



Comprehensive Approach to Human Security

Research Report



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Introduction

Recent decades have seen the emergence of a wide range of new security threats at the local, national and global level, including threats related to ethnic conflict and civil wars, violent extremism, climate change, illicit trade and organised crime. This plethora of fast-changing and intertwined threats has led to several important shifts in international and national discourses and policy-making regarding interventions in fragile and conflict-affected situations (FCS). Firstly, the concept of ‘human security’ emerged as a new paradigm for understanding global vulnerabilities. The concept is based on the premise that the traditional notion of national security falls short in addressing the wide range of dimensions of security in the life of the individual human being. It holds that the proper reference for security should be the individual rather than the state. A people-centred view of security is necessary for national, regional and global stability. Secondly, it has become widely understood and acknowledged that peace, security, justice and sustainable development are inherently linked and therefore require a holistic approach for their promotion. This has led to the concept of a ‘comprehensive approach’ to interventions aimed at tackling the various security, governance and socio-economic challenges by a range of involved actors in a coherent manner.

This research report particularly zooms in on a comprehensive approach to human security in FCS.¹ Such an approach is considered inherent to a human security approach as reflected in a set of key principles established by the United Nations. These principles focus on the need for a people-centred, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented approach through a protection (top-down) and empowerment (bottom-up) framework. More generally, these can be largely regarded as consensus principles for engagement in FCS, which have become mainstreamed in key international policy discourses and frameworks on peacebuilding and state-building. In recent years these concepts and principles have entered the daily vocabulary of government officials, military, non-government personnel, humanitarian aid-workers and policymakers around the world. However, despite the emerging consensus of these principles, their operationalization in fast-changing and complex conflict environments has proven less straightforward. Practitioners and policymakers are often confronted with difficult challenges and dilemmas on the ground, with significant implications for a comprehensive approach. There is scope for fostering new evidence-based knowledge regarding the translation of a comprehensive approach to human security in practice and for enhancing its effective operationalization.

¹ This corresponds with the focus of the KPSRL Working Group Comprehensive Approach to Human Security.

This report aims to provide a broad assessment regarding the status and application of a comprehensive approach to human security in FCS to date. It identifies knowledge gaps and presents an agenda for further research. The proposed research agenda centres on three broad areas for future inquiry: (a) contextual understanding and local inclusion, (b) theories of change and operationalization, and (c) transnational security trends and implications for policy and practice. The research agenda is aimed at enhancing the knowledge and understanding of academics, but more importantly of international and local policymakers and practitioners, enabling them to sharpen and improve their policies and interventions in the near future. The ultimate aim of the research agenda and the related research projects is to contribute towards enhanced peace and stability for the most vulnerable civilians in the fragile and conflict-affected target settings.

Chapter 1

Background and state of the art

1.1 Contemporary fragile states and the emergence of human security

In recent decades the world has been struggling with a wide diversity of real and immediate threats that are often interlinked. These threats originate from different levels: the global level (e.g., climate change, weapons of mass destruction), the transnational level (e.g., transnational organised crime, illicit trade, human trafficking), the regional level (e.g., corruption, state repression), the regional level (e.g., poverty, environmental degradation) and local level (e.g., child abuse, ethnic conflict). Many threats are not limited to one level: for example, danger to vulnerable communities in flood/drought prone areas can emanate from global climate change. Particularly immediate and real are several threats emanating from states that are variously described as weak, fragile, vulnerable, failing, precarious, failed, in crisis or collapsed. Their weaknesses often permit extremist groups to thrive within their borders. Beyond the threat of terrorism, fragile states can become breeding grounds for organised crime, regionally destabilising mass migration, and illicit trade. These dimensions can proliferate further conflict, regional instability, and humanitarian emergencies and undermine efforts to promote democracy, good governance, and economic sustainability.

The evolution of threats, especially in the post-Cold War period, led to new thinking on security. The term human security was first coined in the 1994 Global Human Development Report (HDR)² as a concept that equates security with people rather than territories, with development rather than arms. Proponents challenge the traditional notion of national security by arguing that the proper reference for security should be the individual rather than the state. In describing the concept, former Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan writes in the Foreword to *Human Security and the New Diplomacy*: “During the Cold War, security tended to be defined almost entirely in terms of military might and the balance of terror. Today, we know that ‘security’ means far more than the absence of conflict. We also have a greater appreciation for non-military sources of conflict. We know that lasting peace requires a broader vision encompassing areas such as education and health, democracy and human rights, protection against environmental degradation, and the proliferation of deadly weapons. We know that we cannot be secure amidst starvation, that we cannot build peace without alleviating poverty, and that we cannot build freedom on foundations of injustice. These pillars of what we now understand as the people-centred concept of ‘human security’ are interrelated and mutually reinforcing.”³ Human security and state or military security are not mutually exclusive and can be complementary and contradictory at times.

² UNDP (1994) *Human Development Report 1994*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

³ Rob McRae and Don Hubert (2001), *Human Security and the New Diplomacy*, Foreword, 1

Human security acknowledges the interconnectedness between peace, human development and human rights and considers these to be the building blocks of human and, therefore, national security. At the same time, protecting the well-being of individuals and communities can clash with securing territorial, economic, and political interests of the nation.

Since its first major manifestation in the early 1990s, human security has emerged prominently on national and international peacebuilding and development agendas. The United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals, passed in 2000, were one attempt to codify the scope of human security and make it measurable. In 2012, the UN General Assembly (GA) adopted a resolution which laid down a common understanding of human security as an ‘approach to assist Member States in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood and dignity of their people’.⁴ This common understanding is constituted by the broad definition of human security as freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom from indignity.⁵ On several occasions, former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has repeated that, “ensuring human security is, in the broadest sense, the United Nations’ cardinal mission. Genuine and lasting prevention is the means to achieve that mission.”⁶ Other major international institutions, such as the World Bank⁷ and the European Union⁸ have also begun to utilise the concept. In 2011, fragile states’ governments’ and their development partners launched the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States advocating for five state-building and peacebuilding goals, including among others the strive for ‘establishing and strengthening people’s security.’⁹

Spearheaded by Canada and Japan, bilateral donors have also promoted and developed the concept since 1994. Moreover, Japan has actively promoted and supported the concept in the UN by being the founder and main donor of the UN Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS), the promoter of the Commission on Human Security and the Friends of Human Security. The Dutch Government has included human security as a key element in its international development and security agendas for many years.¹⁰ In June 2013 the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Frans Timmermans, stated in a Letter to Parliament on the International Security Strategy: “A focus on human security and respect for human rights as essential

⁴ UN General Assembly (2012), 66th Session *Follow-up to paragraph 143 on human security of the 2005 World Summit Outcome* (A/RES/66/290), 25 October 2012

⁵ The narrow operational definition of human security focuses on safety for people from violent and non-violent threats (‘freedom from fear’ and ‘freedom from want’). The broader definition of human security adds a ‘life of dignity’ and includes a focus on addressing root causes. This report follows the broader definition. 3P Human Security (2011), *Defining Human Security*, Policy Brief

⁶ Annan, K.A. (1998) *The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable peace and Sustainable Development in Africa*. Secretary-General’s Report to the United Nations Security Council, 16 April 1998

⁷ World Bank (2011) *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development*. Washington, DC: World Bank

⁸ Study Group on Europe’s Security Capabilities (2004) *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe. The Barcelona Report*. No coherent policy and normative framework exists to date to consistently implement human security policy into EU external action, as was noted at CLEER conference ‘Human security as a tool for a comprehensive approach to human rights and security linkages in EU Foreign policy’, 6 December 2013 <http://www.asser.nl/events.aspx?id=384> (accessed 24 August 2014)

⁹ International Dialogue for Peace building and State-building (2011) *A New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States*. 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness on 30 November 2011, Busan Korea

¹⁰ See Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2007) *Een zaak van iedereen*; Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2008) *Veiligheid en ontwikkeling in fragiele staten*, Second Chamber, Parliamentary Proceedings, 31787; Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2012) *Speerpunt Veiligheid en Rechtsorde*, Second Chamber, Parliamentary Proceedings, 32605

prerequisites for peace and stability is vital for the Netherlands".¹¹ The human security approach has also attracted strong civil society advocacy and engagement for instance through initiatives such as Human Security First and the Human Security Collective.¹²

1.2 Human security approach in practice

Twenty years into its existence, the human security concept causes controversy to this day.¹³ Critics argue that the concept is largely academic, that it is vague and too all-encompassing. Opponents claim that it does not assist researchers in understanding what security means or help decision-makers and practitioners to formulate good policies and programmes. Also, human security is sometimes seen as a vehicle to promote certain interests, and has been manipulated and transformed considerably since 1994 to fit organisational interests. Politically, its close association with the notion of Responsibility to Protect (R2P)¹⁴ in debates concerning international interventions has spurred discussions about the reach of state sovereignty, and has alienated certain countries that are sceptical of sovereignty violations. Furthermore, no country has adopted human security as a goal at the national level, raising scepticism about its utility for domestic policymaking.

