

VIOLENT CONFLICT AND MOBILITY— A MICRO ANALYSIS

MICROCON

Policy and Practice in Violence Affected Contexts:
What Can the Latest Conflict Research Teach Us?

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INTRODUCTION

Most conflict analysis, including analysis specifically focused on the nexus between violent conflict and mobility, has typically drawn on regional, national and international perspectives. Yet at its core, conflict originates from people's behaviour and how they interact with society and their environment— from its 'micro' foundations. The Micro Analysis of Violent Conflict Study (MICROCON) has tried to correct the macro bias in analysis by studying a range of micro dimensions of the conflict cycle — from causal linkages and motivations, to capabilities, perceptions, incentives and impacts on individuals, households and groups — across disciplines and across a wide variety of country case studies. The ultimate aim of the endeavour has been to create national, regional and international policies that place individuals and groups at the centre of their interventions.

With regard to migration studies, there has been a similar tendency to focus on the macro level and on economic explanation of mobility although the new economics of migration thesis increasingly focuses on the micro level of the household and its economic livelihood as the lens through which to understand mobility. To the extent that the conjuncture of mobility and conflict has been explored this too has predominantly been in terms of macro-level explanations. The classic study here dates back two decades (Zolberg et al., 1989). By contrast, there is of course a long and extensive tradition of micro-level research on refugees and IDPs: but the dominant concern has been to investigate the lives and livelihoods – the situated experience - of forcibly displaced people rather than the causes, consequences and experiences of mobility in situations of conflict. Arguably, the deficit of micro level analysis is greater in the study of conflict-induced displacement than in the broader field of migration studies. The Work Packages on conflict and mobility have made some progress in exploring this area.

The underlying contention of this paper is that conflict-induced movement can only be fully understood at the *nexus* of agency and structure. Further to this, migration in violent contexts very often combines economic *and* political aspects. A framework that is perhaps best equipped to address all of these facets is the political economy of livelihoods approach. This approach focuses on the interaction of political and

economic processes, the distribution of power and wealth between groups and individuals, and how these relationships are created, sustained or transformed over time (Duffield 2001). The political economy approach demonstrates that 'conflict transforms society, rather than simply destroying it, causing people to adapt their behaviour and their livelihoods in order to survive or to minimise risk, or to capitalise on the opportunities that conflict presents' (Collinson 2003:11).

Within this framework, migration arises as one such adaptation strategy, albeit highly constrained. The task is then to study how assets, motivations, perceptions, capabilities, resources and power intersect to produce migration as a strategy in a particular individual, household or group. This same approach also helps us understand how migration proceeds (migration trajectories or 'who moves where and how') and what the impacts of conflict-induced mobility are on migrant livelihoods (who copes how). But we can even reach beyond this one-way causality model (conflict-migration) to study the impacts *of* migration on conflict and conflict-affected societies. After all, mobility is not simply a 'product' of a social process (here violent conflict), it is itself a *shaping force* of social processes. Migration affects host communities and communities of origin; it impacts patterns of inequality and power relations.

In what follows, this synthesis report provides an overview of the project's findings on the micro dimensions of the conflict-mobility interface. In the process, it draws both on papers explicitly related to mobility and those whose findings are relevant to our understanding of the conflict-mobility nexus. The synthesis report is divided into three main sections to reflect three key areas of findings. First, the focus lies on causes and dynamics of forced mobility in conflict settings. Second, the report looks at in-country dimensions, summarizing findings on the impacts of violence on the internally displaced as well as the latter's impact on host societies. Third, the report explores transnational linkages, looking both at how diasporas interact with their conflict-affected home areas (diaspora-home effects and home-diaspora effects) and at the way in which and the conditions under which certain segments of diasporas might contribute to violent conflict. Important policy implications follow from all three areas of findings. A final section draws out the main conclusions and their policy significance.

CAUSES AND DYNAMICS

a. Conflict-Migration Causality

It is a well-established that violent outbursts of conflict are followed by large internal displacements and cross-border flows of people. But how exactly does conflict cause migration? Not all departures are precipitous and are often mediated by complex factors and considerations. To begin with, to understand why people flee at a particular point during the conflict, we have to understand why they did not do so previously. What made them stay or prevented them from leaving (i.e. involuntary immobility)?

Lindley (2009) explores these important questions through a micro analysis of the causes and processes of migration from a specific locale (Mogadishu) at a specific historical juncture (2007-2008). Why people who have endured urban warfare for 16 or 17 years now flee in large numbers? What informs the decision and the process of leaving? The reason for people's staying is that they have 'found ways to negotiate daily dangers' (2009:4); they put in place survival and coping mechanisms. Some may even have done well out of conflict (warlords) and others despite of it (small and large businessmen, specifically the Hawiye business class) (ibid:18).

Hence we have to analyze why, how and for whom these coping mechanisms break down. Lindley begins by noting that Somali conflict is not 'one' unified conflict but has transformed over time. The first reason for a rupture is then the change in the qualitative nature of violence (ibid:22). In 2007 and 2008, Lindley notes, the nature of conflict changes fundamentally. In December 2006, the Islamic Courts (UIC) who have overtaken Somalia in June of that same year are pushed back as the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) backed by Ethiopian forces retakes territory, including Mogadishu. The reversal is propelled by the support TFG draws from the wider 'war on terror.'

At this juncture, violence becomes unpredictable and more intense, and thus more life-threatening; it becomes disruptive to livelihood strategies (e.g. operating a business). Additionally, while violence was previously inflicted using light weaponry and settled into regular patterns, now heavy weaponry is used including tank shells and rockets; 'bombardments are indiscriminate, lobbed into densely populated neighbourhoods.' The result is that civilian adaptive/coping mechanisms break down and their security deteriorates. The violence restricts mobility and causes economic disruption (looting, bribing, destruction, in addition to hyperinflation and higher food and fuel prices).

