

Human Rights, Food Security, and Conflicts

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Food wars

- The use of food as a weapon, and the food insecurity that follows as a consequence of violent conflict and human rights violations (Brown University World Hunger Program reports)
 - Conflict prevention
 - Conflict mitigation
 - Conflict transformation

Conflict and Food Insecurity

- Concerns of:
 - Humanitarians, who serve countries in food crisis or protracted crisis (FAO-GIEWS-countries in food crisis, and SOFI 2010-Food insecurity in Protracted Crisis countries).
 - FAO, which in SOFA 2000 recognized war as the chief source of food insecurity in the developing world today
 - UN (High Level Task Force on Global Food Security Crisis. Comprehensive Framework for Action)
 - World Bank (World Development Report 2011 theme is conflict)

World Bank

World Development Report 2011 Conflict, Security, and Development

“No low-income fragile or conflict-affected country has yet achieved a single MDG.”

- Cycles of violence repeat, causing countries in “protracted” or “repeated crises” to lose decades of development growth.
- Additional challenges are crossborder, illicit economies featuring criminal violence

World Bank

- *By analyzing the nature, causes, and consequences of violent conflict today, and the successes and failures in responding to it, this World Development Report aims to sharpen the discussion on what can be done to support societies struggling to prevent or grapple with violence and conflict. Some of the ground that the Report covers falls outside the World Bank's traditional development mandate ... the World Bank does not aspire to go beyond its core mandate ... but rather to improve the effectiveness of development interventions in places threatened or affected by large-scale violence...*

Challenge:

- For humanitarian, development, and human rights agencies is to make agricultural and food-security plans food-wars attentive and conflict-sensitive
 - Take conflict history into account
 - Make conflict context systematic part of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
 - Develop crop-specific plans and monitoring (cash crops/food crops) so price volatility does not fuel conflict
 - Create political will, trustworthy partnerships, and funding to prevent, mitigate, and transform conflicts

Outline

1. Conceptual frameworks connecting conflict to food security science and policy.
2. Key conflict-sensitivity questions for food-security and agricultural planning.
3. Where additional attention to underlying human rights demands and violations, and political geographic ethnic religious (PGER) factors might improve food-security program conceptualization, targeting, and outcomes by reducing exclusions.
4. Implications for agricultural/food security research and policy, and questions for further discussion.

Hunger Typology

- Food Shortage (availability, supply at aggregate, national level)
- Food Poverty (access, entitlements, assets at household level, livelihood/income relative to food prices and cost of an adequate diet)
- Food Deprivation (malnutrition, biological utilization at individual level, relative to health, social status)

Food Value Chains

- **Trace pathways** from producer (farmer) to consumer (fork/plate) and all points/flows in between
- Identify & calculate **who benefits** (enjoys added value or loss reductions) as a result of (what) interventions along these pathways (e.g., improved transportation and storage traits or mechanisms)
- **Poverty economists** additionally **model: products, outcomes, impacts; and multiple assets**

Assets based framework

- food security (secure, safe, sustainable access to nutritionally adequate food in socially acceptable ways)
- livelihood security, income, social security (capital, insurance, resilience)
- nutrition and health (benefits vs. costs/risks)
- environmental, including biodiversity sustainability.

Food Wars

- Hunger in History (1990) & Foodwars Reports (1987-1995) document:
 - Hunger as a cause of conflict
 - Conflict as a cause of hunger
 - Human rights violations underlying both hunger and conflict as root cause
 - Case studies, drawing on official and gray literature, plus media sources, and utilizing the Hunger Typology.

Food wars, cont.

- Food From Peace. Breaking the Links Between Hunger and Conflict (1998)
 - quantified negative impacts of SSA foodwars on food production and rates of increase in food production
 - demonstrated significance of food wars as a cause of food insecurity, connecting food shortage, poverty, deprivation
- FAO (2000) State of Food & Agriculture report addressed food wars as leading cause of food insecurity as key theme
 - FAO/WFP (2010) State of Food Insecurity addressed food insecurity in countries in protracted crisis as key theme

Foodwars, cont.

