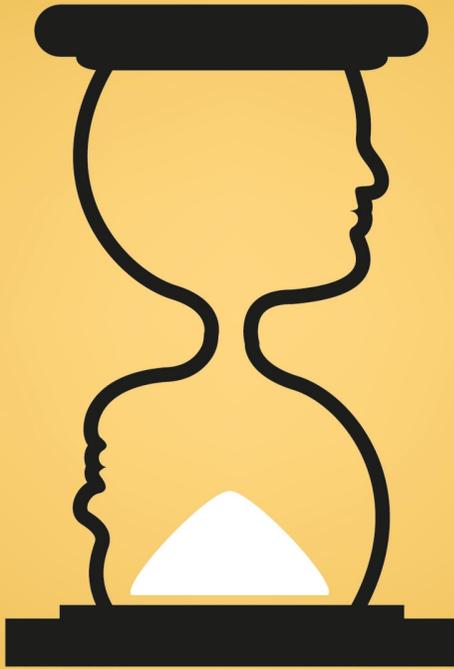# LIVES AMID VIOLENCE

Transforming Development in the Wake of Conflict

Mareike Schomerus

Bloomsbury

Lives Amid Violence

ii

Lives Amid Violence

Transforming Development in the Wake of Conflict

Mareike Schomerus

Series design by Adriana Brioso
Cover image: *The Mental Landscape*, by Olivier Ploux

To find out more about our authors and books visit www.bloomsbury.com and
sign up for our newsletters.

Quanta

How do things unravel?
What is the thorn that catches the dress,
at the edge of the thread that
holds the seam that's
a tad too tight
from the tailor's tug
on the faulty machine
from the bumpy ride
on the overused road
in an over-exacted society
running against all odds to make something
of their own?
Who's to say?
Instead we say,
'Don't play by the bushes dear
– you know that dress is new.'

Michael Onsando

Contents

Figures

Acknowledgements

Abbreviations and acronyms

ARTF	Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development (UK) 1997–2020; merged into FCDO
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FCAS	Fragile and conflict-affected situations
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the UK
FSI	Failed States Index, later Fragile States Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HQ	Headquarter
IA	Irish Aid
INGO	International non-governmental organization
LGBTQ	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, queer
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MDGs	Millenium Development Goals
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NATO	North-Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ODI	formerly Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SLRC	Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium
SOHR	Syrian Observatory for Human Rights
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WDR	World Development Report of the World Bank

1

Goodbye yellow brick road

Beyond the status quo of development
in the wake of conflict

When life is complicated, causality is alluring.

The possibility that there could exist a straight line of cause and effect fuels conspiracy theories, creates powerful arguments and has been the logic underpinning countless international development programmes. Even complexity – when acknowledged – tends to be depicted as a convoluted image of warbled spaghetti to replace the normally-straight causality lines leading from A to B. Yet, even tangled spaghetti diagrams still depict imagined causality: they have a starting and an end point.

'It is because . . .' is a reassuring phrase. It is also a common way of offering an answer to the quest that has troubled international development programmes in the past few years, and particularly so in the wake of conflict. This quest is the search for what works, because the belief to be able to programme against the horrors of violent conflict and its fallouts is appealing. It imagines that, thanks to a specific programme, people can heal. Darkness can turn into light. Everyday life can improve. This resonates with those working in the broad international development sector – helping to make things better is enriching, empowering and gratifying. Believing in this causality is often a *raison d'être* for aid workers. Wanting to support those who have faced or continue to face brutality, marginalization, poverty and hunger – people who, despite everything, find the strength to care for each other and seek out a living – is the backbone of humanitarian and development thinking.

The need to identify a cause is a human instinct. In the development sector, the instinct is intensified by immense pressure to deliver results. Donors have created incentives to primarily engage in ways that are deemed to deliver measurable benefits – those that seem to have figured out causality. Pinpointing exactly what works needs a narrow problem definition, a slim repertoire of what is considered acceptable success, and a ladle of confidence (best in the form of sharp empirical evidence) regarding cause and effect. This development did not come about because this is the best way to make development work: it is based on what Yanguas refers to as the political theatre around the aid budget,[1] where empirical evidence on 'what works' becomes the stuff of political arguments against public pressure to reduce spending.[2]

And yet, something has been lost between the belief in causality, the fine intentions, the complex realities of conflictual environments and the way individuals working in conflict-affected situations imagine how the causality they are seeking comes about. The current mental model that underpins development programming in conflict and so-called post-conflict situations needs an overhaul. A mental model is how we explain the world around us. It is the go-to interpretation of why things are the way they are and how things function; it is the story we tell ourselves about who we are and why we do what we do. The current mental model is not just one that individuals working in the sector have, but it is the broader narrative of causality that the various actors – donors, organizations and individuals who make up those organizations – perpetuate that is just not right.

Causality was once an abstract philosophical concept, an enabler of multiple processes of inquiry: Aristotle's question word was 'why', rather than 'what' when edging towards an explanation. In many academic disciplines, the simple nature of causality is debated: is the concept supposed to capture the moment of change, the ability to break down a relationship into replicable numbers, or a semantic tool to represent the broad phenomenon that everything is connected? Apart from the philosophical contributions, causality was also mainly confined to the hard sciences, which nonetheless remain cautious of its suggested clarity: D'Ariano remarks that causality has never achieved the status of a principle of physics, for example.[3]

The past two decades have seen a merging of the more hard science-based imagination of understanding causality with the qualitative social sciences: systematic evidence reviews – once the territory of medicine – became the required starting point for research programmes on complex and contextual social change. Transferring a view of what constitutes research evidence from one research discipline to another does not happen without hitches.[4] The understanding of causality in international development became 'what works', suggesting that there is an absolute truth to be discovered with the right tools. The notion of an absolute truth is, of course, deeply divisive and dangerous; the clearer the projected causality that is presented as part of an absolute truth, the more the space for compromise, questioning, diversity and collaboration shrinks.[5] This space is vital for humans because, it turns out, we are often very good at seeing causality where there is none, and then we are very good at thinking that we have now figured it all out and thus vastly overestimate what we know, forgetting how narrow our own perspective really is.[6]

Rethinking is a popular sport in the international development sector, and the sentiment that things need to change is widely shared. Papoulidis offers a new paradigm of international engagement in so-called fragile settings that prioritizes country ownership over international agendas, long-term relationships over projects and collaboration (however challenging) to deal with political interests.[7] Glennie suggests focussing on inequality rather than poverty; to shift the notion of aid to one of international public money as a valuable investment from which all sides benefit; and to prioritize collective decision-making.[8] Yet, the term 'aid' still sticks, even when debating reimagining it. The appropriately-named organization Aid Reimagined highlights that institutions – even the assumed good ones that are seeking to support

people in conflict-affected situations – are no longer fit for purpose but very difficult to change because their deeply-ingrained invisible rules keep things ticking over.[9] Phillip goes further by casting doubt on the assumed connection between statebuilding and peacebuilding (which posits that the two go hand in hand) – particularly if pursued by outside actors.[10] 'Development 2.0' marks the end of the one-size-fits-all solution, instead championing ambiguity as well as multiple information sources.[11] The need to decolonize aid shines a light on fusty ideas about the way development will bring modernization and takes out of the shadow the subtext of what modernization suggests: a mash-up of notions of enlightenment, the modern state and, as Tuhiwai Smith argues, practices of imperialism, in which 'imperialism becomes an integral part of the development of the modern state, of science, of ideas and of the "modern" human person'.[12] The searchlight will also inevitably capture the deep-seated structural racism in a sector that wants to do good, showing in, as Peace Direct argues, amongst other things, recruitment practices, partnership set-up, funding and resource allocation, which all prioritize certain relationships over others, and establish what kind of knowledge is valorized.[13]

It is clear just how outdated the jargon is that continues to cement identities of being an aid-receiving 'beneficiary' in a 'developing country', who is not paid for employment but receives 'cash for work'.[14] International systems keep some countries by design in developing mode, including, as Kelton argues, by making sure that the economic order means countries are 'caught in a desperate scramble to acquire the currencies of the rich world'.[15] International benevolent actors – for example, those supporting peacebuilding – continue to, as Errington-Barnes argues in a report by the Life & Peace Institute, use language that is not just reflective of power dynamics but that recreates them, with the international jargon holding forth over expression and discourses driven by those who live amid violence and are dedicating their lives to improving the situations they know.[16] This damages everyone, as a lack of a genuinely-shared language stifles or just stops collaboration and collective efforts. Twenty years after Amartya Sen's *Development as Freedom*, the next generation of economists continues to stress that purely economic measures for development overlook what makes human lives rich.[17] And yet, it is tough to write a book contesting the mental models and terminology of the development industry without using the term 'development' and the notion of the beneficiary. It is tough to shake off deeply-rooted modernization theory. It is tough to shed off the identity of the (thoughtful, of course) international developer and think afresh.

Rethinking – despite suggesting an activity that goes on in someone's head – can be quite material and emerge in the shape of a redesigned programme. A tweak. Because actually changing thoughts, images, mental models, as well as deep beliefs and identities that underpin engagements is much, much harder. A prominent example of this is the experience of how a critique of the mental model can create a new one that seems to suggest a change but remains rooted in the same logic. Perera makes this point regarding peacebuilding activities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC): here, one faulty narrative of how peace will come and the state be built was simply replaced with another one (that argued that it needs to come from local initiatives) that shared the same need for clear and unquestionable causality and simple narratives.[18]

And yet, mental models might matter most in any discussion of change: mental models shape what is imagined as being in the realm of the possible. They are the discourse. They create the norms, the logic and the stories that underpin development engagement; they formulate the questions and the understanding of what it means to live a life under the influence of violence.

A rethink needs to be something else than a programme redesign. It needs to hurt, challenge us to the core, drive us to listen to those who disagree with us and come with a commitment to unlearn.[19] A rethink needs to create a different logic of what international engagement in lives amid violence means. It needs to step away from tinkering with a deeply-flawed system.

This is no small task. It means that those working on development in violent situations have to aim for a profound cognitive shift. They have to reimagine what they are doing and correct cognitive errors that have created the assumptions of causality that prevail. While this book seeks to offer some tools for that revision, it aims to strike a tone of benevolent critique towards a constructive engagement with the dilemmas that are part of engaging in situations of lives amid violence. As a general mindset, it is not an anti-book: it supports the notion that engagement is good because connection is good – but not unconditionally and unquestioningly so and only if it can be reflective, knowledgeable and humble while willing to take on the system, equipped with at least the knowledge that the analysis offered here in this book requires that we acknowledge the patterns it shows.

Wait.

We?

Pronouns are a problem here. Yet, they are also one of the most enduring and maybe endearing symbols of international development where the 'we' is regularly used to lump together all kinds of solidarities: we, the people. We, the internationals working in national context. We, the subset of the internationals who do their work better than those who are stuck in old-fashioned ideas of development and their own power over it. We, who still feel that things have to and actually could change so much that we can use 'transforming' in a book title without blushing (or at least not blushing all the time and only putting it down on paper after practising saying it out loud quite a few times to check if it feels ridiculous). 'We', as reassuringly communal as it is supposed to be, quickly does two things: it glosses over who is included in that big tent and it emphasizes the very othering ('We work for them!') that it is actually meant to play down. It is part of the needed revision to be clear about who is 'we', what perspective has taken most prominent pride of place in that particular 'we', and to not assume that unanimity is clearly expressed by pronoun use. So, is this a book for *us*?

Because this book suggests a revision from the perspective of someone who is not national to the countries in which the research that forms the basis for this book was done; who offers research insights, rather than programmes or policies that come with resources attached; and who grapples with the whole concept of international development and its institutions, this is an inward-looking book for those who recognize some of these attributes. One learning for me has been that my portrayal of the research findings that underpin this book (more on that later) is unique to

me: another person with a different background, history and personality might have written an entirely different book based on the body of research from which I draw. This book, I think, pulls together what struck me as important, but this is not necessarily a common perspective or the only way to interpret the evidence that I used. Or maybe it is universal – but only in the spirit of Gümüsay, who argues that postulating something as universal only defines the limits of our horizons.[20]

Hopefully, this does not mean what is offered here lacks interest for others, but without doubt, the way I think about the issues, the framing, the consequences and the insights – all my lightbulb moments – are the way they are because of what is my 'we'. Arguably, that might mean that the reflections here are of limited value for the people about whom this book should be about: people who live their lives amid many different types of violence. At best, it might provide an explanation of why things look like they do at the receiving end. Maybe it can even offer an insight into the mental model of Western funders and organizations, a kind of a manual for the so-called beneficiary on how to manage the needs of those mental models to make sure that those working in the midst of violence can access resources that allow them to do meaningful work.

What is put forward here is an examination of deeply-established patterns that the people who make up the development sector adhere to, amongst them the comforting notion of causality and how it continues to drive how global public investment in countries in or coming out of conflict is imagined. A sector that has so long functioned on dehumanizing people by calling them 'beneficiaries', 'representatives' or 'human capital' rarely thinks of itself in this way: as humans. As humans who, when attempting to build government capacity or to alleviate poverty, are dealing with other humans. As humans who seek to support change but come with their own social norms and bias towards the status quo – the status quo that is nothing else but decisions from a previous round of thinking that now seem universal, normal and default.[21]

This book is infused with imagery, with the language of mental models and framing. This is a nod to human's propensity for sensemaking by giving even complex issues a strict border that limits what is visible. Every jigsaw starts like that: first connect the pieces around the edge and then work your way inward. Framing makes the emerging picture of the jigsaw much more recognizable. Crucial in Goffman's concept of framing is that one can only see a reality as it fits with one's own sense of that reality; this is shaped by culture, history and likely individual characteristics.[22] Framing forces us to look inward, like the jigsaw margin. A person's mental landscape (the collection of personality, experience, community, history, emotions and the behaviour these create) determines what they are able to see and experience in the moment; this moment in turn will become the future's framing. These mechanisms are, as far as we know, universal to humans, and the use of imagery and framing in this book is supposed to be a reminder of that. At the very least, bringing up imagery and mental models can be a nudge to question the origin and evolution of these models.

That the understanding of what constitutes development and progress needs to be reframed is a widely-acknowledged predicament. But here is the problem: framing, limiting one's perspective, is such an essential part of human existence that it is impossible to go without. And arguing against a particular imagery is likely to

strengthen that imagery – as Lakoff says, 'When we negate a frame, we evoke the frame.'[23] That is why when told not to think of an elephant, what comes to mind is an elephant. Unless there is instantly a convincing replacement frame on offer, we seem to be stuck.[24] Stuck in an extremely-powerful place: Thibodeau and Boroditsky have shown us that even the smallest use of metaphor influences how people think about solving even the most complex of issues.[25] A further challenge is that we now struggle to grasp and even more to attempt to solve complex issues because we have become conditioned, as Hari argues, to lose focus, to no longer be able to sustain attention over long time spans: 'when attention breaks down, problem-solving breaks down.'[26]

Combine this power of the metaphor to shape solution-thinking with the self-referential framing trap and the comforting promises of precision-engineered causality and 'what works' and it becomes obvious why breaking out of established moulds of understanding and thinking – and turning ideas into practice – is proving so difficult: it is because the ground starts to feel very wobbly very quickly.

Scholars and practitioners are trying hard to offer alternative framings that, as Raworth calls it in introducing her notion of doughnut economics, might offer an image that could stand a chance of winning 'the battle of ideas'.[27] Others, for example, de Coning, have proposed to move to the notion of a garden when thinking about international engagement.[28] Liu and Hanauer also start their book on rethinking democracy with an exposition on gardens and gardeners and surmise that what it takes for a new democracy is an understanding that 'continuous investment and renewal', 'loving willingness to tend constantly', 'the right setting' and adaptation due to changes in circumstances is needed: all these are the qualities of a gardener.[29] Even economists, Raworth reminds us, have long tried to conjure up botany-based imagery to shift notions of economic policy: 'Back in the 1970s, Hayek himself suggested that economists should aim to be less like craftsmen shaping their handiwork and more like gardeners tending their plants.'[30] Her recommendation: 'It is time for economists to make a metaphorical career change, too: discard the engineer's hard hat and spanner, and pick up some gardening gloves and secateurs instead.'[31]

Gardening offers a friendly, human and relatable imagery, and it can tell a story – all that is needed for a good narrative. And yet, even the gardening metaphor continues to create the same problem as all other simple images that came before it: it simply replaces one single story with another. It is less the image that matters, but the hope that one image can offer the undemanding story that explains it all. Even the snappiest mental imagery on offer speaks too much to the comfort of causality, of what works, and of an elevator pitch-style understanding. Replacing one catchy frame with another does not get to the heart of needing to be able to sit with uncertainty, incongruity, observation and contemplation. Humans cannot be compared to plants, argues Popova, because they, quite literally, immediately diverge:

> We are not trees – we don't branch and root from a single point, we don't grow linearly; we disbark ourselves at will, at the flash and flutter of a heart, self-grafting every love and loss we live through; our growth-rings are often ungirdled by

self-doubt, by regress, by the fits and starts by which we become who and what we are: fragmentary but indivisible.[32]

Rather than a capture-all picture, what is needed is learning how to live with ambiguity, contradiction and revision.

The need for the revision

Offering solidarity that goes beyond simply expressing it to those living with or in the aftermath of violent conflict is necessary: the World Bank estimates that two billion people are affected by fragility (using the dimensions of violence, resilience, justice, institutions and economic foundations), conflict and large-scale violence.[33] For the past few years, donors have focused their efforts on what are termed 'fragile and conflict-affected situations' (FCAS) – 50 per cent of the United Kingdom's (UK) aid budget was earmarked for this until 2020. Between 2000 and 2015, Official Development Assistance (ODA) from Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries to fragile and conflict-affected states almost doubled.[34] Violent conflict and its aftermath, thus, drive development engagement. But equally, they also present a challenge that makes the development endeavours such as provision of public goods, economic growth that benefits all, and honouring human rights very difficult indeed.

Causality is particularly complicated in these contexts because conflictual environments are both polarized and decentralized, rigid and fluid, archetypal and exceptional. They rarely offer the comfort of identifiable beginnings or closures because violent conflict persists in many ways even after its nominal end and starts long before it is visible. This can mean that even a conflict declared over is actually not.[35] No switch is flicked that takes people from one state of being in conflict to the next of being past it. Instead, the relationship between lives and violence continues on many layers and as many different phenomena in what looks like acute, post-conflict or recovery phases. These layers can be structural, procedural, psychological. They can be about physical survival, about social relationships, about self-worth. The experience of violent conflict continues to affect people's ability to trust, collaborate and plan for the future. Conflict entrenches social, economic and political structures; influences who can access resources and who cannot; shapes individual and communal identities; and can strip whole groups of people of their sense of purpose.

Much of what this book seeks to unpack is what exactly it is – what essential quality – that makes an environment of current or past violence different to other challenges of human change and improvement. Because violence is such an intrinsic dimension of development, of modernization and of statehood, this question lies, therefore, at the core of the development experience. What are the particular attributes of a conflict environment that prevent it from being transformed into one where violence and social, economic and political interactions do not catalyse one another in an endless loop?

Even attempting to answer this question takes a tremendous amount of research legwork and inspection. Ten years of such work provide the roots of this book: ten years of the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC), a donor-funded consortium

of sixteen partner organizations, home to dozens of researchers and additionally hundreds of enumerators.[36] The SLRC, whose home was ODI in London, worked in conflict-affected regions of Afghanistan, the DRC, Nepal, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Sri Lanka and Uganda, as well as in refugee camps for Syrians in Jordan.[37] More than 150 research outputs are the legacy of this far-reaching research endeavour that used structured quantitative surveys, in-depth qualitative work and experimental methods in seeking to understand how people survive, secure their livelihoods and access services amid violence and the structures violence creates and supports.

A decade of research produces a lot of information. Such knowledge-creation labour – unpacking, questioning, strengthening and connecting different types of information and insights from different contexts – opens the door to a grand ambition: to draw generalizable inferences. Taking stock of what was accomplished, this book is the story of this collective effort of multipronged research about how humans live in the shadow of violence. It coalesces findings gained from a multitude of perspectives; distils a wide variety of empirical research, sources and perspectives; and examines how the insights interact. In doing so, it develops a bird's eye perspective of the patterns that emerge when researchers look at lives amid violence. It uses research, ideas and arguments conducted and developed by the many researchers cited in this book. Yet, what is on offer here is not a straightforward synthesis or summary of a body of research. It is an identification of a number of mechanisms that underprop violent situations across the globe in similar (although different in their nuances) ways.

With such a vast body of research underpinning what is said here, the book provides deep challenges to received wisdom on statebuilding, stabilization and post-conflict recovery. This is asking a lot and to get here, SLRC researchers demanded much of the many people who shared their time, suffering, knowledge, frustrations and hopes in order to offer insight. Equipped with the understandings that the SLRC research produced, this book now also unapologetically demands much of its readers, as a way to pay respect to the people who gave us these detailed insights. The book offers a frame within which international development programmes working in contexts affected by violence can question, adjust or debate their engagement.

People affected by violent conflict do not just face a magnified version of development challenges. Situations of violent conflict cannot be imagined as requiring development work that simply faces harsher conditions. They are a completely different problem altogether because people find themselves in an environment that is both *conducive to* and *the result* of violent contestation for power and resources. Conflict-affected people are touched by two forces: those that created the conflict and those that then are created by the conflict's aftermath or continuation. The two forces are not linear; one does not replace the other. They are complex, changeable, interwoven and experienced in both deeply personal and communal ways. Rather than posing an intensified development task, violent contestation creates a qualitatively-different challenge where causality is much more difficult, if not impossible, to locate.

Since causality might be elusive beyond very slim slices of empirical evidence on narrow questions, this book reasons against simplifying such complexity. Ironically, it does so by simplifying the essence of a huge body of empirical scholarship to create what Gunasekara calls 'stylised patterns' – depictions of complex and complicated

issues that allow for generalization without postulating simplicity.[38] The book starts from the insight that current patterns of development engagement in conflict-affected situations have unintended consequences. Or maybe even worse: that the current system of international engagement and monitoring its effect is so far removed from the contexts in which it engages that it has no way of understanding what consequences the engagement has, as a recent evaluation of World Bank engagement in fragile settings states: 'little is known about how World Bank operations in conflict-affected areas can exacerbate underlying grievances.'[39]

It is not accidental that such engagement does not bring about the hoped-for change. It is because the mental model that underpins these development approaches and engagements is not right.

In examining the research on the many layers and phenomena that make up the experience of lives and violence, some aspects and types of arguments kept reappearing. In one way or another, they seem observable across many different contexts. This does not mean they are applicable to every individual or village, but they are sufficiently prominent to warrant generalization. These are difficult to name: Are they patterns? Are they fundamental truths? Key insights? Principles? Maybe they are best imagined as phenomena that are mirrored across different contexts and different time periods and that need to become the revised foundation for future debate, models and images of development, and practical programming. Such a revision might help to, as Valters suggests, 'tell a better story' of why and how development programmes can achieve their aims.[40] Telling a better story that embraces complexity rather than boils it down to digestible chunks, means taking off the safety belt of causality. In a sense, the stylized

Figure 1 Development tools in conflict-affected situations. Image by Olivier Ploux.

patterns put forward here put a square clunky wheel on an unstable wheel barrow, rather than offer a perfectly round one that works smoothly even on rough roads, countering the pervasive idea that lives affected by violence will get better if only the right development tools are applied (Figure 1).