Despite these criticisms, over the years the human security approach has become a broadly defined and malleable tool for analysing the root causes of threats and for responding to complex and multidimensional threats at various levels. In an attempt to further operationalise the concept, the UN recently developed a framework for action, including a set of guiding principles. A human security approach should be people-centred, multi-sectoral, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented.¹⁵ Moreover, the approach is to be implemented through a protection and empowerment framework. Protection refers to 'top-down' measures and strategies set up by states, international agencies, NGOs and the private sector, to shield people from menaces. Empowerment implies a 'bottom-up' approach focused on developing the capacity and resilience of individuals and communities to act on their own behalf and to participate in the design and implementation of solutions to ensure human security for themselves and others.

¹¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2013) *Internationale Veiligheidsstrategie*

¹² See: <http://www.humansecurityfirst.org/> and <http://www.hscollective.org/> (accessed 24 August 2014)

¹³ For more discussion on criticisms, see Niels Terpstra, Dr. Rens Willems, Professor Georg Frerks and Tomás Chang Pico (2014), *What the New Deal can learn from the human security approach*, KPSRL Report

¹⁴ The three pillars of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), as stipulated in the Outcome Document of the 2005 United Nations World Summit (A/RES/60/1, para. 138-140) and formulated in the Secretary-General's 2009 Report (A/63/677) on Implementing the Responsibility to Protect are: 1) The State carries the primary responsibility for protecting populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing, and their incitement; 2) The international community has a responsibility to encourage and assist States in fulfilling this responsibility; and 3) The international community has a responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other means to protect populations from these crimes. If a State is manifestly failing to protect its populations, the international community must be prepared to take collective action to protect populations, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Controversies and debates concerning the scope and application of R2P mostly concern the third pillar.

¹⁵ UN OCHA (2009) *Human Security in Theory and Practice. Application of the Human Security Concept and the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security*. Human Security Unit. New York: UN OCHA For description of principles see: <http://www.unocha.org/humansecurity/human-security-unit/human-security-approach#a3> (accessed 24 August 2014)

1.3 Convergence of approaches and principles

In some cases, for instance through the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS), projects are specifically established and geared towards tackling human security issues.¹⁶ Also some organisations, especially from civil society, claim to implement their programmes and activities explicitly from a human security perspective. This means that their programmes and projects are focussed on addressing the actual needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of the affected communities through protection and empowerment strategies. Individuals and communities are placed at the centre of the analysis and implementation of projects, not just as objectives of intervention, but also as providers of their own security. In practice, such approaches boil down to a strong focus on building local capacities and promoting local response strategies. For the large part however, the principles underpinning a human security approach have become mainstreamed and reflected in broader international and national policies for engagement in fragile states. It appears there is an emerging consensus surrounding a set of common peacebuilding and state-building priorities that national and international partners should consider in their work in FCS, which partly overlap with human security principles.¹⁷ As they have evolved, the concepts exhibited a tendency to broaden and balance their focus (see figure 1).¹⁸

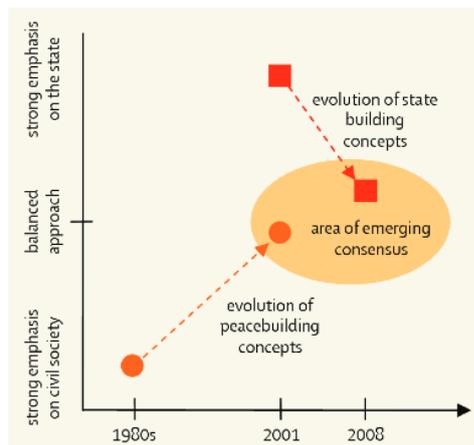


Figure 1. The evolution of peacebuilding and statebuilding concepts over time¹⁹

¹⁶ To date, projects have contributed to rebuilding war-torn communities; protecting people exposed to extreme poverty, sudden economic downturns and natural disasters; and addressing urban violence. Others have responded to complex issues such as trafficking in persons, arms and illicit substances; fostering coexistence and mutual respect within and across communities; and tackling the interconnected human security challenges in isolated communities. UN OCHA (2013), *Lessons from the Field. Applying the Human Security Approach through the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, Human Security Unit*, New York

¹⁷ Peacebuilding is about ending or preventing violent conflict and supporting sustainable peace, while state-building is about establishing capable, accountable, responsive and legitimate states. Both should ideally increase human security. For further definitions and discussions regarding distinctions and overlaps between these concepts: OECD (2010) *Peacebuilding and State-building Priorities and Challenges, A Synthesis of findings from seven multi-stakeholder consultations*, International Dialogue of Peacebuilding and State-building, and: German Development Institute (2010), *The Convergence of Peacebuilding and State Building: Addressing a Common Purpose from Different Perspectives*, Briefing Paper, 4/2009

¹⁸ Also noted in OECD (2010) *Peacebuilding and State-building Priorities and Challenges, A Synthesis of findings from seven multi-stakeholder consultations*

¹⁹ German Development Institute (2010), *The Convergence of Peacebuilding and State Building: Addressing a Common Purpose from Different Perspectives*, Briefing Paper, 4/2009

For instance, the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations (2007)²⁰ focus on state-building as the central objective and do not refer to human security. At the same time, the principles stress the importance of a context-specific approach that is aligned with local priorities, and the need for a prevention-oriented, multi-sector, comprehensive, do no harm approach. The New Deal (2011)²¹ builds on previous international frameworks and combines a focus on state-building and peacebuilding goals including the need to establish and strengthen people’s security. It highlights the importance of inclusive political settlements and conflict resolution. The Dili Declaration (2010)²² does not mention human security as such, but identifies several important key challenges to implementing peacebuilding and state-building goals that relate to human security principles. The challenges include a lack of a shared vision amongst stakeholders based on consultation with citizens and civil society, a lack of context and conflict analysis, the amount of overlapping plans and weak alignments, and the need to strengthen linkages between development, security, justice and good governance. Equally, bilateral governments demonstrate a mix of state-building, peacebuilding and human security aims in their fragile states policies. For example, the Dutch Government’s policy for fragile states is informed by peacebuilding and state-building notions, while underscoring its engagement in FCS from the perspective of human security. It highlights its underlying premises for interventions: a comprehensive approach, prevention and conflict-sensitivity, flexibility and long-term commitment, local priorities and local systems.²³

