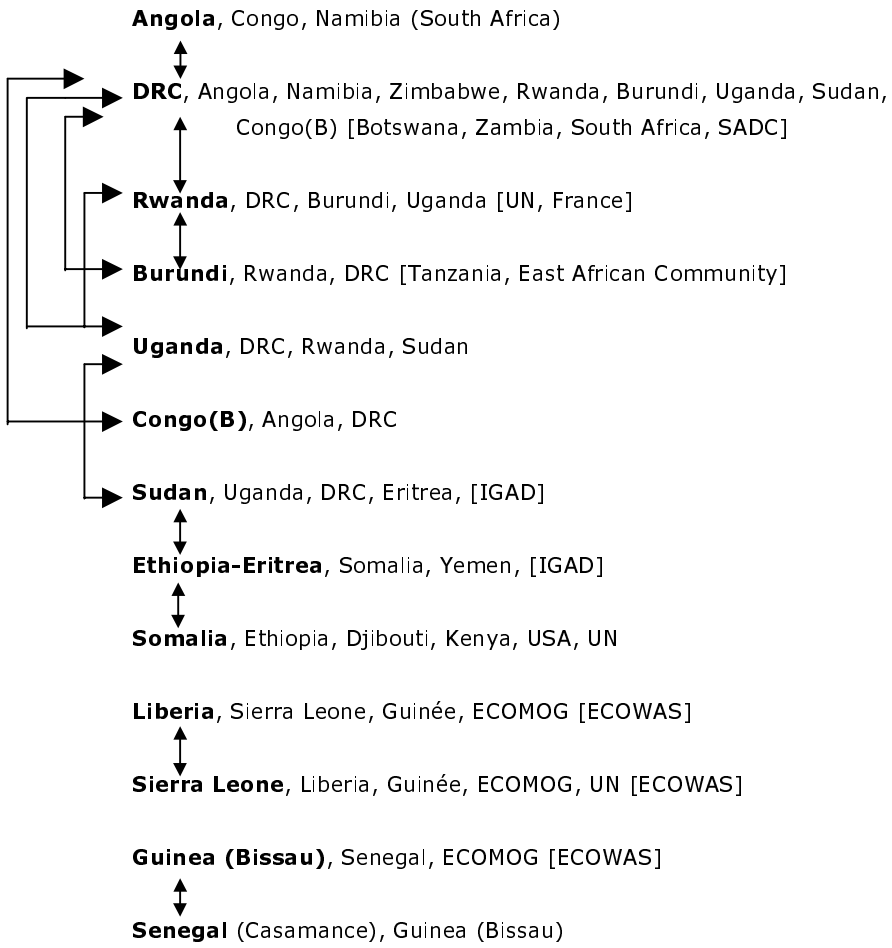
During the Cold War era the nature and course of conflicts was to a large extent influenced by great power rivalries (Luckham 1985), although great power involvement was much greater in some conflicts (like those in the Horn and Southern Africa), than in others (e.g. the Nigerian civil war, or the Uganda-Tanzania war). But even those, which had Cold War dimensions, also had their own specific regional and national dynamics. None could be understood **solely** in terms of Cold War rivalries or international arms markets.

The end of the Cold War had contradictory results. It greatly reduced the arms supplies, military assistance programmes and external interventions which fuelled earlier generations of armed conflicts. It contributed directly or indirectly to the demise of authoritarian governments. But only in some cases did this facilitate democratisation. In others it merely weakened states, stripped them of their monopolies of violence and diminished their ability to survive armed challenges to their authority. Declining military expenditures, unpaid troops and conditions of social unrest, linked to structural adjustment, budget cuts and stagnant economies were an explosive mixture, and contributed to a number of fresh conflicts, for example those in Somalia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and both the Congos.

It also generated new forms of global interconnectedness. Governments and rebel groups, which had lost their former Cold War patrons, sought out new commercial suppliers of weapons and military skills, for instance in the former communist bloc, or from new firms which sprang up to supply advice and military services. It also drove them to seek new sources of funding that did not depend upon foreign government patrons, shrinking official budgets, or the diversion of development assistance; all the more since donors were starting to tie their aid to political reform and military cuts (Ball 1998).

It is in this context that one should analyse the emergence of parallel economic systems sustaining war, and linked to exports of valuable minerals and other primary commodities, described in section1.5 above. These transactions were not, it should be emphasised, completely external to the state. Often states were as deeply involved as rebel groups. In Angola, for instance, both the government and UNITA channelled the proceeds of mineral exports into arms purchases, both entered the shadowy world of unrecorded and illicit arms deals, and both employed mercenaries of one kind or another. Some states indeed have become de facto contractors of firepower in their neighbours conflicts, supplying arms or sending in their own soldiers in exchange for a stake in mining ventures, as in the DRC, or using them to appropriate the proceeds of illicit exports, like Liberia in Sierra Leone.

Table 4 Sub-Saharan African regional conflict complexes (late 1990s/early 2000s)



Note:
1. The table leaves out some conflicts that were active earlier during the 1990s, but have been more or less satisfactorily terminated, e.g. in Mozambique, Mali, the border dispute between Mauritania and Senegal. On the other hand, one or two of the conflicts listed in the table are not presently active, but are listed because the countries concerned are either still involved in their neighbours' conflicts (e.g. Liberia) or because the conflict is still not yet fully resolved (e.g. Congo(B), Eritrea-Ethiopia).
2. Countries and organisations in round brackets were previously participants in these conflicts, but are no longer involved; those in square brackets are involved in conflict-resolution, rather than in military operations.

Hence conflicts have become regionally as well as globally interconnected. Some observers indeed have argued that regional conflict-formations or complexes have emerged, which by-pass and even displace the state (Duffield 1999). In our view, however, it may be more accurate to say the state has been reinserted into new global and regional relationships, and reconfigured through conflict, rather than consigned to irrelevance (Somalia may be the only case where one can say that for the time being the state is really dead).

In Table 4, we list the continent's main conflict complexes as of the late 1990s/early 2000s. Our list includes all Africa's significant armed conflicts of the past three or four years. None of the latter, indeed, has been purely 'internal'. And many stem from or are linked to earlier conflicts (as can be verified from Table 1 above).

Another important dimension of interconnectedness is the involvement of a great variety of international and regional actors in conflict-resolution, emergency assistance and peacekeeping. Partly this reflects the new discourse and practice of 'humanitarian' intervention and assistance, which emerged in the post-Cold War period. It also derives from a major growth in NGO activity in all areas of external assistance, and especially in 'complex political emergencies'. Moreover, African governments, like those of Tanzania, South Africa, Botswana, Ghana or Nigeria, and regional organisations, notably the OAU, ECOWAS, SADC and IGAD have been increasingly active in conflict-resolution, peace-keeping and peace-enforcement. These can be regarded as a potentially more positive Janus-face of regional interconnectedness.

Nevertheless international and regional humanitarian intervention and conflict-resolution efforts in Africa have had a very mixed record (de Waal 1997). The involvement of African governments in resolving their neighbours conflicts too has sometimes had perverse consequences. Sometimes the governments and organisations supposed to be brokering a peace have developed vested interests in the conflicts themselves, as with the Lusaka peace process in the DRC. Yet this does not detract from the urgent need for co-ordinated African, as well as international, responses to African conflicts, all the more because these conflicts are already interconnected, and have developed an alarming capacity to spread across national boundaries.

For long standing conflicts can suddenly spill over into neighbouring countries, threatening previously unaffected foreign populations with heightened poverty, as recently experienced by those living in northern Namibia (see Box 3).

Box 3 Suffering from someone else's war

The impact of conflict on poverty is not only felt by those resident in the country where the main conflict is being played out, as illustrated by activities in northern Namibia this year. The decision of the Namibian Government in December 1999 to allow Angolan Government armed forces to launch attacks from northern Namibia on UNITA rebel strongholds in southern Angola (Economic Intelligence Unit, 1st Quarter 2000), had grave repercussions for Namibians in the region. In retaliation, UNITA began attacking villages in northern Namibia. Since December, a reported 60 civilians have been killed, another 130 maimed by landmines laid by UNITA, and homes and businesses looted (*The Namibian*, 5/9/2000). The national newspaper, The Namibian (6/9/2000), claims that 2267 shops belonging to Namibians in the Kavango region, have been forced to close due to nightly looting of goods, worth in total in excess of £150,000. Consequently, hundreds of small businesses are struggling to pay off their debts at the main banks and supermarkets where they bought supplies on credit. This has resulted in extensive job losses, plunging thousands of local people into sudden poverty, exacerbated by livestock theft by UNITA rebels. The closure of shops has also forced inhabitants in the affected settlements to travel long distances to buy basic commodities, such as bread and sugar. Affected Namibians are now seeking compensation from the Angolan and Namibian governments, with neither accepting any responsibility for compensation (*The Namibian*, 11/9/2000). In addition, three French tourists were murdered in January 2000, allegedly by UNITA rebels, which provoked a sudden and dramatic decline in tourism, which is a key source of national income.

2 The impact of conflict on poverty: the broad picture

2.1 Assessing the impacts and identifying the knowledge gaps

Since conflict touches directly and indirectly on so many different aspects of poverty and in such diverse ways, it may be useful to start with a summary table (Table 5), which provides a provisional inventory of these relationships. It is not intended to portray what we know already, which is far too little, but to highlight some of the relationships that deserve more investigation if we are to fill the gaps in our understanding.

Table 5 is organised around two useful sets of distinctions advanced in Stewart and Fitzgerald (2001) and Stewart *et al.* (1997). The first of these distinguishes (in the horizontal lines across the Table) four principal ways conflicts may widen the gap between entitlements and needs. We use the term entitlements loosely, as we are as much interested in how conflicts destroy assets and livelihoods, as in how they redistribute them.[18] Both are important and they interact (Swift 1996).

We consider not only the failure of market or livelihood entitlements, but also the loss of the goods, services and other more intangible benefits provided through the state (public entitlements) or through the social relationships in which individuals are embedded (civil or social entitlements). To these we have added the category of 'reverse entitlements'.[19] This is not really a conceptually distinct type of entitlement failure. But we use the expression to call attention to how armed groups and those associated with them

[18] Sen (1987) of course used the concept of entitlement failure to sharpen the distinction between food shortages and entitlement failures. Though this is a useful analytical distinction, both are so closely interconnected in most conflict situations that it may not always be useful to insist on separating them.

may appropriate the assets of vulnerable groups, either directly through the power of the gun or indirectly through their ability to control markets, food and aid flows. This is what Duffield (1994) and others call 'asset transfers'.[20]

Second, in the columns of Table 5, we distinguish between the direct and indirect impacts of conflict, the latter at the macro, meso (sectoral and regional) and micro (household and local community) levels.[21] Since the direct 'output' of war is the destruction rather than the creation of value and assets, its impact on the life-chances and livelihoods of households and communities is largely negative. All the more, as both governments and groups opposing them have sometimes deliberately targeted the civilian population, their productive assets and their social safety networks or social capital.[22]. Broadly speaking and very crudely, existing studies of the impact of warfare on various indicators of economic performance, social welfare and poverty tend to confirm the view that growth and social welfare stagnate or decline in states riven by armed conflict.

Nevertheless, there is still a dearth of meso-level studies that detail the impacts of war on vulnerable groups in specific sectors or regions – even though recent analyses of local and regional war economies have changed the way we think about the distributional impacts of conflict and the transfer of resources between its beneficiaries and 'losers'. Nor has there been enough analysis of the micro-level impacts of conflict on households, local communities and vulnerable groups such as children, women, war-wounded and displaced populations; those that are available tend to reflect the immediate priorities of humanitarian aid agencies and NGOs providing emergency relief.

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19 Or what Sen (ibid: 167) 'non-entitlement transfers' (i.e. looting).

20 See also Keen *et al.* (1996) and de Waal's (1997) powerful critique of the politics of disaster relief.

21 Stewart *et al.* (1997) identify the macro level with economic performance measured by aggregates such as GNP, exports inflation etc.; the meso level with the sectoral distribution of government spending and the micro level with households (and implicitly welfare and poverty). Our definition of the meso level in particular is broader, since we consider how resources are distributed between sectors and regions and not just government allocations.

22 See de Waal (1997) for examples of the way the latter has been incorporated in the counterinsurgency tactics of governments, as well as the tactics of rebels.