The status quo of the conflict resolution and development tool box

This is what a default, standard, universal causality diagram for development during and after situations of violent conflict often looks like: relevant indicators could be security/legitimacy/governance (preferably of the good type)/economic development/ service delivery and institutional capacity. Improvement in these indicators signals progress in people's lives, which equals recovery and development. Service delivery plays a huge part in this. Improving access to services, while challenging, seems obviously related to a better environment, which in turn must translate into a better perception of those in power and a better outlook overall. The particulars of this thinking may have been tweaked over the years because the political, economic and social dynamics underpinning the money spent on what is called foreign aid and post-conflict interventions always shift, along with the language used by different international actors to describe these dynamics and how and with what motivation they seek to tackle them. But broadly, this thinking represents a status quo that has proved remarkably persistent.[41] The causality seems so obvious. It is also – largely – assumed, using Western ideas as the basis to image how change happens, while at the same time ignoring how much even those funders wedded to these often deeply theoretical ideas actually operationalize them in their everyday practical work. Such is the case with approaches that develop (accompanied by a generous number of policy papers) as history takes its twists and turns.

Since the turn of the millennium, governments and donors from the Global North have imagined countries affected by violent conflict as failed and fragile. Before the 1990s, international actors hardly spoke of 'failed states' but when it seemed as if particularly conflict-affected countries in Africa posed a threat to political Western structures that had just victoriously emerged from the Cold War, the notion of state failure captured this.[42] A state was quickly labelled as failed if it did not fulfil the crucial characteristic of a state as defined by Max Weber: holding the monopoly on violence. Weberian logic suggests that not holding the monopoly will lead to violent political contestations for power; implicit is the assumption that if violence is available as an option, people will use it.[43] Failed states were seen as vulnerable to overthrow or collapse due to limited central control over national territory, ineffectual institutions and a lack of state legitimacy in the eyes of the people.[44] State failure became a justification for military action, for example, the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001.[45] It also became a driver of statebuilding efforts to construct states that would not fail in future.

In 2005, the Fund for Peace and *Foreign Policy* started to summarize the vulnerability of states to conflict or collapse by collating a number of indicators into

the Failed State Index (FSI). This proved controversial as many of the indicators were perception-based and equally weighted, which assigned the same risk level to often very dissimilar states.[46] In the years since, the judgemental notion of failure has been widely rejected on the basis that it creates a division between states that are seen by the West as salvageable versus those that are seen as beyond repair. Of course, taking states and thus the need to repair them for granted is also a broader Western mental model, deeply rooted in the logic of Western history and theories and an idea of how change happens.

In 2014, the Failed State Index became the Fragile States Index (FSI), which at least had the advantage of not having to change the abbreviation, even if it did not significantly change the controversy. Any overarching characterization – whether failure or fragility – was seen as brushing over the specifics of a situation, instead offering generalized indicators relating to services, legitimacy, security and capacity, with the least attention paid to power. The invention of state fragility spoke more to the political agendas of the definition givers, but states labelled fragile were quick to use this to their advantage.[47] The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which as one of the major birthing helpers made the concept mainstream to keep aid doctrines intact, as Nay argues, has recently offered more nuanced analysis of fragility.[48] It has moved from a blunt political assessment to an examination of a country's economy, environment, politics, society and security. The US Global Fragility Act stresses the need for a more sophisticated look at why a state may become fragile,[49] and has opened the door to more meticulous debate.[50]

Yet, what were the ideas on offer for countering fragility? Despite the fact that the history of state construction might be to blame for violence, statebuilding emerged as the winner, statebuilding being the 'actions undertaken by national and/or international actors to establish, reform, and strengthen state institutions where these have been seriously eroded or are missing' to tackle the threats to stability associated with FCAS, as Rocha Menocal sums up the paradigm.[51] As suggested by the term, statebuilding prioritizes technical capacity and institutional capabilities, often at highest government levels. With such capacity, states were also expected to build their legitimacy in the eyes of their populations. These ideas followed classical legitimacy theory with little adjustments based on the specific nature of a conflict-affected environment.[52] Despite the shift from failure to fragility, these ideas are deeply rooted in the experience of the 1990s and a belief that building market-enabling institutions and stimulating economic growth are the paths to peace and stability.

Since statebuilding neither created sustainable economic growth nor established Western-style democracies, particularly in Africa,[53] it seemed as if the mental model of state fragility and its building response were doomed to disappear. Yet, in what seemed like a contradiction, the 2011 New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States both suggested a shift in the modes of engagement while marking a high point for statebuilding.[54] The UK's 2011 peacebuilding/statebuilding strategy remained deeply rooted in the experience of the aftermath of the Iraq invasion of 2003. It emphasized state legitimacy as key to peaceful societies, and that such legitimacy can be achieved by doing four things simultaneously: '1. Address the causes and effects of conflict and fragility, and build conflict resolution mechanisms; 2. Support inclusive political settlements and

processes; 3. Develop core state functions; 4. Respond to public expectations.'[55] This premise conflated several processes into one: service delivery, end of violence, politics and improved state-society relationships via increased legitimacy.

The toolbox might since have changed a little and critiques have become more nuanced in unpacking how formal institution building neglected, as Moro argues, the role of informal institutions in fostering legitimacy and effective service delivery.[56] But this has only been tinkering around the edges of the very purpose, intentions and morality of development. When Escobar wrote *Encountering Development* in 1995, he spelt out the imposition of Western ideas and values onto other countries and cultures.[57] Almost twenty years prior, Said had framed international development as a Western discourse deployed to gain authority over poorer states and their populations;[58] Escobar identified this discourse as the successor of colonialism that created a similar effect: creating winners and losers, exploitation and oppression.[59] As the debate continues to become more nuanced, the modernizing, capitalist and masculinist values embedded into current approaches to development are being unpacked, as is the belief that development and economic growth are linked.[60]

While statebuilding championed neoliberal ideals, liberalism became the language of peacebuilding. In parallel to the growing post–Cold War statebuilding discourse, liberal peace became, writes Rampton, 'the explicit ideational basis for western foreign policy'.[61] Linking peacebuilding and statebuilding, argues Richmond, became an attempt to 'unite the world under a hegemonic system that replicated liberal institutions, norms, political, social and economic systems',[62] which Mac Ginty sees as supporting illiberal states and actors.[63] Rather than prioritizing the ideas of international actors, those advocating a different approach championed that the diverse perceptions and experiences of people living in conflict-affected contexts should be included, particularly when it comes to determining which institutions are considered legitimate.[64] This makes sense: in South Sudan, for example, local institutions such as local chiefs can be perceived as more accessible and accountable, and as sharing the norms of local communities.[65] But simply accepting local hierarchies and including different perspectives on what good authority looked like was not so straightforward.

'Inclusion' became an important word: the UN has since 2012 used inclusion indicators for post-conflict institutions and processes.[66] A flippant way to describe what this has meant would be to say that donors more broadly discovered their enthusiasm for the local – helping elevate the needs and voices of those traditionally marginalized from decision-making.[67] Locally-owned approaches to peacebuilding, argues Bojicic-Dzelilovic, were conceptualized as a new 'social contract' that bypasses the traditional liberal peace model by fostering relationships between international and domestic actors at the local level.[68] Miklian et al., however, suggest that the notion of bypassing national actors is at odds with the incumbent structures and misses the point of state-level peacebuilding.[69] Others see it as romanticizing the fact that locally-owned approaches can positively cloak engagement with despot regimes – since these would happen only during engagements at the state level.[70]

Inclusion has also been little more than a buzzword when it comes to the experience of women. While policy attention on sexual violence perpetrated on women and girls has remained high over the past fifteen years,[71] what is called mainstreamed inclusion

of women remains patchy.[72] Despite the knowledge that agreeing on peace seems to work better when women are involved and are able to formulate gender-sensitive peace agreements,[73] the broad range of actors and funding pools associated with post-conflict funding has obstructed improved integration of gender-based issues and women's voices into post-conflict planning, budgeting and implementation. The exclusion of gender expertise and technical capacity within peacebuilding efforts has exacerbated this trend.[74]

Two related FCAS development trends are important for this book and for how development in FCAS is imagined. The first one is capacity building. What could be more obvious? If fragility (or previously failure) is based on a lack of capacity in the institutions that make up the state, building that capacity is the solution. This emerged from the realization, amongst others, that military intervention in troublesome areas was costly.[75] Capacity building offers a glimpse of the promised land of causality, and the 2011 World Development Report (WDR) spelt it out: legitimate institutions would counter conflict and violence and improve security, justice and job creation in fragile and conflict-affected states.[76] Capacity building was supposed to simultaneously address the immediate needs of post-conflict states as well as the protracted economic and political causes of conflict and instability.[77] Kinfolk of capacity building is the notion of best practice: if those offering competence could not do so in an accomplished way, something would be amiss. Best capacity-building practice suggested local ownership (preferably by using existing systems) and national priorities in the driver's seat.[78] But would the international system be able to hand over the power of ownership into the unknown?

It did not take long until the challenges with capacity building in FCAS became clear: tension between the goals of the builders and the goals of those to be built emerged in many contexts.[79] In Palestine, writes Tartir, European Union (EU) capacity development strengthened the security sector, but did so through focusing on authoritarian policing that required some stretching of the imagination to still be considered locally owned.[80] The general public and particularly women can fall by the wayside.[81] And sometimes, capacity building simply consists of providing capacity. As Mallet writes, capacity can only exist when multiple other factors are in place, such as resources, appropriate skills, an enabling environment in terms of both politics and organizational set-up and incentives that speak to people's ambitions and interests.[82] Yet, often these factors fall victim to the need to get something done – that something being the transfer of resources and expertise, which still forms the backbone of most international development. A concept such as capacity quickly gets reduced to the bare minimum of technical knowledge transfer. These concepts have for a long time made up the principles, narratives and images that inform development thinking.

Livelihoods beyond capacity

While capacity building reinvigorated a technical perspective on what development was expected to do, the livelihoods approach to post-conflict programming was meant to be an antidote to traditional technical approaches to post-conflict development. In

the 1990s, the approach was favoured by a range of government donors and NGOs, including DFID, Oxfam and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).[83] Different actors have distinctive definitions of what a livelihoods approach is: donors and development practitioners, such as UNDP, have traditionally understood the approach as being externally-driven responses, 'the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time'.[84] Academics understand the livelihoods approach as paying attention to the day-to-day reality of lives after conflict; recent key shifts in the approach emphasize cash transfers, promoting access to local markets via infrastructural development and improving community resilience.[85]

By the middle of the 2010s, mounting criticism of the statebuilding approach and the realization that in many places that had received years of statebuilding assistance, things were not changing much and required at the very least some tweaking. The UK government offered one such tweak in 2016, when it released its Building Stability Framework, a significant step away from the peacebuilding/statebuilding premise that assumed that strengthening state capacity would create legitimacy and stability. The new framework zoomed in on 'five building blocks that drive long-term stability': (1) fair power structures, (2) inclusive economic development (3) conflict-resolution mechanisms, (4) effective legitimacy institutions and (5) supportive regional environment. The framework committed to grounding development decisions in an understanding of 'how power is distributed, used and perceived'; to 'think and act beyond the state'; to manage trade-offs between different projects to ensure a coherent strategy; to react flexibly to opportunities; to be open about risks; and to ensure programmes are informed by detailed knowledge through championing the right kind of expertise.[86]

Just a few months prior to the release of the Building Stability Framework, adaptive management of development efforts had come to prominence, embracing non-linear theories of change and notions of complex adaptive systems.[87] Though the Building Stability Frameworks was a step forward and acknowledged such complexity, it remained rooted in the old logic of what development work in conflict and post-conflict situations should look like. This logic, despite emphasizing on the need to improve the lives of ordinary people, remains decidedly state-centric and mechanistic in its theoretical arguments, measurements of success, economic imaginations and attention to actors. Structures matter more than individuals, with considerations of emotions or relationships consigned to the psychosocial drawer, which is much smaller than that pulled out for support to economic development. Above all, a clear assumption of causality underpins the strategy; one can imagine the sequenced work plans that might develop from this, walking the practitioner through what needs to be done, step by step.

Walking the yellow brick road

In May 2013, then-British prime minister David Cameron spoke at the United Nations (UN) about the 'golden thread of development'.[88] He imagined this to be a set of interventions centred around economic growth, access to markets, good

governance and effective service delivery – these needed to happen simultaneously and in combination with one another. The golden thread image was carefully chosen, speaking as it does to human instincts: many religions offer a version of brightly-coloured guidance that reliably helps weave one's way past obstacles;[89] many stories do, too. *The Wizard of Oz* is enduringly popular for a reason: it is about Dorothy's longing to find the path and to arrive at the Emerald City, the perfect destination where one man knows the solution to her problems. 'How can I get there?' Dorothy asks the Witch of the North, who answers: 'You must walk. It is a long journey, through a country that is sometimes pleasant and sometimes dark and terrible.' But, luckily, 'the road to the City of Emeralds is paved with yellow brick . . . so you cannot miss it'.[90]

Dorothy's arrival in Emerald City then treats us to a most endearing description of the powers of groupthink and wanting to believe what one already believes, even if that might need the help of reassuring embellishments. To avoid being blinded by 'the brightness and glory of the Emerald City', everyone's head (including their brains, presumably) is locked by a gatekeeper into a set of wrap-around green-tinted spectacles that make them see the world as they want to see it.[91] The Wizard of Oz, the architect of accessorizing people's desire for a place of abundance and promise with the spectacles that can make this place happen, then summarizes just how hard it is to change the deeply-held beliefs: 'My people have worn green glasses on their eyes so long that most of them think it really is an Emerald City.'[92]

The yellow brick road offers a mapped-out route to a recognizable and wonderful destination. Yes, there are some obstacles along the way, but these are quickly overcome and do not change the destination. The imagery is almost too close to development's relationship with causality to not make me cringe when using it, but still, a clearly defined path will lead to the creation of peaceful, stable and open societies with functioning institutions and public goods shared in equitable ways. Causality, sequencing and an omniscient perspective of what success will look like, just as it is for Dorothy and her friends.

Because development is a Western concept, it is imagined along Western storytelling conventions, aptly named the monomyth because of its lack of complexity. Visible in countless Hollywood movies, Campbell and Vogler have both laid out the various stops of the hero's journey: a call to adventure, mentorship, tests and ordeals, rewards and triumphant return with increased wisdom.[93] It is linear, it has causality and it offers a satisfying conclusion. It is the single story. The straight narrative. The one that whispers 'certainty' amongst signals that suggest the opposite.

Of course, there is no yellow brick road for programmes seeking to support lives affected by violence. Many of the suggested paths taken by development programmes probably will not lead to the Emerald City. Emerald City is not, in fact, what it promises to be. The perfect destination only exists because everyone accessorizes their experience of perfection by wearing those green-tinted glasses. There are many variations of this imagery, and it is the imagery that needs to change. This is incredibly difficult because of the attraction of causality: causality drives us to simple imagery and strong narratives; it eliminates uncertainty and ambiguity which are both things with which humans struggle. It also creates the scene for a transactional mindset – the kind of mindset that supports meditation as a tool to increase one's productivity. It suggests that action is judged by

what it can measurably achieve with as limited input as possible, but with the highest gain for the initiator of the transaction. The most virulent debates about the nature of violent conflict have focused on the transactional nature of conflict: Is it greed that drives people to violence? Is it grievance?[94] The reduction to clear paths and considering violence as essentially of transactional nature have created a dangerous reduction.

The many layers of conflictual environments and the various impacts these have require working with multiple images, with contradictory narratives, with disjointed activities, with transformation instead of transaction and with other people. There is no one framing, no striking mental imagery, no timed workplan that can comfortably take a place here. That is because the story of lives amid violence is not a monomyth. Other storytelling traditions might help to grasp this fact as they mirror neither the promise of a straight path nor the structure of cause and effect. Nayeri, writing about Iranian storytelling, points out that there are

> no narrative rules. Iranians have no problem with spoilers – the ending isn't the pleasure of a story for them. They don't start in the middle of the action (as Western writers are taught to do) or even at the beginning (where Western logic may take them), they start long before the beginning: 'Let me tell you about modern Iran,' they say, because that is how they are trained to begin. And those are the savvy ones; the rest begin with the creation of the universe. But you start philosophising and you've lost your Western listener.[95]

Changing the story so that it better captures the complex layers for development practitioners means moving towards imagery that does not feel like home just yet. It would mean no longer emphasizing concrete steps and measurable delivery over long-term sustainable-but-hard-to-measure change; that this rarely happens has been a point of criticism of donors who count their results too simply.[96] It is not that these realizations for the need to change the mental model do not yet exist, but such change is hard. It means understanding how difficult it is to balance broad ambition with concrete practice – the dilemma embodied in the question that often comes up in training sessions or knowledge exchanges: 'What should I do differently on Monday morning?' It requires like-minded allies who stick together through thick and thin. These are difficult to find and ambitious ideas often fail to make it out of brainstorming sessions or out of the realm of outsider critique. For programme implementation, narrow technical perspectives remain the most valued, highlighting that if all else is stripped away, international development has not travelled far from its technical assistance roots of the 1950s,[97] or even colonial notions of institution building through administrative reform.[98]

This is so because the pots of money provided by countries with more to countries with less always come with rules and caveats – even those pots that ostensibly are aid that is not tied to direct expectations of how the development transaction ought to benefit both sides. One of those benefits on the pot-giving side is that it must be reputation-enhancing to offer the pot, so foreign staff in a country is often tasked implicitly primarily with managing reputational risk, and explicitly with getting some measurable development results.

And while results are the happiness potion of development programmes, the notion of what constitutes a result is equally confined: the ambition to deliver against indicators that an external auditor or evaluator or a hostile press can recognize curtails nuanced ambitions towards sustainable social and political change and dictates time frames.[99] The management logic that underpins this is certainly prevalent in development circles, but is overpowering in the home treasuries and the development agencies they fund, with long reach even into programmes implemented at the other end of the globe. Results, argues Andrew Mitchell (who was the UK Secretary of State for International Development from 2010 to 2012) in his memoir, are certain if programmatic choices are offered in a market-like set-up, asking if a programme was delivering value for money and acting in British interest. 'Basically', he writes about his time and the reforms he oversaw at DFID, 'we were creating an internal market for the British taxpayer to buy results.'[100] The market stalls full of results on sale, however, might have been based on a flawed sales pitch – one that, as Denney argues, represents development thinking that 'ends up projectising what are essentially processes of social change'.[101]

Assumptions that inform this path in international development are deeply ingrained. There are, of course, success stories. But to reach the broad conclusion that success is proven due to a few good episodes here and there is wrong. A single story does not constitute a pattern and yet is often used to justify doubling down on the old paradigm's assumptions. Thus, when presented with programmes that do not work – when communities feel unfairly treated or excluded, livelihoods remain volatile, changes in lifestyle or livelihoods do not pay off – practitioners assume these obstacles result from the programme, the community, or the practitioners themselves not having done enough. That no longer workable assumptions of causality or a constraining mental imagery might be the main limitation here is not usually part of the discussion.

Decades of mental models of growth, trickle down, capacity deficits, sequencing, and the unspoken understanding that lack of information – in less benign terms, ignorance – is at the heart of underdevelopment, have created a powerful knowledge structure from which any subsequent interpretation stems. These are mental models or schemas, which involve using existing knowledge for future interpretation. They inform certain scripts that development actors act out: donors coming into a context tend to perceive of themselves as powerful and knowledgeable. Hence, the script goes, if their development programmes do not deliver the expected results, it has to be due to lack of technical capacity, lack of political will in the receiving country, or lack of competency on the part of those who are expected to locally own and implement a programme. The notion of development is right now so infused with the idea of having found the path to measurable results that delayed arrival at the destination is blamed on small obstacles, small rocks and potholes along the way, rather than on having taken a wrong turn entirely.

This emphasis on a clear direction leading to the ideal destination obscures what helping lives amid violence actually involves: it is not the predetermined itinerary and destination that matter, but the journey itself. It is not a path on the map that can reliably guide the direction of travel. Valters suggests replacing the notion of the roadmap with the mental imagery of a compass to indicate that there can only ever be a broad direction of travel, rather than a GPS-based route planner.[102] Even more than

that is needed. A process of social change requires it being experienced, rather than simply engineered. This means many individuals experiencing what it is like to set one foot in front of the other and seeing that the map forgot to mention that the road has unexpected turns, bad signage and potholes – or that it might suddenly end and actually needs to be built first.

What change is needed?

The belief in causality along a series of steps towards progress in specific indicators resulted in a number of blind spots. Stabilizing measures can contribute to an experience of fragility, as the experience of failing to get ahead, and of time and money investments not paying off or leading to backsliding, can become permanent features. Development players entering the scene and altering the resource balance introduce a lack of clarity regarding the lines along which relationships are to be negotiated, and what pay-offs they bring. On top of everything else, we know that experiencing conflict affects how people experience their environments and how they behave when it comes to risk-management and livelihood-investment choices. Many experiences in violence-affected settings are not obviously linked to economic development, but in the old, growth-focused paradigm, these are easily interpreted as being part of trickle-down chains.

These trickle-down effects rarely happen in reality: decent jobs are hard to come by. Markets are exclusive on many levels. Given what we now know, the strategic approach suggested in the Building Stability Framework no longer is a realistic proposition. Some of the countries that continue to be marked by violent conflict – for example, Afghanistan – cannot merely be described as 'late developers', a label that relies on the assumption that they can catch up and develop the structures and economics associated with developed countries. Rather, they might in fact be what Pain and Huot call 'too late'.[103] While the development models on offer assume that how development happened in the past might still be possible today, Pain and Huot argue that things have already shifted into the wrong sequencing order: the economy cannot keep up with population growth or competition, and politics means that what really has created development in the past – for example, human migration – is curtailed.[104]

Because of the continued challenges and the increasing realization that the number of people living in FCAS is growing, donors stress the need for research, analysis and lesson learning.[105] More attention is being paid to ensuring that a variety of voices – different genders, different ages, different mother tongues – have their say in how programmes are assessed, and that the possibility of doing harm is seriously considered. Yet, none of this has as yet profoundly changed the inner logic of continuing to push certain approaches that are context-inappropriate and work with unsuitable labels or offer unsustainable economic growth programmes that presume interest in entrepreneurship and/or risk-taking; people's willingness to prioritize any kind of work over decent work; job creation as a focus for development; education as a path to a better job; access to markets that function in a similar fashion to Western

markets; and political systems that credibly use free and fair elections to decide who gets to represent the people in governance decisions.

Development goes through periodic phases of reassessment and changes of direction. This is good. Many researchers have called for a change and for the dismissal of standard programming approaches.[106] These are not trivial and easily uttered recommendations. Rather, they call for a close examination of realities, comfort zones, orthodoxies, nuances and obstacles to make room for development that challenges the political interests of those who advocate aid as the solution to situations of violent conflict. When development ambitions involved making money flows look more like what happens in the Western world through building institutions, structural adjustment seemed like a good idea. The approach then rightly attracted criticism for its destructive impact as an inappropriate intervention, failing as it did to address what was considered to be at the heart of weak financial management: institutions.[107]

The consensus in the international development sector is that programmes in FCAS should improve people's lives after (or during) a conflict. The emphasis for the past two decades or so has been on delivering services in order to improve shattered relations between the state and its citizens, while at the same time promoting economic growth in the expectation that greater wealth results in better lives. Although different programmes may have varying activities and modes of implementation, there is little questioning of whether this is in fact the best path. This is because, despite disappointing results, development practice has a comfort zone. One reason the old assumptions of causality are so difficult to cast aside is how research and evidence are used. Despite there being a wealth of data framed around what works – with many insights suggesting that things are, well, complicated – the established ways of doing things have a habit of winning. This is also because, in the stark reality, rethinking and even adjusting mental models is not enough without an iterative and supportive systems change. Capacity cannot be genuinely built without addressing the wider relationships and systems that constrain action in development projects. The development sector cannot change without a change in managerial thinking in the treasuries of donor countries.