But even more close-up analysis is needed to understand why people make the decision to leave. Lindley does this by utilizing the livelihoods analysis' focus on the capabilities and resources that people possess (ibid:8). She finds that three main types of changes precipitate outmigration—i) loss of human capabilities (loss of immediate family members, physical assault, rape, loss of limbs); 2) loss of financial and physical assets (cash and savings, structures, equipment); and iii) loss of socio-political protection (e.g. membership in certain groups which was an asset before and now becomes a liability). Livelihood becomes severely threatened or impossible. Some livelihood strategies might be targeted directly (TFG employees, NGO workers). For many people, a number of elements might overlap in their decision.

b. The Process of Migration— Complex Patterns and Complicated Journeys

The actual process of migration has been little understood. In the 'Voices of the dispossessed' and 'Leaving Mogadishu,' Lindley (2009b and 2009a) helps outline the complexity in patterns of outmigration in the Somali regions. Migration has been a common response to disintegration of livelihoods and political reconfigurations but has taken various forms, from temporary to permanent, acute and massive to continual and smaller-scale. There has been urban-rural migration and rural-urban

relocation. Many have been displaced and dispossessed before they left the city. Migration paths lead to safer locations relatively close to home, to safer regions within Somalia (Somaliland, and to a lesser extent, Puntland), to neighbouring countries (Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti) and further afield.

Lindley (2009a) also contributes to a micro-study of mobility in states of violence by analyzing the complexity of the individual 'journey' itself. Mobility can start before leaving the city as people first try to adapt. Strategies include intra-city relocation, staying put, avoidance of dangerous areas. Between the decision to leave the city 'in principle' and actual departure, there are mediating factors that might constrain or mediate the act. Violence, for example, could itself impede departure as could limited financial resources. On the other hand, knowing people elsewhere (e.g. rural relatives) could speed departure.

Once the journey starts, there are many stopping points. 'Route-making' depends on a variety of factors— location of relatives, clan homelands, urban centres less affected by violence. The journey often has no clear 'end-point.' 'Expectations of intended destinations— of peace, helpful relatives, NGO assistance – are often not fulfilled, which can lead to onward movement' (Lindley 2009:48). Even with regard to those apparently 'settled,' these people might be seeking to return or move on to a better place even if such plan is not immediately put in action.

Raeymaekers (2011) who studied displaced youth in the city of Butembo in the Eastern DRC adds further insights into the complex nature of mobility in conflict-affected settings. First, the author highlights a situation of 'extreme mobility' in the DRC where only 5.5 percent of all IDPs find refuge in UNHCR-run sites/camps (2011:11). The majority of displaced people in fact find shelter in 'spontaneous sites' and often with family/kin members whose recipient capacity is very limited or ad hoc settlements such as abandoned, dilapidated buildings or improvised dwellings in the forests. Displacement in the DRC is thus overwhelmingly unregistered. Despite this, 'aid agencies continue to concentrate their efforts on camps' (ibid).

A second related issue ties to the cyclical nature of displacement. 'Each time a conflict settles down somewhere, a contamination effect ensues which forces people to flee in the opposite direction' with the result that people are 'pending' between home and multiple places of refuge. Many people are thus forced live a life 'in the limbo' (ibid).

To add to the complexity of mobility patterns, Raeymaekers highlights the 'circular' aspects of migration. 'A few extreme circumstances aside in which insecurity totally impedes a return to home regions... a more frequent mobility pattern among displaced youngsters actually consists of circular migration between their original homesteads and new urban environments, in which the latter remains the main but never the exclusive place of residence' (2011:16).

IN-COUNTRY DIMENSIONS: IMPACTS ON IDPS, IMPACTS OF IDPS

In general, there is very little evidence on how conflict affects livelihoods and welfare of displaced people or how large displacements within a conflict-affected country impact on host communities. MICROCON research helps to bridge this gap by looking at a variety of issues— from asset losses and impoverishment, to employment, gender power balance within the household, child health and welfare and refugee protection, among others— and considers these vis-à-vis four important case studies— Colombia, Northern Uganda, DRC and Somaliland.

a. Measuring Conflict-Induced Disruptions to Migrant Livelihoods

In two studies, Ibáñez and Moya (2009a and 2009b) analyse the impacts of conflict-induced displacement on the welfare of displaced households in Colombia. Colombia is an important case study— more than 2.5 million people are forcibly displaced inside the country, ‘a figure that stands out worldwide’ (2009b: 8). Nearly 90 percent of all municipalities have either faced expulsion or have been recipient of displaced persons.

The first study by Ibáñez and Moya (2009a) is a more general look at the sources of vulnerability of displaced households as well as the more specific ability to smooth consumption and to isolate it from variations in transitory income. Results show that welfare of internally displaced households is severely affected. There is a significant drop in consumption and labour income, substantial asset losses, harsh conditions in destination sites, and a severe disruption of risk-sharing mechanisms (2009a: 659). To avoid further deterioration, households rely on costly coping strategies (effective short-term but with important negative long-term impacts) such as interruption of school attendance for older children and increasing of participation of older children in labour markets.

What we have here is an extremely vulnerable segment of population that faces long-term impoverishment. Displaced households are not able to smooth consumption; forced displacement causes an overall decline of 33 % in aggregate consumption. After a year of settlement, aggregate consumption represents no more than 64 % of the levels enjoyed before displacement (ibid: 655). The especially vulnerable sub-groups include ethnic minorities, female-headed households and families employed in agricultural activities.

The study also suggests there are limitations to the effectiveness of programmes intentionally designed to promote income generation and reduce state dependence among the displaced population. Income-generation programmes offer only a temporary relief but even then the impact is not sufficient to increase consumption and prevent adoption of costly long term survival and livelihood strategies. The impact vanishes quickly with the result that the welfare of beneficiaries soon comes to resemble that of non-beneficiaries. This clearly underlines the fact that forced displacement cannot be viewed as a short-term adjustment problem but rather a long-term predicament for households who ‘most probably become victims of chronic poverty’ (ibid: 659). Policies specifically tailored to victims of conflict-triggered forced displacement need to offer mechanisms to prevent substantial

welfare losses and to create conditions for a *sustainable* income-generation process (ibid).

In the second study, Ibáñez and Moya (2009b) analyse specifically the process of asset loss and prospects of recovery among the IDPs settled in Colombia's urban areas. In the study, Ibáñez and Moya show how a conflict-induced shock (e.g. an attack) imposes heavy asset losses with physical, financial, human and social capital all being severely depleted and hard to recover at destination sites, thus forcing displaced people into long-lasting and hard-to-escape poverty traps (structural poverty).