Table 5 Inventory of the effects of conflict on poverty

	Direct impacts of conflict on assets and livelihoods	Indirect impacts of conflict		
		Macro	**Meso (sectoral and regional)**	**Micro (households and local communities)**
Loss of public entitlements	Collapse/delegitimisation of instruments of public order: military, police etc. Destruction/decay of public infrastructure: hospitals, clinics, schools etc.	Growing macro-insecurity of states and regimes. Decline in their capacities (to tax, provide public goods, ensure security) associated with shrinking revenue base and reduced public spending; the latter reallocated from social or development to military spending	State loss of monopoly of violence to armed opposition groups. Disappearance of government and its agents from the countryside (and some urban areas). Distribution of public goods and services skewed on geographical, social and gender basis	Micro-insecurity: civilians at risk from violence, rape, crime, seizure of assets (e.g. cattle). Diminished access to public services, including health, education, policing etc; hence higher disease, infant mortality, smaller school enrolments, etc.
Loss of market/ livelihood entitlements	Destruction/decay of physical capital, communication infrastructure; withdrawal of land and labour force from production (e.g. due to landmines, population displacement)	Macroeconomic costs/disequilibria: stagnant or falling GNP, exports, imports; trade, b of p and budget imbalances; hyperinflation and exchange rate depreciation; capital flight; increased debt	Decline of formal economy relative to regional and local war economies; increased uncertainty; high transaction costs; failure of price mechanisms; market segmentation; major disparities between war-affected and other regions	Contraction in formal employment; decline in real wages; forced asset sales; destruction of subsistence livelihoods; changes in gender division of labour; shortages, entitlement failures and declining consumption
Loss of civil/social entitlements	Destruction of social capital (institutions, values, networks) through population displacement, impoverishment, inter-ethnic hostility, diminished trust, etc.	Diminished sense of common citizenship based on shared rights and obligations. Shrinking of civil society. Resurgence of primordial rather than more inclusive conceptions of nationhood and citizenship	Existing institutions unable to cope with stresses and dislocations induced by conflict (i.e. refugee influx). Heightened competition for resources and conflict between previously co-operating regions/ethnic groups/communities	Local communities weakened or destroyed; existing safety nets and coping mechanisms insufficient or break down. Proliferation of vulnerable groups (refugees, displaced, female-headed households, orphans, HIV victims etc.)
Reverse entitlements/ new forms of social inequality	'Asset transfers': direct appropriation of assets, land, sources of livelihood from vulnerable groups, displaced populations	Rent – seeking by those with access to state and military power, reinforcing macro-economic distortions and undermining capacities of state	New forms of inequality associated with privatisation of violence; rent-seeking by those controlling weapons, transport routes, food distribution, access to aid	Heightened insecurity and exploitation of vulnerable groups. Increased gender violence. Emergence of new groups dependent or formerly dependent on war for livelihoods, but also potentially at risk: child soldiers, demobilised combatants, war-wounded, prostitutes etc.

2.2 Methodological issues

Assessing the impact of war on poverty is problematic for many reasons. First, there is a lack of reliable data.[23] The latter are often among the first casualties of conflict, due to the physical destruction of records or to deliberate policy by warring parties to distort information. Data collection may also become more difficult because of problems of changed priorities, increased insecurity and greater uncertainty inherit in conflict. As may be readily verified from de Haan *et al.* 's (1999) survey of well-being indicators in SSA countries, such indicators tend to be unavailable in countries like Liberia, Somalia, Congo or Angola with histories of protracted state decline and conflict.

Second, even in countries where national accounts and other data are available they tend to be aggregate country-wide figures. As many conflicts are highly localised, such data may not provide the disaggregation required to analyse the economic and social costs of war. Aggregate data may also be unreliable and incomplete because of unrecorded informal or underground war economies which fall outside the scope of national accounts (Brown *et al.* 1992; Chingono 1995; Stewart *et al.* 1997). Brown *et al.* (1992: 200) point out that 'the figures we usually use in analysing and measuring the severity of the crisis – for income levels, agricultural production, foreign trade, balance of payments and so forth – are so hopelessly inadequate that they cannot provide a full account of the actual situation and, in some cases give a totally wrong impression'.

Third, there is the problem of establishing the appropriate counterfactuals: What would have happened without the war? How have war-torn countries differed from those that have not experienced conflict? The difficulties associated with answering these questions intensifies because SSA war-torn countries have been amongst the poorest in the world, whose prior low economic performance, poverty and inequality may have contributed to the conflict. In their econometric investigation of the sources of humanitarian emergencies Nafziger and Auvinen (1997) demonstrate that their incidence and severity are robustly associated with slow or negative economic growth, low levels of economic development, stagnating agricultural production and extreme income inequality (i.e. many of the variables we would also argue are the product of conflict); but it remains difficult to disentangle cause from effect.

It is also difficult to disentangle the effects of conflict from the effects of other forces active at the same time. For example, whilst Mozambique experienced conflict, it was also subjected to droughts (1982–5 and 1991–2) and floods (1977–8), plus the declining terms of trade, increasing debt burden and the effects of structural adjustment, which many other Sub-Saharan African countries faced. All of these impacted on poverty, making it very different to separate out which poverty impacts were solely attributed to the conflict. In addition, deciding when a country is actually 'in conflict' can be problematic, when in some years there may be neither outright war nor peace.

[23] And to try and collect data or run surveys in conflict zones may possibly prove fatal to those who attempt it.

3 Macro effects and poverty

As we have already argued, one of the more striking features of SSA conflicts has been the atrophy or even disappearance of the state. Though state decline has often begun well before the outbreak of hostilities, the latter have brought it to a head. For our purposes two aspects of this decline are especially crucial (see the first line of Table 5). First the conditions of acute physical insecurity – not only for elites but also for most ordinary citizens – that result from the collapse or delegitimisation of the instruments of public order and the proliferation of armed groups outside the control of the government. Second, the reduction in the government's capacity to tax and borrow and hence its ability to provide public goods like health, education and law and order.

Thus one observes a juxtaposition of two seemingly contradictory tendencies. First, a general move among African countries towards aggregate reductions in military expenditures (see Table 6), despite continuing conflict and insecurity, largely reflecting declining economies and state revenues. SSA's 46 per cent reduction in military spending between 1988 and 1994 was greater than in any other region and represented a decline which began at the end of the 1970s.[24] Second, however, countries involved in armed conflicts have tended to increase their military burdens (at least in terms of military spending as a percentage of government budgets and GNP: see Table 7)[25]. A cross-national study undertaken for the African Development Bank by Mohammed (1996b) suggests that conflict and insecurity have been the most important determinants of variations in military spending between African countries. One should note that this rise of military spending in conflict-affected countries has usually taken place against a background of declining tax revenues, GDP or both. Both trends in combination imply corresponding reductions in social service budgets and the entitlements of the poor.

Table 6 African military expenditures in comparative perspective

Categories	**Military expenditure in US$ billions (1996)**	**Percentage change: 1988–1994**
SSA	**6.2**	**– 46 %**
All Africa	**9.4**	**– 30 %**
Low Income	30.0	19 %
Middle Income	38.0	12 %
World	708.00	– 34 %

Source: SIPRI (1998)

[24] Table 6 shows military burdens only in terms of ratios of military spending to GDP, since comparable figures are not available for the military share of government budgets.

[25] Though, to be sure, this decline had been preceded by sustained military increases during the entire post-independence period: see Luckham (1995).

Table 7 Military burden in SSA conflict-affected states
(military spending as per cent of GDP)

		Duration of conflict	Spending pre-conflict	Peak spending during conflict	Spending post-conflict: 1–2 yrs
Post-conflict*: State Relatively intact*	**Ethiopia**	**1974 – 1991**	**2.8** (1973)	**6.3** (1989)	**2.6** (1993)
	Mozambique	**1976 – 1994**	**0.9** (1975)[1]	**11.7** (1994)	**3.4** (1996)
	South Africa	**1983 – 1994**[2]	**3.7** (1982)	**4.3** (1988)	**2.1** (1996)
Post-conflict: *state incapacitated*	**Chad**	**1980 – 1994**	**4.0** (1979)	**7.8** (1984)	**2.0** (1995)
	Uganda	**1980 – 1986**[2]	**1.3** (1979)	**5.9** (1985)	**1.8** (1988)[3]
Ongoing/recent conflict: *state relatively intact*	**Angola**	**1976 –**	**14** (1978)[4]	**36.8** (1994)[5]	**…**
	Burundi	**1988 –**	**2.7** (1987)	**4.9** (1996)	**…**
	Sudan	**1983 –**	**1.7** (1982)	**3.2** (1989)[6]	..
Ongoing/recent conflict: *state incapacitated*	**Liberia**	**1990 – 1997**	**2.3** (1989)	**…**	**…**
	Rwanda	**1992 –**	**4.2** (1991)	**6.2** (1993)	**…**
	Sierra Leone	**1991 –**	**0.7** (1990)	**2.6** (1993)	**…**
	Somalia	**1988 –**	**1.8** (1987)	**7.5** (1989)	**…**

Source: Mohammed (1996a); SIPRI (1998)

1. USACDA figure, no SIPRI estimates being available.
2. Earlier start-dates for conflicts in South Africa and Uganda could have been chosen, though these would not affect the conclusion.
3. Uganda's Defence expenditures have subsequently risen to 3.8 per cent of GDP (SIPRI 1996) during the current conflict in Northern Uganda
4. No earlier figures available for Angola
5. According to SIPRI (1998); other sources suggest that even though Angola's military burden was very heavy, 36.8 per cent is clearly an overestimation
6. Almost certainly an underestimate; USACDA estimates Sudan military spending at 17 per cent of GNP in 1992.

The ways in which a conflict is financed are important for assessing the economic costs of the war. If taxation is increased to pay for the war, some segments of society will suffer, whereas if foreign borrowing is increased, repayment commitments will be made which will reduce the financial resources available for society in the future. If the government is unable to raise additional funds then existing resources will have to be reallocated to the war effort. Mohammed (1999) therefore argues that the opportunity cost of a conflict is the social rate of return to government expenditure in any area where expenditure is reduced.

In the most severe conflicts where the state administration collapses, the ability to collect domestic tax revenues evaporates. Chad experienced a collapse in public revenue between 1979–81 due to a disintegrated administration and the decline of revenue from import taxes, as imports had fallen to one third of their 1977–78 level (Azam *et al.* 1999). In Mozambique, the tax revenue yield plummeted as both taxable production and the administration capacity to collect it fell. As the war essentially took extensive rural areas out of the formal economy, the effective tax rates for those remaining became extremely high (Goudie and Neyapti 1999).

In addition to the contraction of public entitlements, conflicts have produced massive economic dislocations. Some of these have been the result of the direct destruction or degradation of productive assets, land, infrastructure and institutional structures. In Mozambique, RENAMO deliberately targeted economic establishments (Goudie and Neyapti 1999). The conflict severely disrupted energy transmission, with negative effects for all economic activity dependent on electricity. The electricity transmission grid was facing crisis by 1983, with power exports almost ceasing by 1994. From 10,7000 gwh in 1980, hydroelectricity production dropped to a mere 173 gwh in 1986. RENAMO also cut the rail links between Moatize and Beira in 1983, severely inhibiting both domestic and international coal transport. Thus the conflict practically shut down Mozambique's two main energy production sources – the Cabora Bassa Hydroelectric Power station and the Moatize coalfield. By 1986, the country had been denied an estimated $8.4 million from electricity exports and another $4 million from coal exports. The conflict not only destroyed much of the transport network but also prevented maintenance of remaining infrastructure. By the late 1980s, over 70 per cent of the tertiary road network and 60 per cent of secondary roads were in poor condition.

Conflicts can also inhibit economic activity, with severe consequences for national income and expenditure capacity. For example, in Sudan, the conflict halted many modern agriculture projects, industrial projects and gold exploration activities in Kapoita area in 1983 (Mohammed 1999). In Chad, the lack of security due to persistent conflicts from 1960 to 1995 prevented the exploitation of oil deposits capable of producing at least 10 million tons per year. Azam *et al.* (1999) claim that this oil could have enabled Chad to economise 15 to 20 per cent of its foreign exchange expenditure and double its rate of investment, developing agriculture and investing in schools, clinics and infrastructure, desperately needed by the country. They go as far as to argue that if these investments had been made, the 1997 per capita GDP would have been 80 per cent greater than the reported figure of $160, which confines it to being one of the world's poorest countries.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, investment in mining has been inhibited by the lack of security for personnel (Economic Intelligence Unit May 2000). Exports of major goods fell sharply in 1999, attributed to the war and the fact that many of the DRC's export producing zones are under rebel control. In Angola, diamond mining has been constrained by insecurity and the inability of smaller operators to pay for expensive security firms (Economic Intelligence Unit 1st Quarter 2000). Countries also lose revenues as other groups capture state resources and divert profits away from national investment, as in the case of 'conflict diamonds' (see Box 6).

Civil war economies are starved of private investment, even if there are high return opportunities, as agents preserve their options during this uncertain time by holding their assets in liquid form (Collier and Gunning 1995). Even when conflict ceases, investors may be cautious in committing their investment funds due to a perceived lack of economic security (Harris 1999). Funds from foreign donors may be withheld or shift from development to emergency relief. During conflicts, foreign exchange earnings tend to fall and imports to increase, reducing foreign exchange reserves and increasing foreign indebtedness.

Economic output is also reduced through the gradual loss of the capital stock, due to destruction, dissaving and the substitution of portfolios abroad.