Such an adjustment requires more than a programmatic shift. It requires a movement. Learning, evolving and collaborating are not linear processes and they involve the people on all sides. Walker argues that a movement needs to start with understanding context by encouraging those that want to join to query what the enabling factors were that had created the structures they want to oppose and using this insight to free up the imagination that there are better ways to do things.[108] For a start, this means that the development sector needs to turn its own tools of contextualization on itself and understand how mental models and individual actions intersect, but also how they are changeable.

It requires broadening the mental models shaping development towards those that allow concurrent and contradictory images to exist side by side. It necessitates spelling out that many development practitioners operate with permanent cognitive dissonance where they think and act in ways that they simultaneously believe to be ethically fraught or even ineffective, but at the same time consider necessary.[109] It means acknowledging that this is not a matter of replacing one catch-all image with the next within the same system, of still seeking causality but just along different lines

of reasoning. And yet, despite the need for a change in the system, it also requires those implementing programmes in support of people in conflict-affected situations to do what Elworthy calls the 'inner work': shifting one's individual perspective towards the collective: the

> evolutionary shift, a leap in our ability to move from thinking about 'me' to thinking about 'we'. This may seem difficult at first, but soon it becomes clear that it is a nourishing and satisfying way to live, because what human beings are drawn to is a sense of purpose in life, and what many of us search for in our lives is a feeling of belonging, a feeling of community.[110]

This is not therapy speak but a necessary thinking process: there are deeper thinking patterns and situations that are problematic in the development sector. To address either requires awareness of both and then finding ways to either change them or make peace with them consciously and address the cognitive dissonance in that way. This is likely a messy process, but without realizing the impact of deeper thinking patterns on the situation and vice versa, it is difficult to imagine what an entry point for any transformation might be.

Living with violence makes for a particularly risky landscape. First of all, when there is no state, there is also no arbiter of risk that can ensure a social model in which risk is shared. Second, though institutions are not (yet) strong enough to manage risk, they can undermine the elements that make societies resilient.[111] This in-between space contributes to volatility and, argues Shitemi, development practitioners need to understand that their offerings create or include risks that people must then navigate.[112] Without an emphasis on relationships, development actors take it for granted that communities will want to engage with a programme set up to help them, and then become frustrated when it turns out that communities do not – failing to acknowledge that development programmes often force decision-making processes on communities that are inappropriate to the context.[113]

This is why risk-informed development – which takes into account complex and overlapping risks – emphasizes action, pushing 'development decision-makers to understand and acknowledge that all development choices involve trade-offs. It also requires learning from the past and building upon experience, while transparently and effectively'.[114] Such learning requires the tough inner work of reflective thinking that allows decision-making to support a change of direction. It can be very difficult indeed because even thinking through a risk lens requires first a deep acknowledgement of uncertainty. Garvey Berger and Johnston have articulated some of the most common challenges that interfere with changing an approach – they all resonate with the issues of mental models, behavioural patterns, groupthink and the allure of causality and will be a familiar territory for many development practitioners, including:

- People are too busy to notice there is a problem.
- Confirmation bias means people only see what they already believe in.

- Familiarity/availability bias means people only draw on what they are most familiar with.
- Fear of failure means people choose the action for which they are least likely to be criticized in the event things go wrong.
- Groupthink means people find it very difficult to raise a dissenting voice.
- People seek clear lines of cause and effect, meaning that acknowledging how issues interconnect and how one action may deepen complexity can be a hugely unsettling experience.[115]

The point is not to eliminate these challenges; the point is to recognize and then work with them. If groupthink was so easy to counter, we would not still have green glasses that make Emerald City look green. We would not continue with familiar economic models that clash with economic lives. The point is to understand the risk that these challenges bring and how the fear of failure (as defined by how development actors view failure) interacts with them. Joined awareness of the power of groupthink or familiarity bias allows setting up mechanisms and processes to protect from such blind spots, thereby maximizing the chances of hearing relevant, if challenging, information. This requires meaningful engaging with insights that stem from programmes that have or have not delivered results, as well as listening to community members and constituents, and then listening again. And maybe slowly change the system along the way, for example, funding mechanisms that, as Jackson and Minoia advise, must operate 'in a way that learns from the "blind spots" of past support – that is, the issues and areas that have been overlooked – rather than simply replicating them'.[116]

But this process requires having a critical mind. It requires absorbing and then questioning each piece of information, including asking about the conditions under which a particular insight has occurred and whether these conditions can be replicated elsewhere. Key to this is to ask questions that allow for such concerns to be captured and to constantly look in new places – an approach that has informed this book. However, even when such advice is followed, it does not necessarily make taking action on the basis of it any easier, because risk-informed decision-making requires action.[117] Action requires space – space to do something about the insights gained from formal feedback, empirical research or even from anecdotal observations. This space is risky, because approaches that break existing norms can fail or may be frowned upon. Yet, sticking with the established path may end up contributing to an externally-established hierarchy of 'what matters', with concrete and visible needs (which can be addressed with measurable actions), placed at the top of the ladder, and feelings, relationships and long-term change left at the bottom.

Why recommendations are not enough

Recommendations tend to be comforting to decision-makers. That is because their logic follows that of causality: do this and you will achieve that. A recommendation expressed with authority provides the certainty decision-makers crave. For

practitioners, recommendations can be stressful as they can feel constraining or demanding. For researchers, recommendations are usually accompanied by a sinking feeling. Having spent months (years even) uncovering complexity (and likely finding more in the process), writing a zingy recommendation that is easy to operationalize can feel like crossing a picket line.

Reading recommendations can feel like a looped déjà vu. In the body of work that underpins this book, most recommendations suggest, in one way or another, that decision-makers need to be realistic; emphasize local knowledge and ownership; stop dividing up complex issues into operational nuggets; plan for unintended consequences; appreciate that all development work is political; and understand that because development deals with power, it is inherently risky. If such recommendations worked, their long, repetitive family history would be, well, history. There are other themes that make regular appearances:

- The need for contextual awareness to understand why people make certain choices, including pursuing or rejecting livelihood options.[118]
- The need to overcome programmatic silos because issues are interconnected. Livelihood programmes, for example, need to know about politics and governance to work best in a specific context.[119]
- Assumptions are very sticky, even if disproven, such as: the peace dividend will trickle down. Delivering a service is more important to people than with how much dignity they can receive it. Entrepreneurship is a good route to commercial success for all people.[120]
- That development programmes have political consequences, even if they are not explicitly designed to do political work.[121]
- The need to choose collaborators wisely: working with state actors will have an impact both on how development actors can interact with the state and on how non-state actors experience them.[122]
- That without learning, creating better programmes is impossible and learning is, too, without communication, without transparent planning, without a designated budget for learning, without making sure that learning incorporates many voices.[123]

It is likely that for many practitioners, the aforementioned recommendations and conclusions ring true, even if they are struggling with how to apply them to an issue in hand. Translating research into practice to tackle a specific challenge in a specific context takes particular and skilled work – but even if there is time and money to do this work, achieving certainty is largely illusory.

A different approach to using evidence needs to offer practitioners and decision-makers ways to escape unquestioned mental models, and potentially become comfortable in not having a replacement. That is, possibly, the most transformative part of the transformation suggested here. It is an alien, foreign concept – but, it turns out, only by taking in something that is foreign is transformation possible, are we to take cellular biology as an area in which this can be proven: only when foreign genetic material is incorporated can transformation happen.[124]

What is put forward in this book sheds light on how and why, broadly, the current practice of development tends to fail in substantially improving lives amid violence. However, these revisions can only go so far – they break down imagery but do not necessarily build it back up into something new. And learning how to operate in this way will take time. Learning is not a one-off event – it requires constant acknowledging and questioning of incentives, risk, and foundational assumptions, as well as the relationships these create.

While everyone has to do their part, nobody can do this alone. Change will require the support of others because, as Walker explains in her book on how to build sustainable feminist activism, 'it's pointless urging people as individuals simply to try harder when there are centuries of legislative, cultural and economic inequality to overcome.'[125] That is the major caveat. There is a lot invested in the current aid paradigm and the established ways of doing things, with capitalist and neoliberal notions of development often demanding balance-sheet thinking from people and communities whose worldviews and approach to relationships do not always align with thinking that comes from neoliberal ideas of growth and statebuilding.

This book is really, at its heart, about mental models and realities of lives amid violence. It requires for those working to help people whose lives have been shaped by violence to understand their own role in the relationship between the overlapping risks of existing systems, international support, risk and coping strategies, and to develop a strong consciousness of their own position and worldview. They – we – must do the inner work.

What this book offers

Each chapter in this book seeks to combine some of this inner work with unpacking elements of existing assumptions of the causality paradigm to build a more complete and interlinked picture of the layers and issues that shape people's lives amid violence. The chapters use empirical insights to sketch out some broadly-applicable principles about development in FCAS with the hope of offering these as a foundation to which the inner work can relate.

This requires acknowledging things about the specific quality of conflict-affected environments, the development sector, and the human limitations everyone who works in these environments brings to them. Mostly, this means acknowledging incongruity and the need to concurrently and comfortably hold contradictory images, insights and realizations. Ambivalence is necessary to understand what the revision offers: it is neither clarity nor a workplan; it certainly is not a linear series of implementable steps. To offer some comfort in this disorderliness, here is a linear summary of what to expect from the following chapters.

Chapter 2 argues that stabilizing, statebuilding and prioritizing a transactional approach have contributed to a damaging status quo, pushing a mental model that hides the relational, mental and social aspects of development. A typical post-conflict response is to implement programmes that support economic growth and thus Chapter 3 builds on the previous chapter's demonstration that economic growth policies do not

automatically trickle down to make lives better by arguing that the image of economic life applied in these policies is too narrow. Crucially, it overlooks the importance of social and moral connections in driving economic life. In a sense, the chapter takes issue with how this kind of economic thinking has infused all other ways of thinking of development through the lens of growth and transaction.

While this driver may not be instantly visible to programme decision-makers, it can profoundly shape people's access to markets and the broader economy. Chapter 4 explores why the experience of having survived a violent conflict rarely seems to lead to stable livelihoods or improved perceptions of security once the conflict ends. The chapter takes issue with the view that it is conflict that causes the greatest disruption to lives and that its end constitutes an automatic improvement. Given this, the chapter proposes moving away from notions of sequencing towards a more lateral approach of responding to challenges people experience as they live their lives amid violence.

There are also other unseen factors at play, which Chapter 5 proceeds to outline through the concept of the mental landscape. The mental landscape acknowledges that narratives, experiences and identity influence behaviour and in turn the future experience of the post-conflict environment, including the relationship between citizens and the state.

Chapter 6 reveals that current ways of operationalizing identity create a contradiction: they assume a shared experience and emphasize the rigidity of identity to then support change within that identity. While identity is a useful way to understand local realities, it can also create structures of exclusion. This is due to the damaging effects of categorizing individuals in order to administer development programmes – a categorization that achieves often the opposite of what it sets out to do, which is to find ways to include and to improve how citizens experience the state.

This state–citizen relationship is at the heart of many statebuilding and stabilization policies. In examining the assumptions on which such policies rest, Chapter 7 builds on the argument that legitimacy is co-constructed in a process of permanent exchange between state and society, and that the currency of this exchange is the salient issue along which legitimacy is negotiated.

Whether or not a state is capable of delivering services is usually explained through state capacity. This is a technical view that focuses on strengthening state structures through training, and through these structures allowing governance to develop. Chapter 8 instead suggests that a characteristic of environments marked by violent conflict is that they are structured through existing relationships, which are both productive and the bedrock of being able to adapt: they are what allows pivoting for programmes and adjustment of approaches, since humans are involved and their interactions with each other remain (for better or for worse). Relationships that can provide the capacity to govern or access markets are, however, not open to everyone.

These revised development narratives are quite challenging and will require a shift in mindset, particularly for development practitioners. An afterword, co-written with a development practitioner, offers reflective ways of understanding the role of development workers in these settings, as well as constructive paths to operationalizing the revisions put forward by doing the inner work mentioned earlier. A co-authored

postface gives more detailed background on the SLRC, how it operated, the type of research it conducted and the challenges it faced.

What is on offer here in sum becomes an invitation to join the athletic cadre of rethinkers. This also means being open to reassessing the meaning of success and failure, and to moving towards a position whereby development interventions are judged on their ability to manage and mitigate risks, rather than on the strength of their promise of a solution that can be woefully misleading.[126] The book also seeks to nuance imagery and language for the stories of the lives of people who know violence. These stories do not answer the question of which specific programme will work in a particular location. While the revisions described here are not exactly identical across contexts, the reality they point towards is clear: they do not offer clear causality. Gümüsay, in her exploration of how language continues to recreate societal divides, champions the need for hesitancy, doubt, ability to change one's mind and to continue with the knowledge of just how much there is we do not know.[127] It is the opposite of meeting situations of complexity with explanations of causality.

The problem with bricks

Why building and stabilizing went to the wall

South Sudan in the first decade of the twenty-first century seemed perfect for international development: after years of horrific war, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement had opened the path towards independence. Hope for a better future was palpable. The documentary *State Builders*, which captures international engagement during South Sudan's early days of independence, proclaimed that 'everything has to be built from scratch'.[1] International development actors ready to stabilize the semi-autonomous region regularly conjured up the image of a 'blank slate' that they could fill with justice, security and financial systems. South Sudan emerged as textbook adventure playground for statebuilders.

International development often sounds like a construction ground. State*building*, infrastructure *building*, *building* blocks are needed to make life better. It needs indicators, tools, gauges, and conjures up histories from other times and places of how statebuilding came about through infrastructure building, such as when railway workers forged a path across the American prairie to conclude the first transcontinental railroad. The engineering language evokes change that is – while gradual – planned, predictable and has a clear end goal: a solid house that offers shelter from the elements for generations to come. A little further down this construction line, statebuilding is then imagined to deliver well-built state institutions that act according to the development blueprint by delivering security and other services, being accountable to the citizens (which are all treated equally), and regulating economic growth. Stabilization is the foundation on which such construction happens, suggesting safety, solidity and the prevention of deterioration or of harm. A stabilized ground cannot slide.

This imagery is comforting when events seem chaotic or destructive. Yet, despite these tantalizing notions of foundations and building work, stabilization and statebuilding have failed to deliver on their promise. This chapter unpacks why stabilization and statebuilding produce self-defeating dynamics that are at odds with the needs and experiences of people affected by conflict. The reason is surprisingly obvious: stabilization tends to come at a time when conflict actors are consolidating their positions to ensure future preferential access to resources. Since the best way to access resources is to use stabilized powers to maintain a hold on newly-built state

structures, this means that stabilization freezes existing (often conflictual) power and social structures in place.

Statebuilding efforts are often implemented without much regard for those dynamics created by stabilization. Instead, they assume that the stabilized grip kept on power and resources is not the main predictor of future relationships between governments and people or state and society. The causality logic of statebuilding is that if institutions behave in reliable ways and the state dependably delivers on a number of points, this will create a positive relationship with the governed who will repay by supporting the state and not contest its authority – in short, they will not go to war and conflict is thus prevented. As an aside, this then also fulfils one of the major ambitions of the UN: to prevent violent conflict through its multidimensional 'sustaining peace' approach, which prioritizes national and local ownership, brings in the entire UN system in the process, and moves away from the notion of the UN as a primarily-responsive force called upon when things are escalating.[2]

But in many cases, stabilization and statebuilding, rather than offering walkways into a better future, have been the shovels digging the holes that in the context of violent conflict make it difficult for ordinary lives to improve. This summary criticism is oversimplified, lacking the nuance needed to unpack a whole era of international cooperation. But a simplistic counter is nonetheless justified, even necessary: because in the big construction ground that is the linguistic and metaphorical choice of international development, there continues to be one glaring omission: people. Any theory that aims to underpin practical work but makes no mention of the people invites being unbuilt.

Stabilization

South Sudan's success story – from signing a peace deal with the government of Sudan in 2005, conducting elections in 2010 and then the referendum that brought independence in 2011 – came to an abrupt halt in 2013, the year when numerous violent and political conflicts merged to become a full-fledged civil war with genocidal killings.

'South Sudan: The state that fell apart in a week' headlined *The Guardian* in late December 2013.[3] But there had been no quick collapse. There had been no state to crumble. Eight years of stabilization and statebuilding efforts had instead built the institutions of a government and stabilized a leadership that countered dissent with death, collaboration with division and promise with betrayal. The suffering of the people of South Sudan became unspeakable; disappointment evident within the international community that had poured billions of dollars in resources and dedication into building the state.[4] And yet, South Sudan's meltdown predictably followed the unacknowledged internal logic of stabilization and statebuilding. It was an episode in a long history of how international engagement legitimizes the people in power, no matter their intentions. It was the path on which international actors continued despite warning signs.[5]

In some ways, South Sudan's statebuilding project had worked extremely well. It was just that the major players were working towards different models. The international statebuilders had helped create the controlling, violent, divisive state many of South Sudan's prominent leaders had been pursuing. Stabilization mainly strengthened those parts of South Sudan's governance structures that had long been in place because they served those holding power well. In that sense, South Sudan sits comfortably next to other countries where statebuilding efforts have made visible just how resilient and continuous existing systems of governance and patterns of power and conflict are.[6]

Having imagined South Sudan as a *tabula rasa* where everything had to be built from nothing created the crucial blind spots: humans did not feature. The humans who lived here, who had their own historical institutions, and who had maintained systems of governance throughout the war with the sparse resources available to them were not in the picture. It was like a magic eraser had expunged people and their systems from the picture before it was hung in the offices of the international staff. One reason was that often international actors simply could not see those humans. The systems of governance were invisible to the statebuilders as they just did not compute with expectations: court houses under trees; authorities that decided the rules on a case-by-case basis; and verbal, relationship-based agreements to manage peaceful cohabitation of farmers and cattle keepers. How humans lived did not compute with the transactional growth paradigm that was looking for things to count – it was a perspective that Philipsen in his critique of gross domestic product (GDP) describes as 'people-blind', meaning that 'everything about people and their lives outside of the cash nexus is ignored, and thus culturally devalued'.[7] The blind spot was likely also a product of what information was actually accessible, de Vries and Glawion remind us, as it is a characteristic of insecure, violent environments that places where violence is worst or most permanent are often inaccessible to research and thus absent from analysis.[8]

Before there was *stabilization*, international jargon favoured the more ambitious *post-conflict reconstruction*. The term came under fire for implying a return to a situation that likely contributed to conflict in the first place.[9] But that maybe was not the problem: where nothing can be seen it means that nothing can be recovered. The idea of post-conflict reconstruction or *recovery* (an image drawn from medicine where recovery suggests a return to health) was swiftly replaced by that of starting from scratch and avoiding deterioration. Post-conflict stabilization thus became the winning strategy, accelerated by the securitization of development through the War on Terror. It is thus not surprising that Western militaries were comfortable with what the British government (a great proponent of stabilization) defines as

> an approach used in violent conflict which is designed to protect and promote legitimate political authority, using a combination of integrated civilian and military actions to reduce violence, re-establish security and prepare for longer-term recovery by building an enabling environment for structural stability.[10]

It seemed comforting (particularly because it suggested that there was political authority to protect and promote that had a legitimacy with which stabilizers were comfortable), offering the possibility of staying in control through what sounded like

very concrete measures. When the more abstract belief in having identified causality met the applied imagery of the construction ground, one could not help but get the sense that all would be well.

It is worth contrasting the definition and reality of stabilization. Long-term recovery requires consistency, experienced as reliable livelihoods and political structures that are no longer overtly hostile. Stability is not a step on that path to recovery, though intuitively it appears to be. Rather, recovery and stability can actively work against each other. Stabilization creates winners and losers at the exact moment when much is at stake. When conflict dynamics shift (even towards what might look like the end of a conflict), conflict actors seek to consolidate their power and ensure their access to resources is not curtailed. It is a time of intense stake-claiming for those who have the power to claim a stake – for everyone else it translates into ensuring their survival in the new situation. This may mean striking bargains, clarifying loyalty or protecting oneself. To expect norm change, behavioural change and a willingness to relinquish power over resources in such a moment is a big ask.

Finding a way to balance short-term stabilization and longer-term recovery is thus a key challenge for international interveners.[11] Maybe that is one reason why over the past decade the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has favoured the short-term approach, including stimulating economic activity in order to create short-term employment opportunities and kick-start recovery – the idea being that small successes lead to bigger ones.[12] DFID's interpretation of stabilization extended beyond the economy to promoting legitimate political authority and building an environment that enables long-term structural stability.[13] While DFID's framework recognizes that a simple equation of 'end of war + statebuilding and stabilization = peace' does not work, it nevertheless suggests that stability can be achieved through a process that is largely positive. This is rarely the case, as the path followed after violent conflict is often strewn with structural violence, bargaining and trade-offs.[14] How a country ended up at the receiving end of stabilization efforts also matters, as conflictual paths are likely to continue.[15] How exactly legitimate authority – that can be protected and promoted (and is also legitimate in the eyes of the stabilizers) – can be achieved is not elaborated upon in the definitions.

Stabilization assumes that good governance after a peace agreement improves the chances of peace holding.[16] Unfortunately, stability is not a reliable predictor of lasting peace, not least because it is unclear what theories inform stabilization efforts. Since we know less about what makes peace sustainable than about what causes violence, the evidence base supporting post-conflict stabilization is limited.[17] Amongst countries coming out of war, half return to conflict within eight years, often due to knock-on effects related to how the conflict ended or the dynamics that a dip in violence created.[18] In Afghanistan, the DRC, Pakistan or South Sudan, even intense stabilization and statebuilding efforts failed to create the political will needed to move towards inclusive and transparent rules-based regulation of the economy and services.[19] This may be because stabilization and statebuilding are part of what Nilsson refers to as a 'dysfunctional' model of liberal peacebuilding, which has dominated since the Cold War and continues to focus on externally-driven, top-down interventions, resulting in entrenched poverty and inequality in many post-conflict

contexts and becoming a magnifying class for the competing interests of actors involved.[20]

Stabilization, although cloaked in reassuring language, downgrades ambition, reflecting a need for development actors to pragmatically pursue low-hanging fruit – that is, quick wins – as, it is assumed, small successes prevent deterioration. In practice, this can mean that a situation is frozen at minimally acceptable conditions, usually arbitrarily defined by the development actors involved and including conditions that led to violent conflict in the first place. What emerges can be seen in South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Uganda, DRC, Nepal or Afghanistan: a new normal of fragile livelihoods, unreliable state/citizen relationships or return to outright war. Or, from the point of view of ordinary people, the situation simply represents a continuation of how they experienced their lives during times of violence, rather than there being any noticeable process of recovery – more on that in Chapter 4.

The false promise of a fresh start

Stabilization fundamentally misunderstands the ways violent conflict works because the concept is based on Western knowledge. The flaws of believing that Western models, monomyths and yellow brick roads of statebuilding could work in profoundly different contexts have been widely highlighted. But this is not a casual oversight that can be explained with short-term engagement or even some cognitive dissonance on the part of statebuilders or stabilizers: it is a deep-rooted knowledge problem. Lyall, having assembled a complex data set that includes non-Western cases in the study of military history, suggests that it is time to completely reshape how war is understood. He argues that just expanding the data set in that way throws many established military theories out the window.[21] We would think differently about war if we took into account that other versions of war are profoundly different.