Conflict naturally imposes economic costs even before displacement occurs. These negative effects are further aggravated with displacement. Forcibly displaced households in Colombia leave behind or lose (due to confiscation or destruction) physical capital such as housing or land. Where distress sales are possible, these usually occur in a market where assets are undervalued. Forcedly displaced people also cease to derive returns from their land. Additionally, 'informal and formal risk-sharing mechanisms weaken as a consequence of migration; access to credit markets, both formal and informal declines; links with social networks and formal organisations wither; and alternative savings mechanisms, such as livestock, are destroyed or abandoned. Human capital also depreciates greatly as agricultural abilities are not highly valued in urban labour markets' (Ibáñez and Moya, March 2009b:50). Overall, households identify lack of access to land as 'a predominant factor pushing people into poverty' (ibid:20). With regard to this, aggregate loss of land is massive; the overall figure is two times the amount of land distributed in the 1993-2002 agrarian reform programs (ibid:29).

The way displacement happens is found to be important in predicting asset loss and recovery. Some households might be specifically targeted by armed groups for their valuable assets. 'On the other hand, households with a less traumatic victimization profile or which migrate preventively ... tend to face less severe asset loss, and are thus better able to cope with displacement shock' (ibid: 51). However, 'most households, more than 86 %, displaced reactively, that is after being a victim of an attack from illegal armed groups' (ibid: 28).

All in all, Ibáñez and Moya find that asset recovery is a 'rare event' with no more than 25 % of households being able to recover assets (ibid: 51). Regardless of the extent of the loss, the remaining assets are found to be insufficient to escape poverty. Unlike traditional migrants, displaced households do not catch up even after consolidating settlement (i.e. 'time is not an ally'). 'In this respect, forced displacement has generated a poverty trap for segments of the Colombian population' (ibid).

Studying the few that do manage to recover assets is instructive though. Ibáñez and Moya find that while human capital is necessary but not sufficient. An additional source of income, on the other hand, is crucial to the recovery process. Additionally, households that do manage to recover seem to allocate resources to recovery of

productive capacity, and 'not exclusively to supplying basic needs' (Ibáñez and Moya 2009b: 24). Acquiring productive assets and accessing social networks are also key factors in recovery. Income-generating programs and access to seed capital are also important but most beneficiaries note the amounts of seed capital are insufficient to start a profitable business.

A number of policy implications follow from Ibáñez and Moya's research. To begin with, direct intervention by the government is necessary to help the forcibly displaced escape poverty traps. Additionally, assistance should not group traditional migrants and IDPs together. Neither should they be grouped under the general 'urban poor.' The authors highlight the unique vulnerabilities faced by IDPs in conflict zones and hence their need for special targeted assistance such as asset transfers and protection against shocks. Income generating programs that help spur asset recovery and accumulation should be supported. However, income-generating programs are not sufficient in improving consumption since households prefer accumulating assets over (and hence at the cost of) expansion in consumption. As a result, these programmes should be supplemented by other benefits such as nutritional programmes or conditional cash transfers.

Raeymaekers (2011) also studied livelihoods among the internally displaced (here youth in the urban area of Butembo, Eastern DRC) from a micro-level perspective but in contrast to Ibáñez and Moya, the author applies a qualitative (ethnographic, emic) approach rather than a quantitative one to learn about the 'life-making perspectives' of displaced young people.

The results suggest that young people are often excluded through their inclusion (at physical, social and economic levels) in the urban area. Many young people view themselves as 'strangers' (opposed to the 'Bubolais,' the inhabitants of Butembo) in a 'tribalistic' environment where most economic opportunities are controlled by a finite number of families, creating an oligopolistic economic organisation. As in-migrants, these young people lack the necessary linkages/acquaintances/social capital. The urban space that seems to be constructed is one of "marginals" whose entry is 'regulated and confined by a closed community of "autochthonous" Butembo citizens' (2011:22).

The young people who specifically used to be ex-combatants found that they 'could not claim the benefits of either world: [the] former Mayi Mayi companions in the bush now treated [them] as traitor[s]....[but they] also found it impossible to integrate in his new, urban environment' where, besides the general difficulties faced by 'strangers,' ex-combatants also dealt with 'continuous climate of distrust, innuendo and suspicion' (ibid: 24). But the author suggests that the experiences of youth with 'violent' and 'non-violent backgrounds are not that dissimilar. The access of *all* youth to decent jobs is 'severely blocked;' access to important livelihoods assets is encapsulated by a 'closed group of gatekeepers' (ibid: 27).

To act against the potentially nefarious operation of the "autochthony" card (used to construct and defend inclusion/exclusion), which has an important and long-

standing role in the history of conflict in this area, it is important to evoke the 'potentiality' not 'risks' of displaced youth— to present them as agents wanting 'to carve out sustainable livelihoods in a war-affected environment not as conflict risks and social outcasts but as integrated members who contribute to the rebuilding of society in a constructive manner' (ibid: 28).

b. Does Conflict Empower Displaced Women?

Women forcibly displaced from rural areas possess labour profiles that make them better suited to compete in urban labour market than their male counterparts. But does this advantage translate into empowerment? Can conflict in some way improve the position of women within their household? Calderón, Gafaro and Ibáñez (2009) approach these questions in the case of Colombia by studying the impacts of forced internal displacement on i) female labour participation; ii) female intra-household bargaining power; and iii) domestic violence against women and children.

The authors find that while women indeed increase their participation in host area labour markets, thus increasing their income and share of household earnings, their bargaining power remains unaffected and domestic violence (both by men against women and women against their children) increases. 'Forced displacement may be creating a vicious circle in which women spend longer hours working and less in leisure time while domestic violence escalates' (ibid:8). Overall, 'women's welfare is constant or at best decreases' (ibid: 3); thus making conflict-triggered female empowerment an unlikely proposition (ibid:8).