Conflicts can therefore involve extreme macroeconomic disequilibria, often worsening the situation of countries that had followed flawed economic policies prior to the conflict (Kumar 1997). The result can be devastating. According to some estimates, Chad's GDP per capita fell to nearly half its 1960 level following the civil war of 1979-80 (Azam *et al.* 1999). During conflicts, political authorities have also tended to extend controls and regulations on imports, exports, prices and wages. Firms and households also respond to conflicts in various ways, including transferring capital abroad and making the transition to economic activities considered less risky; a process that has sometimes continued until well after the end of hostilities. High levels of inflation have prevailed as warring parties have printed money or borrowed heavily to pay the costs of war (FitzGerald 1997; Ahmed 1994). Inflation and sudden depreciations in the exchange rate have sometimes led to dramatic declines in the entitlements of the poor. In Chad, for instance, the central bank and other banks ceased to function between 1979–81 (Azam *et al.* 1999), restricting access to credit. However, the effects on the incidence and intensity of poverty have varied, depending on the scale of changes in the macro variables, the nature and duration of conflict, the pre-conflict conditions of the poor and the effectiveness of (social, public and humanitarian) transfer entitlements in mitigating the loss of market and public entitlements.

Stewart *et al's* (1997) seminal assessment of the costs of conflict in developing countries[26] found important macro-level effects in most, including worsened GDP and food production per capita growth (or actual declines) compared with the periods preceding conflict and with trends in other countries. They also observed significant negative impacts on the availability of basic needs of goods and services, including primary school enrolment, availability of medical services and indicators of nutritional levels.

The social indicators of the 11 most war-torn countries (see Appendix 2) show that they have among the highest incidence of poverty, the lowest Human Development Index (HDI)[27] values and well-being indicators in SSA (although since they already included some of the poorest countries in the continent, it is difficult to establish how much was due to conflict). Infant mortality in all these countries has remained above the SSA average and in some cases has increased. Likewise, their HDI values in 1995 remained much lower than the SSA average. In the worst affected countries, not only have HDI indicators been very low, but they have also been declining. In Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda and Somalia where the state collapsed, the macro-costs of conflict almost certainly have been greater than in others (in both absolute and relative terms), though it is precisely in such countries that the presence of HDI indicators has tended to be most scarce.[28]

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26 Drawn from a data-set that included six war-torn African states; Angola, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mozambique, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.

27 HDI value is composite indicator that measures three components – health, education and income – of human development (UNDP 1998).

28 Sierra Leone is the only one of these where the indicators have continued to be available, showing a substantial rise in the HDI index as well as a rise in infant mortality.

Since the majority of the poor in SSA are found in rural areas, the effects of conflict on agricultural production is especially relevant for recognising its impact on poverty. Graphs 1–3 show the per capita agricultural production of the same 11 conflict-affected countries. For the four in which the state disintegrated in the 1990s (i.e. Sierra Leone, Liberia, Somalia and Rwanda)[29] measured per capita agricultural production declined sharply. Some of this may reflect changes in measured and traded outputs. Yet there is little doubt that in these countries conflict had an enormous impact on rural livelihoods. In most other countries (i.e. those in which the state maintained some minimally effective governance) agricultural production has stagnated or declined more slowly.[30] Whether this can be attributed explicitly to war, or to economic conditions common with other poor SSA states, is more difficult to establish. Food supply indicators - per capita calories per day – followed roughly the same trend, but with rather less precipitous declines and perhaps greater fluctuations. It is worth noting that even the pre-war figures were lower than the minimum recommended daily allowances in most countries.

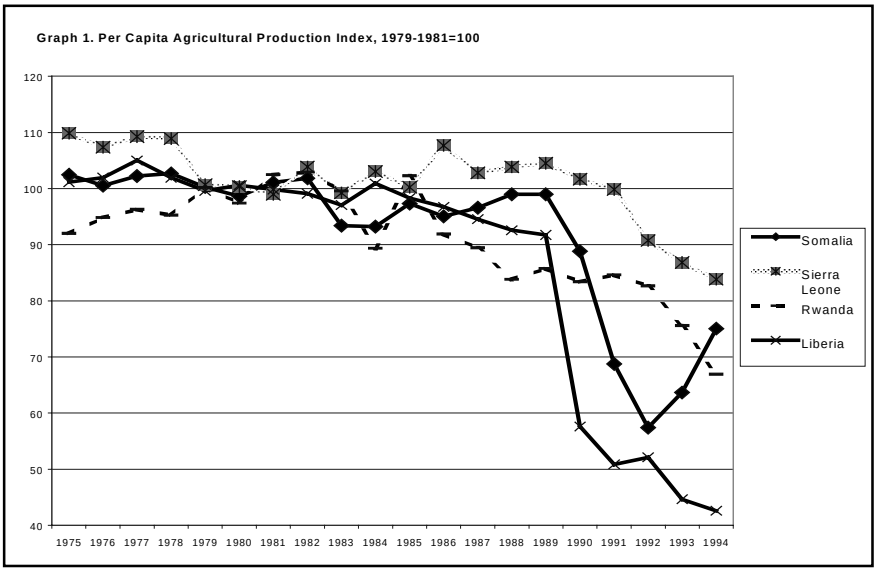
Another way of viewing the impact of conflict is to focus on countries that have made some kind of transition from war to peace. These are relatively few, and in most cases still face quite serious threats to their security, though they include countries such as Uganda and Ethiopia which have made some progress in rebuilding their economies and implementing social programmes. What is certainly clear is that the end of hostilities has in almost all cases resulted in significant reductions in military spending (see Table 7). Whether reduced military outlays have been translated into a significant 'peace dividend', however, has depended on the capacity of states to restore their revenue base (Bevan 1994), and shift resources into development spending and restoring public services like education and health. Another crucial issue for all these governments has been how to demobilise former combatants without reigniting conflict. Thus a successful demobilisation and reintegration programme (DRP) for ex-combatants was central to realising an effective transition from conflict to peace and development (see Box 4), although now reversed by the re-ignition of conflicts..

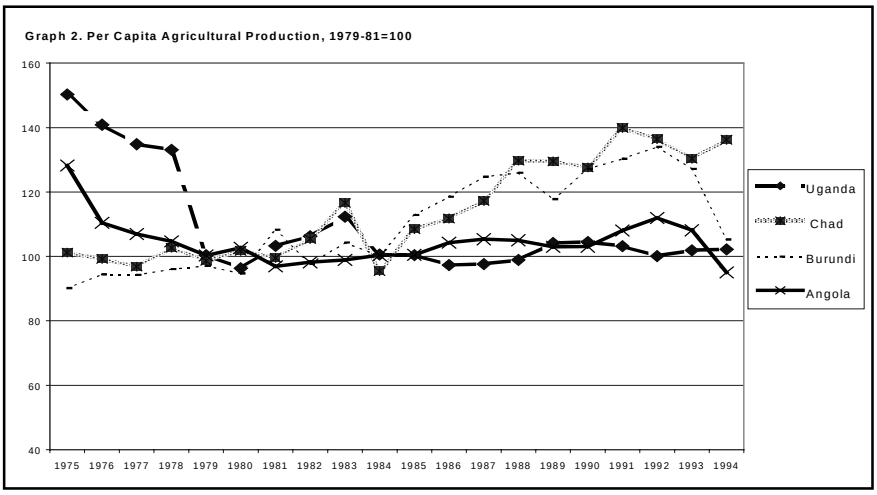
[29] Though the recent conflict (1993–present) in Rwanda is too recent to be fully captured in the index.

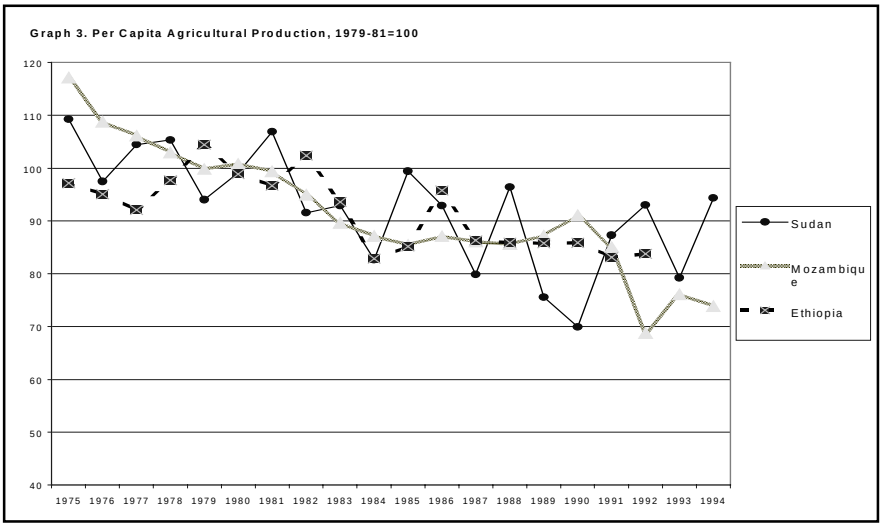
[30] The main exceptions were (i) Chad, where neither war nor the disappearance of the state seem to have had an impact, whether due to the smaller scale of the warfare, or because most of it took place outside the country's main agricultural regions; and (ii) Burundi where previous production increases were eventually sharply reversed by the sharpening of hostilities from the mid-1990s.

Graphs 1–3

Per capita agricultural production indices in conflict-torn states







Source: FAO Agrostat

Box 4 Ethiopia's DRP

Evidence suggests that ex-combatants are an especially vulnerable group in need of priority targeted assistance (Coletta *et. al*. 1996) and also that the diversion of funds away from military spending enables a government to better restructure its public expenditures toward a more poverty-oriented agenda. To be successful, DRPs must involve the reinsertion and reintegration of ex-combatants into civilian life and the rebuilding of community social fabric through multiple forms of national reconciliation. In the post conflict period, Mozambique effectively demobilised 90,000, Eritrea 48,000, Uganda 36,000, Namibia 43,000, Angola (both government and UNITA soldiers) 73,000; although in some of these cases (Eritrea, Uganda and Angola in particular) the revival of conflict resulted in significant re-mobilisations.

By far the largest demobilisation, however, was that of Ethiopia (Dercon *et al.* 1998; Kingma *et al.* 1998). In early 1991, after decades of civil war and social unrest, the new Ethiopian government began a process of demobilising the former regime's almost half a million soldiers. The *Commission for the Rehabilitation of Members of Former Army and Disabled War Veterans* was established and made responsible for the disarmament and formal demobilisation of ex-combatants and for their social and economic reintegration. The Commission decided that transition from combatant to civilian life involved three stages: demobilisation, reinsertion (resettlement) and reintegration. After setting up nine discharge centres throughout the country, close to half a million members of Mengistu's army were formally demobilised. From 1992–1994, after another brief conflict, another 22,200 fighters of the *Oromo Liberation Front* were also registered for the programme. It is estimated that 55,000 former soldiers did not report to the Commission and were thus excluded from reintegration support. Transitional safety nets, tailored to the particular needs of the ex-combatants, were provided to overcome the immediate obstacles presented by resettlement. Those who had served over 18 months or were disabled were offered sector-specific reintegration assistance. Approximately 170,000 ex-soldiers were eligible for rural reintegration assistance, 100,000 for urban reintegration, 37,000 specific aid for their disabilities, and 10,000 for the pension scheme (Coletta, et. al. 1995). Though widely considered a success, recent evidence suggests that only one third of ex-combatants actually received assistance in the form of cash or in-kind support from the Commission. Ex-soldiers tended to be more educated than most of the rural population and many were able to reintegrate in spite of the absence of support. Integration in rural Ethiopia, however, has meant "sharing the deep poverty of the rest of the population" (Dercon, *et al.* 1998: 1672).

Yet it is clear that these initial peace dividends are not by themselves enough, since armed conflicts have long-term consequences with enduring negative multipliers. Not only do they induce transformations in the structure of the economy – such as the out-migration of much of a country's pool of educated and skilled labour, or large-scale rural-urban migration leading to severe labour shortages in rural areas - which slow down reconstruction. Conflict may also generate 'cultures of violence' (Harris 1996: 3), as in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region, where the widespread proliferation of light weapons has introduced domestic arms races, leading to 'the acceptance of weapons as a normal part of life and of violent conflict as an everyday occurrence' (Louise 1995: 14). The availability of light weapons and 'the militarisation of daily life' implies that restoration of human security is not necessarily guaranteed by the signing of formal peace agreements.

4 Sectoral and regional effects

Conflict problematises two of the most central assumptions of development analysis. First that development takes place within national economies, second that (even in market economies) it is facilitated by the state. In internal conflicts states not only face competition from alternative centres of military and political power. National economies also become volatile and segmented, frequently ceasing to operate according to the 'normal' assumptions of economic analysis. Moreover, new rent-seeking groups tend to emerge with a vested interest in war and in exploiting the political and economic opportunities opened up in local war economies (see bottom line of Table 5 above). Thus it is essential to disaggregate and consider the variegated impact of conflict on formal and informal economies in different sectors and different regions. In the following section, the differentiated impact of conflict on rural and urban livelihoods will be assessed. Though inextricably interconnected, some of the specific implications of conflict for health, education, forced displacement, women and children will be discussed.