Stabilization thus does not just act on deeply-flawed assumptions. It also, in its ethos to stabilize and not deal with root causes, contradicts or at the very least clouds the objectives of aid or conflict-resolution efforts, which tend to be aimed at addressing root causes. Proceeding, as it does, from the assumption that conflict presents a situation of instability that is at the heart of all social, political and economic challenges, stabilization assumes that the end of conflict offers a fresh start in tackling such instability. The lacking nuance here means that actual characteristics of a situation are swept up in a vision of what functioning institutions and processes should look like. But a fresh start it is not: Englebert and Tull make the point that, on the contrary, the instant that international actors might interpret as the moment of opportunity for change is for relevant elites a process of continuing war by other means.[22]

Conflict is better understood as a continuum. Violent conflicts rarely end by making way for better systems, structures and peace dividends that can then be stabilized.[23] Structural and personal remnants of conflict (such as contestation over and inequality in access to services, political voice, or exploitative livelihoods) remain even after conflict has nominally ended. Davenport et al. highlight the risk of

stabilization through institution building because institutions stabilized or built in the immediate aftermath of violence will perpetuate the values that were most dominant during their establishment – in other words, they mirror existing damaging dynamics and, therefore, entrench the current context.[24] It is more likely that profound reform becomes impossible,[25] and stabilization efforts likely ensconce this climate of non-reform.

The situation facing stabilization will have been shaped by an entrenched war and often a permanently volatile or low-level violence-prone region or a violent political or ideological confrontation.[26] There are many such examples of entrenchment. In Afghanistan, for instance, particularly fertile land is held in the hands of relatively few, who can disproportionately influence not just the livelihoods of those without land by offering work but also governance mechanisms relevant to their position as land owners.[27] Access to development pathways is thus determined by the structures that were in place during the conflict and development programmes are not radically invasive enough to ensure equitable participation in development for those traditionally excluded.[28] The visible end of conflict often means continuity – in fact, the official end of conflict puts power relations under a magnifying glass. Stabilization efforts occur in what are already deeply-structured environments, made up of complex social and economic structures of governance, power and hierarchies. These structures continue to determine who gets access to services, institutions, power and resources – and who does not.

Even a peace agreement is a somewhat arbitrarily-marked point, despite development actors usually interpreting it as a critical juncture. It may be, but often not in the way imagined: winners and losers are created based on where they stood at the time of the peace agreement or end of conflict. Dominant identity groups tend to have sufficient power to guide a stabilization process into ensuring their status is not threatened, or even strengthened. Efforts at institution building and supporting economic development can create further volatility, as they formalize unequal contestation and thereby stabilize a corrosive status quo. That continued aid, including humanitarian aid, does little to challenge continuing conflict patterns is a much-discussed dilemma – one that has been particularly acute in the case of South Sudan, where a peace deal and independence allowed those in power to ensure they stayed there.[29]

The history of Sri Lanka shows that when some groups are included at the cost of others, and when this becomes part of the official narrative of the state's legitimacy, violent conflict follows.[30] Stabilizing the status quo at the very point when power relations are being renegotiated and consolidated can result in what looks like a post-conflict environment being placed in an indefinite state of suspension, with national actors reordering the pieces on the chess board while also seeking to maintain donor relations and aid funding. Post-war Nepal is characterized by political and social limbo, with nothing substantial appearing to move in any direction. Individual groups have experienced livelihood improvements, which sounds like a description of a country on the up. Yet, there is little evidence of a more profound and equitable distribution of improvements or improved state-society relations.[31] This is the case in Nepal's Terai, where groups who have suffered for generations continue to experience the state as unfair and illegitimate.[32] If everyone merely moves a rung or two up the ladder, the

differences and structures that contributed to war in the first place will remain. This pattern seems to hold true for other areas of improvement. Happiness, as research in the early 1990s showed, seems to not increase in line with a situation getting better for everyone, particularly an economic situation.[33] Relative, rather than absolute improvement is what people seem to notice and actively experience.

This is why, regardless of stabilization efforts, marginalized people do not suddenly benefit from a reconstruction process. Instead, they tend to be excluded from development due to the do-no-harm ethos that underpins stabilization: while development actors want change, they rarely want it to be so radical as to overhaul existing power structures, which is potentially massively destabilizing. There is little recognition in development practice of this tension between stabilization and recovery, and the fact that stabilization might just set the wrong thing in stone.

Stabilization and change: A complicated relationship

Some of these dynamics can look benign, particularly so when stabilization is viewed as something of an administrative process: brick by brick, target by target. Administrative reforms or decentralization are common stabilization tools, but their implementation tends to overlook the structures that caused conflict in the first place.[34] The path of future dynamics is usually marked by how these structures adjust in the aftermath of conflict and with what trade-offs. Because what is meant to be stabilizing is not automatically so. Lindner highlights that dissecting the tricky relationship between change and stabilization requires understanding sources of stability, as different sources create different barriers to change.[35] Intervention in the form of aid, for example, is by its very nature a disrupter. Of course, the hope attached is that the disruption will be positive.

Stabilization of livelihoods can also create volatility if pursued through standard approaches to economic development. Pursuit of macro-economic development as part of stabilization is usually based on the idea that free market-based economic growth is a necessary and the most powerful tool for improvement – yet the lives of the poorest can be very destabilized indeed by free-market policies that become a firm part of the post-conflict environment (more on that in Chapter 4).

Support for local businesses, for example, may appear a viable and innocent development strategy. However, when viewed through the lens of what structures are being stabilized in these processes, it might come into sharp focus that the local business owner is likely someone who holds power due to their status and connections. Procurement processes, including those supported by international public donors, privilege those with a track record. Only individuals who in previous power constellations held a position allowing them to gain such a track record will thus be able to benefit from future procurement rounds. Those who were winners have a much better chance of being stabilized as winners.

In Afghanistan, outside attempts at social transformation have contributed to the consolidation of exclusive systems built on patronage and networks. Here, the conflicting objectives of anti-terror interventions, fighting an illicit economy and

pursuing the building of democratic institutions have combined to create the perverse outcome of entrenching the status quo – and the spectacular return to Taliban rule in 2021.[36] While much effort has been put into ending violence against women in eastern DRC, rarely has this extended to addressing the gender inequalities facilitating such violence in the first place.[37]

Following the 2007–8 Islamist uprising in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the military stabilized the region, thereby suppressing Taliban violence. While this may appear a great success, argue McCullough and Toru, there is a long-term price to be paid. Residents of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa view the efforts of Pakistan's military to stem Taliban violence as another chapter in a long history of suppressing groups that challenge the state.[38] While the Pakistani state asserted itself militarily, it also set itself up for the next political contestation, again likely to be violent. In the short term, stability has been achieved, but in the long run, it is unlikely that groups opposing the state will recognize its legitimacy if their continued experience is one of repression, therefore reducing the likelihood of recovery.

Structures of exclusion take many forms; they always help maintain the rules of how a country is run. This highlights the dilemma between stabilizing what exists and seeking reforms that benefit more people. Patronage networks that form the backbone of governance in the DRC are structured so that local political actors can extract local resources to maintain their relationship to the centre of power in Kinshasa, and not strictly to benefit their local population.[39] In Uganda, aid has created incentives to use post-war service delivery for personal gain, further fuelling distrust between citizens and their representatives even at the local level.[40] Development interventions related to governance best practice may interrupt the use of local resources as currency that maintains political relations. This is likely to be hugely destabilizing, with severe knock-on effects for local people. While stabilizing efforts might cement existing relationships, these relationships will continue to regulate or obstruct access to resources for those most in need of inclusion into markets, productive assets and education.[41]

An aberrant version of stability comes from the fact that amongst those participating in economic, political and social lives after violence will be those who were once active conflict actors.[42] The role of the military in stabilization processes is striking – shifting from being a conflict actor to being a centralized state actor who might be involved in civil administration or as a major actor in the local economy often requires only a small shift. The reinvention of the Sri Lankan army as a peace-time force signals to the northern Tamil population that the dominance of the Sri Lankan government is no longer challengeable. Systems of patronage within the dominant group are becoming entrenched and an atmosphere of fear is the post-war norm.[43] The end of war thus brings little change for many, and the role of development actors in this is not accidental.

Profound change is destabilizing. In terms of mental imagery, stabilization projects firmness, even balance – the opposite of what a risk-based approach to framing international engagement might look like. This complicated relationship with change, in which stabilization efforts must avoid tackling big issues to not end up with having

way more stabilizing to do than they bargained for, is a dilemma that the approach has yet to unpack. While small changes may look as if they are contributing to an improvement or fresh start, the price paid is potentially entrenchment of the big picture. In Pakistan, for example, while small changes to land tenure systems may be implementable, pursuing accountability for the military is not.[44] Stabilization represents adjustment, rather than revolution, and thus seems safer.

Stabilizing measures can smooth over interactions without ever reaching deep into the structures creating volatility in the first place. With much regulation happening informally and in the social space – rather than through official governance mechanisms – internationally supported stabilization efforts often operate on levels irrelevant to day-to-day interactions and the regulation of economic, social and political spaces. In Afghanistan, market prices are determined by powerful traders and their social networks, rather than by official market regulation. As a result, argue Minoia and Pain, markets never collapsed over the course of thirty years of war.[45] Yet, development actors often do not view what is most stable as being worthy of stabilization. Despite the informally regulated market being by all accounts stable (though not equitable), development efforts in Afghanistan largely focused on best-practice market regulation, for example, smoothing out supplies through providing cool storage facilities for onions, a major trading good.[46] While cool storage facilities for onions would likely permit better market regulation by ensuring a steadier supply, prices would continue to be determined by powerful economic players.[47] These social regulations are difficult to read for outsiders, who may not be able to fully grasp the meaning of networks, relationships, identity or other group-defining features.

Stabilization can thus create a vicious cycle: norms about who is allowed access are entrenched; these norms then ingrain uneven access to services as service providers live out these norms; this in turn further lodges the damaging norms and perceptions. Even pro-poor strategies after conflict have often failed to help the people at which they are aimed because existing power structures prevent people from accessing them.[48]

Overall, the imagery of stability that is so reassuring on the implementers side can be weirdly at odds with how those on the receiving end actually feel. Of course, not all consolidation of power inevitably results in a continuation of the dynamics that created violence. Philipps shows that in Somaliland, internal power struggles enabled peace and a definite shift away from a cycle of violence. A most convincing part of her argument is, however, that these dynamics developed positively because they happened without an injection of outside resources: unrecognized Somaliland did not get huge amounts of international money earmarked for stabilization efforts (nor much international engagement in any peacemaking efforts). Somaliland had to find its own way of shaping its institutions; the implicit mandate for all institutions seemed to have been from the beginning to prioritize that peace is maintained. Somalilanders achieved this with resources accessible to them, for example, through diaspora remittances.[49]

What can look fragile to outsiders – violent conflict, market regulation through personal relationships – might be experienced as entrenched, rigid or even stable on the receiving end. Conversely, stabilization may be experienced as stagnant and backwards-looking as those excluded from trickle-down improvements are likely to

observe that support for power structures or economic development continues to favour those who were already close to both.[50] Historical legacies of neo-patrimonial structures, clientelism and informal taxation as part of the official exertion of authority – for example, in eastern DRC – do not disappear because stabilization measures seek to work against them.[51] This means that for many of the most vulnerable people, stabilization efforts appear remarkably similar to the path already travelled.[52] The nature of conflict environments is that they can simultaneously be stable – with clear rules of the game – and unstable, with actors shifting their loyalties and taking advantage of opportunities. Once these shifting patterns become part of a localized culture, stabilization efforts will struggle to find the right entry point, or even be able to operate on a level that is local enough to make a difference.[53] Which is why attention turns to the more removed level: the state.

Why statebuilding is not guaranteed to be constructive

Nobody argues anymore – at least not openly – against the sentiment that context matters. While the philosophy still does not always translate into practice (where plenty of ready-made solutions continue to be on offer), the principle largely goes unchallenged. And yet, one contextual consideration for development programmes aimed at statebuilding in societies that have experienced violence is absent and this large context hole is Max Weber-shaped.

In 1919, Max Weber, a German sociologist, historian and lawyer and soon-to-become one of the world's most influential social scientists, was emerging from a number of gruelling experiences: the First World War had just ended with Germany's surrender and Weber had gathered first-hand experience as German delegate at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, where he felt assigning responsibility solely to Germany for the catastrophe of the war overlooked its complexity. The Spanish Flu pandemic was killing millions of people all over the world. Weber had recently dabbled in political office and had quickly been disillusioned by what he perceived as politicians' vanity in pursuing political careers. The German state had in Weber's lifetime morphed from the Iron Kingdom of Prussia via the German Empire (which introduced the welfare state as a way to maintain power over the working classes) to the Weimar Republic, declared with Germany's surrender in November 1918. Following the January 1919 assassinations of the socialists Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, this new Republic likely looked anything but stable. But despite so many changes in what this state looked like, the intellectual fashion did not favour much general theorizing about the *nature* of the state – what there was of the concept was considered old fashioned and the search for a workable catch-all description of the state was dismissed as futile.[54] Against this backdrop, Weber spoke about and then published his thoughts on what he considered the main characteristics of the state. This was to become the gospel of statebuilding, the three bullet points that were to find their way into thousands of programmatic documents of international development programmes in entirely different parts of the

world in an era way ahead in the future. Here are these three building blocks, in the common shorthand:

(1) A successful state holds and enforces the monopoly on violence.

(2) The state should have the capacity to deliver services considered fundamental to its population and to raise funds to do so through obligatory or voluntary taxation in return for a privilege by enabling the economic activities that allowed those funds to be created.

(3) A state is a state only if it is legitimate to the people it governs.[55]

With this set of principles, Weber became the mothership of all statebuilding efforts and, it turns out, imagery: in discussing the nature of the state, Weber indulged in mechanical metaphors, maybe offering the starting point for this long tradition in political science.[56] Weber sounded like an engineer talking about a machine, as Anter points out – leading to the well-established critique that Weber was the first prominent proponent who thought of statebuilding as a purely-technical exercise.[57]

It is unlikely that, despite his engineer's hat, Weber had imagined that his ideas would take on quite such a lively bullet point existence as they have – this was, after all, a tiny piece of his work, delivered in a speech that was deliberately a bit polemic.[58] Weber's work continues to be nuanced by generations of political theorists, for example, in the development of the notion of 'hybrid political orders', where social order is imagined as being created bottom up.[59] Legitimacy of the state is created through the extent to which people see their own needs reflected in what the state can offer (in addition to tradition or charisma). In a sense, argues Clement, the legitimacy of the state is 'grounded' in this shared understanding.[60] Clearly that points to the need to unpack the relationship between states and people, and how the process of creating legitimacy through a shared understanding works – both points come up again in later chapters.

And yet, despite offering these three gargantuanly influential and seemingly sweepingly generalizable bricks of statebuilding, Weber was anything but myopic and mechanical. His outwardly-schematic view on what a state was sat alongside his deep belief that causality was actually a fickle thing: his critical realism, summed up as the notion that the outcome of complex social processes always has several causalities, suggested what Ekström calls a 'generative view of causality'.[61] This means that understanding what works does not create a rulebook that offers instructions on how to make it work again next time, but invites a closer look at the elements at play and what it is that makes them powerful and how they might interact with each other in a future iteration.[62]

Above all, Weber thought that causality was also an expression of the power of belief: rather than being a scientific isolatable phenomenon of cause and effect, he saw causality in social processes as creating itself when a human wants to achieve a certain outcome and has a belief in how this outcome can be achieved.[63] In short, Weber was convinced that causality was created through the eye of the beholder. And he also looked at causation through a historical lens to understand what plausible relationships of causation might explain – with hindsight – what happened in a process.[64] Hindsight bias – the urge to connect disparate facts into a coherent narrative with, well, hindsight – might explain a lot about how solid and straightforward the

notions of the state appeared that Weber put forward and that became the blueprint. His own understanding of social processes was nuanced with an awareness of the many layers that go on at the same time. How could it not have been, considering the complex times in which he was living? This view made it so difficult for him to hear the arguments at the Paris Peace Conference that there was only one cause for the First World War and this single cause was Germany.

Academic social science has long wrestled with these contradictions and the usurpation of Weber's nuanced offering into the bullet points as which they are remembered. Lottholz sums up the subtle processes of continuous reinterpretation and reappropriation of Weber's thoughts towards the neo-Weberian institutionalist approach to statebuilding . . . characterized by a fixation on state capacity' with

> 'state institutions . . . seen as autonomous from their social grounding, while societal cohesion is neglected. The monopolization of violence is further taken out of its specific historical context and, in a social evolutionary logic, theorized as necessity in processes of post-conflict reconstruction. Neo-Weberian institutionalist state-building scholarship thus advocates the instantiation of peace through a monopolization of violence. In case of multiple, contesting sources of legitimacy, more stabilization policies are advocated, which leads to a securitization and militarization of state-building missions.[65]

In fact, Lottholz goes even further to suggest that Weber's own understanding of legitimate social order, as outlined in his *Sociology of Domination* sets the stage for questioning whether his own Western conceptualization of the state is applicable or appropriate in other cultures.[66]

So, in some ways, Weber's state could be interpreted as the exact opposite of a blueprint. This fits more with cases that obviously deviate. For example, Somaliland, where Phillips finds little causality between the quality of governing institutions and the level of peace – in fact, the opposite of a properly-built state was able to deliver peace in Somaliland.[67] But how the idea of the Weberian state infuses statebuilding approaches in international development in violent or fragile contexts, the three bullet points that have become shorthand for statebuilding, is a far cry from an idea that was, just like any other, deeply steeped in its context. At the time the idea was to reignite a stale intellectual debate while embracing contradictions and ambiguities from the start. These also included the usually murky processes that humans, with their imagination of causality, apply to will ideas into becoming reality or gospel.

In post-conflict statebuilding, Weber's pared-down contribution has taken on an overall definiteness that means that Weber's headspace, his unique German context, experience, frustrations, articulation and his strong interest in humans faded into the background to reveal a decisive story that was to become the undisputed statebuilders' blueprint – the one that suggested that state capacity was the key to prevention of violent confrontation through service delivery and holding the monopoly of violence. The state of the imagination of a Prussian-born man who had seen Germany's process of industrialization taking a very different path from

Britain's successful example[68] before himself succumbing to the Spanish Flu in 1920 was to shape the lens of international development efforts all the way to 2005 South Sudan and beyond. In all the emphasis on context-specificity, Weber's own is rarely mentioned.

Thinking of Weber in this contextualized way might help to put the statebuilding ideology on shakier grounds and away from construction site precision. The suggestion that the provision of services would unquestionably shape a state–society relationship in one way only would likely have sounded weirdly myopic, one-sided and disembodied to Weber. Critics of the wide application of this principle have pointed out in many variations that this perspective leaves out humans or the socially-productive characteristics of violence.[69] This is an argument with which Weber himself might have agreed, particularly because he believed in observing human behaviour over other research methods.

But things can be sticky: what remained almost unquestioned in development practice was that statebuilding – powered by its engine, capacity building, as the most important vehicle for improvement – was going to be a neat design process that treated the state as an empty mould to be filled with training and technical skills thereby, argues Denney, streamlining its functions so that every person in every corner of the state experiences them in the same way.[70] While there are many competing definitions of what exactly statebuilding is, they all share one characteristic: they couch processes of human interaction in the driest of languages such as 'endogenous process to enhance capacity, institutions and legitimacy of the state driven by state–society relations', which is the preferred definition of the Danish Foreign Ministry.[71] The lack of humans continues when statebuilding's emphasis on tackling the threats associated with FCAS by addressing longer-term developmental challenges is highlighted.[72]

Statebuilding continues to be the language of the OECD,[73] but also of the 2011 New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, which puts ownership of development processes squarely in the hands of central governments. David Cameron's image of 'the golden thread of development', discussed in Chapter 1, exemplifies how international actors at the height of the statebuilding paradigm understood their job: the golden thread suggested that all good things go together, hence improvement of welfare and building state institutions created a lived practice in which development and statebuilding became synonymous.[74] The attendant discourse drastically narrowed towards ideal notions of governance that speak to an international development paradigm.[75]

There are, occasionally, glimpses of humans in the dry statebuilding language, usually lumped together as the often-imaginary nation. This creates another problematic layer. Nation-building – defined as 'proactively claiming legitimacy and nurturing loyalty . . .' by Whaites, involves 'the fostering of a common identity among the governed' to avoid 'an ongoing risk of challenge [of the state]'.[76] A different imagery here would help: maybe the fostering of a common identity towards strengthening the possibility of challenge is in fact exactly what is needed. But who is in and who is out?

Lepore's dissection is more helpful, where

> a state is a political community, governed by laws; a nation-state is a political community, governed by laws, that, at least theoretically, unites a people who

share common origins, as if they were a family. In practice, though, a nation-state does not ordinarily unite a people who share common descent by geography and birth; instead it gathers together all sorts of people, from many different places and lines of descent, speaking different languages, attached to different traditions, and belonging to different faiths. Sometimes, when this happens, a powerful majority purges its population of minorities, by massacre, imprisonment, persecution, or deportation.[77]

So nation-building is not automatically a welcoming get-together of a newly defined enlarged family. In addition, statebuilding's record is, at best, patchy. It is not merely that statebuilding's technocratic approaches and best-practice notions modelled on an ideal state have failed to work; they have called into question the very endeavour of international development.[78] A critical part of the discourse is the need to build market-enabling institutions to stimulate economic growth – neither of which have been particularly successful or, in the case of growth, effective in creating growth that created benefits that were spread with equity in the population, rather than just benefitting the elites that supported the market-driven policies.[79] Of course, the model has come under criticism for failing to encourage sustainable economic growth and for promoting a Western-centric ideal of democracy inappropriate for many conflict-affected contexts.[80]

Because statebuilders need to start their job with those who hold power, they never arrive as neutral actors.[81] More practical challenges have also emerged. The dilemmas of working with states emerging from conflict, and with government actors that are often hostile or corrupt, are well documented. Working with state institutions lends those actors credibility, potentially glossing over their involvement in violent conflict. It also maintains a veneer of legitimacy that institutions or agreements in reality lack, thereby letting the state off the hook for – or even undermining – service delivery.[82] Because interventions are often portrayed as blank slate relationships in which upholders of universal values swoop in to shape a society that, having just emerged from violence, holds none of its own.

Statebuilding suggests mouldability and linearity, evident in the assumption that there is a linear link between service delivery, state/government legitimacy and peace holding.[83] Much to the surprise of many who had worked on the assumption that service delivery increased state legitimacy, this relationship did not turn out to exist in the ways imagined. Additionally, in cases where the state did provide a service, there was no significant difference in how recipients perceived their governments compared to cases where services were delivered by non-state providers.[84] This highlights the mismatch between Western donors' idealized version of the state and how national actors actually view the role of the state, and how their own authority shapes access to state resources.

The most prominent recipients of major statebuilding attention in recent years (South Sudan and Afghanistan) are poster children for the failure to achieve functioning states concerned with delivering adequate services to their citizens.[85] Even when direct budget support from donors is involved – as in the case of the multi-donor, Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) – holding governments to

account has not worked particularly well.[86] The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, which sought to increase country ownership and leadership of context-appropriate peace- and statebuilding, has failed to create a South Sudan that takes care of its citizens.[87]

However, at some point, the statebuilding agenda and realities on the ground entered into a staring contest, with donors afraid to blink first, lest they be forced to admit that the structures they were encountering – such as patronage and clientelism structures in Afghanistan or a state that had only patchy control over its physical territory and certainly did not hold the monopoly on violence like in South Sudan or DRC – were not yielding to statebuilding efforts.[88] The staring contest is ongoing and means that the statebuilding approach continues to be tweaked, rather than altogether reconsidered. Work on the construction ground continues, but it still seems as if there is no view of the humans that are expected to drive the diggers and caterpillars.