Looking at specific results, wage rates of displaced women are 1.8 higher than those of similar women who stayed behind and their household budget contribution increases by 14 %. Almost a third of displaced women contribute to more than a half of all household expenditures. 'Thus, the contribution of displaced women to household expenses increases substantially, yet this does not seem to be improving women's power within the household' (ibid: 15). Moreover, prevalence of domestic violence increases. Displaced women report more frequently being the victim of emotional and severe violence than women who stayed behind. With regard to severe violence, the increase is 87.3 %. Further to this, domestic violence against women seems to induce harsh punishment against children by their mothers and displaced children are 6 percentage points more likely to be punished violently. Interestingly, migration of brothers and sisters, a proxy for women's social networks, seems to act as a protection mechanism and attenuates the negative effects with regard to violence (ibid: 19).

A number of factors seem to explain these outcomes. i) The concomitant deterioration of male labour conditions; ii) in addition to the challenge to patriarchal structures; iii) as well as effects of violence endured before displacement, may together cause stress, frustration and anger in men, increase their need for control over women and their propensity for violence. Hence it is not only the increased participation of women and their role as a breadwinner (at times the main one) that threatens men. This effect is further strengthened by the devaluation of skills in men displaced from rural to urban areas and the consequent increase in their

unemployment. Further to this, being the victim of traumatic events— massacres, selective homicides, sexual assaults, threats, among others— can cause stress and anger and post-traumatic syndrome, which may further strengthen propensity to domestic violence (ibid: 22).

These findings are highly policy-relevant. Most generally, it is key to identify the consequences of conflict on displaced women and the mechanisms that transmit them, especially since impacts on women 'transmit easily to children' (ibid: 2). Importantly in this respect, Calderón, Gafaro and Ibáñez show that while conflict might result in more labour participation by displaced women, this does not translate into their empowerment and might in fact lead to deterioration in women's welfare and an intergenerational transmission of violence. If further support is not offered to these populations, rising female labour participation will not be a factor attenuating the costs of conflict suffered by displaced families but rather a factor aggravating the already high costs of conflict. As a result, the authors of the study suggest that 'policies directed to increasing women's bargaining power, such as providing subsidies directly to women and designing special education programs, as well as offering psychological support to displaced families, may help victims of war to deactivate the cycle of violence in which they are immersed' (ibid: 23).

In a very different setting of Northern Uganda, Kindi (2010) explores the challenges faced by female IDPs returning to their home areas. Northern Uganda is an important case study. The almost 20 year long conflict in the Acholi sub-region created massive internal displacement, making Uganda the country with the third largest IDP population scattered across 218 camps. In 2006, the rebels' withdrawal from the Acholi area enabled people to start going home. The subsequent government Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) identified land issues (access, ownership and use of land) as a major challenge in the return process.

In the context of post-conflict reconstruction, access to and ownership of land 'remains a key aspect in rebuilding [women's] lives' (Kindi 2010:4). Land is a basis for shelter, food and is the most important employer of women's labour in SSA (ibid). Yet achievements in women's land rights have been difficult in SSA, compared to achievements in other areas such as education or formal employment. Despite some progressive legislation (i.e. 1995 Constitution and 1998 Land Act), customary male tenure remains the norm. Women's lobbying attempt to include a co-ownership clause in the 2000 Land Act amendment proved unsuccessful. Male politicians felt this would 'undermine clan cohesion and power' (ibid:13). The women's struggle was also portrayed as 'a struggle against African culture' (ibid).

The result is that only a small fraction of women have managed to own land in their own right, estimated nationally at 16% (Kindi 2010:10). Conflict further exacerbates women's existing land access problems and creates new ones (e.g. when husbands and male relatives die). There are problems with tracing land after prolonged displacement, encroachment by earlier returnees, occupation by army detach, cultivation by unknown individuals, rumours of government interest in Acholi land

for investment, lack of compensation for land that was used as camp sites, among others. These problems affect both men and women, but for women they mean 'further displacement and difficulties in finding for their dependants' (Kindi 2010: 18).

Despite the challenges, Kindi believes that the post-conflict setting of reconstruction and reconstitution offers opportunities for change that should be exploited. 'This is because the disruptive effects of the war on the socioeconomic fabric of the affected society presents opportunities to engage new and transformational measures and processes that have regard for women's rights including addressing and reforming land related conflicts and inequalities in the post conflict reconstruction' (Kindi 2010:6). For example, while customary tenure remains the norm in Acholi society, '20 years of displacement...debilitated social norms and values as well as dislocated social networks that undermined the institution [of customary tenure]' (ibid: 23). The PRDP in turn could be the opening for official transformation but it faces some practical obstacles. First, many displaced people are not even aware of the PRDP. Second, the policy document is couched in gender-neutral language. Additionally, women's concerns continue 'to be seen as an add-in rather than part of the overall planning and implementation process of PRDP framework' (Kindi 2010:21). All of these obstacles need to be addressed if the opportunities for women's empowerment are to be seized.

c. Health Effects of Camp Decongestion and Return

A brief study by Bozzoli and Brück (2010) tries to understand why children in IDP camps and those in returnee locations exhibit the *same* morbidity rates. Should not camp decongestion improve health outcomes? Displacement and stay in camps has been long linked to high morbidity and mortality rates. But 'the first year of post-conflict period is a very fluid and little understood period of human development' (ibid:9). It is possible that the immediate post-return period presents different but no less important challenges than those posed by camp congestion.

Using the case of Northern Uganda, the authors find that while IDP camp residency does indeed almost double morbidity rates, the poor sanitation (captured by access to safe drinking water) in return locations counteracts the positive health effects of camp decongestion. The study helps to better target preventive policies and make them more balanced. Bozzoli and Brück (2010) suggest that reduction of overcrowding in IDP camps needs to be combined with acceleration of provision of sanitation facilities in returnee villages (ibid:3).

d. Impacts of Conflict-Induced Displacement on Host-Area Economies

Conflict-triggered displacement does not only affect the welfare of displaced households, it has wider effects on local host economies. Calderón and Ibáñez (2009) study this by focusing on impacts of mass inflow of forced migrants on urban labour markets in Colombia. Specifically, they determine effects on city wages, employment, unemployment and labour force participation. Most research has so far focused on the effects of *international* economic migration on labour markets in the *developed* world. Calderón and Ibáñez thus offer an important contribution to

our understanding of the little studied impact of *internal* migration in a *developing* country.