4.1 War economies, new forms of inequality and poverty

Most internal conflicts in SSA have been characterised by the development of informal war economies that thrive in a lawless and highly unstable environment and tend to create new forms of inequality and poverty (Fitzgerald 1997; Mubarak 1997). Despite their importance, there is very little understanding of the function and structure of such parallel markets and the particular behaviour of its different institutions and actors. However, it appears that informal economies share some common features that have negative implications for poverty.

First, informal or grassroots war economies start or intensify after the collapse of the formal economy; they tend to concentrate in urban centres where there may be relative peace – encouraging rural-urban migration. In Mozambique, for example, the grassroots war economy operated principally in the urban centres (Chingono 1995). Similarly, in Somaliland, the emergence of booming informal markets in urban centres began after the collapse of the (formal) economy and the state, drawing migrants from rural areas. In both Mozambique and Somaliland informal war economies have arguably been partly responsible for the collapse of formal rural market networks. Although these parallel economies can provide a means of basic survival in wartime, they can prove an obstacle to national economic reconstruction efforts after the conflict (Harris 1999).

Second, economic activities with short-term returns tend to dominate informal war economies (Bruck 1997; Addison 1998). Wars create situations of uncertainty that directly affect the level of investment, portfolio choices, the goods traded and the extent to which agents participate in the formal or informal sector. Transformations in incentives result in inter-sectoral and inter-temporal reallocations of resources. The behaviour of households tends to be affected by the priority given to survival, putting premium on current consumption rather than savings and productive investment. War economies also tend to be associated with unsafe labour conditions, low productivity and temporary activities with low

wages. Inflation and shortage of investment capital encourages a shift to a whole range of short-term economic activities that may have negative implications for employment.

Third, informal war economies create opportunistic behaviour – creating new opportunities for some while at the same time destroying or undermining the livelihoods of (many) others. Because conflict erodes social capital (trust, norms and networks of reciprocity) which is necessary for "lowering transaction costs, securing property rights and containing opportunistic behaviour" societies move from a 'trust equilibrium' to an 'opportunistic equilibrium' (Collier 1995: 1). One may question, however, whether 'equilibrium' is quite the right term for the latter.

War economies also tend to be characterised by segmented markets. Movement of goods and people within a particular country may be restricted by warring factions or as a result of perceived widespread insecurity. Markets may also become geographically segmented because they may be located in zones controlled by rebels, government or in contested areas. In Mozambique the rural areas controlled by Renamo rebels were virtually cut off from the areas controlled by the Frelimo government administration causing devastation to the local economy (Alexander 1997). In most civil wars, market centres and transport links are deliberately targeted in order to destroy the source of livelihood for particular groups. This strategy has been employed in Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and Mozambique where government troops deliberately bombed trade routes and markets in areas held by rebel movements. Even though competition may be strong within such segmented markets, competition between markets may be limited due to higher transport costs.

Informal sector activities may also be confined to larger markets considered safe, at the expense of smaller rural markets. In Ethiopia, because of insecurity and the collapse of infrastructure, the price of cereals in surplus producing areas fell while it increased sharply in deficit areas. Similar price differentials between regions were also reported in Uganda during the war (Matovu and Stewart 2000). Conflict also tends to create geographically segmented labour markets. Forced migration may also result in concentration of people in specific areas, together with chronic labour shortages in others. Food markets become particularly unstable as strategic food stocks are either looted or reserved for the army. Private food storage in war situations becomes both risky and costly, especially because of high inflation.

Paradoxically, however, some informal economies may prosper from **booming sector effects** (spending effects) resulting from increased remittances (e.g. Somalia and Somaliland) or export revenues (e.g. Mozambique) used primarily for immediate consumption rather than savings or productive investment (Ahmed 2000). Mubarak (1997) contends that the growth of a thriving private sector may be stimulated by the disappearance of a former predatory state. Yet, even in the midst of booming urban sectors, it is still possible for the poor to suffer a decline in wellbeing. General price increases often have damaging effects on the livelihood of the poor and displaced. A further problem is the inequality-increasing effects of remittances sent back by migrant workers (or diaspora) who left the country during the conflict. Hence, even where market activity booms, there may still be extreme and increasing inequality (Addison 1998; Mubarak 1997).

The cessation of conflict does not automatically correct these distortions. Collier and Gunning (1995) argue that micro-level insecurity will be a concern because of individuals and groups with access to arms following a conflict. This discourages the acquisition of visible assets, as in Ethiopia where the lack of personal security remained a major obstacle to investment in commercial agriculture, especially in the immediate post-war period of 1992–93.

All these changes provide great opportunity for certain groups to **profit** from conflict, altering intra-national distributions of wealth. As markets become disrupted, they become less competitive, increasing marketing margins and opportunity for individuals to reap high profits. There is a limit, if transaction costs are too high trade will be eliminated. As competitive markets disintegrate, substantial opportunities for rents for illegal traders emerge. In some cases, the profits to be made through the exploitation of resources inaccessible during peacetime are so enormous that the maintenance of conflict becomes desirable to enable resource-controlling groups to continue benefiting at the expense of the nation. These issues are at the heart of the current international debate around 'conflict diamonds', (see Box 5)

Box 5 Conflict diamonds are forever?

Although only accounting for 4 per cent of the world trade in diamonds at least according to DeBeers (Economic Intelligence Unit September 2000), 'conflict diamonds' have attracted extensive international attention in the discussion of the consequences and causes of conflicts in Africa. 'Conflict diamonds' are diamonds sold by rebel groups for personal profit, to fund the war effort or for arms. Many individuals and groups have been suspected of involvement in conflict diamonds in Africa's conflict zones. It is alleged that Charles Taylor, who led the NPLF in Liberia, supported the formation of the RUF in Sierra Leone in order to gain access to the country's diamonds to fund his war in Liberia (Alao 1999). Even if the RUF rebellion in Sierra Leone started as a result by disaffected youth, its main preoccupation rapidly became control over the mining and sales of diamonds and soon government soldiers were accused of working in alliance with RUF rebels to loot diamonds for personal profit, instead of fighting for the government. Currently, Sierra Leone's revenue from diamond sales is estimated at US$ 65–75 million per year, of which some claim the RUF takes 20–50 million, due to their control of the main diamond fields in Kono district (EIU September 2000).

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the conflict has allowed the Zimbabwean government to profit from the Congo's diamond resources. In appreciation for military support received from Zimbabwe, President Laurent Kabila, granted Zimbabwe valuable mineral concessions (EIU 1st Quarter 2000). Zimbabwe has also mined and marketed diamonds and gold from Katanga province, which according to Zimbabwe's Minister of Defence contributes to financing the war effort in the DRC. In addition, Ugandans and Rwandans now control other diamond areas of DRC, with middlemen giving rebel groups, such as the Congolese Rally for Democracy (CRD) a cut of their profits in return for access to diamond areas under their control (Walsh 2000). Since 1992, it is estimated that UNITA in Angola sold US$3 billion worth of diamonds, some of it to arms dealers from the Ukraine (Walsh 2000), with The Namibian putting the figure at US$8billion (*The Namibian* 11 January 2000).

Illegal diamond exploitation in conflict situations generates enormous profit for a few, at the expense of the country's citizens and development. Resource-rich countries, like the Congo, Angola and Sierra Leone, are some of the poorest in Africa, when they have the potential to be among the richest. In addition, the lure of profits provides a powerful incentive for rebel groups to perpetuate the conflict, and block legitimate government access to the diamond fields. 'Conflict diamonds' are therefore both a consequence and cause of conflict.

NGO campaigning on the role of diamonds has had some impact. DeBeers announced in February 2000 that it would guarantee that its diamonds did not originate from illegal sources, through measures including a chain of warranty at each stage in the marketing pipeline. Although this will not end the problem of smuggling, DeBeers argued it would establish a clear moral obligation among responsible operators not to handle diamonds from dubious sources (EIU 1st Quarter 2000). The UN has also striven to halt conflict diamond flows, passing resolution 1173 in June 1998 prohibiting the import of Angolan diamonds not accompanied by a certificate of origin from the Luanda government, in an attempt to cut off UNITA's main source of revenue and cripple arms purchase (Shigwedha 1999). This was followed by another resolution demanding that states take measures to prohibit the direct or indirect import of rough diamonds from Sierra Leone and requiring the Government of Sierra Leone to implement a certificate of origin system. In October 2000, thirty six countries attended a conference in London to discuss how to tackle the problem of conflict diamonds (Parker 2000); they did not, however, endorse Britain's proposal that measures to regulate the diamond trade should be given legal force in a treaty sponsored by the UN.

Concerns have already been raised about the effectiveness of the DeBeers certification system and the UN embargoes, with evidence emerging of both the RUF and smugglers in the DRC successfully circumventing restrictions, by exploiting routes through neighbouring countries (EIU 2000; Walsh 2000). Concerns have also been raised about the impact of the regulations on 'clean' diamonds. In the DRC, diamonds currently account for almost 50 per cent of the country's foreign exchange earnings (EIU July 2000). If the government fails to meet certification standards, then the country's revenue may fall dramatically, with serious poverty implications.

4.2 Widening regional inequalities

The root causes of conflict often include gaps between relatively rich and underdeveloped regions. These gaps tend to increase in conflict situations, either because the conflict itself may focus on a particular region (e.g. northern Uganda, southern Sudan) or because it may have disproportionate indirect effects, exacerbating existing regional inequalities. Social services in some regions may improve while those of others deteriorate rapidly during the conflict as has been the case in Sudan. Aggregate social indicators for Sudan as a whole have improved during the conflict (if one can trust the official figures, which are open to question). For example, infant mortality fell from 102 per 1,000 live births in 1991 to 73 in 1996 (the lowest in African war-torn countries); also education, health and other social services apparently improved (see Appendix 2). However, these improvements have been largely in the North. Although there are no separate indicators for the South, such evidence as is available suggests that social services have collapsed in most parts of the region. For example, less than 25 per cent of public schools and institutes remained open in 1989 compared to 1983 (Mohammed 1993). Health services in Southern Sudan were also devastated by the civil war, with only 6 out of a previous 32 hospitals operating by 1989 (Mohammed 1999).

4.3. Conflict and rural livelihoods

Rural areas have been acutely vulnerable to internal conflicts and have suffered disproportionately from its consequences, as most insurgency movements are based outside main towns (Ahmed 1994; Cliffe 1994). Prolonged wars have devastated rural livelihoods by destroying crops, killing livestock, damaging irrigation networks, dislocating markets and forcing farmers to abandon farms either because of insecurity

or landmines. El Bushra and Lopez (1993) discuss the various ways in which a rural community may be affected by conflict. A community's habitat may be totally destroyed in some cases, with homes demolished, roads and bridges rendered impassable, water supplies cut off or polluted, or residents forced to abandon their homes due to constant attacks. Alternatively, a community's habitat may not be completely destroyed but may be sufficiently disrupted to make continued existence there extremely difficult. The community's productive base may be destroyed through lack of supplies, lack of access to land, the laying of landmines in fields, or destruction through looting of crops and animals, or scorched earth policy. At a regional and state level, instability and breakdown of authority may initiate the collapse of commercial systems, including markets, credit, provision of essential products and services, e.g. extension workers. A third scenario, is when a community's territory is invaded or used as a base by armed groups. They may demand to be sustained by local people, who are forced to sacrifice scarce food, shelter, water and transport to the invaders, a common experience of rural people with RENAMO in Mozambique. Seed stocks may be looted or eaten. Those who flee lose access to land and even livestock, with refugees given few opportunities to earn a living. At times during the Sierra Leone civil war, rebels ventured into farming areas to force villagers to harvest, thresh and then transport rice back to their camps (Richards 1996). Damage to the environment may also undermine rural people's livelihoods, in the short term and long-term (see Box 6).

Box 6 Conflict and the environment

Conflicts may cause extensive and long-lasting damage on the environment, consequently undermining rural livelihoods which are so dependent on natural resources such as land, firewood, water, soil, wild animals and plants. In some cases natural resources may be exploited at excessive rates to finance war efforts (Harris 1999), whilst military training and manoeuvres expropriate vast areas of arable land, damage wildlife habitats and soil stability (Mohammed 1999). Forests are often the theatre for guerrilla warfare and may be degraded, denying local people access to firewood, building materials and food sources. Refugee camps in particular may put the environment under severe pressure, as large, concentrated populations suddenly start seeking fuel, food, water and arable land to survive off. The laying of landmines can put vast areas of arable land and pasture out of use for decades. Some have also argued (Homer-Dixon and in an African context Mohammed 1994 and 1999) that environmental stress and competition over scarce resources have been among the most important factors in the outbreak of conflict, not only where poor people put pressure on the local environment for survival purposes, but also where wealthier and better armed groups strive to capture scarce resources, marginalising powerless groups in the process. Competition over limited land in the densely populated countries of Rwanda and Burundi was arguably one of the factors contributing to conflict and genocide (Uvin 2000).