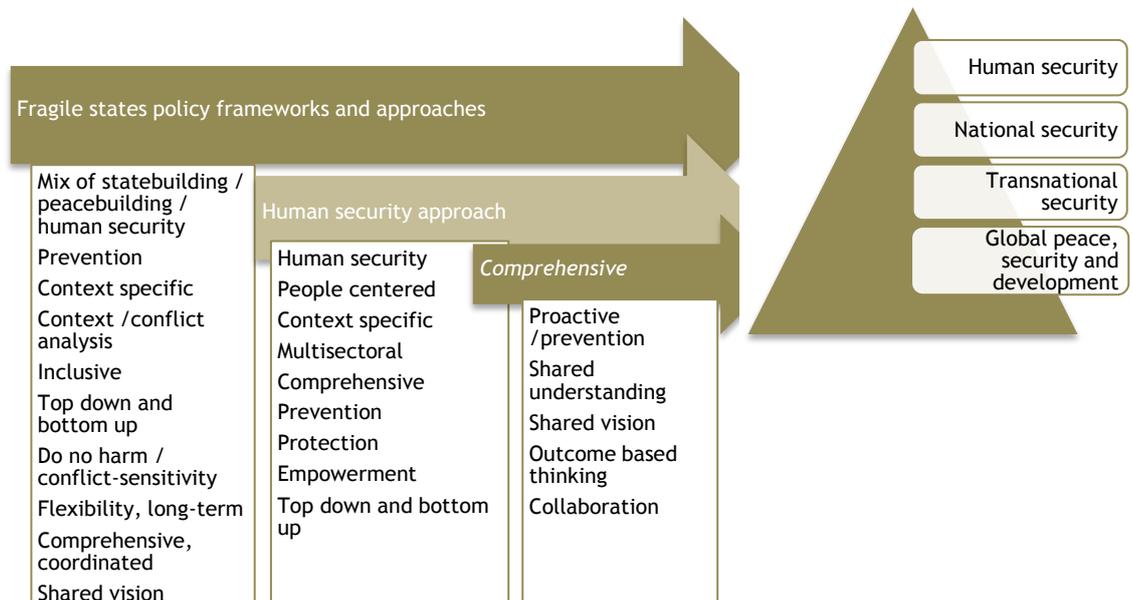


Figure 2. Overlapping approaches and principles of intervention in FCS

²⁰ OECD DAC (2007) *Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations*

²¹ The ‘New Deal’ is based on the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations (2007), the Kinshasa Statement (2008), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), the Dili Declaration and consecutive g7+ Statements (2010-2011), the Monrovia Roadmap (2011), and the work undertaken by ‘the Dialogue’ working groups.

²² International Dialogue for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (2011), *A New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States*. 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness on 30 November 2011, Busan Korea

²³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2012), *Speerpunt Veiligheid en Rechtsorde*, Second Chamber, Parliamentary Proceedings, 32605

The overlapping approaches and principles echo the growing consensus regarding interventions in FCS (see figure 2). Despite this convergence, their operationalization in practice is less straightforward and more challenging, especially due to the complex nature of FCS. Policymakers and practitioners often need to make difficult choices of how to intervene and who to engage with. Moreover, interventions are further influenced by motivations, political and economic interests and particular relationships of local and intervening parties. Quite often it is not the local perspective on security that leads in terms of priorities, types of interventions and resources committed, but rather the perspective and interests of international intervening actors. In practice, the diversity of actors and approaches on the ground can create tensions and dilemmas and impede comprehensive approaches among actors.

1.4 Linking a comprehensive approach and human security

“Without peace, there can be no development. Without development, there can be no enduring peace. Peace and justice are prerequisites for progress. We must acknowledge a principal lesson of the MDGs: that peace and access to justice are not only fundamental human aspirations but cornerstones of sustainable development.”²⁴

The term ‘comprehensive approach’ emerged during the 1990s in response to the recognition that the security, social, political and economic dimensions of conflict and crisis situations are mutually reinforced and all central to sustainable transitions. In the past two decades, conflict situations have become increasingly complex, timelines have expanded and the number of internal and external actors involved has grown immensely. Recent experiences in countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq and the Democratic Republic of Congo have highlighted the need for greater communication and collaboration between military, diplomatic and development actors and civil society. The essence of a comprehensive approach is captured in many different international and national policy documents, however no single commonly-agreed definition or understanding exists.²⁵ Various bilateral donors and international institutions (e.g., UN, EU, NATO) have developed their own understanding and approach of an integrated or comprehensive approach. These vary from inter-departmental cooperation (‘Whole of Government approach’) to broader integration or coordination with a wider range of actors including civil society and the private sector (sometimes referred to a ‘Whole of Society approach’). The Dutch government has for instance recently captured its thinking in a new policy framework (‘*Leidraad Geïntegreerde Benadering*’), which focuses predominantly on inter-departmental cooperation (Ministries of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Economic Affairs, Justice).²⁶

²⁴ United Nations (2013), *A new global partnership: eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development*, Report of the high-level panel of eminent persons on the post-2015 development agenda, 52

²⁵ For more discussion on a comprehensive approach and challenges in concept and practice see for example: Kristiina Rintakoski & Mikko Autti (2008), *Comprehensive Approach: Trends, Challenges and Possibilities for Cooperation in Crisis Prevention and Management*, Crisis Management Initiative; and Karsten Friis and Pia Jarmyr (2008), *Comprehensive Approach: Challenges and opportunities in complex crisis management*, Oslo: NUPI Report Security in Practice No. 11

²⁶ The Dutch approach is often referred to as the 3D approach, combining security instruments, diplomatic pressure and development cooperation. This term is somewhat outmoded given the recognition of the

While definitions and scopes differ, the various approaches boil down to similar assumptions regarding the need for a diverse range of actors to achieve a minimum of shared goals and approaches and to establish mechanisms for information sharing, coordination and cooperation.²⁷ It is expected that the process of establishing such common objectives, visions and goals will generate some level of coherence, and result in more efficient and effective outcomes.²⁸ The British Ministry of Defence has identified a useful set of four guiding principles underpinning a comprehensive approach: the need for pro-active, preventive engagement, the importance of a shared understanding between parties concerning the context and each other’s capabilities, the need for outcome-based thinking and mutually agreed goals and measures of effectiveness, and collaborative working.²⁹

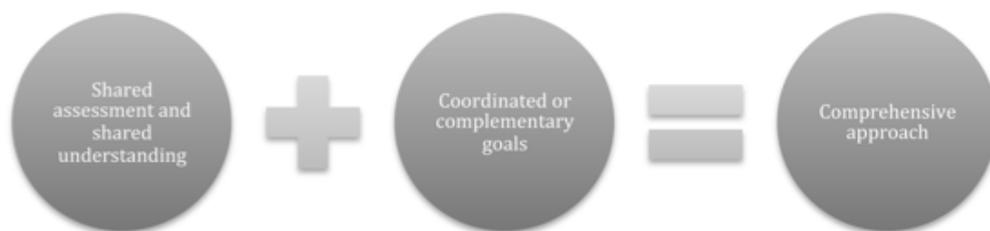


Figure 3. Components of a comprehensive approach³⁰

A comprehensive approach is essentially inherent to a human security approach.³¹ Human security requires a range of diverse actors from international to local levels, as well as intersectoral collaboration to develop solutions to interdependent threats. This naturally raises the question which actors should be involved in these endeavours and how. Which people, communities, governmental and non-governmental institutions play which role and to what extent? Specifically this prompts the discussion of the relevance of the local level for providing human security. The importance to bring in the local level is underscored in a number of the principles of a human security approach (people-centred, conflict specific and bottom-up approach). Local actors affected by conflict - e.g., host governments, communities, civil society, the private sector, traditional leaders and women’s, youth and

importance of wider inter-departmental cooperation, also involving economic and justice departments. Ministries of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Security and Justice (2014), *Leidraad Geïntegreerde Benadering, De Nederlandse visie op een samenhangende inzet op veiligheid en stabiliteit in fragiele staten en conflictgebieden*

²⁷ While discussions continue about the level of integration in a comprehensive approach, it is widely accepted that any approach should at a minimum be based on sharing information and cooperation and not necessarily integration. This is especially pertinent for humanitarian actors who wish maintain a reasonable distance with security forces in order to uphold their neutrality and impartiality. See footnote 25.