The results suggest that migration flows produce an expansion of the informal sector in a given host area and create large negative impacts on wages and employment opportunities of all workers, but especially lower-skilled ones since this is the group they compete with for jobs (Calderón and Ibáñez 2009:3). Specifically, as a result of forced migrant inflows, informal workers face a 1.0-2.4 percent salary decrease for every 10 percent increase in migrant share. The effects are more pronounced for women. The share of migrants also decreases labour participation and unemployment but these impacts have not been statistically significant. The total effects during 2001-2005, when displacement inflows in Colombia increased by 200%, are sizeable. As a consequence of forced displacement, overall wages fell by 28.4 percent and informal wages fell by 60 percent. All in all, Calderón and Ibáñez' study suggests that the 'impact of displaced inflows falls heavily on the most vulnerable groups of the native population' (ibid).

e. Protection Challenges in Conflict-Affected Settings

Two studies have analysed the challenges governments of conflict-affected countries face in giving protection and support to forced migrants within their territories. While Lindley (2009c) focuses on the self-declared Somaliland government's approach to cross-border migrants from Ethiopia, Ibáñez and Velásquez (2009) study the distinct challenges facing the Colombian government in delivering support to its internally displaced population.

Somaliland—a self-declared *de-facto* state but one not recognized internationally—is typically conjured up in people's minds as a refugee-producing territory. Nonetheless, Somaliland has in fact recently experienced growing non-Somali immigration from the Oromo regions of Ethiopia.

Lindley (2009c) explores the protection challenges faced by refugees in an unrecognized state. To begin with, there is little information on the many Oromo living in Somali regions. Second, the interviews with Oromo migrants highlighting persecution in the Ethiopian state as a basis for their movement (informants speak of inhuman treatment, torture, imprisonment and killed relatives) contrast starkly with the 'commonly held view in Somaliland that the Oromos are economic migrants' (ibid:188). Third, Oromo refugees are generally 'the poorest of the poor' (ibid) in a state that has itself undergone 'massive upheaval in the past thirty years.' Finally, the prospects of integration are considered slim— 'community relations are generally segregated due to the language barrier, distinct culture, and belief among locals that Oromos are Christian (although many coming to Somaliland are in fact Muslim)' (ibid).

Even though Somaliland is not an internationally recognised state, it is bound by customary international law in areas over which it exercises effective control. In fact, despite the precarious economic and political situation, an asylum system has been established there. In 2008, Somaliland had some six thousand registered asylum

seekers and over a thousand recognized refugees, mainly Ethiopian Oromos. Refugees were given a recognition letter and were able to claim a monthly allowance from the UNHCR. The protection system, nonetheless, has gaps. Large portion of Oromos in Somaliland are still not registered as asylum seekers. There are also reports of deportations and attempted deportations. For many Oromos, it is hard to access any assistance as the local population is itself struggling to survive. Nonetheless, Lindley urges Somaliland authorities and donors to provide further attention and support to what is most likely a permanent minority in Somaliland.

Challenges of a different kind emerge in the case of Colombia. During low-intensity conflicts, such as that in Colombia, people rarely flee *en masse* and they do not congregate in camps where their identification and targeting would be relatively easy. Rather, displacement in Colombia largely occurs on an individual basis and people spread across the country. Further to this, the Colombian government uses demand-driven programs to deliver aid to IDPs— people have to approach the government and, upon proving they are IDPs, register under the Unique Registration System of Displaced Population (RUPD) scheme. As a result, policy makers face problems primarily with targeting and delivery of aid to the internally displaced.

Ibáñez and Velásquez (2009) analyse the effectiveness of demand-driven RUPD in reaching its intended beneficiaries and detect a number of weaknesses in the system. First, the authors identify under-registration. They find that almost 30 percent of those eligible are excluded from the system mainly due to lack of information, with 8 percent excluding voluntarily and 22 percent being excluded involuntarily, either by not being informed or having been denied access (ibid: 433). Second, there is a widening gap between declaring eligibility and actual registration. While rejection might reflect the possibility of illegal claimants, there is a widening gap between claiming of eligibility and registration. 'Given that this may possibly signal a purposeful rationing by the government of state aid, this increasing trend is indeed worrisome' (2009:441). Third, the authors find a gap between those registered and those actually receiving some type of aid. Out of the 71 percent of displaced households that are registered under the RUPD scheme, only 56.3 percent effectively receive government aid. This indicates a 'flaw in this stage of the process, since almost half of the displaced families, after engaging in a costly declaration process, do not reap any benefits' (ibid). In addition, beneficiary households usually receive only one of the many services that the government provides. Finally, the 'time elapsed between the different stages of the declaration process also indicates a critical failing of the program' (ibid: 442). Altogether, almost three months pass between declaration of eligibility and provision of government aid; 'arguably, these are crucial months during which support is very urgent' (ibid).

To address these shortcomings, Ibáñez and Velásquez suggest reforming the existing demand-driven system of aid provision. The most salient alternative— a supply driven approach, whereby government officials actively seek out victims of displacement— has prohibitive costs. The demand-driven approach should thus stay in place and focus on improved dissemination of information. Massive diffusion campaigns should focus on providing detailed information on RUPC benefits and the

process of registration. This should be complemented by personalized campaigns that would channel information through organisations traditionally working with vulnerable groups. Additionally, the identification process of eligible applicants should be improved to prevent denying registration to real displaced households.

TRANSNATIONAL LINKS

a. Diaspora-Home Effects: Remittances and Labour Supply

Labour migration is an important coping strategy for households in conflict-affected areas. But transnational financial support in form of remittances does not only represent additional income/purchasing power for households in post-conflict states, it might have important impacts on local labour markets as well. These effects remain largely unknown.

Justino and Shemyakina's study (2010) of post-conflict Tajikistan explores the important impacts of remittances on i) recipients' decision to enter the labour market; and ii) their decision regarding the hours they want to supply. They find that both women and men from remittance-receiving households are less likely to participate in the labour market and supply fewer hours when they do participate. The effect is more pronounced for men. Remittances also show larger impacts on men in conflict areas compared to less conflict-affected areas.