Whilst there is certainly evidence that competition over scarce land grazing rights or ownership of diminishing stocks of cattle, has been an important factor in some micro-level conflicts (Swift 1996), how far resource poverty and environmental degradation offer a useful general explanation of African conflicts has been questioned (Fairhead 2000). Indeed in a cross-national study (not confined to Africa) De Soysa (2000) used per capita natural capital stocks of renewable and non-renewable resources to test whether abundance or scarcity increases the risk of conflict. The results revealed that the higher the availability (per capita) of sub-soil assets (i.e. minerals), the higher the incidence of conflict. In contrast he found no support for Homer-Dixon's hypothesis that poor countries with scant resources are more prone to violence.

In Somaliland, for instance, more than half of the total livestock population was lost through direct and indirect effects of the conflict (Ahmed and Green 1999). For a country in which the livestock sector accounts for more than 50 per cent of the GDP, this had a devastating impact on both the rural and urban areas. In Mozambique, more than 80 per cent of the country's cattle population was lost as a result of the war (Bruck 1997). In Chad, conflict caused all livestock vaccination programmes to be suspended. When bovine plague hit the country in 1982, some half a million animals perished (Azam *et al.* 1999).

Moreover, production in the rural sector has tended to contract because of displacement and migration into relatively safer urban areas. It has also tended to fall because of severe labour shortages, particularly in protracted wars as large numbers of young men have been conscripted both into government armies and rebel factions. Members of the agricultural work force may be maimed by landmines, or even more brutally by deliberate maiming, like the cutting off of hands and feet by rebels in Sierra Leone.

Isolation from markets due to damage to transport networks and insecurity of travel both prevents farmers selling their produce at market and cuts them off from obtaining vital inputs, such as fertilisers, as in Mozambique (Goudie and Neyapti 1999). Farming has declined across Angola because of fighting, the laying of landmines and the apparently deliberate targeting of people in their fields by UNITA, preventing farmers from accessing their fields. Hundreds of thousands of farming families have been forced to abandon their homes and flee the land. Total cereal production in 1998/99 fell by 11 per cent, increasing the country's food import requirements to an estimated 505,000 tonnes.

Damage to agriculture also impacts on agro-industry. Mozambique's war-time exports were dominated by output from state farms and plantation agriculture, both of which RENAMO targeted; consequently exports plummeted. Aggregate export volumes fell by an estimated average 34 per cent in 1982/83, with tea and sisal, previously major export crops, almost ceased, while cashews fell to about 20 per cent of their 1980 level by 1985 (Goudie and Neyapti 1999).

The case of Eritrea, which had one of the longest internal conflicts in SSA, illustrates why agricultural production has contracted as well as the differential impact of conflict in rural areas. While no separate statistics are available for Eritrea during the war, there is ample evidence from surveys conducted during the war (Cliffe 1994). The studies indicate that more than 40 per cent of the adult male labour force in agricultural areas were either recruited by the EPLF or conscripted into the Ethiopian army. Large numbers were also displaced internally or across frontiers. Specifically, migration and 'the exodus of young men, prompted a major redistribution in the gender division of labour, placing a much greater burden on women' (Cliffe 1994: 165). The severe labour shortage, loss of animals and problems of land mines in the agricultural land resulted in food insecurity particularly among the poor and female headed households. The long years of war resulted in a 'more general long-run decline in the resource base ... with increasing proportions of households drifting down from the "middle" peasant to the "poor" category' (ibid: 166).

In the Horn of Africa, conflict has had a debilitating effect on particular groups such as pastoralists whose migratory patterns already confined by the extension of cultivation have been disrupted by the actions of warring parties or further by landmines. This has been particularly the case for Somali pastoralists (in Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somaliland and Somalia) who traditionally crossed regional and country borders during seasonal movements in search of water, pasture and markets for exchanging their animals for food. Restrictions on trade have also disproportionately affected pastoralists who rely more on exchange of animals for food than farming households, who may produce most or all of their food and rely less on trade. As livestock prices have fallen, the terms of trade between livestock and food have tended to collapse, forcing pastoralists to sell more and more animals to meet minimum subsistence requirements.

Added to the declines in agricultural output, there have been problems related to the distribution of food between regions and households, the most extreme manifestation of which have been periodic war-related famines, like the famine suffered by the Horn of Africa region in 1983–84 when more than two and a half million people are estimated to have died. In war conditions moderate crises such as droughts that people used to cope with in the past have tended to cause widespread starvation and death by undermining the coping strategies employed by rural households and communities faced with declining entitlements to food. As the onset of war arguably has a much shorter time scale than droughts and other natural disasters, households and communities have less time to respond: entire markets may be destroyed overnight; household assets looted; and people forced at short notice to abandon their farms and villages.

In some areas internal wars have left a legacy of land disputes in which some groups, particularly ethnic minorities have lost their titles to agricultural land. This has partly resulted from the absence of exclusive and clear-cut property rights in the pre-conflict period. In southern Somalia, for example, a problem of land disputes that started in the 1980s intensified during the conflict when ethnic minorities lost their farmland to warring factions (Africa Rights 1993). The UNDP Human Development Report for Somalia (1998: 32) argues that 'the civil war and State collapse accelerated this struggle for land, replacing land deeds with semi-automatic weapons as the instrument of choice for appropriating land from weaker groups'.

Yet despite all the above severe challenges to their livelihoods and even survival, civilian populations in Africa's conflict zones have by no means been passive victims. In fact they have initiated a variety of coping strategies to adapt to their new adverse situations. These adaptations complicate efforts to predict how conflict will impact on poverty in each context, but also illustrate how informed and targeted interventions can enhance local people's coping strategies (see Box 7).

Box 7 Coping with conflict

In conflict situations, individuals and communities engage in a variety of coping strategies to adapt to conflict situations, and their ability to employ these strategies affects how great the impact of conflict on poverty will be. El Bushra and Lopez (1993) categorise coping strategies into four phases, where the impact of conflict, and hence need for adaptation to fend off severe poverty and more direct safety concerns, increase. To begin with, family members facing initial effects of conflict, attempt to make adaptations to existing roles and within their existing environment. For example, mothers sacrifice meals to feed their children; existing resources are exploited more intensely than normal until exhausted; assets such as jewellery may be sold, and animals slaughtered. Women may seek paid work for the first time, and the family might switch to growing short-cycle crops, ones that can be grown close to the house to avoid the insecurities associated with working in fields. If male household members are lost through death, desertion or participation in the fighting, or maimed by landmines or fighting, women are forced to take over the tasks previously carried out by men. If the situation deteriorates further, the family may decide to migrate, either to urban areas where petty work is available, to more peaceful areas, or to refugee camps, within or outside of the country. In extreme situations, women may take up activities, which may be socially unacceptable, e.g. prostitution, selling of alcohol.

Aning (1998) details how women refugees from Sierra Leone and Liberia at the Ijebu-oru camp in Nigeria, farmed the abundant land around the camp by producing different local root crops to supplement the intermittent supply of commodities from the United Nations. Several refugee women then established bases for grating, pressing and frying the cassava through investing in petty commercial ventures. In one case, the incomes accruing from these ventures enabled women to expand into activities such as soap making, baking and dressmaking. The most enterprising women saved sufficient funds to pay for their children's schooling outside of the camp.

Rural farmers can be helped to adapt to conflict conditions by changing the type of seeds they use. Farmers in Pujehun, in Sierra Leone, responded positively to a hardy rice type introduced from the north, as part of a relief initiative. By planting this three-month rice they found they had something left to harvest after being chased several times out of their farms by fighting. In other cases, a more urgent requirement is to facilitate a change to less easily raided crops. A standing field of cassava requires less labour and can be harvested when needed. It cannot be looted or burnt as easily as the contents of a rice barn (Richards 1996). Coping strategies may also be employed for services. For example, in Sierra Leone, educational institutions were relocated during the civil war and pupils absorbed into unaffected schools to minimise the disruption to children's education (Wright 1997).

4.4 Population displacement

Massive displacement of population has been one of the most common consequences of internal conflicts in (see Table 8). By 1992, at the peak of internal conflicts in SSA, more than 30 million Africans were displaced – internally or externally (Green 1994). Displacement splits up families and communities and destroys social networks and the way of life of affected populations. Households and family networks are fractured, sometimes irreparably. The displaced have often been forcibly relocated to marginal lands and among unfamiliar ecological environments. Refugees, displaced people, returnees and ex-combatants tend to make up the bulk of transitory poverty. For example, in Ethiopia the majority of the estimated 10.3 million people who were experiencing transitory poverty towards the end of civil war were in these categories. In Sudan over 4.5 million people from the South were displaced at the peak of the conflict in the early 1990s (Shalita 1994). In Mozambique, up to 6 million people (roughly one-third of the

population) were displaced at the height of the conflict (Stewart and Samman, forthcoming). As highlighted earlier, it is the breakdown of livelihood systems and coping-strategies that have rendered displaced people vulnerable. Conflict has forced the displaced to abandon their societies and institutions to either resettle or seek refuge in relief camps, where they have often been further economically and socially marginalised. The majority of the displaced have been women and children, who have been forced to make a living in often hostile environments of lawlessness, violence, prostitution and HIV.

As these people have gathered in relief camps, malnutrition and disease have become endemic resulting in sharply increased mortality rates. Box 2, in section 1, indicates the incidence of malnutrition among refugees and displaced people in Liberia. It is roughly illustrative of the conditions throughout Africa, for in 1996 23 per cent of all displaced Africans were either severely or moderately malnourished (ACC/SCN 1996). The influx of refugees and internally displaced has also intensified pressures on fragile social and environmental resources in host communities.

If refugees are later repatriated they may then be confronted by a whole host of new problems. On returning home, refugees often find that their homes, land and businesses have been appropriated by other people. Regaining these assets may prove difficult, particularly for women (see 4.7 below), plunging many conflict-survivors into poverty, undermining their ability to recover from the conflict.

Table 8 A snapshot: major refugee populations, returnees and displaced people in SSA (Sept 1996)

Origin	Country of Destination	Refugees	IDP	Source
Angola	DR Congo, Zambia	76,000	1,375,000	ACC/SCN, 96; UNHCR, 95
Burundi	DR Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia	234,000	300,000	ACC/SCN, 1996
DR Congo	Rwanda, Uganda	18,000	460,000	ACC/SCN, 1996
Congo	Cameroun, DR Congo, Uganda	...	...	ACC/SCN, 1996; UNHCR, 95
Eritrea	Ethiopia, Sudan	...	133,000	ACC/SCN, 1996
Ethiopia	Eritrea, Kenya, Sudan	11,000	23,000	ACC/SCN, 1996
Liberia	Ivory Coast, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Sierra Leone	729,000	1,500,000	ACC/SCN, 1996
Mozambique	Mali, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe	...	154,000	ACC/SCN, 1996
Rwanda	DR Congo, Tanzania, Uganda	560,000	1,633,000	ACC/SCN, 1996
Sierra Leone	Gambia, Guinea, Liberia	228,000	609,000	ACC/SCN, 1996
Somalia	Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Yemen	524,000	840,000	ACC/SCN, 1996; UNHCR, 96
Sudan	CAR, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda	416,000	2,000,000	ACC/SCN, 1996
Uganda	DR Congo, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania	12,000	20,000	ACORD, 1998
Total 1996		**2,808,000**	**9,247,000**	

† 1.5 million or 12 per cent of all displaced experience a high prevalence of severe malnutrition and/or sharply elevated mortality rates. †† A further 1,350,000, or 11 per cent, experience high nutritional risk and likely pockets of severe

4.5 In sickness and in health

There is ample evidence to suggest that conflicts, along with large-scale population movements, have contributed to dramatic and differentiated declines in health sector functions and delivery. Insecurity has led to closure of urban and rural health clinics, the displacement of staff and disruption of immunisation programmes – putting added pressures on what are already fragile national healthcare systems. In Mozambique, an estimated 196 health posts or centres were destroyed during the civil war, with an additional 288 heavily damaged and therefore forced to close, representing in total 34 per cent of the health network (Goudie and Nepayti 1999). These problems have been compounded by widespread looting of equipment and medicines, and sometimes to deliberate targeting of health structures. The impact of such disruption on health systems can be dramatic. A report released by the US-based International Rescue Committee in June 2000, estimated that 1.6 million people may have died in the DRC due to the war since August 1998. A major contributor to this has been the collapse of the health services in the worst affected regions. In the Eastern Congo, 30–40 per cent of children did not survive their first year, with the figure being as high as 47 per cent in some areas (Economic Intelligence Unit, Country Report on Zambia and DRC, July 2000).