²⁸ Karsten Friis and Pia Jarmyr (2008), 14

²⁹ The UK Ministry of Defense defines a comprehensive approach as ‘commonly understood principles and collaborative processes that enhance the likelihood of favorable and enduring outcomes within a particular situation’. The Ministry of Defense (2006), *The Comprehensive Approach Joint Discussion Note 4/05*, United Kingdom

³⁰ Lisa Schirch (2013), *Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning: Toward a Participatory Approach to Human Security*, Boulder: Kumarian Press

³¹ While a comprehensive approach can be considered inherent to a human security approach, a comprehensive approach to interventions in fragile states does not necessarily and always have human security as its main objective.

victim groups - intrinsically have more information about their specific context than outside actors and are critical partners in promoting human security.³²

³² Kapuy Klaus (2012), *The Relevance of the Local Level for Human Security*, Human Security Perspectives, Volume 1, Issue 1, 3

Chapter 2

Key challenges and knowledge gaps

The concept of human security has fostered a large and growing literature, predominantly of an academic nature. Interestingly, much of this literature is concerned with contesting and defending the concept itself, rather than on its theoretical coherence or associated policy agendas.³³ Similarly, the concept of a comprehensive approach has been subject to a growing body of literature, albeit focusing more on its operational trends and challenges.³⁴ Rather than re-hashing discussions on conceptual and operational challenges of the individual concepts as such, this paper homes in on key issues concerning policy and practice with regard to a comprehensive approach to human security. Several key cross-cutting challenges can be distilled, which will be further discussed below:³⁵ (1) the level of shared and context-specific understanding and the inclusion and empowerment of relevant local stakeholders, (2) the assumptions and theories informing our interventions and the potential for a comprehensive approach based on a shared vision, and (3) the nature of evolving transnational security trends and related implications for policy and practice in FCS.

2.1 Contextual understanding and local inclusion

A recent review of two decades of peacebuilding practice concluded that such a practice ‘has failed to be context-sensitive, oriented towards the long-term, inclusive or accountable to local constituencies.’³⁶ Insights gained over the years have led to a general recognition of the importance of inclusive, participatory analysis and response mechanisms and strategies in peacebuilding. A predominantly top-down approach has proven ineffective and the political

³³ Sakiko Fukuda-Parr and Carol Messineo (2012), *Human Security: A critical review of the literature*, Centre for Research on Peace and Development, CRPD Working Paper No 11

³⁴ Reports on the operationalization of a comprehensive approach usually cover the following issues and challenges: overcoming conflicting mandates, principles and priorities of different actors; bridging many organizational structures and approaches; how to organize a comprehensive approach and whether it should be integrated or coordinated; who should lead a comprehensive approach and on what level this should take place; challenges related to the collaboration with local actors; insufficient implementing capacity and political will by various actors to dedicate resources to implementation etc. See also footnote 25.

³⁵ These issues emerged as important topics for further research, as signified by discussions and papers produced by the KPSRL Working Group Comprehensive Approach to Human Security, findings from the recent IOB evaluation on Dutch interventions in fragile states, the KPSRL expert meetings and online debates, and a wide range of contemporary international literature on the subject. See full literature list below.

³⁶ Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (2013), *Inclusivity and Local Perspectives in Peacebuilding: Issues, Lessons, Challenges*, Geneva Peacebuilding Platform Paper No 8, 2. This Paper draws on the expert meeting *Towards a Comprehensive Strategy for Inclusivity: Strengthening the Role of Local Perspectives in Peacebuilding* on 14-15 May 2013, in Uppsala, Sweden, organized jointly by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform

will of local power brokers and public support is crucial.³⁷ Such a top-down approach must be combined with a 'bottom-up' approach that engages with non-state and community-level institutions and that is central to building peaceful states and societies.³⁸ These insights have led to a stronger emphasis on interventions rooted in solid context analyses and based on principles of 'do no harm' and conflict sensitivity.³⁹ Such principles underscore that even well intended interventions can undermine existing peacebuilding efforts or contribute to new outbreaks of violence if not properly tuned in with the context. Where international actors fail to invest in good political and conflict analysis, actions can result in more harm than good.⁴⁰

Getting the context right

To this day, however, intervening actors do not always know enough about the local dynamics and the possible results of their engagement and intervene without adequate input from local practitioners. Conflict analyses are not always done or done with only limited involvement of local stakeholders.⁴¹ This can be due to limited time available to engage in in-depth conflict or context analysis exercises, or to fully take into account international conflict assessments⁴² or reports that cover a certain area.⁴³ In other cases conflict assessment rely too much on donor-driver outsiders using inadequate research methods that fail to appreciate the complex, culturally unique, local conflict-affected system.⁴⁴ It is equally important to recognise that 'the ability of external agents to gain knowledge of the complex social systems in the peacebuilding context is inherently limited'.⁴⁵

Given the challenges of 'getting the context right' for individual actors, reaching a shared understanding among the various actors poses even greater challenges, due to both the complex nature of these environments as well as the inherent conflicting interests that inform policies. Rather than tackling this from a top-down approach and attempting to reach

³⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2013), *Investeren in Stabiliteit, Het Nederlandse fragiele statenbeleid doorgelicht*. The Hague: IOB, 245

³⁸ Department for International Development (DfID) (2010), *Building Peaceful States and Societies*, UK: DfID Practice Paper, 9

³⁹ Do no harm and conflict sensitivity refer to a thorough understanding of how an intervention interacts with the operating context, and acting to ensure that any potential negative impacts as a result of this interaction are minimized. See www.conflictsensitivity.org

⁴⁰ DfID (2010), *Building Peaceful States and Societies*, 8

⁴¹ CARE International and International Alert (2012), *Peacebuilding with Impact, Defining Theories of Change*, 2. Also a recent World Vision report notes the presence of a participation gap between micro and macro-level conflict analysis practice. Many non-government organizations and civil society organizations use local level conflict analysis methodologies, often incorporating participatory approaches. They generally do not conduct structured, macro-level analysis. Donors on the other hand, tend to focus more on macro-level analysis, but rarely make use of participatory approaches. National, or macro-level conflict analysis is relatively scarce. Tim Midgley and Michelle Garred (2013), *Bridging the participation gap: developing macro level conflict analysis through local perspectives*, UK: World Vision Policy and Practice Paper, 6

⁴² An ever-increasing number of conflict analysis tools and methodologies are available for practitioners to use. For a selection of conflict assessment tools see Annex 1 CARE International and International Alert (2012), *Peacebuilding with Impact, Defining Theories of Change*.

⁴³ Noted in Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (2013), *Investeren in Stabiliteit, Het Nederlandse fragiele statenbeleid doorgelicht*, 22. Governance and Social Development Resource Center (GSDRC) (2012), *Helpdesk Research Report: Theory of Change approaches to post-conflict governance programming*, 3

⁴⁴ Schirch (2013), p. 16

⁴⁵ Cedric de Coning (2013), *Understanding Peacebuilding as Essentially Local*. *Stability*, 2(1): 6,2

consensus among intervening actors, it is more feasible to take a bottom-up approach and to examine how the inclusion of local stakeholders as key actors and beneficiaries in a comprehensive approach can be strengthened. How can they be provided a more influential role in the analysing the context and informing the planning and implementation of interventions? What are the local perspectives of the context, the root causes of conflict and the desired long-term outcomes? The complex nature of FCS and the lack of social cohesion imply, however, that also at the local level a common vision on the situation and what is required is lacking. This implies that intervening actors need to consider who they engage with as partners and why.

Getting local inclusion right

Beyond the level of context analysis, the ambition of working on the basis of participatory, inclusive mechanisms presents policymakers and practitioners with difficult dilemmas. In conflict settings, security and rule of law is often organised and provided on the basis of dominant group's interests. While consolidating and partnering with elites can catalyse profound change, such processes may incur a legitimacy deficit with the broader population. At the same time, actors with strong local legitimacy may disengage and self-organise services and development, which may not necessarily be in line with a donor's vision and values. In most conflict areas, a wide array of non-state actors carry out governance functions, such as rebel militias engaging in taxation and service provision in neglected areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo, or public health services in Niger depending on bribery and voluntary cleaning services by hospital users.⁴⁶ Also Somalia has maintained some basic services, an impressively efficient remittance system and a comparatively stable currency, despite not having had a functioning state for more than two decades.⁴⁷ People rely on such home-grown institutions (non-state and/or customary institutions) to address their everyday human security needs related to livelihood stress, resource management and competition, and issues of order, security and conflict resolution.⁴⁸

Alternative inclusive mechanisms

New concepts in academic debates, such as 'hybridity' and 'post-liberal peace'⁴⁹, emphasise the need to build on local practices and structures. Instead of focusing on top-down approaches, practitioners and academics are beginning to question whether more appropriate forms of order can be constructed by 'working with the grain' of local institutions operating

⁴⁶ Kate Meagher, Tom De Herdt and Kristof Titeca (2014) *Unraveling public authority, paths of hybrid governance in Africa*, IS Academy Research brief #10

⁴⁷ Kate Meagher, Tom De Herdt and Kristof Titeca (2014), *Hybrid Governance in Africa: Buzzword or Paradigm Shift?* <http://africanarguments.org/2014/04/25/hybrid-governance-in-africa-buzzword-or-paradigm-shift-by-kristof-titeca-kate-meagher-and-tom-de-herdt/> (accessed 3 September 2014)

⁴⁸ For a more in-depth discussion on such local arrangements see Gemma van der Haar (2013). *State and non-state institutions in conflict-affected societies. Who do people turn to for human security?*, IS Academy Occasional Paper. This study explores how state and non-state institutions at the local level are 'put to work', with field studies conducted in regions affected by conflict-related state fragility in Somaliland/Puntland (Sanaag region) and Afghanistan (Kunduz and Takhar provinces).