A number of mechanisms link higher remittances to lower labour supply. Remittances as non-labour income tend to increase reservation wages (the lowest wage rate at which a worker is willing to accept a particular type of job); in other words, people can afford to wait for 'a better job to come along' (Justino and Shemyakina 2010:10). Higher non-labour income might also decrease the opportunity cost of leisure (leisure is not so 'expensive,' one does not really 'give up' income to increase leisure since remittances come regardless). The more pronounced effects of these transmission mechanisms in conflict-affected areas are attributed to 'the timing of the process of outmigration in Tajikistan, which started much earlier in the areas more affected by the civil war' (i.e. the long-term nature of outmigration in these areas; *ibid*:21).

Justino and Shemyakina also discuss the 'puzzling result' whereby remittances seem to have a stronger effect on the labour supply of men than women in conflict affected areas. Previous literature has pointed to the opposite tendency suggesting that women's labour supply is more responsive to the receipt of remittances. The authors explain this lower observed responsiveness with the high fixed costs that women face when entering the labour market. Women are likely to have faced difficulties (persuading their family, husband's family and employers) when joining paid work since 'this [female employment] was not very common' (2010:22). As a result, they might be unwilling to leave 'hard-won' employment and to return to their 'traditional roles' even in the event of additional income in form of remittances. The other possible explanation is that women are more risk averse. 'By maintaining their jobs and thereby access to wages, women diversify their sources of income' (Justino and Shemyakina 2010:24).

b. Home-Diaspora Effects: Continued Impact of Conflict on Lives in Exile.

Conflict is not simply a cause of movement; it is not 'left behind' once people flee. Conflict follows people into exile. Zetter and Zimmerman (2011) show the diverse ways in which conflict in the homeland can affect refugees in the diaspora-- here Somali refugees living in Britain and the Netherlands-- and the implications this has for the resettlement process and host country integration policies.

The Somali diaspora in Europe is an important case study since 'Somalis have been one of the most disadvantaged, excluded or marginalized of all refugee groups' (Zetter and Zimmerman 2011:2). Rather than heeding the portrayal of Somalis as 'difficult to integrate,' the authors point to how the ongoing conflict back home might influence these outcomes.

To understand the impacts of conflict on diaspora lives, a 'transnational' perspective is needed— refugees' decisions and outcomes in exile are made with reference to different locations not just the host country conditions (as is often the assumption in integration research). Refugees often remain embedded in 'transnational households' spread across countries (with members in home country, countries of first asylum and resettlement countries) or transnational extended families. As such, refugees both affect and are affected by the situation in their home country.

Conflict-triggered 'transnationalism [thus] complicates the lives, opportunities and aspirations of [resettled] refugees' (ibid:4) as it involves making sacrifices due to competing demands (e.g. choosing between supporting those in Somalia or educating their own children in Britain) most clearly reflected through continuous remittance flows. The pressure to provide financial support to others in Somalia together with the protracted nature of the conflict (many give over the span of a decade, some close to two decades) leaves refugees 'unable to better themselves through education and work' (ibid:7). Investment in form of education or skill building is often foregone for any paid employment due to pressure to send money to relatives back home. Protracted sacrifice within already impoverished households can lead to cross-generational tensions within the family and, down the line, to feelings of alienation from host society or resort to criminal activities to improve welfare. Besides material constraints, conflict affects refugees also through the anxiety and stress that result from continual worry for relatives in Somalia, especially if these remain directly affected.

Not all refugees are affected in the same way. A larger family network in exile means the burden is more manageable. Similarly, those with better-off families in Somalia or with families whose members have died or moved away 'may have more freedom to pursue opportunities in exile' (ibid:8). In addition, transnationalism cannot be seen as 'negative' only. Material 'costs' of help must be seen against 'non-material' satisfaction. Aiding those left behind is seen as a moral imperative or obligation; hence being able to do so can contribute to feelings of 'status, purpose, stability, dignity or esteem' (ibid:5). In addition, the often significant 'costs' (in terms of career, education, 'moving on') incurred by the diaspora has to be seen against the 'gains' by people living amidst conflict. It can be seen as a show of group inter-

reliance and a strong alternative mechanism of 'transnational' aid to people who often have no other access (due to security situation) to help from the outside.

All in all, host governments' resettlement policies do not factor in these complex dynamics that directly affect the prospects of refugee integration (Zetter et al 2006). Somali refugees' socio-economic performance needs to be seen against their transnational preoccupations and obligations. The 'needs' and 'problems' of Somalis in exile cannot be seen in isolation from the ongoing conflict in Somalia. Policies need to be more culturally sensitive, considering Somali refugees' behaviour against the backdrop of a collectivist rather than individualist culture, which does not 'necessarily reify individualistic achievement' (ibid:13) but rather group achievement. 'The idea that the refugees should or might distance themselves from the needs of others in Somalia is thought to be culturally impossible' (ibid:20). Zetter and Zimmerman's study is key in that it urges governments to reconceptualise integration and to tailor it to the predicament and specific needs of different diasporic groups. The enmeshment of conflict in refugees' lives cannot be simply rejected and worked against, rather the sacrifices have to be acknowledged as 'enduring cultural obligations' and further support has to be offered to make better 'adjustment' possible.

c. Global Diasporas and Conflict: From Conflict-Generated Displacement to Displacement Generating Conflict

Since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the potential of immigrant and refugee communities (and diasporas more broadly) to offer a base for transnational mobilisation and financing of conflict has become a prominent point on the political agenda of Northern states. While it is important to explore this aspect of migration and resettlement, the analysis has to be careful not to reify scapegoating and subsequent discrimination of whole groups of people. As Bezunartea, Lopez and Tedesco (2009) show with regard to the Muslim community in Spain, it is only a small fraction of the Muslims that are involved in transnational terrorist activities. The careful isolation of the extremist segments and their clear differentiation from the remainder of the immigrant community is profoundly important if successful integration is to occur. Integration, in turn, is itself paramount since its failure can be a driver of conflict. As the work of Stewart (2009) on global horizontal inequalities experienced by Muslims worldwide demonstrates, integration needs to work both at national and trans-national/global levels and needs to address the multifaceted discrimination that Muslims still experience, not only within a given host country where they comprise a minority but across countries as well.