The problem with gap filling

A bricklayer might fill gaps through neatly-fashioned pieces of stone or filler paste. In the perspective that South Sudan was a blank slate, gap filling becomes solid operational advice. The answer to what seemed like South Sudan's justice system deficit (since laws were nowhere to be found) was – erroneously, as Isser argues – to draft laws.[89] Peacebuilding, capacity building (on which roughly a quarter of all international aid is spent each year),[90] building the economy, institution building – they all work with the image of a gap. Gap filling deeply permeates development approaches, so much so that one could be forgiven for thinking that international development pictures itself with an architectural blueprint in hand.

Capacity building has been ubiquitous in international development since the term started to be used in the 1950s. Strengthening local individual and institutional competence was imagined as an apolitical activity;[91] its goal to set a state on the path to durable peace, stability and development, while equipping local actors with the technical skills and knowledge necessary to fulfil the state's functions.[92] The imagined capacity gaps, summarizes Denney, can be material (in order to teach a state how to regulate a market, a physical market is built), bureaucratic (lack of administrative entities), or community-based (needing community self-help groups).[93] Internationally supported approaches demonstrate this perspective: the Afghanistan Compact, for example, emphasized developing the capacity of the Afghan government to become a service provider for all.[94]

The immediate post–Cold War era gave capacity building another boost, seemingly offering a way out of costly military interventions by bypassing the trend towards securitizing aid. The agendas are vast: poverty reduction, changing social dynamics to include everyone, local ownership of a development agenda,[95] sustainability and legitimacy,[96] working with existing systems, better knowledge of local cultures[97] and better use of increased aid without creating dependence.[98] The challenges of these are well known: David Cameron's notion of the golden thread that suggested that all good things go together actually meant that too many things needed to happen

simultaneously for capacity building to have an impact.[99] But too many details are impossible to implement;[100] and it is too easy to substitute, rather than build, capacity,[101] particularly when simply delivering training counts as a measurable output, without much attention paid to what people actually learned and applied afterwards.[102] This is crucial since detailed technical skills that capacity building imparts might be unimplementable in said system.[103] In practice, capacity building tends to be reduced to training and infrastructure development aimed at addressing individual capabilities and systemic shortcomings.[104]

The mental imagery that underpins capacity building summarizes the worst of it: projectized, focused on technical function above anything else, imagining the functions of a state as a collection of bureaucrats who can build a state if only they were better trained. Capacity building, being outcome-focused, is implemented without regard for whatever power relations, politics or systems are in place, meaning that it can prop up a dysfunctional system or destroy something that works, but not in the mould of the image of capacity building. Capacity building too often recreates an imbalance in power, as those who get access to it are likely to be already in the vicinity of power.[105] This has become nuanced – but the belief that statebuilding happens through capacity building is unshaken.

The more recent debate about whether statebuilding has focused too heavily on formal institution building and in doing so neglected how local informal institutions foster legitimacy and effective service delivery expresses this nuance.[106] Instead, statebuilding in the past decade has tended to prioritize top-down improvements to technical capacity and institutional capabilities, while failing to take into account local needs. By removing the mechanisms used by economic elites to collect rents, market-enabling democratic institutions can in fact disrupt the very system upholding peace.[107] Supporting learning appeared to provide a way of implementing the institution-building aspect of liberal peacebuilding; numerous scholars have criticized the state-centric Weberian lens to this approach and advocate an indigenous, bottom-up approach that empowers local actors to more effectively participate at their own pace and take control of national or local agendas.[108] While this is the right argument, it still starts from the logic of the monomyth; it just reverses the direction.

The logic of capacity building is that of the linear experience of building a house: it pursues idealized versions of what should happen. Pouring a foundation and then working on an architectural plan that first frames the structure, gives it a roof, fills up the walls – this process does not simply translate to building state capacities. The involvement of many well-trained individuals does not automatically make for a Weberian state, like it might for a house. While scholarship on capacity building has broken down the approach to its constituent elements of agent, organization and system,[109] the notion of statebuilding struggles to produce the material for the house, cannot decide on who builds or who designs it, and is oblivious to the fact that while one wall is built, another is torn down and someone might be adding a secret door. A lot of connections are missing.

The many layers of the state (a topic that has been the focus of much scholarship over the past two decades)[110] are yet to be acknowledged in these broad-brush development activities. What are the conduits an individual can use to change

ways of working in an organization? What are the connectors to the systemic level? Unpacking the constituent parts of the system into relationships, cultures and ways of working, in order to see where change might happen, is rarely done.[111] There has been no genuine shift towards an understanding that a state has multiple faces and thus many different types of capacity, and that different people experience the state in many different ways. Capacity building has a patchy track record due to its narrow focus on transferring technical skills and a simplistic understanding of how change comes about. As a result, it puts the pressure of systemic change on individuals with a very narrow technical skillset.[112] Training-based approaches to capacity building fail to focus on local relationship building or to measure success against locally-appropriate definitions of capacity. Weber's most prominent idea looms large; the Weber-shaped context hole that might help explain where the origins of the idea of state capacity came from remains.

Bricks piled one on top of the other to build the state and capacity do not automatically contribute to behaviour change.[113] In tandem with stabilization, these bricks can be toxic: by funding capacity development initiatives to strengthen governance and implementing military interventions that support local elites, donors in Afghanistan have inadvertently upheld a governmental system that corrupts subnational institutions, as the elites have consolidated their power through large-scale security infrastructure projects.[114] A different model could have been direct support to provincial governments to avoid what Denney calls the 'missing middle' of capacity development, which prioritizes central government over district or provincial government.[115] In Sierra Leone, this has put the focus on national health structures, with little support given to the district level that actually provides health services. Statebuilding has acted as a magnifying glass, counterintuitively, on the very processes it seeks to counter: it makes visible patrimonial structures and perpetuates dependency of the state on external actors (or being curtailed by external actors).[116]

In most examples, considerations of power are absent and yet it is power that brings capacity. In Afghanistan, the capacity of village elites to provide services relies on relationships with province headquarters; while in DRC, similar relationships exist between province governors and Kinshasa. However, the role of power in these situations has so far been ignored,[117] instead assuming that statebuilding can somehow bypass or reshape power. In a view influenced by Weber and ideals of a social contract, states are imagined as good and power as dirty.

Capacity does not improve with more building blocks, but rather by, as Denney argues, addressing the hardware and software of interaction – formal regulations, mechanisms and procedures (hardware), and power relations, informal institutions and social interactions (software).[118] Denney breaks capacity building down into shifts needed in who has resources, skills and knowledge, and in finding answers to questions regarding who can manage what, who holds power, and what are the incentives within the existing system.[119]

What would such a transformative approach to capacity building look like? It would need to address imbalances in very different ways. If we stay with construction site comparisons, meaningful shifts might look like this:

- An architectural competition is published. One firm on the market is powerful, experienced, well connected and tends to win these competitions – and the more they win, the better they become at both winning competitions and at delivering their projects. In old capacity-building thinking, the fact that it is an open competition makes it look as if everyone has an equal chance of winning. Some training in proposal writing and an open market engagement day might fix any differences in knowledge. To shift skills and knowledge, however, would mean an entirely different process. It might mean that the big hitter on the market would need to make their submission public before the deadline so that less established firms can review, use it as a template and counter it. Ideally, publishing the big firm's submission would be accompanied by a knowledge share on how to win contracts. Knowledge and skills transfer is only meaningful when it also transfers power.
- A building site needs to be managed. An established international management company not only has a track record of decades in business; in fact, they created the best practices they are at the forefront of leading. In old capacity building, they subcontract local firms for specific aspects of site management, but never let go of overall control. In new capacity building, the local firm gets the management contract – building its own capacity by subcontracting the international firm for specific aspects. This is the organizational shift in who can manage what.
- A large road-building project is put out for tender by a government. The deal is being sealed away from the public eye over a drink, a walk, a chat or an invitation to dinner – it goes to the person whose identity allows them access to decision-makers. In new capacity building, it is necessary to give responsibility for implementing projects to unknown quantities who might empower other networks. This speaks to the question of who can get what, based on their political power.
- An elected official uses the road from the city centre to the airport several times a week. It is a terrible road, just as bad as the one that leads to the villages in her constituency. In old capacity building, the pressure would be put on the elected official to visit her constituency often because of a sense of duty. In new capacity building, incentives are shifted: a renewal of the airport road is coupled with a renewal of the constituency road so that the power holder who will use the airport road several times a month feels more inclined to support the village.
- And redistributing resources? This one is the clearest and also the hardest: it just means taking bricks from one builder who has many and handing them to another who has few, without replacing the first builder's bricks.

While these shifts sound naive – even cute – they simply take the construction ground imagery and the capacity-building logic (neither of which are widely judged as cute) to their next step. They openly acknowledge that building capacity means to transfer power, the crucial aspect that makes stabilization such a potentially-treacherous undertaking (but who this power is transferred to is another question). The neo-Weberian emphasis on institution building never quite acknowledged this – a point

that is most obviously made when looking at what most capacity-building efforts actually target.

Strengthening institutions in times between war and peace means bestowing power. This might seem harmless when the image that capacity building conjures up is that of a ministry civil servant being offered IT training or a faith-based civil society group receiving grant-writing training. The image is less benign when what is being built is coercive capacity. For those at the receiving end, the effect of statebuilding might simply mean being taxed in the name of the state, but how to get access to services or benefit from better governance and more equitable institutions remains opaque.[120]

These dilemmas are even starker when the image of the generic civil servant being capacity built is replaced with the image of a soldier.

For many people emerging from episodes of violence, security is the most important service their government can deliver (even though the government might be a provider of insecurity, too). In fact, maybe security is the most import service anyone can deliver, but it is particularly complicated. It is also the most political, as it requires addressing military power, which in most cases is at the heart of the violence that occurred. Yet, this importance is rarely matched by the level of determination shown by donors regarding the provision of physical security. Security is rarely treated by international actors as a basic service,[121] despite it being the service that civilians usually crave most. As such, prioritization should be given to the ways in which it might work, such as, as Timilsina argues, through supply of peacekeepers, withdrawal of foreign troops and disarmament.[122] Ironically, capacity building in the security sector tends to be approached with the least commitment to delivery (how to make it better right now) and the biggest commitment to systems change (reform the security sector).

South Sudan has experienced a huge amount of security sector reform capacity building, with the former armed rebels and now South Sudanese army, the SPLA, a focus of numerous rounds of security sector reform efforts. In the imagination of the statebuilders, this was akin to creating a professional army from scratch. It seemed obvious that this was necessary: the state needed a way to enforce its monopoly on violence and security is a service that expresses state capacity. Secure citizens will feel that the state giving them such security is legitimate. Easy and obvious, based on Weber's (very abbreviated) playbook.

Books, reports and evaluations have been written on how this particular security sector reform through capacity building worked out.[123] But it is best summed up through the words of a South Sudanese academic, who evoked the violent history of the SPLA towards civilians when he said in 2019:

> When I heard that the Americans were building the capacity of the SPLA, I was shocked. Really, the SPLA is not an army you can build capacity. We know what they did in Bor in 1991.[124] And in 2013, what did they use that capacity for?[125] I always ask Americans how they feel about the capacity. If you read the history of South Sudan, you know that there are really nasty people.[126]

The image of soldiers who had been in capacity-building sessions, walking down the streets of South Sudan's capital in late 2013 to pull people out of their houses and kill

them on the basis of their ethnic identity in the name of the state and of government is one that needs to become centre stage when thinking about what in current approaches is being stabilized and built. It is a peace that isn't: in Sri Lanka, those who were displaced by the army have seen that same army return to help them with their resettlement, thereby contributing to their peace is experience as an environment that is hostile.[127] A 2014 African Union report on the atrocities in South Sudan also offers the assessment that 'those involved in state-building – perhaps overwhelmed by how much was required to be accomplished to establish a semblance of a functioning state – appear to have taken on too much at once'.[128] The overall assessment of statebuilding efforts echoes what by now might sound familiar:

> There appears to be the dominant approach in international state-building initiatives that focus on the technical, in the sense that there is a tendency to ignore the politics, and are invariably ahistorical, international partners have not resisted the urge to import designs that are deemed to have worked elsewhere, for the most part ignoring local context.[129]

Violent conflict and capacity building at the state level have a much more complicated relationship than is left visible by the transformation of Weber's ideas of state, social processes, legitimacy and causality into three bullet points against which bricks can be stacked to build the state.[130] In fact, argue Jackson and Minoia, the images of building and linear processes can become a liability.[131] The appealing notion of bricks contributes to the limited language available to describe the processes at play – unpacking these processes into Denney's images of hardware and software is already a big step towards nuance. In Afghanistan, for example, this applies to the lack of analytical categories that capture the social nature of the economy, and the way that identity and social norms become gatekeepers of economic opportunity – for instance, by not allowing women to participate in the economy in the same way as men. While the notion of a defined path is unhelpful, finding an alternative approach remains immensely challenging, as there is no clear alternative road to take once the failure of statebuilding is admitted.[132]

The reasons behind this poor record are rooted in the limited imagination underpinning statebuilding, and how this shapes the actions of international development. The most basic problem with the state construction mental model is that the application of this model rarely happens in what Eriksen calls state-centred societies: societies where states hold material and symbolic resources.[133] How the state is imagined in this approach simply does not reflect citizens' experience of it – although it does reflect a lot of how Weber experienced the German Empire, its violence and its move to provide social welfare to citizens. Hence, even if state capacity is built, many citizens are unable to engage with it, as it is based around ideas of state structures that are alien to them.

Then there is the challenge of creating state institutions where no nations exist, so the starting point of even a benevolent institution will look comforting to some, alien to others. Lepore reminds us that

nations, to make sense of themselves, need some kind of agreed-upon past. They can get it from scholars or they can get it from demagogues, but get it they will. The endurance of nationalism proves that there's never any shortage of fiends and frauds willing to prop up people's sense of themselves and their destiny with a tissue of myths and prophecies, prejudices and hatreds, or to pour out the contents of old rubbish bags full of festering incitements, resentments, and calls to violence.[134]

While statebuilding and nation-building are treated definitionally as separate paths to walk on,[135] this separation has created unhelpful mental imagery. It suggests that one – the institutional part – can happen to then be filled with meaning by the other one – the nation. Once the buildings of the state are erected, then the nation can come in and fill them with meaning. If, however, the construction was done without consideration of the people, those impressive statehouses will just fall to the meaning that people with power give them. Pushed over, one by one, like a row of small domino pieces, each one its own house of cards (Figure 2).

The gulf between the lived experience of the state and the notion of the state working in the best interests of all its citizens is deep because statebuilding starts from the misleading assumption that even in post-conflict situations, the state is a public good, that it provides equal citizenship to all, and therefore its role as a public good needs refining and strengthening. State and society, in the ideal version, are counterweights on a balanced scale.[136] That means that strong states need strong societies.[137] If war or

Figure 2 The house of cards of statebuilding. Image by Olivier Ploux

history means that there is one without the other, then stabilization efforts start by tipping the balance. Bringing the scales back to equilibrium will be infinitely harder, if not impossible. For Acemoglu and Robinson, the starting point determines what is possible and without trust, achieving a balanced state is impossible.[138] Perhaps a more appropriate starting point is that for a state to become a public good, it must be taken away from the networks that have taken ownership of it, or their ownership must be accompanied by some beneficial externalities.[139] However, there are many examples where these networks – for example, in Somaliland – deliver services in return for propping up the public purse with loans rather than taxes, high protectionism and the limiting of foreign firms in return. While this 'hybrid political order' of public and private actors may prevent the state from becoming a public good, it has also been integral in keeping the peace.[140] Shifting the assumption towards one where the state is not necessarily a public good radically alters the level of ambition of statebuilding.

A more helpful understanding of the state might be that the state is not an existing entity,[141] but an effect of how its actions are experienced on the receiving end. This means the practical norms of everyday life become the state, rather than the state attempting to impose norms.[142] In DRC's mining sector, for example, the law is not strong enough to govern the sector. This allows civil servants to use access to the service for corruption, argues Iguma Wakenge, and private sector actors to act without acknowledging the state's existence.[143] There is no state being built, and yet the nature of the Congolese state is very much shaped by these practices.

Afghanistan is a prime example of the difficulty of changing incentives in order to prevent actors from exploiting networks and resources, for example, through relationships with foreign actors that bring aid or military resources.[144] Institutions here are *expressions* of power rather than means of equitably regulating power and, argues Jackson, such power is then exercised to utilize state resources for further gain, for example, by charging for basic services.[145] The degree to which those outside the network experience this as unfair, predatory or crippling to everyday life determines whether such exclusion results in tough existences or violent insurgency. In Nepal's Terai, for example, when certain communities experienced the state as unfair, it resulted in Maoist conflict.[146]

The challenge here could be described as what behavioural scientists call loss aversion – in this case, loss aversion of the power-holding elites – rather than being an issue of capacity: it is much more difficult for humans to let go of something they have than to never have it in the first place.[147] However, shifting the interpretation towards loss aversion by elites requires development actors to acknowledge that the state and its institutions are often better understood as networks, rather than impersonalized and impartial systems. Even capacity is personal – in DRC, for example, the extent to which a province is able to govern is often linked to the capacity of governors to negotiate relationships with patrons and clients. While existing infrastructure, the history of a province, or mineral resources can also contribute to the effectiveness of a province, the personal network is crucial.[148]

A state thus cannot be built from scratch. In the relationship between the state and those it governs, everyone continuously rummages to understand the limits and possibilities of what governance offers. That is why Hagmann talks of negotiated

statehood – the process of continuous negotiation that creates and recreates state-society relationships.[149] Englebert and Tull see the key to successful statebuilding efforts in Africa in support to making such bargaining constructive, rather than in support to building institutions.[150] Moore spells out the circular nature of creating institutions, with regularization being the moment in which rules are produced (usually by those with power) to give some predictability to social realities and situational adjustment. It means that those very rules are stretched or exploited by those who are able to because they come to a situation with the power to do it. Both processes work with power, they keep pollinating each other and manifest in a permanent building and breaking down of rules.[151] Power is both political and economic and political power translates into economic power, which in turn increases political power.[152] This is a far cry from the reassuring image of the brick-by-brick building of a state.

Conclusion: Walking in Max Weber's shoes on unstable ground

If Max Weber had been in South Sudan in the heydays of pre-independence statebuilding, what would he have suggested? Would he have looked at the SPLA and said: they have the monopoly of power. My first box is ticked! He might have been most intrigued by the widespread adoration for the SPLA at that point – in other words, their legitimacy – solely based on their legacy as freedom fighters and thus a wonderful example of the social, rather than transactional, creation of legitimacy. His explanation of charisma as the source of legitimacy would have been ample.

But even that might be a stretch for someone who believed that everything has multiple causes. He might have enjoyed the mental gymnastics that statebuilding requires to reconcile two activities that are fundamentally at odds with each other, as Eriksen argues. Eriksen's point is that statebuilding galvanizes the narrative of the state-centred society while, through statebuilding efforts and a certain hubris about just how much they might be able to achieve, achieving such a society becomes impossible.[153] But Weber might have struggled to find the acrobats amongst the statebuilders who were engaging in those gymnastics. His engineer mind, on the other hand, might have been delighted to see the many workplans being drafted onto the imagined blank slate of South Sudan.

While images of stability and building make for comforting work plans, they cannot deliver on what they promise. Stabilization and statebuilding according to three bullet points cannot capture what states emerging from conflict are: relationships and networks with histories that are cycling through consolidation, creation and adjustment. As a state develops (or continues to be built), competition between its institutions over resources and power will grow.[154] Efforts to strengthen such institutions through statebuilding are likely to contribute to this competition, creating a last-order panic, with groups seeking to maintain control.

However, the construction site imagery is more than just misleading, it is actively damaging. The sense of linearity implied by building discourages creative

context-driven engagement, limiting both practice and imagination. In many programme planning sessions, thinking that is a bit too creative is roped back in with the dreaded Monday morning question. The image of the brick suggests that a construction site approach to social change will work, and that a simple technical solution is available to deal with complex political and social problems. If, in the space of lives amid violence, development practitioners persist with stabilizing and building, strengthening the contradictory forces at play, there is little reason to think development outcomes will improve. A knock-on effect for development practice is that programmes can be too easily myopic, seeking to implement change that is quantifiable. While technical and countable indicators can be measured, recording an improvement in relationships is much more difficult. This technical lens obscures the fact that the underpinning notions of progress are not value-neutral, but political.[155]

More strikingly, along the way, they also do not create a constructive experience for those whose lives have been shaped by violence. South Sudan in the early twenty-first century is instructive here. While the international community was busy building and stabilizing, those who held power during the war used the statebuilding years to consolidate their ownership over state structures, including the security sector. Meanwhile, the experience for the vast majority of South Sudanese was that of being excluded from improvement, as they had no way of taking part in the transactions that form the foundation of current development approaches. And worse: the grief of just how damaging international blank slate capacity-building efforts of the army were was ringing through the words of the South Sudanese academic quoted earlier, who continued to say:

> I think many people thought we are a young country and we don't know what we are doing. But really, we have never been a young country. The [statebuilders] knew what they were doing [in supporting the SPLA]. It is shocking that some people simply really don't read things. If you are running a very busy office, you don't have time to read history. So people in the humanitarian agencies, they just think 'I'm delivering here and there', and you don't look back, 'who are the people I'm supporting.' And I now see the same thing: I saw a UNDP report that 70% of people feel secure. And I said, oh now we are going back to the fragility report of 2013 when they said that South Sudan is heading in the right direction.[156] I don't feel secure here. I live here. By 6pm, I have to cross the road and be home with army around here.[157]

It is impossible to think of one image that captures all the many things that these words express – the one image that would give a cognitive crutch to more easily tell the story of international development in violent settings. And yet, even Max Weber who could be so nuanced on causality liked the notion of the engineer. So, if the imagery of building is so disproportionately helpful in providing reassuring terminology, then perhaps it can be used constructively in other ways to illustrate how solid existing structures can be, and how difficult it is to tear down walls that have been erected to exclude some while ensuring those in power continue to benefit. Such imagery serves as a useful reminder that, as Jackson writes, 'investing in institutions makes little sense

if these institutions are largely expressions of closed systems of access'.[158] A functional approach to understanding governance capacity is to examine an institution's ability to deliver on shared societal values.[159] How to determine who gets to decide what these shared values are, however, is a complicated process.

If necessary, maybe there is a simple counter when the building imagery comes up: I would like to offer up, as a conversational tool, the process that architects call a 3D visualization. A 3D visualization is a planning sketch that takes into account the purpose of a project while also incorporating local-planning constraints and how a project fits into the existing surroundings. A 3D visualization is not an image of a building – it is the building as it fits into its context. What exactly does this slight difference offer us? An orthodox neo-Weberian institutional building plan would, for example, seek to neutralize patronage systems, as they are seen as not fitting the bullet point summary of stately qualities (although if the real Max Weber, please, stood up, he might have had something more nuanced to say about this). This is likely doomed to fail.