⁴⁹ For an in-depth discussion on these concepts, see elsewhere, for instance: Richmond, O.P., and Audra Mitchell (2011), *Hybrid Forms of Peace, From Everyday Agency to Post-Liberalism*, or: Ioannis Telledis (2012), *The End of Liberal Peace? Post-Liberal Peace vs. Post-Liberal States*, *International Studies Review* 14

on the ground in fragile state contexts.⁵⁰ The term ‘hybrid governance’⁵¹ refers to alternative forms and processes through which state and non-state institutions coalesce around stable forms of order and authority. Hybrid governance analyses withhold from negative judgments on less ideal forms of order that may involve collaboration of public authorities or aid agencies with informal or illiberal institutions, such as vigilante groups, informal enterprise associations or religious authorities, and consider such arrangements in terms of ‘practicality’, ‘legitimacy’ and ‘arrangements that work’. Many questions are currently still being considered in contemporary discussions of what hybrid governance is and how it works. Can local non-state institutions provide a more appropriate mechanism for building effective governance systems from below than costly and increasingly problematic ‘good governance’ reforms? Does hybrid governance provide a useful conceptual tool for understanding and even facilitating these more grounded and potentially sustainable governance processes? Who decides which non-state institutions are suitable and legitimate partners for hybrid governance arrangements? What are the implications for state capacity, political legitimacy and public accountability? Are hybrid governance arrangements always stabilising, or do they have different effects in different institutional and political contexts? Here it is also important to take into account the role externals play in defining hybrid governance priorities and outcomes and the influence they wield on this.⁵² In the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example, donors, international mining interests and foreign governments ally with rebels and civil society groups in defining hybrid arrangements. Struggles over the boundaries of public authority are as much about international demands and strategies, as about local political aspirations.

These issues reveal some of the fallacy of ‘local ownership’ and present normative and practical challenges to external interventions, which necessitate further scrutiny.⁵³ There is a need for prodding prevailing assumptions, revealing ‘difficult truths’ and considering ‘unconventional options’. Alternatives are not always sufficiently taken into consideration in policy development, as was also concluded in the recent evaluation of Dutch interventions in fragile states.⁵⁴ How should one deal with other actors assuming state-like functions on parts of a territory? What could be alternative forms of engagement to support unique local needs? Alternatives could range from support to hybrid arrangements incorporating non-state institutions into formal governance arrangements, to transnational approaches (discussed in Section 3.3) to minimalist approaches that allow for local self-organisation.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ A workshop entitled ‘Unraveling Public Authority: Paths of Hybrid Governance in Africa’ held at the London School of Economics on 6-7 December 2013 was organized by the Department of International Development (LSE) and the Institute of Development Policy and Management (IOB) of the University of Antwerp, with significant support from the IS Academy Human Security in Fragile States at Wageningen University and the Justice and Security Research Programme (JSRP) at the LSE. Kate Meagher, Tom De Herdt and Kristof Titeca (2014) *Unraveling public authority, paths of hybrid governance in Africa*, IS Academy Research brief #10

⁵¹ A swarm of related concepts have coalesced around the notion of hybrid governance, including ‘hybrid political orders’, ‘real governance’, ‘twilight institutions’ and ‘negotiated statehood,’ drawing attention to the failures of conventional debates about weak and fragile states, and stimulating new kinds of discussions about governance in Africa. Kate Meagher, Tom De Herdt and Kristof Titeca (2014)

⁵² Kate Meagher, Tom De Herdt and Kristof Titeca (2014)

⁵³ KPSRL (2014), *Synthesis Report*

⁵⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2013), *Investeren in Stabiliteit, Het Nederlandse fragiele statenbeleid doorgelicht*. The Hague: IOB, 245

⁵⁵ Discussed in KPSRL Online Debate on *Foreign Engagement in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Contexts*, in KPSRL (2014) *Synthesis Report*, p 9, and in online debate and discussion paper ‘*Local conflicts in transnational*

Other important questions relate to the legitimacy of political actors in these contexts and how their legitimacy is defined.⁵⁶ Is a country's government automatically a legitimate actor? What form of alignment with the state is appropriate in each context: whether *through* the state, *with* the state or *outside* the state?⁵⁷ How do we recognise 'agents of change' at the local level? By what criteria do we select our local partners, or perceive their legitimacy? How do we deal with actors/institutions with high local legitimacy, which tend to have low 'international legitimacy' and do not comply with donors' norms? Are donors able and willing to work with dominant elite groups and/or unconventional local partners even if these are not necessarily in line with international models of governance and development? Are donor governments ready to take the risk of working with shady actors?

The bottom line is that engagement always means intervening in local politics, and that intervening actors become part of local reality. Working in conflict settings adds another layer to local complexity, and the deepening of interventions due to the human security agenda may further increase the risks of doing harm. We need to understand better how international actors can adapt to these fast-changing realities on the ground, while continuing to align with conflict-sensitivity and 'do no harm' principles. In this context, Cedric de Coning also points to the tensions between the local ownership principle and the interest-driven external initiatives. Peacebuilding and state-building interventions essentially are about stimulating and facilitating the capacity of societies to self-organise. In practice, however, many, international peacebuilding missions to date have made the mistake of interfering so much that they ended up undermining the ability of the local system to self-organise.⁵⁸ What is the right balance between outside intervention and genuine local empowerment? Only after gaining more clarity on the above-discussed bottom-line strategic considerations, a next step would be to determine how local perspectives and local actors can be more structurally included in analysis, planning and implementation of interventions.

2.2 Theories of change and operationalization

A comprehensive approach underscores the need for a common understanding of the conflict and an alignment of goals among actors. In practice, however, various stakeholders often hold different views regarding local dynamics and what it takes to produce long-term outcomes. While some actors largely focus on state-building approaches and the strengthening of core national institutions and the rule of law, the reality on the ground triggers human-security oriented interventions by others, which can sometimes be contradictory. Trade-offs also

entanglements. Challenges for multidimensional external interventions in building sustainable peace. KPSRL Expert Meeting 1 July 2014.

⁵⁶ These issues are also discussed in Van Sluijs, P., U. Keller, S. Bachtold (2013) *The New Deal and the Role of Civil Society*. Swiss Centre for Peacebuilding

⁵⁷ DfID (2010), *Building Peaceful States and Societies*, 9

⁵⁸ In his article he discusses Somalia, where a powerful and diverse international community has the resources to enhance peace, however such resources come with a set of ideas concerning what the President of Somalia should be doing. Each outside nation and organization involved in Somalia is engaged for its own strategic political, security and economic reasons. The limited capacity of the President and its government is overwhelmed by the transaction cost of 'catering' to each of the international partners. De Coning (2013), 3

exists between peacebuilding and development objectives.⁵⁹ Development and peacebuilding professionals, even when working within the same government department, tend to approach things differently, use different terminologies and are often unfamiliar with the dominant theories of change and paradigms related to each discipline.⁶⁰

In recent years the use of theories of change as part of project or programme design has increased in peacebuilding policy and practice. A theory of change (ToC) defines how change occurs and lays down the assumptions that link inputs and activities to the attainment of the desired ends.⁶¹ Assumptions explain both the connections between early, intermediate and long-term outcomes and the expectations about how and why proposed interventions will bring them about. Explicit theories of change assist policymakers and practitioners to assess the impact of interventions and to devise monitoring and evaluation approaches along the lines of the activities - intended changes - desired results chain.