- Food, Globalization and Conflict (2000-2009) demonstrated:
 - export cash crops (cane, coffee, cotton, cocoa) used as conflict commodities in SSA foodwars.
 - Globalized trade in food and agriculture connected need (“resource scarcities”),” creed (“identity-politics”), and greed (“resource abundance”) as causes of conflict.
 - Update would add financialization, land-grabs, bio-fuels, increasing vertical integration and concentration, and food-price effects

“Bright side” of globalization

- normative and substantive human rights (right to food) community organizing and social mobilizations
- food & justice advocacy (fair trade, slave-free production),
- Small-scale farmers movements & networking
- Human rights and food sovereignty analysis and strategies that counter globalization’s “dark side” with this “bright side” of globalization

Food wars, cont.

- “Rising Food Prices, Social Mobilizations, and Violence”
 - Connected 2007-2008 food crisis (rising prices accompanied by political demonstrations, sometimes violent) to foodwars. (note: few overlaps)
 - Along with human right to food proponents, called for more attention to human rights, PGER (Political-Geographic-Ethnic-Religious) factors, human and market displacements in more conflict-sensitive (CS) approaches to food security

Food wars, cont.

- Climate Change Causes Conflict (Oxfam America, 2010).
 - Analyzes rhetoric and evidence showing connections of food (in)security and conflict to energy security, environmental deterioration, population movements, and climate change.
 - Emphasizes political resource management issues shaping environmental change and related conflict and violence
 - Update: suggests that displacements, migration, and violence associated with climate change and livelihood insecurities are entry points for conflict-sensitivity

Conflict Sensitivity: Principles and Methods

- Three guidelines:
 - Be aware of conflict (PGER context)
 - Do no harm
 - Do some good
- Strategic analysis: How does conflict background affect food security (intervention, including agr) context?
- Operational assessment: How might conflict or post-conflict social dynamics affect project implementation, and how might intervention affect conflict dynamics? (e.g., participation)
- Monitoring and Evaluation of actions that affect conventional, but also “co-existence” or “conflict” indicators.

Conflict sensitivity: practice

- Aiding Violence Critique of conventional food security, agriculture, humanitarian, development assistance (Uvin 1998)
- “Do No Harm” guide to operational practice (Mary B. Anderson 1999)
- Building Institutional Capacity for Conflict-Sensitive Practice (Maria Lange, for International Alert, 2004)
- SOFI 2010 Livelihood security and rights-based approaches to food security and development in protracted crisis countries (PCCs) (FAO, WFP)

Conflict-Sensitivity q's for IAASTD

- Whose land/land use will be affected?
- Whose water, and is water scarce?
- Whose labor (at what price, with what risks)?
- Whose end products and livelihoods (food, feed, fuel, fiber, and other uses of crop plants & environmental resources) with what opportunity costs? Who decides/chooses?

Conflict sensitivity q's, cont.

- Whose seed (what traits?), from what sources (hybrid, open-pollinated), for what ends (food, feed, fuel)? Who monitors performance, guarantees quality, and maintains replacement seed stocks
- Whose inputs, high or low, with what quality assurance, timely distribution, and on whose credit or insurance?

Conflict-sensitivity for plant scientists

- What are risks and opportunity costs vs. benefits (for different stakeholders) of high-yield potential seeds, agronomic packages, selective extension?
- What traits should be prioritized (drought tolerance, N-response (efficiency), photoperiod sensitivity, pest resistance, other economic traits (e.g., vegetative plant parts for food wrappers, quality forage), storage

Conflict sensitivity, cont.

- Whose value-added (which farmers) should be prioritized in more integrated local to global food value chains (fvc)?
- Whose improved access to markets & communications (cell phones, other IT)?
- Who are the local partners, and why selected?
- What are relationships of local partners to government, NGO agencies, private sector?

Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Checklists of PGER/conflict factors & concerns?**
 - Who controls (which) factors of production? How will project affect existing vertical, as well as horizontal inequalities?
 - Who records, owns, uses this information?
- OR
- **Systems flow diagrams** for calculating/tracing ex-ante and ex-post product/outcome/impact pathways description and modeling

NGOs are the most active CS players

- Humanitarian NGOs

- deplore the political uses of food aid in war and natural disaster situations, and their accomplice roles in delivery.
- Also assert a “right to feed” and a “right to protect”

- Peace & Conflict NGOs

- are the most foodwars-attentive and conflict-sensitive
- review & assess CS practices of official aid and NGOs
- offer guidelines for other agencies and professionals (e.g., International Alert) , and reports on conflict factors connected to other security issues (e.g., Christian Aid on Migration & Climate Change)

How does conflict figure into future of food scenarios in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)

- UN High Level Task Force on Food Security Crisis conceptualizes conflict as contextual background (rationale) relevant to food-security tasks, but not part of strategies and operations, which are all technical & institutional
- UK Foresight Project on “The Future of Food and Farming” made “volatility,” including food and water wars, a theme in its initial stages and background papers, but then dropped it in favor of technical and institutional scenarios in final report/exec sum
- IAASTD 2008 Summary Report was entirely technical and institutional. But run-up to Stage II report is investigating land-grabs, conflict, and other political issues

Conflict in future of food scenarios, cont.

- University research projects on food and farming
 - largely ignore conflict scenarios, although note post-conflict country situations of research (e.g., Rwanda).
 - pursue business as usual--food value chains, “sustainable intensification,” export crop production, as if access to and PGER-based competition for land, water, and program assets were not working constraints associated with conflict problems in proposed intervention areas
 - sometimes note natural resource constraints...

Does humanitarian vs. development context make a difference?

- For some UN agencies, “yes”.
 - Thus, UNDP analyzes background conflict context but does not incorporate CS into food-security planning, which by mission and mandate, is “development”.
- Other UN agencies (FAO, WFP)
 - are trying to bridge the divide between relief and development, which characterize especially PCCs
 - WFP actively moving from humanitarian relief to nutritionally sound food systems, incentivizing and integrating local food producers, processors, and markets.

Food Security vs. Right to Food Framing for Conflict Countries

- **MDGs and WFS** set food-security goals - to cut hunger in half
 - are not on track in food wars countries (land-mines, lack of physical infrastructure & community-to-government trust)
 - Some countries figure “conflict” recovery into poverty-reduction strategy plans
 - PRSPs avoid human rights language

Success stories in conflict countries?

- **agricultural livelihoods programs in protracted crisis countries** aim to bridge humanitarian/dev divide (mostly SSA)
- **post-war food-security interventions** seek to win hearts & minds through food aid-assisted **fvcs** in post-conflict and transition countries
- **Success story: 1990s eradication of rinderpest in southern Sudan**. Anticipate others—e.g., coffee cooperatives, grain, potato producer-associations in Rwanda, PSNPs in Ethiopia

Purchase for Progress (P4P)



- **WFP's P4P** peace-oriented partnerships favor local sourcing, and try to make food and food programs connectors, not dividers
 - Provide seeds, quality and timely inputs, credit
 - Assure sustainable fair-price market for products that meet quality standards
 - Work with coops, farmer associations, especially women farmers, especially in post-conflict countries
 - Country by country projects are transparent (see web-accessible maps and commodity reports).

Summary: Conflict Sensitivity in Agricultural Planning

- What does conflict-sensitivity mean in the context of agricultural development planning?
 - describe the background, conflict context;
 - analyze PGER divisions & dynamics
 - consider who are the stakeholders; what varying crop characteristics/traits/requirements they value, and why
 - anticipate how food wars legacy might constrain community participation and inputs, and affect products, outcomes, impacts

Value Added of Human Rights and Rights-Based Approaches (RBA)

- Food Security principles and paradigms distinguish Humanitarian, Human Rights, Refugee legal frameworks.
 - **humanitarian principles** assert no one should starve, and humanitarians embrace obligation (right) to feed and to protect, especially in conflict situations

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- **Human rights principles and instruments** clarify legal obligations & voluntary guidelines--to respect, protect, and fulfill the right to food, with special attention to drivers behind rising food prices, including conflict, refugees, biofuels, land grabs & global trade liberalization (see documents and reports by Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Food)
 - **Refugee Law** addresses rights across borders (IDPs disadvantaged by these legal divisions)

Where PGER and Human Rights (might) contribute to CS food security planning

- Food aid in protracted crisis countries, and nutritionally-targeted food aid everywhere. Promote connectors/avoid dividers in livelihoods programs
- Agricultural science and policy initiatives integrate additional cultural political factors, including historical conflict tensions, landgrabs, human rights (especially right to food) claims or violations (see HRF Special Rapporteur reports)

PGER and Human Rights factors, cont.