Compared to other European states such as France, Germany or the Netherlands, Spain has a relatively small Muslim community and one that is considered 'well integrated' (Bezunartea, Lopez and Tedesco 2009:6). The 2004 Madrid terrorist attacks, however, undoubtedly increased the profile of Muslims in Spain. It was discovered that jihad members have been using Spain to 'escape persecution on their own countries,' soon 'taking advantage of their refuge to devise propaganda activities, recruit new members and send them to training camps, collect funds and transfer them to terrorist cells in other countries,' among other activities (ibid:12).

Nonetheless, at the same time it 'remained clear that objectively there was hardly any connection between the Islam of the religious communities in Spain and the Islam of the [terrorist segment]' (ibid:11).

But even though these are two distinct groups operating in very different contexts (the extremists do not operate out of Muslim religious or cultural centres but were rather concentrated around phone centres), the Spanish society perceives them as a *single group*. This perception could have potentially negative consequences if an active policy countering it is not implemented. Further to this, 'although what we have here are two different worlds, we must also be aware that under certain circumstances they may intersect and therefore feed off one another. Such a situation would be more liable to arise if a deep sense of belonging is not developed among young Spanish Muslims and a generation of socially maladjusted youth emerges' (ibid:18). The authors conclude that policy response should be two-fold, focused both on i) police intervention against terrorist networks at national and international levels; and ii) integration processes and creation of a greater sense of belonging among the Muslim community.

Stewart's research (2009) explores, among other things, the way in which inequalities among groups (so called 'horizontal inequalities,' as opposed to 'vertical' inequalities among individuals) can contribute to conflict. Stewart focuses on identity groups and, specifically, explores global aspects of inequalities that pertain to Muslims as a cross-national identity group. Stewart's research is not exclusively related to forcibly displaced or recently migrated Muslims, but is relevant to these segments as well. As such, it is of special relevance to numerous European countries, which have seen a large inflow of Muslim populations over the past decades.

By drawing on examples of Muslim minorities from across Europe, but also Asia and Africa, Stewart shows the relative impoverishment and discrimination of this group on multiple levels (employment, education, income, housing, cultural status, and more). Inequalities persist even when comparison operates at cross-country level, comparing all-Muslim countries with non-Muslim ones. Though both of these categories are very heterogeneous (e.g. in terms of HDI, non-Muslim countries range from Norway to Burundi), average per capita incomes of states where Muslims form the majority is just 44% of those of the non-Muslim countries and under five mortality rates are almost twice as high (Stewart 2009:26).

Stewart argues that this type of group inequality—Muslim versus non-Muslim, at national and international level— 'can be a source of political mobilisation, sometimes leading to violent conflict' (ibid: 5). If these inequalities, however, are to lead to 'world-wide mobilisation, then Muslims world-wide must have some shared identity and shared perceptions of grievance' (ibid:31). Though Stewart does not 'prove' that this is the case, she offers 'suggestive evidence' of i) global connections among Muslims across geographic distance; and ii) evidence of shared perceptions of identity (ibid). The implication here is that 'to the extent that a group has strong affiliation with others in the group elsewhere in the world, then horizontal

inequalities in one part of the world can then be a cause of grievance and of mobilisation elsewhere' (ibid: 42).

Just as Bezunartea, Lopez and Tedesco (2009) have noted, Stewart highlights that religious extremism is confined a small fragment of Muslim communities— 'the vast majority of Muslims view the rise of Islamic extremism with alarm.' Nonetheless, and again in line with Bezunartea et al, Stewart warns that 'at national level, systematic horizontal inequalities make mobilisation more likely.' The policy implication is then more concrete than simply 'integration.' It specifically calls for equalization of conditions, specifically the reduction of horizontal inequalities 'in each dimension where they are severe' (Stewart 2009: 42). Such reduction is needed both within and between countries. This approach diverges in an important way from the main post 9-11 strategy focused on suppression of extremism rather than equalization of conditions (e.g. countering of discrimination) among diverse groups in host society.

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

In this paper we have explored how mobility mediates the space between livelihoods and conflict and how this is reflected in: complex patterns of mobility; in the subsequent impacts on those who are displaced and their hosts; and some transnational consequences. Drawing on a micro-level focus on the agency-structure nexus, the conclusions seek to draw out and emphasise the policy implications of this overview.

Whilst at one level, the characteristics of flight from violence and the subsequent patterns and processes of mobility in situations of conflict suggest that movement is both random or spontaneous, this is by no means the case. This mobility may be fragmented - for example initially over limited spatial scales, and in different stages/phases - rather than a single movement. And at the same time whilst destinations are not necessarily predetermined, there is often a 'trial and error' strategy at play. Mobility is a complex process determined by strategies for survival (personal safety, livelihoods), available networks of support, and by improvisation, exercised albeit in highly constrained and unpropitious circumstances. Understanding these complex and transient patterns of mobility in response to conflict has significant implications for agencies seeking to develop strategies and policies for the protection of forcibly displaced people on the one hand and for providing assistance on the other.

Turning to in-country dimensions – the impacts *on* and *of* forcibly displaced people - the overview of the various case studies highlighted a number of dimensions of the way conflict affects livelihoods and welfare. The severe negative impacts on households displaced by conflict are already well known – substantial decline in consumption patterns and labour income, heavy asset losses (notably land), limited livelihood opportunities in displacement locations. What the studies have highlighted is the more detailed, context specific, impacts. These include, for example, the destruction of risk-sharing mechanisms, and coping strategies which trade short-term gains for long-term losses and thus produce endemic conditions of

chronic poverty. Attention is also drawn to the particular incidence of vulnerability for ethnic minorities, female-headed households, young people and agrarian families, who face long-term impoverishment. In addition, the form of displacement is an important variable in predicting asset loss and recovery.

From the policy perspective, the key message is that conflict-induced displacement is not a problem of short-term livelihoods adjustment – the conventional humanitarian focus. Rather, the issue is the long-term and irreversible depletion of physical, financial, human and social capital. Given that the substantial majority of the world's refugees and IDPs live in situations of protracted exile, this reinforces the case for a radical policy shift which is both urgent and imperative.