In the case of DRC, for example, working against the grain of the patronage system that exists at the heart of the country's rapid administrative fragmentation is, as Jené and Englebert argue, unrealistic and unimplementable. Using a 3D visualization image means letting go of statebuilding notions of blueprint ideal institutions. A 3D visualization would put these efforts into the context of what local requirements and needs are, evaluating if, as Jené and Englebert propose, direct funding could be provided to decentralized authorities in order to reduce the need for patronage, rather than making the end of patronage a pre-condition for such direct aid.[160] A 3D visualization means to lift your head and look around. It is simply impossible to imagine that a pre-independence statebuilder working in South Sudan could have concluded that 'everything has to be built from scratch' after even hastily taking a look.

Now, it is indeed the case that what is offered here is a critique of two broad approaches in post-conflict development. There will be specific parts of both stabilization and statebuilding that make a situation better for the people, no doubt. And there is always the point to be made that processes of statebuilding take time – not months or years, but decades or even centuries of time. That is true. It also makes it even more important to question if the mental imagery underpinning work that might last decades (and through generations of development practitioners) does the task justice. The problem is: if something starts with being reduced to simplicity, to one technical image, then judging the outcome simply and categorically becomes very attractive. Bricks and foundations. No humans mentioned anywhere. Three bullet points that were used to forget that the point is to make people's lives better.

Money can't move a ton of bricks

The real currency of economic life

You are driving on a road and are coming to a fork. The road splits into two: one a major motorway and the other a slightly smaller service road. After the fork, the service road continues to trail the motorway in a straight line as far as the eye can see. These two parallel roads are in a country called Conflict Affected. Not many detailed maps exist of Conflict Affected, but it is known that this fork is located not far from the border, which means that the one road splits into two not far from where the country begins.

The roads have names, too: the major motorway is Stabilization/Statebuilding Highway, the service road is Economic Development Lane. And, as the map shows, once the two roads have split, Economic Development Lane stays largely in the shadow of Stabilization/Statebuilding Highway, almost as if it is unable to find its own way. When Stabilization/Statebuilding Highway develops a pothole, Economic Development Lane can help out. Together, these roads offer something very tempting for travel in Conflict Affected: a clear direction.

The clear direction is reassuring amongst all the complexities of lives amid violence. Travelling alongside statebuilding and stabilization, there exists a third promise of solution: economic well-being. People need to have the means to eat enough, to live healthily, to get an education, to have the time to care for their families, to talk to their friends, to nourish their communities, to enjoy and care for nature, as well as to create or revel in music, art, reading, worship or whatever else feeds their soul. Economic hardship makes all of that much more difficult or impossible – and more. Poverty and the struggle for a livelihood are cruel constraints in every moment of every day, for individuals, for communities, for the planet. Not having enough to live on today and not knowing whether you will tomorrow is both a symptom and a cause of inequality and inequity: being poor gives you the worst starting point for getting out of poverty.

Alleviating poverty is necessary. Everyone's opportunity to have a decent, non-precarious, non-exploitative and sustainable livelihood is a non-negotiable goal. How to do this, though, continues to be the central question of societies in general and in international development in particular. Livelihood questions tend to sit with economic advisers, so economic policies to pursue some sort of economic growth tend to be the approach. But the question how to really achieve equality and equity and a

decent livelihood for all has thus far an incomplete answer. This chapter, unfortunately, also does not give the step-by-step breakdown of how to do it. But it offers a couple of reasons for why creating decent livelihoods has been so difficult in conflict-affected settings.

Statebuilding and economic development share the assumption that a priority is to get the structures right and all else will follow. Both approaches and the theories that carry them are deeply rooted in the psyche of the international development industry. The mental – and practical – model of economic development has long focused on what the OECD calls the '"supply side" of the economy – attempting to ensure that economic conditions such as infrastructure provision, competition and regulatory policy, and the education and incentives of the labour force, are supportive of private sector investment and growth'.[1]

With a supply side that is immaculate (as fresh as paint), it is assumed, that it drips – trickles down – to become poverty reduction. Also assumed is that investment will happen as long as there is competitive access to labour and capital markets and, therefore, prices. Because the paths of stabilization/statebuilding and supply side economic development intersect, they reinvigorate each other's philosophy that putting structures in place will order all the pieces in the right way. The two roads lead in the same direction, each supportive of the other.

Both roads offer comforting mental maps, so comforting in fact that they touch almost all types of development programmes in some way or another, even programmes that are not about statebuilding or economic development. That is why something as complex as participation or inclusion becomes a line graph showing that the amount of people who have participated is growing; why setting up an office is often a first requirement to get funding for working on changing people's minds about social norms; and why the success of peacebuilding is presented as an Excel table that shows the number of attendants at a meeting. Building structures, road-mapping a project (with milestones), measuring impact, counting progress (which has to clearly show that something is growing to be considered progress) – all of these elements are common development parlance, even for projects that seek to support the most complex, challenging and delicate social changes. But what is the origin of these maps that are so rooted in the traditional statebuilding and economic development thinking? Ironically, the vast amount of post-conflict programming that starts from the fork in the road uses mental models that many development economists themselves no longer occupy. These are the development economists that grapple with what exactly their mental identity is, because it is not clear from what is written on the tin.

A double surname suggests that each name is taken from one parent. Normally, this creates a merged harmonious identity – except in the case of the double name Development Economics. The linear presentation of this double surname belies the power struggle between the two parental identities underneath. On the days when Economics sets the dinner table, the dinner guests are Growth, GDP, Line Graph and Neoliberalism; all sitting on stiff-backed chairs. When Development is hosting, the bean bags are out to welcome Sociology, Anthropology and Political Science; all lounging about and sometimes even crawling over each other.

The two parts of the identity grapple with how neoclassical economic thinking and the much broader definition of development need to interact. This tension became very visible in the evolution of how the global community articulated its own goals of human well-being. In 2000, throwing a party in honour of the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) would have required a generously-sized dinner table. With their slender definitions, all MDGs could comfortably fit around that table: eight goals, twenty-one targets and sixty-three indicators. Fifteen years later, a hosted brunch for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) required at least a couple of decently-sized marquees to accommodate the bulk of the ambitions and the more detailed articulation of global problems that have become the SDGs: 17 goals, 169 targets and 232 indicators.[2] Problems had always been complex, but the complexity had just become much more visible.

Gunasekara unpacks how complex the reality of making a living in post-war Sri Lanka (and elsewhere) is, writing about people's

> seemingly endless struggle to secure livelihoods and move on with their lives after conflict while positioned along inimical economic, political, social and cultural fault lines. These fault lines operate not only at the level of gender, class, caste, and ethnicity, but also in relation to capital and labour, market and the state, and centre and periphery.[3]

Confined theories of economic growth that equate growth with poverty reduction cannot capture such detail. And while that is true, it is not the main point of this chapter.

The main point is to lay out how limiting the mental imagery is that underpins development approaches, particularly in violence-affected situations. And just how much a particular model of thinking about economic development continues to be weirdly myopic about the humans that are the economy. This is not an ignorant dismissal of the many economists working on supporting livelihoods with innovative ideas and patient long-term strategies on how to harmonize livelihood interventions with existing market systems, or on how to strengthen value chains within their specific political economies. It is not a dismissal of an economic structural transformation that grapples with change in activities, employment and the need to use fewer resources to support more people.

But something often happens to economic development policies specifically in situations of violence: inspiration and courage disappear. Because Economic Development Lane first intersects with Stabilization/Statebuilding Highway, economic thought becomes glued to the imagery of bricks and mortar, the allure of straight lines and blueprints. The result is that in situations where the state is diagnosed as needing construction, inspired and thoughtful economic programmes are replaced by those that lean in to the blunter ideologies of structures, rules and capitalism.

Just like Weber's ideas about the state suggest a clear roadmap towards getting to the state when reduced to three bullet points, mental models of conflict-affected development heavily feature statebuilding and the linear clarity of economic growth. And just like Weber's legacy is – unbeknown to him who believed in multi-causality – to suggest such clarity, the idea of straightforward economic growth as a solution to a multitude of problems is incredibly powerful.

The mental imagery of linear growth

Some images about lives amid violence are incredibly stubborn. Take the question of whether scarcity or sociopolitical marginalization is what causes wars. In conflict studies, the question of whether economic hardship (which in that debate gets the shorthand 'greed') or identity-based deprivation ('grievance', for short) sums up the motivation for armed violence has been a major point of contention amongst scholars of armed conflict since the 2000s.[4] Despite a fierce, often emotional and often nuanced debate, economic development approaches are generally still stubbornly rooted in the notion that violence comes from economic inequality – greed – and thus economic hardship is the major factor in recreating the conditions for violence.

Travelling alongside Stabilization/Statebuilding Highway, Economic Development Lane thus prioritizes economic activity above all else, often overlooking the finer questions on what makes livelihoods sustainable or what combination of economic and social change makes communities resilient against violent conflict.[5] Yet, economics' oversized presence is testament to its relevance and to the strength of the ideology that underpins it, or, as Girvan phrases it, the fact that the neoliberal paradigm is equated with universal knowledge makes it extremely challenging to even slightly question neoclassic economic development thinking or the ideas of development economics that emerged in the 1950s.[6] In fact, the way economic development is imagined in conflict settings can be a bit retro: it is reminiscent of how in the 1960s, development was imagined as a result of infrastructure building. The 1990s saw an emphasis on knowledge and productivity, which are two terms that rarely emerge in economic development programmes aimed at conflict contexts.

Now, there is a point to be made about economic growth that is needed that can sit alongside a critique of capitalism: quality growth – meaning growth that emphasizes distribution over sheer GDP numbers and that handles the planet's resources sustainably – is still necessary to tackle poverty. But quality growth is not the story that is overpowering in securing livelihoods amid violence: despite all known complications of situations of violence, lack of attention to detail is just an expression of the assumption that there is a road to recovery, maybe even one that just needs restoration, rather than building.[7]

What is this supposed universal knowledge? Although, just as a hint, there was an earlier quote about how claiming universality shows off one's own bounds, but there is – undisputed in its existence – neoclassical economics. In the history of development economics, neoclassical economics moved away from the classical focus on production, expansion and contraction towards an interest in modelling the expected economic behaviour of an individual in an environment of supply and demand.

Neoclassical economic theory has a number of axioms with which its main goal, growth, is pursued. These are that in an environment of free competition, free entry and exit, it costs very little to participate, which allows the rational pursuit of maximum self-interest by an individual. This, in turns, leads to maximum social welfare. No agent has power, which means all are price takers (in fact, power, as ever is conspicuously absent). Low-cost transactions work best in a market that protects

property rights, but minimizes regulation to freely follow a demand and supply logic. There is perfect information, so no uncertainty exists. Time is imagined to be a logical, calculable element of the human experience. An individual's economic life is improved by access to resources as this increases productive means. It is also taken as given that these resources are distributed from the start and that income distribution will follow from this. While it is recognized that even under ideal circumstances, many of these theoretical ideal types of economic development are difficult to achieve, this remains largely unaddressed in the neoclassical logic. Beyond the assumption of perfect information, neoclassical economics takes limited interest in, for example, transaction costs (with Douglass North's research on transaction cost being the exception that proves the rule) or externalities resulting from processes such as war.

War and violence are about as far away from ideal circumstances as possible. In economic parlance, violence is a hindrance to productive lives for a number of reasons. Violence changes or stops access to resources for individuals, decreasing productivity. Violence destroys public and private assets and limits market transaction, thereby reducing productive capacity and decreasing the ability to generate income.[8] Markets shrink because of interrupted or changed supply chains and because the cost of doing business rises and with that the cost of living: in Pakistan, for instance, Indian-imported vegetables filled a gap during the height of violence between the Taliban and the Pakistani Army in Swat and Lower Dir Districts from 2007 to 2009, but Indian vegetables were a lot more expensive, so what people could afford to eat changed.[9] Violent conflict tends to strengthen the informal economy, most notably because taxes cannot be collected and are thus effectively reduced.[10] Violent conflict can also be a reason for extreme poverty, as particularly subsistence production is extremely disrupted.

From the point of view of neoclassical economics, the instability that violent conflict can bring is also a pesky disincentive to private sector investment, which is considered crucial for economic development.[11] Peace, in that vein of thinking, is not a goal in itself: it is a platform required for investment needed for capital to be invested where it promises the largest return. Humans, in this way of thinking, become less productive when violence interferes. They are less human capital (maybe even more human liability) because human capital – the skills, knowledge and capacity seen as literally embodied in people – will be wasted on unproductive or even destructive purposes hindering growth.

The emphasis on capital is important because, simplistically, support for economic growth in conflict-affected settings tends to consist of support for private enterprise; a state that keeps out of private enterprise and offers limited regulatory interferences; a free, borderless and self-regulating market. The aim is to see the economies grow, measured on common aspects such as productive output, otherwise known as GDP. What unites development approaches in places as diverse as Sri Lanka to Sierra Leone is the growth paradigm: the ambition to restore or build economic activity as the major building block for recovery. The portfolio of programmes reflects this: support in FCAS often prioritizes economic development, particularly job creation, reviving markets, boosting productivity and supporting small- and medium-sized

enterprises. The growth paradigm regards obstacles to growth as rooted in the absence or malfunctioning of markets.

It is a reassuring paradigm, augmenting the feel-good factors of the yellow brick road, the bricks and mortar of statebuilding and stabilization, and setting in motion the wheels of transactions on the open road of economic development, the highway to wealth. The imagery of growth fits right in there, as Hickel argues: 'It's a powerful metaphor that's rooted deeply in our understanding of natural processes: children grow, crops grow . . . and so too the economy should grow.'[12] Economic Development Lane alongside Stabilization/Statebuilding Highway follows mainstream neoclassical economic and often neoliberal principles that support the idea that economic growth trickles down and manifests itself as improved economic lives for all.

Trickle . . . what?

In the late 1970s, Sri Lanka's young Sinhala found it a lot easier than their Tamil peers to get a job.[13] Getting a job had become a matter of survival since Sri Lanka's economy was changing: the state had cut its welfare spending and was pivoting towards economic policies that were supposed to enable benefits of economic growth to trickle down to everyone. At first the promise of economic growth stalled dissent about the changes. Meanwhile at the top of the chain, those with good connections were able to reshape how state resources were used: incoming external aid allowed patronage networks to mediate who had access to state resources and who did not.[14] Those patronage networks tended to be Sinhala; thus, the jobs (the access to resources) did not go to Tamils. The market – ideologically imagined as free, growing, powerful, offering development to all – became ethnicized through practical policy; the trickling tap was turned off for those who were not part of one ethnicity. War between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) against a Sinhala-dominated state started in 1983. Since it ended in 2009, Sri Lanka's post-war GDP growth has been strong. But the trickle-down tap, it turns out, is still turned off.

GDP as a measure for economic welfare of citizens comes with all kinds of health warnings. For starters, it is an invention with a patchy history, as Criado Perez argues, rooted in gender stereotypes of the 1940s that dictated that unpaid housework was not productivity worth measuring.[15] The lack of importance seemed evident from the fact that there was no data available to measure unpaid household work, hence it could not be that important. GDP was also geared towards understanding what would best suit the war economy of major Western forces in the Second World War to offer a way to compare quantitative metrics.[16] It is a measurement informed by politics and ideologies, made to look like an objective assessment, that continues to accompany us because the ideas and mental models that underpin it are so ingrained and convincing. It also has technical challenges regarding the choice of its indicators and context-specificity, failing to capture much of the economic activity that goes on in the first place, and then spreading out national income as an average to each person in a country, obscuring unequal distribution.[17] In situations of war and violence, GDP in richer economies increases as more is produced via state intervention because

government spending and public investment shoot up to fuel the military and to organize production. Even post-war reconstruction should boost GDP. But none of this can tell us much about how households and individuals are faring. What it does, however, is help the treasuries in the donor countries, who need to account for the public money spent on aid. Accounting through GDP and reporting back on employment numbers is a lot easier than looking behind the veneer of what, if anything, these mean for ordinary people.

GDP's staying power is even more baffling when looking at the scaffolding on which it depends: data. Particularly in countries where formal market processes have not evolved strongly because either tradition or violence have shaped the economy towards the informal economy, the data underpinning GDP is to be treated with great caution.[18] But possibly the most perplexing aspect of all is that GDP pays little attention to the relationship between its tracked measures and the many other social factors that make up economic interactions and thus shape the economy.[19]

The thinking that once created the idea of GPD permeates how particular programmes designed to support economic development are imagined: because of donor accountability to their taxpayers, they tend to use the simplest of measures, such as what infrastructure has been built, what seeds were distributed or how many farmers were trained.[20] Every now and then, programmes allow themselves a cognitive break which makes room for longer causality chains such as this one: job creation is the holy grail of many economic development policies particularly in violence-affected settings, assumed to create stable livelihoods, thereby leaving less reason to resort to violence and ensuring better state–society relationships.[21] Getting everyone into gainful employment (of the kind that is then measured in GDP) is a priority. Without economic growth, there are no jobs, so emphasizing economic growth seems sensible (although, strictly speaking, in most economic growth models the implied causality is that better labour allocation will lead to growth). Yet, in the way the logic is playing out, economic growth has to come first as it will create jobs.

The DRC's economy is one of amazing success: national and international statistics suggested significant poverty reduction thanks to unprecedented post-conflict growth of 3–4 per cent in GDP per capita a year over ten years from 2004 to 2013.[22] This, surely, was the peace dividend. But who was this dividend paid to? Who benefitted in this vast country that, when superimposed on a map of Europe, stretches from Poland's border with Belarus to where France turns into Spain, and that in the other direction encompasses the distance from the Black Sea to the North Sea – and that is home to probably somewhere around ninety million people? Not too many of those ever got to hear of a peace dividend. Even per-capita growth says nothing about income distribution. So despite such growth, the percentage of people in poverty increased from 72 per cent to 81 per cent. Staggering post-conflict poverty (and malnutrition) exists in parallel with unprecedented post-conflict growth. What the GDP measure does not show is that the benefits of this growth are confined to the little dot on the map of DRC that is the capital Kinshasa (which in itself, however, covers an area about the size of Lebanon).[23]

And where were the jobs? If economic growth is the measure of development, then how the population experiences who the winners and losers are of this growth

is the crucial consideration. This question is not only relevant for DRC: support for Afghanistan's economic development did also not take into account how it would create equitable employment.[24] GDP growth did not translate to more or better employment opportunities, or to an equitable spread of wealth.[25] Uganda's impressive economic growth, pushed by aggressive neoliberalism, has created some winners and trapped many, many more people in poverty.[26] Sri Lanka's GDP growth still, after all this time, has not created jobs in an equitable way, instead concentrating wealth in the hands of relatively few people and leaving the majority struggling for a decent living.[27]

South Sudan was classified as a lower-middle-income country in 2010 based on its oil wealth (and due to experiencing a frenzy of foreign support in the lead-up to the independence referendum).[28] When the country turned off its oil production in 2011 in a stand-off over pipelines with Sudan, South Sudan's economy crashed in ways that were unprecedented, leading economic advisers to try to get answers to the question what happens to a country that has no credit, no money and hyper-inflation. It was a frightening chaos. And yet, most South Sudanese noticed neither South Sudan's ascent to lower-middle-income status nor its abrupt departure from this status and drop back to lower income: none of the economic growth had ever trickled down in the first place – neither as improved services, improved monopoly of violence by the state, nor improved personal economic situations. There was little to lose for ordinary people who had gained nothing. Very few South Sudanese had even become part of the cash economy that the rapid development the country was undergoing had brought. Cash continues to be – for many people in many different situations – out of reach, particularly if they are used to simply eating the food that they themselves grow.[29]

GDP is really not very good at measuring economic welfare because after all it is an accounting system. Growth without any attention to distribution is pointless in this regard. Even an inquisitive and generous journey spanning vast territories with many countries of different experiences (maybe also traversing time to see if it will bring the answer) can only end up with one conclusion: within the economic paradigm that uses GDP as a measure, the self-regulated trickle that brings benefits to all is nowhere to be spotted. This has not gone unnoticed and there is no shortage of old and new critique and criticism of GDP as the dominant measure. Philipsen calls GDP's emphasis on transactions and valorizing when there is more of something – anything, any increase in count – 'stupid growth'.[30] Since this echoes criticism of the economic growth way of thinking, it might be useful to think of the two as inseparable: the transactional economic growth mental model.

Criticism of the economic growth paradigm is also plentiful, particularly when it is imagined as, as Raworth phrases it, 'a panacea for many social, economic and political ailments: as a cure for public debt and trade imbalances, a key to national security, a means to defuse class struggle, and a route to tackling poverty without facing the politically-charged issue of redistribution.'[31] Redistribution, however, is not a workable suggestion on its own: it needs to be clear that there needs to be enough to redistribute (i.e. through sustainable growth for those countries that do not have enough and through an emphasis on income, rather than assets), and the rules of it: pre-distribution, that is the state preventing crass inequality in the first place, might be a better theoretical model to deal with the issues of how power holders in

conflict-affected situations use their situation to accumulate even more, but still faces the challenge that developing economies might not have enough to distribute and that redistribution of income has traditionally been an afterthought in the standard capitalist growth model. Piketty has made it a beforethought, arguing that inequality is baked into neoclassical economics; it is a structural outcome of free markets which can only be corrected by redistribution.[32]

Pushing the need for redistribution sits uncomfortably with mental models of capitalism, which as Hickel points out, 'requires elite accumulation: piling up excess wealth for large-scale investment'.[33] The capitalist perspective thus supports the governance and elite dominance that the ideals of development – inclusion, leave no one behind, support the most vulnerable – want to counter, ironically often through capitalist approaches (including those that bring emotions into the capitalist logic, as Illouz argues[34]). Stated intention and ideological underpinnings are somewhat at odds here.

The ambition of both being inclusive or of supporting the most vulnerable points to other set-ups that are systematically contradictory. Examining lives amid violence through an economic lens has a weird power to siphon off agency. Lepore, echoing W. E. B. Dubois, argues that understanding particularly American history as a story of economic conflict without considering those who are not credibly even part of this economic conflict (because they are so powerless they are easily forgotten) means to project an agency-free evolution of power structures, with no perpetrators actively establishing oppressive and exploitative structures.[35] But at the end of the day, it is people pushing and pulling money, for better or for worse: none of these developments are disembodied processes with a clear start and a clear end.

But the growth and transaction paradigms drive imagery of investments and guaranteed pay-offs, suggesting that goals are identifiable and reachable through clearly identifiable transactions, a process that puzzles Philipsen: 'strangely, thus, it is economists who invented the economy as something separate and divorced from the toils and aspirations of human beings.'[36] Investments bring a measurable productivity uptick. Provision of services gives countable successes and legitimacy. Investment in peace negotiations leads to a signed peace agreement. The mental imagery of what a peace process looks like often borrows from a particular economic thinking paradigm: rule setting, investment, transaction, pay-off through a defined conclusion. This particular interpretation no longer looks at investment as something that brings a return over time and requires living with uncertainty. Instead, it prioritizes the deal over the process – a flaw when thinking about peace agreements, where the process is what matters, not the outcome.[37] As an example, the Juba Peace Talks between the Lord's Resistance Army and the Government of Uganda (2006–8), supposed to end a war that had started in 1986, were pushed by international funders and norms to arrive at the photo-op handshake moment of signing the final deal. It is a capitalist version of the most delicate of human needs: the permanent negotiating of peaceful coexistence, something that is much better captured in the notion of 'perpetual peacebuilding' that Paffenholz articulates.[38]

Moving away from the confining mental imagery requires paying attention to those processes that were not hindered by a defined goal, such as Somaliland's peace

processes in the 1990s. As if to prove that many of the previously-mentioned problems are donor-created, Somalilanders took their time, shaped and reshaped their rules. With little outside support, they created an appropriate political space that did not start debates from established peacemaking templates around institution-building or democratic processes.[39] The result: Somaliland remains largely peaceful (but with institutions that might not meet international imaginations of inclusion). The Lord's Resistance Army, on the other hand, is in 2022 still a violent factor in the lives of people in central Africa, and the political, social and economic marginalization of northern Uganda that was discussed at the Juba Peace Talks is still unresolved and continues to create violence and marginalization in Uganda.[40]

Cramer et al. suggest that it is time to acknowledge that the foundation of capitalism sets up contradictions and that 'policy officials protect themselves against the misleading idea that development can be expected to be a smooth, linear process, or that it would be were certain impediments suddenly removed'.[41] And Ferguson argues that critique is weakened by its own lack of clarity: even the seemingly clearly-defined concept of neoliberalism is used and interpreted in a multitude of ways: 'as a sloppy synonym for capitalism itself, or as a kind of shorthand for the world economy and its inequalities . . . a kind of abstract causal force that comes in from outside . . . to decimate local livelihoods'.[42]

Decimating local livelihoods?