Figure 4. Components of conflict assessment and peacebuilding planning⁶²

⁵⁹ Whilst poverty reduction imperatives often point towards targeting the poorest and most vulnerable in society, successfully addressing conflict may require targeting a different set of actors: those who promote or engage in violence. For example, in Burundi, a conflict analysis revealed a pattern of university students being manipulated into igniting street violence. With training and support they were able to resist manipulation. However, donors whose mandate is poverty reduction may react negatively to a programme that targets the (relatively) rich. Sarah Bayne and Tony Vaux (2013), *Integrated development and peacebuilding programming Design, monitoring and evaluation*, Practice Products for Improving Measurement in DFID Crime, Conflict & Violence Programming, 11

⁶⁰ Bridging these divides is not helped by the fact that within development agencies peacebuilding is often perceived as a distinct set of activities (e.g., relevant to security sector reform or mediation) to be led and managed by specialist units (in the case of DFID, by Conflict Advisers), as opposed to an integrated component of development. Integrated programming requires a reorientation in approach that avoids the framing, ‘How can we incorporate peacebuilding alongside our existing development work?’ Rather, we should ask, ‘How should we be organized to support peacebuilding and development simultaneously?’ This requires extensive programme and managerial staff to work closely across disciplines and to develop new knowledge and work in unfamiliar territory. Bayne and Vaux (2013), 11

⁶¹ A theory of change differs from a logic framework. A logical framework is often a graphic illustration and demonstrates how activities will logically lead to a particular or set of particular outputs, which result in the accomplishment of objectives, which then accomplish the goal. A theory of change explains the how and why of the logic framework – how and why a set of activities will lead to the accomplishment of project/program objectives and goals. It is the explicit expression of often unstated assumptions of how change will or will not occur in a given conflict context. http://www.internationalpeaceandconflict.org/profiles/blogs/theories-of-change-in-peacebuilding-project-design?xg_source=activity#.VAbOpEhLF2c (accessed 28 August 2014). See also: www.theoryofchange.org

⁶² The recent IOB evaluation regarding Dutch interventions in fragile states concluded that interventions are often rooted in implicit TOCs that are subconscious and unstated. The evaluation further noted a vacuum created by the absence of theories of change which it argued was filled by ‘neoliberal’ assumptions of what the approaches were

While the added value of theories of change is widely recognised, in practice they often remain non-explicit, vague and/or inappropriate.⁶³ When theories of change remain implicit or unstated, assessing whether a project's underlying assumptions and rationale are appropriate to a context becomes more difficult. In these cases, when things do not work, it is much more difficult to critically examine whether we are working on the basis of the wrong theory, or whether we are working on the right theory, but the programme is poorly implemented.⁶⁴

Linking theories of change to comprehensive approaches

Contemporary analyses and reports focusing on theories of change and interventions in fragile environments are largely focused on improving and enhancing the development and application of theories of change related to particular programmes or interventions. Less attention is devoted to how explicit theories of change can foster greater understanding among various parties with regard to their assumptions and approaches and thereby enhance collaboration, and in particular with local actors.⁶⁵ One of the principal recommendations of a recent study by CARE International was that 'theories of change need to be as precise, nuanced and contextually specific as possible and be based on broad conflict analysis.'⁶⁶ This prompts the question how theories of change be harnessed and made more explicit, while firmly rooted in local dynamics and perspectives. Moreover, can such well-informed theories of change contribute to enhancing a comprehensive approach among the various international and local partners?

Such an approach would first and foremost require a more explicit analysis and understanding of the assumptions informing various policy agendas and how incongruent agendas obstruct the implementation of comprehensive strategies for engagement in fragile states. What theories of change inform a human-security approach and how does this differ from other approaches? To what extent do different actors' long-term outcomes, theories of change, approaches, interests and operating modalities complement or undermine each other? Are current assumptions and theories still fit for purpose and what alternative approaches should be considered? Can a new narrative or policy theory for the promotion of security unite different perspectives, end-goals, and interests of engagement in fragile states? How can local actors be more structurally engaged in devising locally informed theories of change and policies, based on an adequate assessment of the local context? More explicit insights on envisioned common long-term goals may also contribute towards mainstreaming human

trying to achieve and what local people actually wanted. See: Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (2013), *Investeren in Stabiliteit, Het Nederlandse fragiele statenbeleid doorgelicht*. Den Haag: IOB, 245. See also: OECD DAC (2008), *Guidance on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities*, p. 77; and GSDRC (2012), 1.

⁶³ The recent IOB evaluation regarding Dutch interventions in fragile states concluded that interventions are often rooted in implicit TOCs that are subconscious and unstated. The evaluation further noted a vacuum created by the absence of theories of change, which it argued, was filled by 'neoliberal' assumptions of what the approaches were trying to achieve and what local people actually wanted. See: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2013), *Investeren in Stabiliteit, Het Nederlandse fragiele statenbeleid doorgelicht*. The Hague: IOB, 245. See also: OECD DAC (2008), *Guidance on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities*, p. 77; and GSDRC (2012), 1.

⁶⁴ CARE International (2012) *Guidance for designing, monitoring and evaluating peacebuilding projects: using theories of change*, 6

⁶⁵ KPSRL (2014) *Synthesis Report*, 5

⁶⁶ CARE International and International Alert (2012), *Peacebuilding with Impact, Defining Theories of Change*, 2

security in national development agendas and policies of fragile and conflict-affected states, which is considered to be currently lacking.⁶⁷

A mutually agreed-upon definition of success or goal jointly set by the parties is an important process milestone in and of itself, but challenging to attain in practice. Sequencing of interventions and clarifying division of labour between parties can be a more realistic way to resolve dilemmas between short-term and long-term objectives.⁶⁸ This requires parties to undertake inclusive and transparent processes of dialogue among parties to express their visions and grow mutual understanding.⁶⁹ Beyond dialogue, it requires processes of joint assessments, results reporting, strategizing and sequencing to optimise the added value of each actor's contribution to comprehensive strategies. It also requires a deeper understanding regarding the challenges to change established ways of working and how these can be overcome.⁷⁰ It is worth further exploring how such aspects can be operationalised in a locally driven, context-specific manner.

Theories of change can encourage an overly linear approach, so there is also a need to remain firmly grounded in the organic and non-linear change processes that are taking place on the ground. At the end of the day it is not the theories that matter, but how interventions can be most effective in these complex and chaotic contexts. It is, therefore, also worth considering whether theories of change in fact contribute towards enhancing insights and improving (comprehensive) interventions or whether more iterative approaches are possible that allow for a more flexible and fitting way of operating in these environments. As de Coning states, 'the system is continuously evolving and 'the solution' need to evolve with it. We need a new approach that goes beyond the old problem-solving 'assessment-design-apply' approach. We need a new planning model that can recognize the need for continuous iterative processes and that enable interventions to evolve along with the surrounding system'.⁷¹

2.3 Transnational security trends and implications

In a global world, conflicts are no longer local. They are exposed to global and transnational influences and dimensions, which alter the extent to which conflicts can be resolved locally.⁷² Although each circumstance is unique, transnational dynamics are pervasive across conflict. Acknowledging the complex nature of these environments and processes, and seeking to better understand their causes and dynamics is necessary if external interventions are to achieve more successful and sustainable peacebuilding.⁷³ To date, international and local responses in FCS mostly focus on local or national security challenges. We need to understand better how such global and transnational developments shape conflict at the local

⁶⁷ Noted by several local practitioners interviewed by the Working Group Comprehensive Approach to Human Security, as input for the strategic research agenda.

⁶⁸ DfID (2010), *Building Peaceful States and Societies*, 8

⁶⁹ KPSRL Online Debate on *Foreign Engagement in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Contexts*

⁷⁰ Noted as a key challenge in the panel debate on 5 December 2013, KPSRL (2014) *Synthesis Report*, 5

⁷¹ De Coning (2013), 4

⁷² Discussed in online debate and discussion paper '*Local conflicts in transnational entanglements. Challenges for multidimensional external interventions in building sustainable peace.*' KPSRL Expert Meeting 1 July 2014.