- Regular monitoring and evaluation of targeting (PGER favoritism or exclusion) in PSNPs; use lessons to negotiate inclusion and more equitable outcomes (Ethiopia ex.)
- Review of PGER factors in producer and farmer association partners. Who has access to land, irrigation water, project inputs, markets, social connections? (Rwanda ex.)
- Consider PGER factors and conflict sensitivities everywhere landholding, water, selective distribution of program inputs and outputs are concerned. Question: Using PGER as a focus for conflict-prevention or sensitivity may receive a more concerned hearing than human rights, which is the underlying concept

Conflict sensitivity & human rights

- Advocacy and activist organizations help mobilize farmers and consumers on their own behalf, to assert their right to food.
 - Key agency is FIAN (Food First Information and Action Network), with Via Campesina, which works in conflict and post-conflict countries, helping farmers and consumer unions organize to put food first on political agendas
 - Advocates use political demonstrations, the non-violent kind, as a constructive tool for social change.
 - Oxfam, Global Exchange, and other NGOs also work in this rights-based food-security policy and advocacy arena.
 - Faith-based/religious NGOs & Official human rights organizations, at multiple levels

Implications

- Regular monitoring and evaluation of social protection and other food-security programs, to ensure equity and non-exclusion, and also possibilities of appeals.
- Expect that partners (governments) will privilege their political supporters, marginalize their political opponents, and try to circumvent other conditionalities, such as gender, where they experience such constraints as inconvenient or going against cultural-political custom. But food wars-attentive and conflict-sensitive food security programs can help adjust discrimination (exclusion) and promote co-existence over conflict, by finding or constructing peace-building connectors that encourage opposing sides to work together.

Ways Forward

- Conflicts matter
- PGER factors matter
- There are steps agricultural and food-policy professionals can take to become more food-war attentive and conflict-sensitive

But also obstacles...

- Government to government aid reluctant to intervene in “internal” affairs
- Humanitarian vs. development division of labor
- Technical personnel lack expertise, time, and will to add “conflict” and “human rights” factors
- Ground-up efforts that integrate PGER factors may struggle to find their niche.

Food-Wars and Conflict Sensitive Practice

- Checklists (International Alert, Mercy Corps)
- Flow diagrams (peace vs. conflict “products,” “outcomes”, “impacts” identify and manage PGER connectors and dividers, especially for bilateral agencies, and agricultural projects)
- Food wars reports for up-to-date information to brief agricultural and food-security program and project personnel (university think tanks)
- Conflict sensitivity and human rights components add-ons to all technical and institutional agricultural innovation projects

More monitoring instruments

- Foreign agricultural investments (“Land Grabs”) UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, NGOs dedicated to these issues (e.g., GRAIN)
- Commodity price reports for basic food crops and cash crops, and compensation funds and mechanisms (World Bank, ERD?)

Discussion Questions

- Can (how can) focus on PGER factors motivate agriculture and food security interventionists to pay greater attention to food wars and conflict-sensitivity, not only in PCCs, but all food-security and agricultural programs?
- How to incentivize agricultural experts and policy makers to look at complexities of landholding, water access, labor compensation and safety, and also lines of social connectedness that influence participation in programs and local economies more generally?

NGO division of labor?

- Right to food NGOs (FIAN, Food First)
- Human rights NGOs (Amnesty International, Oxfam America, Global Exchange)
- Peace and Conflict NGOs (International Alert)

Official aid division of labor?

- UNDP and World Bank add human rights and conflict monitoring to MDG assessments?
- New and innovative agricultural initiatives incorporate conflict-sensitivity and peace monitoring into plans, programs.

Who should fund peace operations?

- Make cultural political (peace and conflict) assessments a voluntary percentage contribution in all agricultural funding?