Applying an unquestioned transactional economic growth mental model is without a doubt devastating for FCAS. And maybe it is even more dramatic: not only is there no trickle down. If anything, there are large quantities of water gushing upwards.

Economic development policies that are rooted in the ideas represented by GDP continue to be weirdly context-neutral: an economic development programme might look the same in the DRC or in Uganda – which are countries where at least the GDP reflects some growth – as it does in Afghanistan, a country that for a long time now has experienced little, if any, growth.[43] Here, continued deep poverty places most of the country's people in survival mode, with ever fewer assets and ever fewer ways to become productive in the capitalist sense – the kind that is reflected in GDP measurement.[44] Current economic programmes also overlook that experience of conflict affects people's economic behaviour, but more on that in Chapter 5.

The reason for this continued one-size-fits-all is, yet again, the belief in trickle down or its more complicated version, the invisible hand: the notion that in the absence of targeted support, everyone will benefit from changes at the top. It permeates not just economic thinking, but even issues such as training, where knowledge is supposed to cascade down from those being trained to broader populations. That the messages imparted during that training – for example, in training programmes on malnutrition in Sierra Leone – might never cascade, but at best get diluted along the way is overlooked.[45]

But trickle down as a mental model persists: economic growth programmes envisage economic systems in which the availability of decent jobs will become a reality; people

are willing to prioritize any kind of work over the availability of decent work; education is available as a path to a better job (and this job does or will exist); interest exists in commercial entrepreneurship and/or economic risk-taking; and markets function in a similar fashion to those in what Henrich et al. have so memorably termed the WEIRD societies: societies that are Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic.[46] Cultures where, in Piketty's argument, inequality is the logic of the economic system.[47] The kind of countries where typing the word *entrepreneur* into a Google search bumps up four pictures to the top of the results page: Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Mark Zuckerberg and Jeff Bezos. Arguably, these archetypes of entrepreneurs might not universally create warm and fuzzy feelings since it is not news that entrepreneurship for growth is not automatically benign and socially beneficial.

Entrepreneurship is also risky, competitive, and might thus require a certain personality type. This is why war economies are often better for entrepreneurs than peace economies and why moving from one to the other is difficult: during war, illicit trade tends to flourish – seeking to stem this post-war means curtailing the profit-making of those often synonymous with or at least well connected to conflict actors, who entered the conflict in order to re-direct resource flows they had missed out on before.[48] In FCAS contexts, the phenomenon of what Desai et al. call 'destructive entrepreneurship' is real.[49] These are often illegal entrepreneurial activities, not captured in GDP and likely born out of necessity or opportunity in a process during conflict or as an outcome of conflict. Unlike productive (wealth creating) and unproductive (redistributive) entrepreneurship, destructive modes have negative impacts on the local economy and community. War economies, argues Mallet, offer a good home to destructive entrepreneurship as they are often easier to access than peace economies.[50] Put crudely, becoming part of a profitable local arms business is likely to improve an individual's livelihood considerably more quickly than selling crops from a piece of land that barely offers enough for subsistence agriculture. The dynamics that fuel illegal arms trades in one place are often steered by legal international profit-making in another. Unless war economies are replaced by peace economies in a swift and visible way (e.g. the replacement of opium cultivation with an equally-profitable alternative in Afghanistan),[51] and those who can make money in war can also make money in peace, the gap that opens up will inevitably be filled with economic activity that might be illegal, damaging to some or at the very least not benefit a majority.

Peace and economy are linked on a number of levels. Mallet sums these up as individual or village-level livelihoods, social-political networks that can help or hinder economic development, and international financial flows – including illicit flows that, for example, shift income from opium harvests through the Gulf states or create other huge financial movements.[52] These many market places profoundly influence how actors behave and if and when they decide to use violence. Crucially, aid is unlikely to ever be as profitable as being part of an illicit, networked global economy, even if in the short- to medium-term creaming off aid might be profitable. In other words, the incentive to allow aid to shape a peaceful environment is often not there.[53] The countries that do successfully manage the transition from a war to a peace economy tend to do so on the back of existing structures that allow the best use of incoming resources. This is widely considered the secret of the economic success of the Federal Republic

of Germany in the wake of the post–Second World War Marshall Plan – a success story that in not-so-subtle ways continues to influence the thinking of contemporary donor approaches to both reconstruction and development post-conflict, with little thought about the social, institutional and human capital that was left in Europe in 1945, notwithstanding what had been destroyed. Glorious memories of Europe's reconstruction after the Second World War also tend to gloss over the fact that despite all that existing capital and a huge further Marshall Plan influx, reconstruction took a long time – a most obvious reminder of this is that food rationing was still prevalent well into the 1950s, for example.

While destructive entrepreneurship with its outright rule breaking to benefit a few is on the extreme end, even the humbler image of entrepreneur comes with its challenge: the image that comes up when you expand that Google search from 'entrepreneur' to 'entrepreneur Africa'. It is very different from the first set of results: quite a few images of people behind sewing machines, a smiling man in a polytunnel, three people bent over one shared laptop and women selling eggs (Google might want to adjust its algorithm to not forget the likes of Aliko Dangote or Mo Ibrahim). But the point to take away is that economic development theories that underpin entrepreneurialism borrow from the environments of Gates, Zuckerberg, Jobs and Bezos to create the reality for the tailor in a dark market stall and the women selling eggs.

Economic development that has been shaped by statebuilding ideas presumes that a regulated state environment that supports a free market offers commercial protection in some aspects (such as property rights or preventing monopolies) and freedom in others (free trade). Either such freedom already exists or it can be created. It also assumes that it is fairly easy to recognize when protection and when freedom is offered. This environment, it is presumed in the theoretical model, offers reliable access to price information and has information structures that help the entrepreneur to balance out supply and demand and thus offer their wares at exactly the right price. In the resource-strapped environment of the conflict-affected setting, this is augmented with access to credit to replicate resource distribution. If only more of these circumstances can be provided, then more entrepreneurs would emerge (and with that more jobs). Economic development policies reflect this push towards entrepreneurialism – although whether what comes up under the Google search 'entrepreneur' is solid economic policy for lives shaped by violence is rarely questioned.

The international understanding of how violent or military conflicts operate is profoundly skewed by the outsized attention on the conflicts between Western armies. The economic thinking that underpins these mental models of FCAS economic development also assumes a universality – one that is drawn from what Henrich calls 'massively biased samples' that hide 'psychological diversity' and 'psychological peculiarity'.[54] Things are different from Western universality in non-conflict poor/developing economies, and they are completely different again in a conflict-affected environment, in so many ways. When conflict diminishes the formal sector – if it even existed in a situation in the first place – the worst scenario is that destructive entrepreneurship becomes institutionalized as 'the new norm'.[55] This is the scenario that stabilization and statebuilding want to avoid, in the process risking collateral damage of those things that do work away from the state: market governance without

the state, for example. An example are transport associations in DRC, where the prospect of shifting to a state-centric economic development model – which suggests safety inspections and mandatory insurance – is experienced as a nuisance for truckers and in their lives creates further instability.[56] Other common development policies, such as opening up people's access to credit, can make life a lot more volatile – but more on that in the next chapter.

But it is good to linger on a few obvious mismatches between the realities of lives amid violence and the market paradigm – the approach that privileges economic tools that are too blunt to address the needs of the most vulnerable and instead leaves them behind. As ever, there are some success stories. Some pro-growth policies in the agricultural sector – such as supporting cash crops or more diverse crops in Pakistan – do seem to have trickled down to smaller farmers, mainly due to the availability of different seeds in the market.[57]

But most of the time, the market paradigm – the transformation of lives from subsistence living to growth-oriented societies – hits people like a ton of brick, a shock so deeply felt that it cannot be computed quickly. It lingers, it brings radical change, it uproots. This is what has happened to the economy of South Sudan, which in the past fifty years, through wars and international development, has moved from individual self-sufficiency to market dependence. This is a development so profound, yet so shocking in its speed and impact, argues Thomas, that it has irreversibly transformed all aspects of life, including those that create the very conflict dynamics that economic development is expected to prevent.[58] More money cannot move that ton of bricks away, the ton of bricks that came crashing down in the shape of money.

Was this the shift that people needed? That is a loaded question. Because where deeply-rooted mental models and development practices in conflict-affected situations intersect is on what constitutes a need. Hickel argues that capitalist ideology starts from the assumption that people have unlimited needs and that these can be satisfied in a capitalist society.[59] Capitalism is about the need to accumulate, with accumulation a means to maximize utility as imagined through individual preferences. Need is an interesting term in international development, where a needs assessment is a tool that is often couched in participatory, demand-driven terms, but ends up offering what is on supply based on the market and capitalist ideologies that underpin thinking within international approaches.

This is how this pre-identified list of needs might read: because some things do not exist, they get reframed as needs: needs access to credit, needs business training, needs entrepreneurship. The growth-paradigm-informed needs assessment does not look at these identified needs as a list of possible tons of bricks, of very risky by-products of economic development that in turn might become the cause of economic volatility or even violence. So ingrained is the transactional growth paradigm that its inherent riskiness is a blind spot. Within the tight framing (the pieces of the puzzle being added only within its own frame), the market paradigm is ignorant of just how damaging a support for risk-taking can be. Some mental expectations that come with the growth paradigm are also simply unfair to people who have experienced violence as these expectations demand superhuman qualities of them – but more on that in Chapter 5.

The mental imagery of the transactional growth paradigm is so powerful: its influence reaches way beyond economic development. It expresses a certain mindset: measurable transaction as the most important way to understand human experience, trickle down, more and more of everything is good, supporting competition as a means to improve a situation, offering opportunity that within the precarious existence of lives shaped by violence is more likely to be jeopardy. And it fuels a broader image of development for conflict-affected situations that says: everything can be bought and sold. Everything is a transaction.

Transacting lives

The verb 'to transact' can be used in a disembodied way, without an object, in which case it just means to conduct business. With an object, it offers a totally different meaning: conducting business towards a conclusion, maybe even a resolution at the end of the transaction. The promise of a solution is what gives the transactional growth paradigm for programming in FCAS such power and the power is used to emphasize the need to facilitate market-like exchanges. Stabilization and statebuilding are also ultimately premised on transactionalism. The transaction that continues to take centre stage in donors' imaginations is the equation that says service delivery will result in state legitimacy.[60] The theory of change here is that increased legitimacy, and with it, stability, comes from making improved state capacity and a state's concern for its citizens visible, expressed through the state's ability to deliver services.[61]

In this way of thinking (which draws on the adulteration of Weber into three bullet points and Rousseau's idea of the social contract) state functions, such as services and social protection, are imagined as currency with which state capacity can be expressed and legitimacy bought. But particularly the notion of the social contract requires two contractual parties: a recognizable political community as one sovereign signatory, a government that is the administrator of that community's interests. Neither one tends to exist in areas where the state is weak; and yet it is here that service delivery is expected to be the transaction that contributes to legitimacy and improved governance.[62] In effect, a government that fulfils the core functions of a state is well on its way to putting the buildings blocks for legitimacy in place. The argument is well established.[63] As Van de Walle and Scott argue, 'Public services are what makes the state visible to its citizens [. . .] They make the state tangible through an almost daily interaction, direct or indirect.'[64] Conceptual work by the World Bank on the relationships between states, providers and citizens (or clients) is presented in the 2004 World Development Report,[65] with donor assumptions being that legitimacy will result from improved state performance, as expressed through better services.[66] More on this follows in Chapter 7. For lives that have experienced violence, this link seems particularly pertinent, as both services and social protection can contribute to peace, stability and social cohesion, thereby preventing future violence.[67] Service delivery is considered a key governance function of post-conflict internal development.[68] In an imagined state re-emerging after conflict, the relationship between state and citizen is designed to become more transactional.[69]

In much of the literature supporting statebuilding, service provision is seen as the fulfilment of citizen's expectations, demonstrating in the process the willingness of a state to uphold its side of the assumed bargain.[70] Here, legitimacy is understood to mean that citizens accept the state's authority to rule over them,[71] though it is not a good to be achieved for its own sake. For statebuilders, legitimacy promotes stability and builds a state's ability to demand non-violently that citizens fulfil their part of the social contract: to pay taxes and to not rebel.[72] Positive effects on state legitimacy can be undermined by citizens experiencing service delivery as unfair.[73] The World Development Report 2017 frames this as the state's need to generate commitment, coordination and cooperation.[74] It is another version of the golden thread – the comforting idea that, as Acemoglu and Robinson posited, all good things go together in linear fashion.[75]

The notion of this circular transactional process strengthens the image of services as a currency used to purchase better state–society relationships: it is about one powerful side being able to grant the other less powerful side access. This underpinning notion of power in this exchange represents what Heimans and Timms call 'old power' that 'is held by few. Once gained, it is jealously guarded, and the powerful have a substantial store of it to spend.'[76] What they refer to as 'new power' is more akin to a 'current . . . open, participatory, and peer-driven . . . it's most forceful when it surges. The goal with new power is not to hoard it but to channel it.'[77]

Time and again, situations of violent conflict revealed that this link between service delivery and buying better quality state-society relationship, as imagined in an old power transaction, does not exist in the way imagined. Such situations are marked either by a broken relationship between the state (who is keen on hoarding its power) and at least some of its citizens, or the state was never sufficiently present to be understood as the overall governing authority in the first place to actually hold the old power currency.

The role of service delivery in stabilization

Service delivery is often imagined as the perfect leveller. If widely improved, access is assumed to be evenly spread, creating more inclusive and equitable societies and thus reducing conflict dynamics. Service delivery's imagined knock-on effects – healing broken relationships and creating peace – are substantial.[78] Particularly since the New Deal in 2011, service delivery and its power to bestow legitimacy has been pushed as a statebuilding instrument.[79] Implicit in this view of the link between service delivery and legitimacy is that services also become the currency used for buying prevention.

But this assumed link between service delivery and legitimacy is tenuous at best, as Nixon et al. summed up.[80] A panel survey on this issue conducted in various rounds in DRC, Uganda, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Pakistan, showed some country-level movement and change between how people experience the quality of a service and how they perceive their government, but could not reveal any strong positive correlation between service delivery and perceptions of government.[81] While shorter journey times to a service may be a good thing, they do not systematically change how people feel about their government. While social protection sometimes appears more

effective at achieving better perceptions, much depends on the context and levels of government involved. Some degree of satisfaction with the quality of certain services or with cash transfers and, to a lesser extent, access to services (even if the quality is not great) is correlated with some perceptions regarding specific levels of government, though not consistently across all regressions.

It does matter somewhat what physical and financial access to a service – for example, drinking water – is like and it certainly leaves a mark if people experience this access as mediated through identity-based discrimination or administrative measures, including corruption.[82] Though quality of services can matter for how people feel about the state, such feelings are not dependent on whether it was actually the state that provided the service in the first place.[83] If a service is experienced as being bad, as we saw in Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Uganda,[84] then this negatively affects the degree to which citizens feel they are being represented by local and, to a lesser extent, central government.[85] Thus, the link between service delivery and legitimacy, stability and even peace simply does not exist, nor is it clear whether there is any particular added benefit to governments delivering services. Even when relevant changes in perception do seem to occur – for example, better water services are in some places associated with better perceptions of government[86] – uncovering the secret ingredient that makes services more effective for legitimacy is a frustrating and ultimately fruitless endeavour. Thus, whichever way the link between services and legitimacy is examined, none of the findings is convincing as the basis of a whole international development philosophy.

A better response would be to step back and reconsider whether this social engineering of perceptions to achieve an unproven causality chain is actually worthwhile, both for those whose lives need to improve and for those dedicated to helping achieve this. An answer can be found in how the mental imagery of economic growth unhelpfully foregrounds the transaction.

Transaction-driven development assumes a service has a measurable exchange value that can buy a measurable improvement in return. First and foremost, it starts with an extremely reduced arsenal of what is considered a service: it is very limited to hardware-based services such as provision of schools, hospitals, water or road infrastructure. Because of donor's reluctance to get into political territory, understanding of service delivery rarely tends to involve issues of land tenure, even though in some cases they might be more prominent than other service-related challenges. The mental model also works with a limited imagination of what a transaction is: a straightforward, market-like exchange. It is a reasonable depiction of the simplest of economic transaction – a dualistic exchange with a clear cause and effect or, in other words, a reassuring causality. It is not an adequate depiction of the ever-ongoing negotiations of the state-citizen relationship, of which service delivery can become a part.

The mental model also fails to take into account the huge difference in power between the givers of a service and the recipients: the recipients tend to not get much of a say. Unlike in Hirschman's version of how politics and economics intersect – where an unsatisfied consumer can exit or raise their voice – the quality of a conflict-affected environment is that consumers of services do not have that option.[87] They are simply expected to be grateful recipients that pay back with loyalty, even if things are not as they should be.

The image of the transaction is entirely misplaced for complex social processes that involve dynamics and benefits that are not material.[88] This is the difference between an understanding of 'transaction' as essentially a commercial exchange (which is easier to imagine when linked to hardware-driven images like provision of a school building), and Dewey's and Bentley's understanding of *transactionalism*. Transactionalism posits that human exchanges are based on different types of exchange not obviously measurable in value,[89] and, crucially, do not consist of a straightforward exchange of two goods.[90] Barth, drawing on his work in Pakistan in the 1950s, stresses that mutual transactions are what creates social relationships, pointing towards the social economy – more on that later.[91] Despite the long history of research stressing that social relations are not built along simple equations, the 'transaction' based on economic value is the dominant image in development. Chapter 7 will unpack in greater detail what this means for the equation of 'service delivery = state legitimacy'. Here it is useful to merely remember just how deeply this imagery from a market-driven paradigm penetrates the mental models for all development approaches in FCAS. Instead, how this interaction needs to be understood is that people – their relationships, values and experiences – take precedence over the hardware transaction.

The social economy

The neoliberal model (even in the many ways the term is used), assumes that everyone is broadly the same when it comes to economic decision-making; this is how the image of the rational *Homo economicus* was born. Homo economicus has been knocked off the pedestal from more angles than can be counted: Cramer grapples with the reductionism of the model, particularly in situations of contemporary violent conflicts.[92] Henrich argues, in his groundbreaking development of the WEIRD problem (which posits that people from Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic backgrounds are the global exception) that it is peculiar to WEIRD populations to 'lie at the extreme end of the distribution, focusing intensely on their personal attributes, achievements, aspirations, and personalities over their roles, responsibilities, and relationships'.[93] This group of people are maybe more suited to neoliberal thinking:

> highly individualistic, self-obsessed, control-oriented, nonconformist, and analytical. We focus on ourselves – our attributes, accomplishments, and aspirations – over our relationships and social roles. We aim to be 'ourselves' across contexts and see inconsistencies in others as hypocrisy rather than flexibility. Like everyone else, we are inclined to go along with our peers and authority figures; but, we are less willing to conform to others when this conflicts with our own beliefs, observations, and preferences. We see ourselves as unique beings, not as nodes in a social network that stretches out through space and back in time. When acting, we prefer a sense of control and the feeling of making our own choices.[94]

But there may still be generalizable inconsistencies between the notion of Homo economicus and humanity at large, which Raworth sums up as 'social and reciprocating' with 'fluid values' and interdependency. Humans do more guesswork than straightforward calculations, she argues, and they are 'deeply embedded in the web of life'.[95] Because violent conflict is such an extreme experience in life, it is not surprising that in many societies that have experienced violence, the economy is not just about money: it is primarily a social marketplace that has material exchange value attached to it. This might be a main distinction between Western and non-Western societies, and a question is also possibly whether there is a relationship between the social economy and violent conflict.

For development practitioners that come from WEIRD backgrounds, it is often difficult to get their heads around this, argues Henrich: 'Interconnectedness – between humans, between humans and their natural environments – is lost in the individualistic principles of WEIRD populations.'[96] The crucial difference for Henrich is that in those traditions that developed the transactional growth paradigm with its emphasis on the transactional nature of all interactions, individuality trumps community: relationships matter less than personal achievements; gaining access to an aspirational social group is more important than cherishing an inherited social role. Rules imposed by an impartial state trump every other set of rules.

Some of the great economic minds, such as Thorstein Veblen or Karl Polanyi, acknowledged that markets are made by culture: Polanyi was first to emphasize that economics cannot be separated from society and that the term also expresses the relationship between livelihoods, natural and social environments.[97] For Polanyi, markets were a social institution. Veblen, as the founding father of institutional economics, highlighted bounded rationality (meaning that humans are not the rational Homo economicus carefully assessing all information and weighing all options they are purported to be) and the permanent negotiations of shaping institutions. Both Veblen and Polanyi continue to be marginal figures in mainstream economics, and thus the insight that economic life is simply not disconnected from social life under any circumstances is not part of the mainstream narrative.