Policies should more effectively aim to prevent substantial asset, social capital and welfare losses in the short-term whilst, at the same time, creating *sustainable* income-generation to avoid chronic conditions of structural poverty. Intervention should be targeted to the unique vulnerabilities of conflict displaced populations, notably asset recovery and accumulation. Critical here is the need to balance asset accumulation with assistance to consumption needs such as nutrition levels or health conditions. Generally speaking income generation programmes inter alia, fail: to provide sufficient start up capital; to offer more than temporary relief as opposed to spurring asset recovery and accumulation; to increase consumption; and to prevent adoption of survival strategies which have severe long term costs.

Instructive, are the conclusions to be drawn from those households who manage to recover from, or protect, asset loss. In such households, additional income sources are essential, but allocating resources to recovery of productive capacity, not just the supply of basic and consumption needs, is crucial, alongside accessing social networks.

Turning to the impact of conflict induced displacement on particular social groups, two aspects stand out in terms of policy implications. As the study of a particularly problematic group emphasised - conflict-displaced young people - policy interventions must find the modalities for tapping into the constructive agency of individuals in war-affected environments not as conflict risks, or social outcasts, or welfare assistance dependents. The key point to emphasise here transcends the particular social group. An agency-structure understanding of the socio-economic impacts of conflict-induced displacement is an essential prerequisite to formulating policy intentions. Rarely, if at all, is this perspective used by humanitarian or development agencies working with forcibly displaced populations.

The overview sheds some new light on the well known impacts of conflict-driven displacement on household gender dynamics. Whilst women are often the more economically adaptable in conditions of displacement, what emerges is that this economic advantage does not translate into enhanced social empowerment within or beyond the household. Moreover, displacement is associated with increasing propensity for domestic violence by men against women and women against their children. Amongst other precipitating factors here are the exposure to the violence

of conflict, and the frustration and anger of men who experience a combination of downward economic mobility, the challenge to patriarchal structures.

These findings are highly policy-relevant in a number of respects. If, for example, female empowerment and intergenerational transmission of violence are to be tackled, the findings of the various studies point to the need to identify, far more fully than is the case to date, the consequences of conflict on displaced women and the mechanisms that transmit these impacts. Policy interventions will first need to comprehend and then devise strategies to reverse the processes whereby enforced displacement may simultaneously enhance economic opportunity yet aggravate its enormously high social costs. Working with women and men, the challenge here is to find the combination of economic and social policies which increase women's bargaining power (eg conditional and/or direct cash payments to women), and provide family support (through education programmes and psycho-social support) to deactivate the cycle of violence.

Under conditions of repatriation, women often find the economic empowerment produced by enforced displacement is reversed as customary male land tenure is reinstated as the norm. Despite these challenges, post-conflict return and reconstruction do offer opportunities for change and transformation. But as the studies show these opportunities are either misconceived, leading to practical obstacles, or they are neglected.

That refugees and IDPs might constitute a burden on their hosts is intuitively compelling. This notion informs the increasing resistance of countries hosting displaced populations and the wider calls for international burden sharing by countries in the global south most impacted by mass population exodus. However, this is a substantially under-researched field and the studies make a significant contribution in opening up understanding of these wider impacts of conflict-triggered displacement on local host economies¹. The expansion of the informal sector is paralleled by very substantial negative impacts on wages and employment opportunities of all workers, but the lower-skilled and women amongst the host population are most vulnerable. Whilst more effective policy interventions designed to support long term sustainable income-generation and asset accumulation of the displaced population will help to relieve some of the negative impacts on host population's economic wellbeing, of themselves they will be insufficient. Significant here are the need: to tackle the short term shocks for the host population reflected in rising prices caused by increased demand of displaced population; smooth out some of the distributional imbalances in labour markets; and seek to capitalise on the expanding markets created by displaced populations. Significant here is the need to rethink the conventional dichotomy between humanitarian and development strategies.

The studies draw attention to a range of protection challenges for conflict-affected governments with regard to displaced populations. The 1951 Convention relating to

¹ A soon to be completed *Study on Impact and Costs of Forced Displacement* for the World Bank by the Refugee Studies Centre will shed further light on this and other impacts.

the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol provides international instruments for such protection. And, adopted by the UN, the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, set out a normative framework for protection of those displaced within their own countries by conflict – the majority of those studied in the MICROCON projects. But, the evidence from these studies highlights significant protection gaps in terms of basic information on the displaced populations, the failure of registration systems, and the often perverse impacts which registration may have on these populations. Whilst demand-led protection systems should remain, the importance of community-led processes of registration which are more trusted, reliable and inclusive is the key policy recommendation.

The increasing focus on transnational communities and labour migration as development actors through the remittance process, is mirrored in studies of displacement under conditions of conflict. The findings show that international labour component amongst the conflict-displaced is an important coping strategy for these households as it is for households producing ‘voluntary’ migrants.

But from a transnational links perspective, it is the wider social impacts of conflict-induced displacement - the home-diaspora effects – which are the more revealing. Conflict is not simply a cause of movement which is then left behind. On the contrary, refugees are embedded in ‘transnational households’ and the studies reveal how this provides the context for the protracted sacrifice of displacement, the impoverishment of those in exile because of remittances, the transmission of the stress and anxiety of conflict at home to the exilic population, and of course the effect of the refugees on their home country. Social displacement experiences may often be reproduced in forms of alienation from the host community. Of course, there are positive outcomes as well - new responsibilities and not least the escape from violence.

From a policy perspective these complex, and often contradictory, dynamics and outcomes call for a significant reshaping of the way settlement and integration strategies are designed and enacted. Poor socio-economic performance and partial ‘integration’ must be seen in the context of, not isolated from, transnational preoccupations. Policies need to be more sensitive to different cultural characteristics which may, for example, be more collectivist than individualistic. Dispersal policies fragment vital social networks further marginalising the refugee populations (Zetter et al., 2005, 2006). By contrast, the advantage of successful and sensitive integration policies, at least for the host countries, is that reduction in the relative impoverishment and discrimination of refugee groups - reduction in horizontal inequalities – may also help to reduce the potential for marginalisation to be a driver of conflict.

From the three perspectives of causes and consequences, in country impacts on and of conflict-displaced populations, and transnational links, a conflict-mobility lens has shed new light on the both the patterns and processes of mobility under conditions of conflict. But, more, significantly, it shows how this mobility itself impacts the lives and livelihoods of those who are displaced.

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