Lack of water and sanitation have contributed to widespread incidence of disease and illness; reaching near epidemic proportions in overcrowded refugee and IDP camps. The pathways between conflict and the spread of communicable and vector-borne diseases such as TB, measles and malaria are well known (Macrae and Zwi 1994). War has also served as a vehicle for the spread of HIV/AIDS (see Box 8).

Box 8 HIV in Uganda and Eritrea

HIV and AIDS have devastating implications for growth and development. In Uganda their spread has arguably been accelerated both by the conflicts across the entire country before 1986 and by the simmering low intensity conflict in the North since then. WHO estimates the number of HIV infected people in the country at 1.9 million; the infection rate hovers at around 25 per cent of the population (WHO, 1997). Between 1993 and 1998, 565,000 adults and 250,000 children have died directly as a result of AIDS. AIDS is not an illness that solely affects the poor: HIV prevalence is proportionally higher in urban areas and among the more educated occupational groups. Due to the severity of the AIDS crisis the country's productive work force could perhaps be halved by the year 2010. In the more severely affected regions, less land is under cultivation and farmers are becoming less interested in long-term planning and investment. As health expenditures rise and household-care increases, labour inputs will be severely constrained and development slowed.

In 1994, **Eritrea's** AIDS Control Office estimated that upward 60,000 individuals had contracted HIV. Almost 71 per cent of those believed to have contracted HIV lived in Asmara and 12 per cent in Asab. Almost 75 per cent of those with HIV are between the ages of 20 and 39, roughly two thirds of which are men. As in Uganda, conflict has created the enabling conditions within which HIV could spread; areas of high prevalence correlated with high areas of Ethiopian militarisation. Sex work, an important survival strategy for many Eritrean women, provided a large client base. Though not as dire as the Ugandan situation, the incidence of HIV in Eritrea is rising rapidly.

As a result AIDS cannot be perceived solely as a 'medical condition' that can be managed and prevented through changes in sexual behaviour. It can only be slowed through addressing politico-cultural and economic conditions – from the micro to the macro level. Another long-term effect of conflict is the persistence of psychosocial trauma (see Box 9).

Box 9 Psychosocial trauma

Psychological trauma attributed to conflict is a critical public health issue. Indeed, much of the documentation on Northern Uganda refers to what are called the 'psychosocial' impacts of conflict: 'civilians, particularly women, have been dehumanised, disabled, lost relatives and been traumatised' (ACORD 1997). But individualised Western approaches are proving increasingly inadequate. Western health care models that treat trauma as an individuated condition irrespective of their social context are ill equipped to deal with the particular circumstances of conflict. Indeed, there is no such thing as 'universal human response to highly stressful events' (RRN 1995). Health programmes targeting 'vulnerable' groups such as 'traumatised children' or particular events such as 'rape' may risk disconnecting such actors from their community and from the wider context of their experience. Rather, insecurity must be perceived as an enduring trauma for people embedded in conflict environments; ultimately, psychological effects cannot be divorced from political contexts. In some cases, the mending of social relations can be viewed as the most important element of the healing process.

4.6 Lessons in conflict: the impact on education and human capital

Conflict has had a major negative impact on education enrolment rates in SSA. Not only is SSA the region with the lowest primary gross enrolment ratios (PGER)[31], its ratios actually decreased from 78 to 74 per cent between 1980 and 1995 (Colclough and Al-Samarrai 1998). Box 10 discusses empirical research on the impact of conflict on education. This impact can be understood in both supply and demand terms (White 2000). In times of conflict, the supply of schools would be expected to fall, and the quality of existing ones diminish, due to reduced government expenditure on education in percentage terms, as the government reallocates resources to military demands, and in absolute terms as GNP falls. The supply of schools may also contract due to destruction, especially when schools become deliberate targets of one side in the conflict, e.g. by RENAMO who sought to destabilise services and hence the Mozambican government (Graham-Brown 1991). Overall the Mozambican government estimated that 68 per cent of primary schools were closed or destroyed by the war (Government of Mozambique 1995). Primary schools also lost one third of their teaching staff between 1981–87 (Goudie and Nepayti 1999). In Southern Sudan, the destruction of schools has caused demand to outstrip supply (Graham-Brown 1991). Also high population displacement can cause the existing supply of education to be mismatched with demand, in geographical terms.

From the demand side, the costs of schooling may rise as the government is no longer able to finance education, at the same time as households experience falling incomes due to rising

[31] Primary and Secondary Gross Enrolment Ratios are defined respectively as the number of children who are enrolled in primary or secondary school expressed as a proportion (percentage) of the number of children in the age-group who are eligible to attend (Colclough *et al.* 1994).

unemployment, asset and livelihood destruction, and loss of wage earners through death, displacement or conflict participation, reducing the ability of parents to meet education costs. The opportunity costs of sending children to school may increase if heightened poverty and the loss of family members necessitates the use of children's labour, or if the risks of travelling to school in conflict zones are too high, such as in RENAMO controlled areas in Mozambique.

Evidence of child soldiers in SSA, for example UNICEF's (1997) estimate that 10–20 per cent of combatants in Liberia were under 15 years of age, also suggests demand for education may fall during conflict as children choose or are forced to fight. The literature on education tends to focus on girls' lower GER. But in times of conflict the gender difference between GER may alter due to the majority of child soldiers being boys. Rose *et al.* (1997) attributed the sharp fall in male PGER during Ethiopia's conflict to the decision of some boys to fight and hence leave school, and the avoidance of school by those who wanted to escape school-based army conscription. The perceived returns to education may also alter. In Mozambique, technical secondary schools experienced large falls in enrolment ratios during the civil war. Graham-Brown (1991) attributed this mainly to the high unemployment among graduates due to the virtual collapse of the productive sectors of the economy, which reduced the private returns to this education, hence the demand for it. In Sierra Leone, Wright (1997) discusses how involvement in armed conflict has given many young people positions of responsibility and respect, which were traditionally acquired through education. This has consequently cast doubt on education as the main route to social mobility, reducing demand for education. The long-term effects of disrupted education are severe for countries, in terms of a poorly educated and skilled labour force, and more gravely, in terms of creating a future generation which has known nothing but violence.

Box 10 Testing the impact of conflict on education

White (2000) used education enrolment data for 25 SSA countries to test the two hypotheses that internal armed conflict reduces Primary Gross Enrolment Rations (PGER) and Secondary Gross Enrolment Rations (SGER) and that male PGER and SGER are reduced more than female GER, based on the discussion of the impact of conflict on supply and demand for education (see above). White first compared mean total PGER and SGER, and male and female PGER and SGER, for 5 year periods between 1970–1997, for the 25 SAA countries, which included ones that had experienced conflict and ones which had not. The conflict countries were shown to experience significantly slower growth in PGER than non-conflict countries, in both absolute and percentage terms, while conflict countries exhibited slower SGER growth in absolute terms. In conflict countries, male PGER only increased by 1.4 per cent in the 27 year period, compared to 35.3 per cent for non-conflict countries, yet female PGER increased by 35.8 per cent in conflict countries, suggesting that conflict affects male PGER proportionally more than female GER.

White then conducted multivariate analysis on 22 of the 25 countries using data from 1980–1997. PGER and SGER, total, male and female ratios, formed the dependent variables, with LOG GNP per capita, per centGNP spent on education by each country's government, and various measures of conflict (dummy variable for the years a country experienced conflict, the number of previous 10 spent in civil armed conflict, and per cent of population killed by conflict) taken as independent variables. Conflict was negatively correlated with all GERs at the 0.01 significance level, supporting the hypothesis that internal armed conflict reduces GER to a

lower level than would be achieved in the absence of conflict. The co-efficients were large at the primary level, as high as 26.7 for FPGER, indicating that conflict has a substantial negative impact on education. Gender differences were not proved to be significant.

However, a major limitation of the research was that individual country patterns were submerged. An examination of Ethiopia's SGER, for example, shows the narrowing of the gender difference between boys and girls GER during the conflict years until 1993/4. Another problem is the difficulty of determining whether conflict directly impacts on GER or whether its effects are mediated through other channels. The research clearly showed that GER were most strongly correlated with GNP per capita; however, it was impossible to determine whether the impact of GNP per capita on GER was the result of conflict-induced GNP fall, which is well documented in the conflict-literature or due to other economic determinants, such as the declining terms of trade or increasing indebtedness which were affecting all of SSA during the same period. Another problem was the lack of disaggregated data within countries, as it was assumed that major falls in GER in some conflict torn regions could not be detected when aggregated at national level with relatively unaffected rations. For example, while the Tete and Zambezia provinces were deprived of 80 per cent of their schools due to the intensity of RENAMO activities giving them the lowest GER in Mozambique, the capital Maputo was relatively unaffected, sustaining high GER (Graham-Brown 1991).

4.7 Gendered conflict

Recent analysis and research has revised simplistic gender stereotypes of men as perpetrators of violence and women as the passive victims of conflict (El Bushra and Lopez 1993; Byrne 1996b). Women may also be actively involved in conflicts. Aning (1998) discusses the diverse ways in which women participated in the conflict in Liberia, including providing crucial political support, access to centrally-placed regional political actors, courier services, funding sources, and even intelligence to assist the NPLF's early efforts. Women may also be guilty of encouraging violence by men or participating as direct combatants themselves, challenging the universal gender myth of women as caring, nurturing, peace makers. Women have been seen to be capable of horrific acts of violence in Rwanda, in Sierra Leone and Liberia. The Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) had an independently established women's wing of combatants with a fearsome reputation for efficiency and brutality (Aning 1998), and women also figured quite prominently in the leadership of the RUF (Revolutionary United Front) in Sierra Leone (Richards 1996). Evidence is also emerging of girls joining the ranks of child soldiers, for instance, in the Lord's Resistance Army, in Uganda (World Vision 1996) where girls who had been abducted were forced to serve in support roles, transporting materials, cooking food, helping to loot villages and even to serve as 'wives' for soldiers.

Women have also been involved in more positive roles, such as efforts to offer support to displaced women and refugees. An example is the female-led NGO *Our Sisters Place*, which opened and maintained a home in Monrovia for the provision of assistance and guardianship to orphaned and prostituted teenagers. In both Sierra Leone and Liberia, women have played leading roles in the efforts to find lasting solutions to the conflicts. In Sierra Leone, the leader of the RUF negotiating team was a woman, and in Liberia, the *Women's Peace Initiative* has been actively engaged in endeavours to resolve the country's conflict since 1993 (Aning 1998).

Both men and women are victims of conflict, directly as war fatalities or through the disruption of their livelihoods and social networks. However, conflict impacts differently on men and women, making a gendered analysis of conflict essential. While both men and women are victims of violence in conflict, men are a greater target for physical violence, with World Vision Staff in Burundi estimating that boys were 2–4 times more likely to be killed than girls (World Vision 1996). The dominance of refugee populations by women is indeed a reflection of men's vulnerability in conflict, and means that in numerical terms, women and their dependants form the majority of the vast numbers of people affected by today's wars.

Women on the other hand are more likely to be the victims of sexual violence. In conflict situations, rape may be opportunistic by combatants, such as RENAMO rebels who took advantage of lone women (Jacobson 1999) or used to humiliate and dishonour the group to which the women belong. In Rwanda, rape was systematically used as a weapon of ethnic cleansing to destroy community ties (World Vision 1996). Women's vulnerability is increased when they lose protection from their male relatives, who have been killed, gone to fight or abandoned them, and as community protection measures break down. Sexual violence is widespread even in refugee camps, where women go supposedly to be safe. Lone women are also vulnerable to opportunistic thieves and bandits. Byrne (1996) argues for more attention to be given to the protection and enforcement on women's rights in times of conflict, as it is clear that women have different needs to men and in many respects are more vulnerable.

Sexual violence has severe health consequences, stemming from pregnancy or amateur abortion attempts when health services are disrupted, the promotion of sexually transmitted diseases and severe psychological effects (Jacobson 1999). Before the war in Rwanda, an estimated 45 - 60 per cent of Rwandan soldiers and an even higher proportion of officers were infected with HIV, with devastating impacts, as shown by the thousands of rape victims who have tested positive for HIV after the conflict (Halim 1998).