⁷³ Mentioned by Idean Salehyan, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of North Texas, KPSRL Online Debate: 'Local' conflicts in transnational entanglements, 19 June 2014, www.kpsrl.org (accessed 7 September 2014).

level and what this means for policy paradigms for interventions in FCS, and in particular for human security approaches. Transnational threats are often felt at a local level, but the cause of the threat and the responsibility for addressing it lies elsewhere.⁷⁴

Evolving security threats

Although transnational elements have been present in many historical wars, there are qualitative differences in today's environment. The ease of international travel, communications, commerce, etc., has made distance less important and transnational activities easier to coordinate.⁷⁵ One of the more classical dimensions of transnational influences can be described as the use of rear-guards and foreign support networks by insurgent forces, which is an age-old phenomenon.⁷⁶ In more recent decades the world has been plagued by the spread of large-scale organised crime and political extremism, as currently witnessed with regard to Boko Haram in Nigeria, and the Islamic State (IS) in Iraq and Syria. Transnational influences are, however, far from limited to cross-border support, organised crime and political extremism. They also concern developments related to cyber security, illicit trade, trafficking in humans and drugs, and less intentional issues, such as climate change and pandemic diseases.⁷⁷ Nowadays the world is confronted with a host of border-spanning trends and in the coming years the nature and extent of these threats will only continue to grow, with important repercussions at the sub-regional and local level. In many affected states, criminal groups are often embedded in the societies in which they operate and enjoy legitimacy at the local level. In peripheral regions of weak states such as Uganda, the Central African Republic and Nigeria, local actors benefit from the transnational extension of ideas, funds and weapons that provides these groups their dynamic, adaptable, asymmetric power.⁷⁸ These developments prompt important questions worth asking and worth further exploring. For instance, to what extent are transnational security concerns aggravating or accelerating local conflicts? How are global and transnational threats such as global extremism tapping into and exploiting local grievances and local inequalities? What are

⁷⁴ Also discussed in seminar report from the seminar 'Addressing Transnational Threats: Building a Common Agenda', held in The Hague from 23-24 June 2014. Saferworld organized the one and-a-half day expert seminar with the support of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The seminar was attended by 25 experts from think tanks, inter-governmental organizations, NGOs and policy institutions from different regions including China, India, Brazil, and Turkey as well as African and European countries.

⁷⁵ Idean Salehyan, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of North Texas, KPSRL Online Debate 'Local' conflicts in transnational entanglements, 19 June 2014, www.kpsrl.org (accessed 7 September 2014)

⁷⁶ For example, during the Cold War, the U.S. and Soviet Union supported client states and guerrilla movements in proxy wars on multiple continents. Matthew Levinger, Research Professor of International Affairs, Director of National Security Studies Program, George Washington University, KPSRL Online Debate: 'Local' conflicts in transnational entanglements, 9 July 2014, www.kpsrl.org (accessed 7 September 2014)

⁷⁷ For a discussion of the new transnational reality: Roger Z. George (2007), *Meeting 21st Century Transnational Challenges: Building a Global Intelligence Paradigm*, Studies in Intelligence, Vol. 51, No. 3 <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol51no3/building-a-global-intelligence-paradigm.html> (accessed 6 September 2014).

⁷⁸ What distinguishes contemporary conflicts from those of earlier times is the phenomenon that Moisés Naím calls the 'decay of power': "*Insurgents, fringe political parties, innovative startups, loosely organized activists, upstart citizen media, leaderless young people in city squares, and charismatic individuals who seem to have "come from nowhere" are shaking up the old order.... These are the micro powers: small, unknown, or once-negligible actors that have found ways to undermine, fence in, or thwart the mega players, the large bureaucratic organizations that previously controlled their fields.*" Moisés Naím (2013), *The End of Power: From Boardrooms to Battlefields and Churches to States, Why Being in Charge Isn't What It Used to Be*, New York: Basic Books, 51.

the effects of transnational organised crime and corruption on general governmental service provision and what further implications will this have on human-security in environments that are weak and fragile? What are the implications of global climate change for vulnerable communities in flood/drought prone areas?

The problems of, and solutions to state fragility are often identified within the boundaries of fragile contexts. Yet, the focus on ‘local solutions to local problems’ may distract from structural sources of conflict and fragility situated outside the realm and/or reach of fragile and conflict affected states themselves, including struggles for resources, transnational organised crime, global trade, economic inequalities and exploitative relationships.⁷⁹ How can international response strategies and community based approaches be made more fit for purpose in helping to resolve local conflict in the face of transnational influences? What is the significance of context-specific, locally driven and inclusive processes to address local peacebuilding challenges, while these are so transnationally influenced? In particular, what does it mean for empowering local stakeholders? This works in two ways: empowerment to deal with local vulnerabilities that emanate from transnational threats, and empowerment to feed into and influence policies at the national and global level to tackle the true sources of insecurity.

New actors, new approaches

At the same time, the world is witnessing the rise of newly emerging global players in the development and peacebuilding landscape. Before 2000, traditional bilateral and multilateral donors dominated the scene. Since then the volume and composition has changed significantly, with a much larger share being accounted for by non-traditional providers.⁸⁰ The so-called group of emerging players includes global giants, regional powers, rapidly industrialised economies and former socialist states from diverse geographic and historical backgrounds, but also social impact investors, the private sector, philanthropists and global funds. These players are neither a homogeneous group in terms of their interests and capacities nor share a unique agenda. They are increasingly important drivers of development and peacebuilding theory and practice, leading to alternative conceptualisations, such as ‘non-interference in domestic affairs’, ‘win-win relationships’ or ‘mutual benefits’. Dichotomies such as DAC/non-DAC, North/South or donor/recipient are becoming out-dated and being questioned by diverse actors and processes that go well beyond aid.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Discussed in Niels Terpstra, Dr. Rens Willems, Professor Georg Frerks and Tomás Chang Pico (2014), *What the New Deal can learn from the human security approach*, PLSRL Report, 7

⁸⁰ Romilly Greenhill, Annalisa Prizzon and Andrew Rogerson (2013). *The age of choice: developing countries in the new aid landscape*, a synthesis report. London: Overseas Development Institute, 9 <http://eudevdays.eu/sites/default/files/8188.pdf> (accessed 5 September 2014)

⁸¹ The DAC/non-DAC divide falls short in explaining most of the current changes and often oversimplifies more complex dynamics. For instance, China shares many practices and approaches with other Asian donors, such as India and Korea, that are fundamentally different from the approaches, agendas and experiences of other “new donors” such as the Gulf States, or Latin American donors such as Brazil. Patricia Magalhães (2012) Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Center (NOREF) book review: Emma Mawdsley (2012), *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape*, London: Zed Books http://www.peacebuilding.no/var/ezflow_site/storage/original/application/2e668af9146a4ecbceab0e790c8ac274.pdf (accessed 5 September 2014)

It is important to understand the implications of this changing landscape not just from a technical and operational point of view, but also as political and strategic matters that relate to interests and power. One important consequence of the growth in the variety of providers is that it is helping to strengthen the negotiating power of governments and increase country ownership, understood as government choice over policies. On the one hand, this might lead to better results, especially in weaker government environments, while on the other this may make it more difficult for traditional donors to push their agendas and/or raise concerns around corruption, human rights and poverty reduction or otherwise.⁸² It may also have an impact to focus on results in development and peacebuilding, as it may be more difficult to clearly identify and attribute results.

Undoubtedly this changing landscape will lead to different 'ways of working' for local stakeholders, governments, traditional and new players and the international aid effectiveness community. Particularly in light of this paper it is worth further exploring how such new players relate to human security and to what extent they work on the basis of locally oriented, context-specific and people-centred principles. What challenges and opportunities does the new landscape of players present for a comprehensive approach to human security and resolving conflicts at the local level? What role do these new players have in terms of aggravating or mitigating the impact of transnational security issues at the local level? The challenge for policymakers and practitioners alike is to understand the dimensions of these developments, to adapt to current power transitions and to shape approaches accordingly for continued constructive and effective engagement in FCS.