Rape has poverty implications for women, as many rape victims are ostracised by their society who dishonour them, making economic survival difficult, and even forcing some to survive through prostitution, further increasing their risks (El Bushra and Lopez 1993). Rape victims in Rwanda were particularly disadvantaged, because no one wanted to marry a woman raped by the enemy ethnic group (Halim 1998). In response to these potential consequences, there has been a noticeable increase in early marriages as families seek to find their daughters a husband before conflict-associated sexual violence makes them undesirable. World Vision (1996) claims that 55 per cent of girls were marrying earlier than before in conflict torn Burundi, with similar trends witnessed in Somalia. In Sudan, reports of women and children being captured as war booty and turned into slaves have also emerged (Turshen and Twagiramariya 1998)

Women are affected more than men by the collapse of health services in conflict situations, due to their need for reproductive and maternal health care, reflected by appalling rises in maternal and child mortality in conflict zones (Jacobson 1999). During conflict, families' and communities' material and

social resources are stretched to the limit, increasing the burden placed on women to provide, both economically and emotionally, at the same time as they experience a dramatic reduction in the degree of support available (El Bushra and Lopez 1993). The increased work burden may spill onto their daughters as well, with UNHCR observing in refugee camps that girls are quickly removed from school to meet the increased demand for labour, giving ratios of boys and girls school attendance of 3:1 (World Vision 1996). Women and children are particularly vulnerable to death or disablement by landmines, as they are often the ones working in the fields where landmines are planted. El Bushra and Lopez (1993) argue that while disabled men expect their wives to care for them, disabled women are frequently abandoned by their husbands, further increasing their vulnerability to poverty.

Conflict also affects men and women's mobility differently. Evidence to support this comes from Mozambique, where 90 per cent of the population in some rural areas during the early 1980s were women, reflecting how men were generally able to flee to towns, while women, pregnant or encumbered by dependants, were forced to remain in the rural areas to produce 'taxes' in food. They were then made to provide domestic services to occupying forces (Jacobson 1999). Fear of violence and rape also limits women's ability to travel to market, work in the fields, stand in queues for food aid, collect firewood and water, all undermining their ability to provide for themselves and their dependants on a daily basis (El Bushra and Lopez 1993).

Conflict situations generally have important demographic impacts, with repercussions for poverty, deriving from an increase in female-headed households. An estimated 20 per cent of the male population died in the Rwandan genocide, leaving 60 per cent of women widowed, and 70 per cent of the population female (Turshen and Twagiramariya 1998). Female-headed households often face greater difficulty in accessing resources, such as credit and land. In Rwanda, returning refugee widows not only find their property and land occupied by others, but are told they cannot inherit their husband's land or property. Hutu widows or those with husbands in prison are vulnerable to being forced off their property, or even if they try to get their assets back may be thrown in prison (Halim 1998). There are safety implications as well, since lone women are at greater risk of sexual violence. The demographic gender imbalance reduces the chances of women finding a husband, and hence economic security, with severe poverty implications (El Bushra and Lopez 1993).

In some societies, women's sense of identity and self-esteem is reflected outwardly in standards of modest dress, standards which maybe difficult to maintain in wartime. Thus El Bushra and Lopez (1993) report of Somalia women who had lost their clothes being confined to their houses and therefore unable to collect desperately needed food aid. Failure to consider gender when delivering relief in conflict situations tends to augment suffering. For example, women who normally take responsibility for household management are often sidelined in relief distribution procedures when to speed up relief efforts, only male household heads are registered (Byrne 1996). Yet, distributing food directly to women is insufficient if adequate security is not provided to ensure women maintain control over the resources they receive because food aid intended for women and their dependants may be stolen by men (World Vision

1996). Rwandan widows in refugee camps in Tanzania complained of how when the Tanzanian Red Cross handed food to commune leaders they received very small rations or none at all, or stronger individuals snatched away their rations. Improvements only came when CONCERN took over and appointed its own distributors, men and women (Pottier 1996). The type of food rations provided may increase women's work load and hence suffering. For example, the provision of pigeon beans in Mozambique which required long periods of cooking to become palatable, simply added to the long periods of time women were forced to queue for all supplies (Jacobson 1999).

Internally displaced women are an acutely vulnerable group as they bear the emotional, physical and material brunt of relocation (Roe 1992). Forced displacement leads to dislocations in women's status and the breakdown of their families. This is in apparent contrast to empirical studies on rural-urban migration in SSA which have tended to view migration and displacement as a complex process of gradual acculturation and economic integration (UN 1993) in which women's migration to urban areas and employment are perceived as raising their social status and increasing their independence from men (Hugo 1993). Similarly, evidence suggests that female migrants adopt fertility-limiting preferences and contraceptive use (NRC 1993). But regular migrants are a selective group with relatively stable socio-economic profiles. In contrast, war-induced displacement compels a large number of individuals and households with varying degrees of human and social capital into flight (see Box 11).

Box 11 Female integration in Mozambique

In Mozambique a survey of internally displaced women suggests that many were unable to integrate fully into the urban labour market as they were detached from extended family networks, unaided by husbands and partners and excluded from employment opportunities (Agadjanian 1998). Lacking education, work skills and social connections necessary to successfully integrate into urban settings, forcibly displaced women were characterised by extreme economic vulnerability. The nature of their displacement had serious implications for socio-economic wellbeing and reproductive health. Their living conditions were often deplorable: consisting of squalid housing; lack of running water, electricity and basic amenities; and extreme scarcity of household belongings. Hierarchical gender relations were not only reproduced but strengthened – further hindering their social and economic participation. Access to sufficient health and family planning services were limited. In Mozambique, there is an urgent need for targeted measures that provide material aid, training and counselling as well as resources for community mobilisation among female IDPs and vulnerable groups.

Yet at the same time the literature on refugees, displaced women and those that remain in rural areas, suggests that they often manage to turn their difficult situation around and improve their social and economic status – absolutely and in relation to men (Kibreab 1995). For example, women may partake in activities previously performed by now absent men, hence experiencing an expansion in the activities and opportunities available to them. Women may learn new skills through their new roles, to increase their confidence and opportunities for income generation in peace time (El-Bushra and Lopez 1993). Social disruption caused by conflict and its aftermath, may cause previously unquestioned assumptions about gender norms to be challenged, as both men and women become aware of alternative roles. Alternatively,

the increased roles may simply translate into an increased work-load for women in peace time, if men fail to assist with household chores they were released from during conflict.

A major question is whether at the end of conflict women will be allowed to maintain their new roles, and keep the new division of labour. Indeed in some post-conflict transitions, women may become more vulnerable as competition for scarce resources intensifies, a situation relief agencies may aggravate if they direct inputs of seeds, farming equipment, to men and not women. Even after 'reform wars' waged by liberation movements as in Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Africa or Uganda (prior to 1986), where women have fought alongside men and equal rights for women have been among the goals of the struggle, it has sometimes proved difficult to preserve women's gains once the conflict is over.

Conflict in sum, has multiple effects on women, as the cases of Uganda and Eritrea illustrate (see Box 12). Clearly women and children suffer the most from violence, without usually being part of the decision to initiate conflicts. Indeed, Turshen (1999) reports how victims of conflict argue that women and children should receive compensation for conflicts like soldiers.

Box 12 Differentiated impact of conflict on women in Uganda and Eritrea

Before the outbreak of hostilities in the 1970s, there was a relatively clear demarcation distinguishing male and female household roles and the resources allocated to each. In **Northern Uganda**, women maintained exclusive access over subsistence crops while men controlled livestock and cash crop production. This relationship was reinforced by patriarchal marriage relationships and community consensus. As a result of the war, however, male labour migration and livelihood strategies have altered gender relations. Women have often been forced to assume their partner's previous tasks in male dominated spheres and yet have been subject to gender-based humiliation. Women not only have a greater share of responsibility and work; they still have only limited control over resources and limited enabling rights. Men have sometimes encroached into women's activities and onto subsistence land, tending to increase food insecurity; yet they have often escaped their obligations to pay school fees or provide basic household necessities. Paradoxically, the Ugandan government's *Women in Development Policy,* a programme originally designed to promote employment and intensive income-generation, may in some respects have aggravated their situation. Women suffer from an increasing work-burden, without benefiting from corollary increases in societal status or control over productive resources (el Bushra *et al.* 1993).

Formal women's political organisations and pro-poor policy did not exist in **Eritrea** before the 1970s. During the liberation struggle, ordinary Eritreans were organised into the National Union of Peasants, Workers, Women, Youth, Professionals and Students, forming the foundations of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF). Women's mass organisations such as the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) provided a structure for women's political representation from the village to the national level. The NUEW simultaneously campaigned for increased female participation in education, equal pay for equal work and for the implementation of family law at the grassroots. Whereas formerly, women had rarely participated in public community decision-making structures, a quota of twenty per cent for women at the local level was introduced. Since independence in 1991, women have been encouraged to participate in social transformation processes, from land reform to the introduction of local marriage by-laws. As of 1995, a ten per cent quota for women in the National Assembly has been in operation. Yet not all the gains won by women in the course of the armed struggle have been preserved, and women ex-fighters have sometimes found it difficult to reintegrate themselves into (male-dominated) rural communities.

4.8 A child's war

Large numbers of children, that is youth under the age of eighteen, have born arms in Sub-Saharan Africa's internal armed conflicts. They have been coerced or manipulated into joining either government armed forces (Ethiopia) opposition movements (Mozambique, Liberia or Angola) or both (Sierra Leone, Sudan). For example, in violation of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* (Art.38), which states that no child under the age of 15 years should be conscripted into an armed force, underage boys as young as eleven have been forcibly recruited into Sudan's army or government-sponsored militias. For its part, as the government has attempted to redirect world attention to the *Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army's* (SPLA) use of children: in 1991, an estimated 17,000 under-fifteen 'unaccompanied boys' were recruited by SPLA and trained in Ethiopian camps (HRW 1994a, 1994c). Boys as young as eight or nine belonged to the Small Boy Unit of NPLF in Liberia (Richards 1996). In Ethiopia under Mengistu between 1987 and 1991, thousands of under age boys were taken in sweeps of public places and forcibly recruited, trained as soldiers and then deployed directly on the fighting front. Museveni's NRA in Uganda had large numbers of orphans and unaccompanied children ('*kadogos*') who simply 'tagged along' for food, protection and survival. Museveni said the children came to his army to eat and to take revenge on those who had killed their parents and relatives (Furley 1995).

Forced recruitment has been practised due to shortages of soldiers, institutionalised discrimination against certain sectors of society, a perceived need to control the population, or ideological imperatives. It has been discovered that young, impressionable children can be converted into the fiercest of fighters through brutalisation, exposure to and involvement in violence (see Box 13). Indeed, many young soldiers are not so much coerced into recruitment, as subjected to subtle and insidious manipulation: how communities 'value' the reasons for conflict, for example, in terms of social justice, religious fanaticism, ethnic purity, redress of historical wrongs, have tended to shape the children's own perceptions and willingness to participate. In Sierra Leone there was widespread evidence of the use of drugs (marijuana and cocaine) and violent videos, to remove the children's fear and to inspire them with tactics for fighting respectively (Richards 1996). The use of young boys to inflict sexual violence on girls poses grave problems for the future, as a new culture where sexual violence is seen as acceptable may develop (World Vision 1996).

Richards (1995) argues the importance of seeing the political agency of youth cultures, instead of simply writing off child soldiers as deviant. He argues that the youth factor has much less attention in debates about conflict in Africa but he believes it may take over from ethnicity as an important cause of conflict in the continent because SSA has such a high proportion of young people, many of which who are potentially alienated form wider civil society by failures of educational systems and employment opportunities. He argues that young people were easily recruited by the rebel cause in Sierra Leone and Liberia because of the failure of the state systems to provide education and employment. Diamond-digging youths on the border between Sierra Leone and Liberia were already alienated from existing structures of state and civil society, being ambiguous in their national loyalties and many of their activities

being clandestine, making it easy for the RUF to mobilise them to their cause. Richards records eye-witness accounts, from the area adjacent to the rebel strongholds on the northern edge of the Gola Forest, of youthful RUF warriors alternating between bouts of hectic diamond mining and carefully laid ambushes on lonely forest tracks. Richards argues that these youth are hardly distinguishable from the gangs of youngsters found before the war in this remote area, fighting for their economic survival in the remote forest diamond workings under arduous and often violent conditions.

Box 13 Children in Liberia

Since the outbreak of conflict in 1989, tens of thousands of Liberians were killed and approximately one-third of the population forced to flee the country as refugees. Mass 'ethnic' killings and horrifying atrocities marked the ongoing internal conflict. The Liberian conflict was distinct from 'conventional war' in that there were no commonly understood rules, few legitimate military structures and no readily discernible chains of command. Children who were used as soldiers are among the most tragic victims of Liberia's conflict. Although international law forbids the use of children under the age of fifteen as soldiers, thousands were involved with both the *National Patriotic Front of Liberia* (NPFL) and the *United Liberian Movement for Democracy in Liberia* (UNLIMO). UNICEF estimates indicate that between ten and twenty per cent of the combatants, or six to twelve thousand fighters, were *under* the age of fifteen (UNICEF 1997). The *World Health Organisation* (WHO) reported in 1994 that nearly two-thirds of all secondary school pupils in Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, had seen someone killed, tortured or raped during the conflict.

The implications of child soldiers for long-term development are disastrous. In Liberia, an entire generation has known nothing but conflict; war has been the single and most salient factor conditioning their political, economic, social and cultural life during their lives. As a result, the rehabilitation and reinsertion of child soldiers back into their communities' poses a number of serious difficulties. Next of kin have frequently been slain or have fled. In other cases, households have refused to take children back on account of the abuses they had been forced to commit (HRW 1994b). The UNOMIL *Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Programme* has trained one hundred trainers to work with community people, sensitising them to the perils involved in reintegrating fighters into their communities. The *Children's Assistance Programme* (CAP) and UNICEF are working toward 'de-traumatising' the children and reuniting them with their families (UNICEF 1998). Nevertheless, the problems of reintegrating former child soldiers into their communities are immense.

5 Conflict, humanitarian aid and poverty: implications for policy

Conventional development analysis has tended to treat conflict as exogenous – despite the fact that in SSA conflict has been just as 'normal' as peace. Indeed over half the countries of the continent have experienced conflicts in the past two decades. Hence programmes for poverty alleviation which do not factor in conflict are seriously incomplete. They deal only with the more routine and manageable forms of impoverishment, rather than the acute forms of social misery that are common in war situations.

The difference conflict makes, however, is not just to the scale of human suffering. It also poses important challenges to how we think about development, poverty, the state, conflict itself and post-conflict reconstruction, with major implications for policy. These challenges can now be summed up in the seven basic propositions below:

First, **armed conflicts have structurally reconfigured entire states, national economies and societies**, producing new forms of inequality and acute vulnerability in the manner analysed in greater detail above. Hence they require policy responses that deal not just with symptoms, but are strategically targeted to foster conflict-prevention and post-war reconstruction.

Second, as we have argued, **armed conflicts cannot be separated neatly from peacetime 'development' and indeed often arise from the contradictions of the latter** (to twist a phrase from Clausewitz, war is under-development by other means). Thus policy responses that focus primarily on restoring some kind of pre-war normality, rebuilding the state, rehabilitation, reconstruction, etc., may not always produce the desired results. In the worst cases, they may even re-ignite conflict, especially where the conditions that erupted in the first place are ignored, as in Sudan at the end of its first civil war in 1972.[32]

Third, **armed conflicts have specific consequences that flow from the way they change power relations, create new economic incentive systems and reorder society, including gender relations**. These basic realities must be factored into conflict-resolution, peacebuilding and reconstruction; otherwise the latter is much less likely to succeed.

Fourth, **to the extent that African wars have been fuelled increasingly by economic incentives and agendas, one cannot necessarily assume that each side's objective is to win, or in the case of stalemate, negotiate, hence ending the conflict**. Instead, warring parties, and those arming them, trading with them or allied to them, may acquire vested interests in the continuation of hostilities: the present conflict in the DRC, in which there are so many different economic stakeholders, would seem to be a case in point. It is obviously much harder to negotiate peace agreements, still more to make them sustainable, when for some or even most of the protagonists, the incentives are greater for war than peace.

It follows, fifthly, that **policy interventions need to find ways of ensuring that all parties gain more from peace than from war. To do this they must identify the groups with vested interests in war**, be these existing state elites and military establishments, new actors like warlords, mercenaries, arms traffickers and diamond merchants, or ordinary combatants (including child soldiers) for whom war and plunder have become livelihood strategies and find ways of changing their behaviour. This may sometimes necessitate Faustian bargains with powerful groups, who may have little serious interest in peacebuilding, reconstruction or poverty-alleviation.[33] Yet donors, international agencies and NGOs, sixth, should ensure their interventions do not inadvertently entrench groups with a vested interest in war. **Instead, indeed they should seek ways of identifying and empowering groups with a vested interest in peace.**

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[32] The Sudanese government failed to make use of an important opportunity build a more inclusive political system, and to address the under-development of the South. Consequently civil war reignited and still continues.

[33] This is analogous to the broader problem donors face in negotiating reform or poverty-alleviation programmes with state elites whose own priorities may be dominated by the requirements of rent-seeking or political survival.

For it must be recognised, seventh, that **donor interventions and humanitarian aid in war-torn societies have sometimes themselves reinforced the negative impacts of conflict**. **These paradoxes of humanitarian assistance need to be brought out into the open. Donors need to be far more self-critical about their own programmes and their potentially perverse effects.**

The latter are worth elaborating on further. There is a considerable body of evidence that poorly considered donor programmes may contribute to conflict (de Waal 1997). For instance, externally-imposed economic adjustments, inappropriate use of political conditionality, and mis-reading of early warnings of conflict, are all stressed in recent assessments of international responses to the Rwanda genocide (Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda 1996).

In addition humanitarian assistance during conflicts is sometimes coopted by warring parties and may help sustain parallel war economies. The massive US$ 3 billion intervention in Somalia suffered from serious leakages that reinforced (and were partially incorporated into) the war economy (Ahmed and Green 1999). Agencies such as ICRC and CARE International were forced to use militia bodyguards at a cost of upwards $US 100,000 per week (Prendergast 1997). Contracts worth millions of dollars were awarded to competing factions and played an important role in sustaining the warlords' patronage system. In Mozambique humanitarian aid during the civil war also helped finance the war, while the increased role of external NGOs in the management of aid undermined the government's authority and administrative capacity (Stewart and Samman, forthcoming). Both rebels and government forced civilians in areas they controlled into relief camps, partly in order to develop or maintain systems of patronage and control.

Moreover, large-scale humanitarian interventions have tended to suffer from fragmentation and lack of coordination. Assistance has often arrived too late when many people have been forced to liquidate their assets (Ahmed 1994; de Waal 1989). Late delivery of aid has resulted from lack of preparedness on the part of international aid agencies and a general confusion on how to distribute while attempting to maintain neutrality. By concentrating resources (in feeding centres for example) relief agencies sometimes attract raiding. This was witnessed in Sierra Leone where the pattern of RUF violence from the outset was to concentrate attacks on arm dumps, hospital pharmacies and food stores. In 1992, the Gola Forest village of Sembehun in Sierra Leone was raided by the RUF a day or two after radio announcements that the Red Cross was about to deliver supplies of bulgur wheat (Richards 1996).

The concentration of displaced persons in relief camps has all too often encouraged their abandonment of their assets, livelihoods and way of life, rather than protecting them. The use of food aid has tended to undermine domestic food production and has contributed to a culture of dependency. The latter has not necessarily been the product of food-aid as such – rather it has been the consequence of significant adjustments in people's way of life in response to the mechanisms through which assistance is provided (Ahmed 1994). A narrow focus on food delivery has also sometimes led to deterioration of sanitation in relief camps, giving rise to increased death rates among the displaced (de Waal 1989).

How, then, to ensure that donors, international agencies and NGOs respond in a more timely and coordinated manner to conflicts, both addressing the real needs of the most vulnerable groups, and

ensuring that their policies and programmes build peace, rather than feeding into the continuation of hostilities? The following are a number of recommendations that seem to follow from our analysis:

(1) **There is a need for more differentiated and contextual analyses of conflict.** These should not only recognise variations between conflicts in particular national contexts, but also intra-national differences in how conflicts impact on different regions, sectors and social groups. Aggregate national figures seldom allow enough differentiation, and hence priority should be given to more disaggregated empirical data and analysis.

(2) **Greater priority should be given to conflict prevention**. The donor community must begin to look for opportunities (entry points) to manage latent hostilities before they result in full-scale conflict. It should also be more sensitive to how its own regular development policies and programmes may help sow the seeds of conflict, and be prepared to subject these programmes to 'conflict-assessments' to identify their impact on underlying social tensions.

(3) **Conflict must not be perceived as an exogenous variable,** but should be integrated into the relief-development continuum. Development activities need not be suspended in conflict situations and conversely peacebuilding should be built into development programmes and aid operations.

(4) **It is important to recognise and deal with the tendency of conflicts to become embedded in social and political structures over the long term (see Section 1.4)**. The signature of formal peace agreements is no more than the starting point for a much more protracted process of reconstructing livelihoods and human security. Moreover, peace agreements cannot by themselves guarantee that hostilities will not reignite - as on many prior occasions in SSA.

(5) **Donors should broaden the range of their policy tools and interventions to address the whole spectrum of factors which perpetuate conflicts**, rather than addressing only their symptoms and consequences for the livelihoods of the poor. Hence policy interventions would, for instance, include such things as tighter controls against the export of conflict diamonds and other minerals, encouraging small arms moratoriums, rebuilding police and law and order systems, resettling former combatants and (over the longer-run) providing the education and employment opportunities that would discourage them and other young men from reverting to violence.

(6) **More attention also needs to be given to the macroeconomic framework for recovery from conflict,** and in particular how to deal with the perverse consequences of hyperinflation, capital flight, urban bias etc. and their effects on the livelihoods of the poor (see Section 3).

(7) **Far more sustained thought should go into how to restore the legitimacy and effectiveness of SSA's conflict-fractured states**, including their capacity to tax, assure the basic physical security of their citizens and provide services like health, education, water and demining. A crucial aspect of this relegitimisation of the state should be new forms of democratic accountability to ensure responsiveness to the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of society.

(8) **More sustained thought and policy action should go into ensuring that the elusive 'peace dividend' is made a tangible reality for the groups which have suffered most from conflict** –

women, children, the wounded and disabled, displaced populations, marginalised minorities and other vulnerable groups identified in Sections 4.3 to 4.8 – as well as the rehabilitation of the services (health, water and sanitation, education, markets etc.) which will most improve their welfare and livelihoods.

(9) Explicit attention needs to be paid to the gender dimensions (4.7 above), including the differential impact of conflict upon the vulnerability and coping strategies of men and women, the need to ensure the protection of women in relief responses and interventions, the role of women in conflict and peacebuilding, and the consequent transformations (or sometimes the lack of them) in the gender division of labour and in the lives of women.

(10) **Donors, international aid agencies and NGOs should be more self-critical about the potentially perverse consequences of humanitarian aid (and indeed regular development assistance). They need to develop forms of accountability** – to local as well as international stakeholders – to make them less susceptible to such problems in the future.

(11) **Donors and international agencies should be more proactive and strategic in their relations with potentially obstructive governments and warring groups, to avoid co-optation by them, to moderate their excesses, and** empower groups that might challenge them and support peace.

(12) As conflicts tend to be globally and regionally interconnected, policy responses to them require greater policy coherence (Leader and Macrae 2000) and international co-ordination between donors, international agencies and NGOs. Policies and programmes should cover not just individual national conflicts, but also deal with their regional and global ramifications, including the entire range of national, regional and international protagonists, as well as the commercial networks, which sustain conflicts. **They should also be designed to encourage regional and subregional cooperation among African governments.**

Appendix 1 Military expenditures as a percentage of GDP, education and health in main SSA conflict-affected states

Countries	% GDP		% of Education & Health (1991)
	1985	1996	
Angola	15.1	6.5	208
Burundi	3.0	5.1	42
Chad	2.9	4.0	74
DR Congo	1.5	2.8	71
Congo	1.9	1.9	**...**
Djibouti	7.9	5.4	**...**
Eritrea	NA	8.4	**...**
Ethiopia	17.9	2	190
Liberia	2.4	**... ***	**...**
Mozambique	8.5	3.7	121
Rwanda	1.9	6.8	**...**
Sierra Leone	1.0	**... ***	[23]
Somalia	6.2	**... ***	**...**
South Africa	2.7	2.2	41
Sudan	3.2	5.8	44
Uganda	1.8	2.4	18
All SSA	3.1	3.2	...
All LDCs	4.3	2.5	72
All Developing Countries	7.1	3.7	63

Source: IISS (1998); UNDP (1998)

* IISS provides military expenditure estimates for Liberia, Sierra Leone and Somalia of 4.1 per cent, 5.9 per cent and 4.8 per cent of GDP in 1996, which we omit because we consider them particularly conjectural given the absence of government in these countries

Appendix 2 Trends in human development

	Human Development Index (HDI) Value					Human Poverty Index (%)	Population without access to		Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births)	
							Safe water	Health service		
	1970	*1980*	*1987*	*1992*	*1995*	*1995*	*1990-96*	*1990-95*	*1991*	*1996*
Angola	0.195	0.212	0.304	0.271	0.344		68		128	170
Burundi	0.157	0.219	0.235	0.276	0.241	49.5	48	20	108	106
Chad	0.135	0.151	0.157	0.212	0.318		76	70	125	92
Ethiopia			0.282	0.249	0.252	55.5	75	54	125	113
Liberia			0.333	0.317					131	
Mozambique	0.248	0.247	0.239	0.252	0.281	48.5	59.9	37	149	133
Rwanda			0.304	0.274					112	
Sierra Leone	0.155	0.177	0.150	0.209	0.185	58.2	66	62	146	164
Somalia			0.200	0.217	0.184-0.159[34]				125	
Sudan	0.188	0.229	0.255	0.276	0.343	42.5	50	30	102	73
Uganda	0.213	0.215	0.354	0.272	0.340	42.1	54	51	105	88
SSA					0.378				91	

Source: Human Development Report (various) UNDP.

[34] Source: Human Development Report, Somalia (1998).

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