⁸² Greenhill *et al* (2013), 45

Chapter 3

Areas for further strategic research

Based on the analysis above and identified gaps in knowledge and understanding, this report suggests a number of areas for future strategic research regarding a comprehensive approach to human security in FCS. This report has attempted to flesh out key contemporary issues that have less to do with academic concerns regarding conceptual clarity, than with implications for policy and practice. The proposed research agenda can be broken down into three broad areas of inquiry: (a) contextual understanding and local inclusion, (b) theories of change and operationalization, and (c) emerging security threats and implications for policy and practice. Each of these research areas will be outlined below, identifying key research questions to be addressed in future research programmes.

3.1 Research Area 1: Contextual understanding and local inclusion

The proposed research seeks to scrutinise how a human security approach applies to everyday local conflict situations and how local actors can be more structurally empowered and included in defining these situations and promoting their own security and development. The complex and chaotic nature of conflict situations poses dilemmas related to power and legitimacy of local actors and demands a stronger understanding of local dynamics to inform policy choices. In its core, this research area deals with reaching agreement on what issues are at stake and on getting local inclusion and ownership right.

Key research questions include:

- How do various stakeholders (local/international actors, men/women, educated/uneducated, centre/periphery, various identity groups etc.) perceive human security at the local level? What is considered to be the human security that is being or should be promoted? Whose security is this? Who is responsible for providing this security? How is human security seen to be contradicting or complementing traditional (state) security?
- What are the various local perspectives on the context, the root causes of conflict and the desired long-term outcomes? Who defines local conflict situations and how can local voices be given more space in this process? How can local stakeholders be given a more influential role in analysing the context and informing the planning and implementation of interventions?

- How should local ‘agents of change’ be recognised? By what criteria can local partners be selected, or their legitimacy perceived and who determines this? What kind of checks and balances could be put in place?
- What alternative forms and institutions for the organisation of security and governance exist at the local level (hybrid arrangements)? Are these arrangements useful for understanding and facilitating more grounded and potentially sustainable governance processes? What stabilising and de-stabilising effects can such arrangements have in different institutional and political contexts? What are the implications for state capacity, political legitimacy and public accountability?
- What is the role of external actors in shaping and influencing such alternative processes and options? How do alternative inclusive approaches relate to principles of conflict-sensitivity and ‘do no harm’? What is the right balance between outside intervention and genuine local empowerment?
- To what extent and how can international actors work effectively with dominant elite groups and/or unconventional local partners (such as religious groups, vigilante groups and other non-state actors), taking into account that such actors may challenge donors’ own vision and values?

3.2 Research Area 2: Theories of change and operationalization

The second research area focuses on gaining a deeper understanding of how to make better use of theories of change to shape and improve (comprehensive) interventions in FCS. Are current assumptions and theories still fit for purpose and what alternative approaches should be considered? How do different theories of changes and visions on long-term outcomes by different actors complement or undermine each other and are joint narratives possible? In its core, this research area aims to determine what strategic processes are needed to optimise a multi-stakeholder approach with emphasis on actively involving local stakeholders.

Key research questions include the following:

- What are the theories of change informing human security approaches and how do different actors from international to local levels perceive this? Are these different from theories of change informing other approaches in fragile states?
- Are the implicit and explicit theories of change informing fragile states policies still fit for purpose? How can underlying assumptions be proven or falsified?
- How can context knowledge inform assumptions and theories about catalysts of positive change in fragile states? How can theories become more locally informed? How can local actors be more structurally engaged in devising locally informed theories of change and policies, based on an adequate assessment of the local context?

- To what extent do different actor's long-term outcomes, theories of change, interests, approaches and operating modalities complement or undermine each other? Is there a shared vision on end-goals and theories of change given the emerging consensus on principles and approaches? Can a new narrative or policy theory for the promotion of security unite different perspectives, end-goals, and interests of engagement in fragile states?
- Are theories of change most appropriate to inform our interventions in complex and chaotic environments or are other more iterative approaches more apt?
- Can well-informed theories of change contribute to enhancing a comprehensive approach among the various international and local partners? What are the key challenges to alter established ways of working in line with the context analyses and theory of change based program designs, and how can these be overcome?
- What processes of joint assessment, result monitoring, strategising and sequencing are required to optimise the added value of each actor's contribution to comprehensive strategies? What can be done to improve joint results monitoring and evaluation, and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned of interventions between local and international academia, policymakers and practitioners?
- How can human security be mainstreamed in national development agendas and policies of fragile and conflict-affected states?

3.3 Research Area 3: Evolving security trends and policy implications

The final research area focuses on the main evolving trends in the security landscape of the 21st century and the implications on contemporary intervention theories and approaches in FCS. While the problems of fragile states are embedded in global and transnational threats related to cyber security, climate change, the growing risk of extremism and corruption, these dynamics are thus far insufficiently integrated into thinking on interventions in FCS. At the same time, the growing involvement of new global players will have critical repercussions for security dynamics and interventions aimed at conflict resolution at sub-regional and local levels. The proposed research seeks to scrutinize the implications of such developments and to deliberate on the required adaptations in policy and practice.

Specific questions in this research area include:

- To what extent and how are transnational security concerns aggravating or accelerating local conflicts? What are the implications of newly emerging global and transnational security threats for resolving conflict at local and sub-regional levels?
- What is the significance of context-specific, locally driven and inclusive processes to address local peacebuilding challenges, while these are so transnationally influenced? What does it imply for current assumptions and theories of change informing such interventions?

- How can local stakeholders be more involved in the analysis of emerging micro- and macro-level threats and related policy development? How can local stakeholders be empowered to cope with transnational influences? What community based adaptation and resilience mechanisms can be designed and/or enhanced?
- What is the nature and extent of the involvement of newly emerging players in aggravating or mitigating the impact of transnational threats at the local level? What is their role in promoting human security and resolving conflict at local and sub-regional levels on the other hand? What are the challenges and opportunities for 'ways of working' among the variety of actors and on the scope for a comprehensive approach to interventions?
- How can academic work on future global and transnational security trends more structurally inform policy development and practice regarding interventions in fragile states and conflict-affected environments?

Chapter 4

Impact pathways and conclusions

Global, national and local actors are continuously seeking to better understand, adapt and improve their interventions to address the wide-ranging and fast-changing security challenges in today's world. Over the past twenty years the human security approach has become embedded in national and international policy documents and its importance continues to grow. Security has gone global and the security of individuals has come to be considered as equally important, or more important, and closely linked to state security. The human security approach requires analysing local circumstances and root causes of conflict, identifying and building on local capacities and designing comprehensive strategies based on sound theories of change.

This research report has attempted to shed light on what a comprehensive approach to human security interventions means in practice. The purpose was to assess the current state of the art and to reveal some of the pressing issues and key gaps in knowledge, which need to be better, articulated and understood. These gaps centre on three main areas of future research: (a) contextual understanding and local inclusion, (b) theories of change and operationalisation, and (c) evolving security threats and policy implications. The proposed research responds to the overall objectives of the proposed research agenda:

- Contributing to new insights and evidence-based knowledge on needs, policies and practices regarding a comprehensive approach to human security in fragile and conflict-affected environments;
- Raising awareness and sharing the generated new insights with relevant stakeholders to facilitate inclusive processes and the development of well-informed theories of change;
- Contributing to further operationalising a comprehensive approach to human security by involving relevant stakeholders from local to international levels, thereby contributing to improving the effectiveness of interventions in FCS.

The aim of the proposed research agenda is to enhance the academic basis and underlying assumptions of intervention logic and policy theories on the use and application of a comprehensive approach to human security. The knowledge should help strengthen linkages between academia, policymakers and practitioners, and should feed back into different knowledge domains. The research should particularly contribute towards increasing the capacity of local actors and identify opportunities for capacity-building throughout the

process. First and foremost, the research outcomes must lead to informed advice and policy prescriptions for practitioners with the goal to enhance the effectiveness of policies and interventions in targeted fragile and conflict affected situations. Ultimately, the research agenda and the related research projects are aimed to contribute towards enhanced peace, stability and sustainable development for the most vulnerable civilians in the fragile and conflict affected target settings.

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