It might be part of the specific quality of conflict-affected societies that they are in fact one and the same: in these contexts, economics is disproportionately not about money, but more about social relationships and moral values. Someone who comes with a WEIRD eye might see an unregulated *economic* space that is often in fact a highly-regulated *social* space, despite not conforming to notions of regulation as put forward by the international development community.[98]

The socially-embedded economy

After Polanyi (building on Marx) introduced the notion of socially-embedded economies, Granovetter expanded the concept to imagine the economy as driven by social networks and interpersonal relations.[99] This is not a one-direction highway: all economic activities are social, while social interactions are also economic.[100] Markets are governed by social networks and how people experience their economic lives

depends on social connections and how these networks interact with often global economic challenges.[101] Socio-economic does not represent two categories meshed together by a hyphen: unlike 'development economics', which combines two different interpretative entry points into one, socio-economic is one and the same.[102]

The social economy, also called the embedded economy, acknowledges that the market is not a stand-alone thing: it is where goods, services, resources, structures, governance and, most importantly, people and their histories meet. At times, argue Graeber and Wengrow, what looks like trade networks evolve 'largely for the sake of creating friendly mutual relations'.[103] Thus, the social economy is a complex system made up of relationships, histories, formations of power and various other factors that impact family formation and livelihoods.[104] It is these that determine the distribution of any economic development, with the degree of access to capital or jobs dependent on personal relationships.[105] In an ideal scenario, the social network includes people with resources, but when resources are scarce, it is connections that maintain the possibility of future access to resources. Social connections are the currency needed for economic survival, but in the most desperate situations even they cannot guarantee the necessary support if the resources are simply not available – IDPs in DRC, for example, struggle to meet basic needs despite building good networks.[106]

The social economy is also where the invisible becomes visible: the work that makes economies of all kinds tick and that is based on socially-offered work that is not renumerated.[107] The dramatic omission of the unpaid work that keeps societies running – childcare, home creation, other types of care – is only one aspect of the continued painting of economics pictures that are less realist and more impressionist.[108] It is another example of a data gap, alongside the insight mentioned earlier just how different our understanding of violent conflict would be if mainstream conceptualization would take non-Western wars into account.[109]

The moral economy is slightly different from the social economy, although it is an equally dynamic concept. It accounts for class-informed frameworks involving traditions, valuations and expectations – social processes and relationships that underpin the cultural fabric of a particular locale. The premise of the moral economy is that relations of exchange and production cannot be separated from the moral conceptions that endow them with meaning.[110] It governs exchanges between people and elites, and is supported by norms of reciprocity.[111] There is a strong moral aspect to the social economy, as it involves filling institutions with the moral authority to govern – the aforementioned explosive concept of fairness comes back here. Hence an inquiry into the function (or lack thereof) of an institution should proceed from an understanding of the moral principles underpinning it, rather than its presumed function in the statebuilding blueprint.[112]

The flip side of this is that access to the economy is a matter of power and control, and this can play out in nuanced ways – but we do not know much about the nuance. Scholarship explicitly linking the moral/social economy to post-conflict contexts remains scarce. This is despite calls to avoid economic reductionism that disregards how the self and the social world connect with economic thought, in what Fassin describes as production, distribution, circulation and use of moral sentiments, emotions, values and norms in social space.[113]

When the social economy meets the transactional growth paradigm

Economic development policy usually seeks to depersonalize the economy, meaning its aim is to decouple identity and networks from economic access. It suggests that economic actors can be equal agents without history, like in an idealized version of the Weberian state, where everyone is the same and nobody is discriminated. If driven by neoclassical economic thinking and the transactional growth paradigm, a policy's aim is to give the market free rein; if driven by philosophies from development studies it is likely to support the most excluded and most vulnerable in gaining access. In the end, the policies seeking to depersonalize the economy might look very similar, no matter from which ideological well they were drawn. The gist of them kind of makes sense: economic lives after conflict re-establish – or continue to work along the same lines of – social networks of access that created or maintained the conflict. Thereby continuing to exclude people from those economic lives creates new or reinvigorates old patterns of violence, particularly structural violence. Thus, a policy needs to depersonalize this access to networks and resources for economic development and to avoid exclusion.

And yet, despite these good reasons to support depersonalizing the economy, the encounter between the transactional growth paradigm and the socially-embedded economy is really quite an awkward one. The transactional growth paradigm will offer regulation, formalization and the institutionalization of relationships – for example, by proposing formal access to credit. The socially-embedded economy will maybe tip its hat questioningly at that suggestion, muttering to itself:

> But the formal credit does not allow you to do anything in the social economy. What relationship of trust am I supposed to have with a formal lender? How will I even get into the market if my lender is not part of that market? Having the money lent to me is not what I am after – I am after building a relationship of trust that is an investment into a future embedded economic activity so my networked relationship will pay off.

'But,' will the transactional growth paradigm say, 'if you have credit, you can make an investment without the burden of the relationship. You can go it alone!' 'But I just don't believe anyone can', answers the socially-embedded economy. 'Going it alone creates insiders and outsiders, and the outsider will struggle even more to fend for themselves without access to the right networks.'[114]

Afghanistan provides a good illustration here. Informal credit is one of the most pervasive social protection systems in Afghanistan, yet most attempts at addressing it have involved replacing it with formal credit, argue Shaw and Ghafoori.[115] Losing informal access to credit may – in the very long run – smooth people's livelihoods by facilitating credit on more favourable predictable turns. On the flipside, formalized credit removes credit's function as a social lubricant (although some microfinance schemes integrate this insight into their approach, using Rotating Savings and Credit

Associations to integrate delivering credit with social relationships). Being indebted marks the existence of a social relationship. These can be relationships of reciprocity that set up the possibility of future business or credit relationships. The closer the social connection, the more likely it is that a future relationship will allow access to credit without risking adverse social connections. More broadly speaking, disruption of the relationships that form the moral and social economy is likely to create further inequalities and loss of political/social/moral voice – factors identified as risking violent conflict.

Afghanistan offers particularly poignant examples for many of the facets of what the socially-embedded economy is. In a market where social relationships trump both supply and demand, the pillars of free-market thinking lose their shine as regulatory powers. While every economy might offer examples of embeddedness, what the concept highlights is that social relationships are different from context to context and allow a lens to unpack differences. The growth paradigm, direct transaction and a free market that might look good within an embedded economy in the West do not stand much of a chance in Afghanistan. Here, free-market competition loses to the need to be socially embedded to gain access to economic opportunities. Thus, people buy their goods not from the vendor that offers the best price, but instead spend their money to maximize the benefit to the most powerful local figure because that person is the gatekeeper of broader access to the economy. Minoia compares this situation to a game of snakes and ladders offered by economic elites, where the opportunity to climb up the ladder costs both an entry fee and paying for continued membership.[116]

Afghanistan's local onion market is governed by organized local traders with political connections, which are utilized in order to control the price and availability of goods, as well as share or withhold information. It also means traders can stem farmer's access to income should they decide to do so.[117] Furthermore, traders have easy access to price information, thanks to mobile phones. However, this knowledge does not empower them to regulate prices, as these are entirely dependent on the actions of networks and network hubs, says Minoia.[118] Prices in markets are volatile, reflecting collusion between key brokers, who use their networks to shift prices and keep stocks back or release them to the retail market.

Similarly, access to Afghanistan's labour markets or educational opportunities depends on social networks and one's role in them. Paine argues that land and labour are regulated through relationships between landlords and labourers, or patrons and clients or social obligations that were maintained or created throughout the conflict with economic exchanges determined by social relations, rather than consideration of profitability or efficiency.[119] More on the broader role of such relationships will come up in Chapter 7. Given that social relationships continue even during conflict – though they may change during this time – the inner workings of the social economy can emerge unscathed after violence. Social connections between teachers and parents matter in determining who gets what kind of schooling, while men's support of women (as fathers, husbands or uncles) is important to how women's work lives take shape.[120] In South Sudan, one's history in the army continues to be a good indicator of the kind of administrative positions that will be available.[121]

The impact of the social economy goes beyond regulating access to markets and into the realm of reputation and acceptance. This involves inquiring and negotiating what the acceptable social norms are for different groups, and how deviation from them may be punished by curtailed access to livelihoods. In Uganda, having a job is not a straightforward aspiration: the neoliberal push of the past decades has created a brutal labour market that offers not just precarious employment but does so with the risk of being ostracized from the socially-embedded economy. Taking one of the more readily available undesirable jobs – for a woman, for example, in a seedy bar – may damage an individual's position in their social network so much, that the chances of using that network to secure a better job are next to nothing, argue Mallet and Atim.[122] Such a job – what Mallet and Atim call 'bad jobs' – carries further reputational risks, potentially closing off family connections or impacting an individual's desirability as a future husband or wife.[123] Thus, the social economy as it currently exists acts as both a mirror and creator of social inequality, as well as how people experience their lives amid violence.[124]

The role of trust

Trust is crucial to the market and market regulation in all economies. But how trust is created and destroyed varies by context and needs to be understood, particularly with an eye to how trust is built, maintained or destroyed in each context of a conflict situation. But often the notion of trust interacts uncomfortably with the statebuilding approach and ideas of gap filling: statebuilders would probably argue that if only there was a reliable regulatory framework, people would use the handbook, rather than their levels of trust in each other, to make economic decisions. But what makes an environment conflictual are the same qualities that give trust such a strong exchange value: it is built on numerous identity characteristics or social bonds, such as background, language and ethnicity.[125]

Economic and trade relationships function on the basis of trust, as well as an understanding of what is on offer and what is expected in return. A key part of the trust is the sense that you will get what you are promised, even when the two sides of the transaction are separated in time. While this separation in time is very common, neoclassical economics has a limited conception of time and of repeated transactions. Trust does not play a big role in the neoclassical view of how things work. For behavioural economists, who emphasize the human in all they do, it is an absolute centrepiece. In cash-based societies, expressing this trust is relatively straightforward: it is money that represents a shared understanding of its value. In Afghanistan, trade is structured around informal credit needed to buy costly seeds and manage goods; this web between expressions of trust through credit, buying and selling (often on credit as a further loop in the trust relationship) means that many individuals are involved in rolling along the economy. People who push and pull money or other values along, in a joint endeavour that is the social economy and that makes it possible to overcome obstacles and shocks (Figure 3). Money alone cannot move that economic shock that hits like a ton of bricks, but the people in the socially-embedded economy can.

Figure 3 The social economy. Image by Olivier Ploux.

The phenomenon of socially-embedded economies poses a real challenge for development practitioners whose mental models are the transactional growth paradigm, trickle down and transactions – in short, the more engineering-leaning mindset of statebuilding. The technical knowledge transfer does not create development for all. Supporting agricultural growth in Afghanistan without consideration of social connections, for example, does not mean that benefits will trickle down.[126] The argument that purely-technical approaches to development do not work is well established. Usually, the argument is made that even technical support is political. But the argument has to go further: technical solutions must do more than take into account a particular set of circumstances – they must actively understand that the technical and the social are always and entirely deeply imbricated and intertwined with each other and thus context and solution can never be separated.

There are many layers to this, which serves as a reminder that the path towards making markets work better for the poorest is not clearly marked. While strengthening worker or trader associations may help support workers in Uganda's catering industry to achieve better conditions, the same approach will have little effect on addressing the political structures that make up the market in which Afghanistan's onion producers find themselves, where patron–client relationships can block the impact of collective action.[127] In many cases, it is the interaction between the formal and the informal that makes change possible or that produces an outcome: migrants, for example, often have to rely on some formal mechanisms and personal networks.[128]

But any suggested change comes with a fuzzy timeline. While a peaceful redistribution of income may be desirable, it may not show benefits for a long time. And in reality, redistribution (particularly of assets) is rarely very peaceful: growth,

resource flows and changes in patterns of access can incentivize both war and peace. On the other hand, a swift securing of resources and economic gains almost inevitably involves violent means.[129] In order for economic growth to work for peace, people must be willing to forego benefits in the present in favour of a possible pay-off in the future. Their time preference, in other words, needs to make them prioritize the future over the now. This might be tricky in an environment that was marked by the need to survive from day to day. But it might also be the case that one effect of having experienced violence is that such time preferences are different and that they guide people towards not taking risks, particularly of the entrepreneurial kind.[130] This poses another challenge to the transactional growth paradigm, which relies on people wanting to take some economic risks in the presence – but more on that in Chapter 5.

Conclusion: Going off road

The problem with economic development in conflict-affected settings it not that it should not happen or that it is impossible: it is that there is an unresolved tension between the deceptive simplicity that economic growth models can suggest and the human experience of the complicated multi-causality of economic hardship. This might be because it is unclear at what level the dots are supposed to connect: while statebuilding works on regulatory frameworks (or, in the transactional growth paradigm, on building the institutions that protect the regulation-free space), many individual entrepreneurial support projects might chug along without ever being connected to the question of whether growth is in fact distributed equitably. Connecting the dots of high-level ideological approaches with local-level, often individualized, support is difficult.

What is also extremely challenging is to take into account the specific quality of FCAS: rarely do economic development programmes in violence-affected contexts place sufficient emphasis on the social norms and context that will shape their impacts.[131] Seldomly, if ever, do they consider what sources of trust they can draw on and how these might intersect with people's ability and willingness to take risks. Maybe never do they boldly prioritize redistribution (of income through, for example, minimum wage, and wealth through taxation) over economic growth, even though such growth has not proven to be the change agent for all without making it equitable. In some cases, it is simply true that poverty is so prevailing that there is not enough to meaningfully redistribute – or, indeed, as Craven-Matthews and Englebert argue for the case of Mali, there might not be enough resources to sustain the image of a state in the imagination of a statebuilding exercise.[132]

Yet, thinking in economic development has come a long way from a straight neoliberal approach, but this nuanced way is still much more difficult to apply once the nuance that might exist at the highest policy level gets watered down each step along the way, until it disappears when the heading 'Theory of Change' is written on a project design document. All that is said here could be a more broadly-applied critique of the development industry and donor-driven projects. The situation is just made particularly stark in the economic development field because the consequences of

these approaches are driven by the donor's need to be accountable to the taxpayers that provide the resources, and to whom policymakers have been unable to provide a more nuanced (less transactional and free-market paradigm-driven) model of development. If you present a development issue to the tax-paying public as being mainly about sending off their taxes to another country, it is no wonder that attention on those resources is enhanced, as Yanguas also reminds us.[133]

Thus, what ends up as a programmatic approach is often a strangely watered-down version of a neoliberal mental model of economic growth, seasoned with a bit of fear of taxpayers' scrutiny. In practice, economic development programmes often end up as simplified causality-chasing interventions that put the burden of risk or uncertainty to a large extent on the people least able to buffer themselves against either. What blind spots this creates can be made visible through a glimpse into programmatic approaches and by looking at the real engine of the economy: people.

It is clear that any programme to support economic development needs to start by understanding connections: interactions between the economic support on offer with existing social relationships (and their possible conflict dynamics). International development efforts cannot simply break through the networks that control access and instead offer a regulated and equitable version of service delivery and economic growth for all. Taking seriously the reality that whatever an outside provider has to offer will be controlled from the very beginning by local networks must become part of any expectation or definition of success.[134] This is not something that can be done through one-off analysis or a bird's eye perspective – if economic development is to be effective, interveners need to have relationships with market actors. These are often synonymous with conflict actors, so that relationship is tricky.

But these interconnections are what create success and failure, so attention needs to be paid to them. That a change in approach is needed is now theoretical consensus and many different new approaches are on offer. There are many ways of thinking about this: Mazzucato suggests bold experimentation and a public reclaiming of a purposeful economy is necessary, requiring redefining the role of government.[135] Even the OECD – for decades the guardians of the narrow, economic growth-driven model of development – shifted gear in a major 2020 policy report towards 'a new conception of economic and social progress – a deeper understanding of the relationship between growth, human wellbeing, a reduction in inequalities and environmental sustainability, which can inform economic policymaking and politics'.[136] This new conception emphasizes environmental sustainability, increased well-being, falling inequality and system resilience, which means the economy is able to deal with different types of shocks without breakdown.[137] What kinds of shocks these might be (or have been) is easy to spell out: the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis (which includes continued or worsened inequality), the climate catastrophe and the Covid-19 pandemic are just the most obvious recent examples.[138]

The OECD suggests a 'new economic narrative' that includes understanding how economies really work; how economic growth interacts with humans, unequal systems and sustainability; and the courage to use new tools and methods, even new frameworks.[139] It is a significant shift for the OECD to announce that an approach that emphasizes 'supply side and ameliorative policies' is 'no longer sufficient to address

today's economic challenges. We need to pay attention to the way the engine itself works.'[140]

The engine? There it is again, the mechanistic approach.

There is a danger that even a new perspective replicates the engineering-think. New narratives, new frameworks and new analysis suggest innovation, grandeur and glitz. Yet, what they need to thrive is anything but glamorous: guts and grit and the courage to not be reduced to an image.

It is extremely difficult to be the one person in the room, the one colleague amongst peers, who suggests that the established way might not necessarily be the only way. It is particularly difficult in the international development sector, which is a strange conglomerate of idealism, belief, dedication and curiosity, as well as jadedness, cynicism, alienation and conformity – sometimes all in the same person.

International development sells progress and self-sufficiency, but does so often on colonial terms without trust. When it seeks to shift its own approaches, it often stops short of actually implementing them. The OECD highlights that the notion that economic progress needs to be measured with indicators that capture well-being rather than GDP growth, social progress rather than GDP per capita, is by now well established. What is not established is the consensus that allows those ideas to be more than blue sky thinking:

> Politicians and policy makers (particularly in finance and economic ministries) must make clear in their public pronouncements that this is how they want economic performance to be judged, and media debate needs to reflect this. Going 'beyond growth' needs to be an explicit political aim.[141]

With this statement, the OECD is on the money, so to say. What is required here is a mental model that recognizes just how fundamentally wrong the unreflected growth model is that pays no attention to distribution or sustainability – just how much it pulls people away from the strongest asset they have particularly in conflict-affected situations, the real currency of economic life: each other.

But finding that new economic narrative that abandons the straight line, the parallel tracks of Stabilization/Statebuilding Highway and Economic Development Lane, is challenging. Because the image of having to navigate a road that zigzags and meanders, that crosses small paths and big lanes, that stops and starts and ends up with unexpected connections – and that on top of everything else is full of pedestrians (people!) who walk in the middle of the road at their own pace and maybe even stop to chat – is much more difficult to compute than the parallel highways. Going off road suggests a bumpy ride. But it is overdue to support livelihoods that are less tossed about by having the transactional growth paradigm injected into their often already challenging lives.

Times are a-changin', but the tide is not turning

Why life after conflict does not
automatically get better

Uganda's war in the country's north, where the Lord's Resistance Army rebelled against the government, ended a long time ago – sometime between 2006 and 2008. The area is unrecognizable from its conflict days: after 2008, close to two million people left displacement camps to again live in villages and towns and farm their land. There are impeccable roads that now connect major towns like Gulu and Kitgum. People drive or walk on these roads even at night. Many people own mobile phones.

But people's experience of just how much life has improved is not as convincing. Livelihoods remain precarious, whiplashing people between extremes of being food secure and insecure – in other words, being able to meet their nutritional needs or going hungry. The graph depicting this wild ride between different levels of food security looks like an overly busy repetitive up-and-down pattern, showing that while on average in the population, food security remains about the same, individuals can go from being very hungry to having enough food and vice versa in short spaces of time. There is a slim overall majority of households experiencing somewhat improved food security, but change goes in all directions, with households churning in and out of different levels of food security.[1] For a household that gets better, another one gets worse.[2] Livelihoods display this volatility even after violence ends and things seemingly stabilize.[3] Patterns of partial recovery and decline, followed by partial recovery, are common.[4] Poverty either remains unchanged or gets worse, with noticeable and sustainable improvement being an exception (Figure 4).[5]

This jerky livelihood experience presents a puzzle to those implementing economic programmes in conflict-affected settings. Why does this volatility continue even when violence ends? Surely, material life *must* get better? And yet, it does not – at least not evenly, reliably, incrementally. Gunasekara calls this the 'paradox of livelihood interventions', describing that despite efforts to support livelihoods and improved circumstances, livelihoods continue to be insecure.[6] Much like post-conflict economic growth in DRC or Sri Lanka never made much of a difference to most Congolese or Sri Lankans, the end of violence has not improved people's livelihoods.[7] Why? Because the
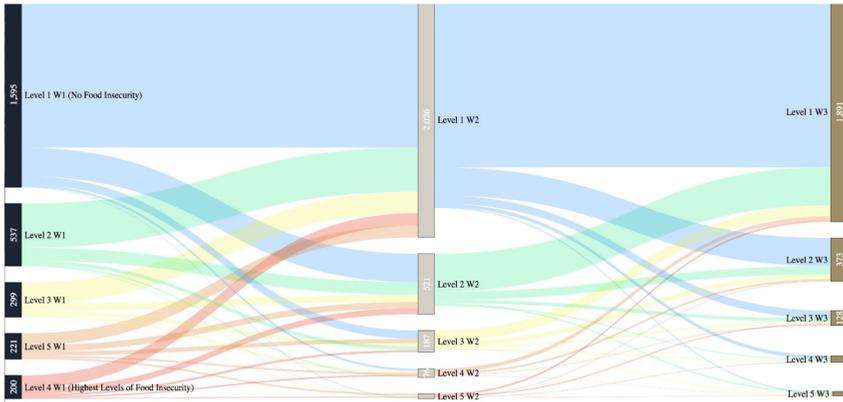
Figure 4 Churning in and out of food security. Source: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium/ODI.

causality between conflict, livelihoods and livelihood support is not what it seems. The change agent is misidentified.

Violence is often assumed to be the main factor determining people's livelihood vulnerability. But often, it is a cloak – a brutal, destructive, merciless one – that carefully covers up the causes of its own existence. Because violence is the most obvious symptom, post-conflict programming can overlook that violence is an expression of a particular quality of an environment, rather than its defining factor. Violence is a bit like the pictures from the 1993 book *The Magic Eye*.[8] Not entirely dissimilar to the graph above that shows just how volatile people's livelihoods are, magic eye pictures fill the page with a vividly coloured and overly busy melange of wavy lines and bright flashes. For many people, that gaudy mess is all they ever saw. Others are able to adjust their gaze to – miraculously – see shapes appear from within the overwhelming and shouty pattern: a camel, a snowman, a shark. Once you had seen the hidden shape, you could not unsee it.

Violence is like the messy, obvious lines. It is the visible, magnified, unmissable layer. It kills. It hurts. It destroys. But it is also only the most demonstrative part of a picture that hides layers of shapes underneath – the structures that create and guide the dramatic, visible, violent lines. The shapes that are the political, social and economic systems or the poverty supporting, evolving, advancing conflictual dynamics: governance, power, norms and other – maybe unexpected and often localized – factors that regulate everyday life that then, visibly, erupt in the moment when tension becomes conflict.[9] Because violence is so dominant, so aggressive and vicious, it is easy to conclude that when it disappears, what was most disruptive to life has ended.

But the shapes underneath are the reason why people cannot suddenly gain from the huge systemic shifts that post-conflict programming often pursues. That is why, as Levine writes, the term *recovery* means both very little and a great deal, but mostly it means embarking on a journey that will include many ups and downs.[10] That is why things do not automatically get better.[11]

After violence ends, what remains?

Some conflict legacies that shape economic lives are obvious: Continued insecurity means transporting goods on the roads is not safe.[12] Having lost livestock or land – productive assets – deprives whole generations of sources of income and of the opportunity to learn skills.[13] Displacement disrupts livelihoods in ways that cannot be quickly – if ever – restored. Other conflict leftovers are obscure: architectures of economic exclusion do not suddenly dissipate. But the most remarkable conflict legacy might be violence – as declaring its end often does not mean it is gone. It just shape-shifts.

International actors often distinguish between violent conflict and crime, but for most people the categories are interchangeable.[14] In northern Uganda's Acholiland, where 55 per cent of households had a member who had experienced at least one serious crime with measurable impact on the household's livelihood since the conflict officially ended (but most households had more than one), conflict and peace times can feel very similar, argue Marshak et al.[15] Violence from cattle raiding, violence from hostile government forces or from militias (sometimes acting as government's proxy) will also feel little different to civilians after fighting has officially stopped.[16] And there is no one to help: conflict-affected environments typically have limited law enforcement that helps victims of violent crime, even less so if this violence is between intimate partners or family members and the victim is a woman. In northern Uganda, one study found that 78.5 per cent of women had experienced intimate partner violence, with half of the study participants having experienced such violence in the prior twelve months.[17] A two-year study at northern Uganda's main hospital in Gulu concluded that of all 1880 patients that had come to the hospital with physical injuries, the highest percentage of patients (24.1 per cent of whom 73.6 per cent were women) had been injured in domestic violence.[18]

In Pakistan, Uganda and DRC, the perception that post-conflict lives are not safer is a major element of people's everyday experience.[19] This is not just bad in itself. It has a knock-on effect: perceptions of increased safety correlate with better food security, so feeling less secure might in the end mean that people go hungry.[20] Those without land and productive assets are particularly vulnerable to experiencing continued violence – of the kind that excludes from economic and social life and that different scholars have described as quiet, silent and structural.[21] Conflict also remains visible through displaced people and displacement often comes with its own violence. Displacement-fuelled livelihood models that started as a coping mechanism can acquire a permanence from which it is not easy to move on.[22] But even moving on – physically – is not a peaceful and smooth process: large population movements (such as returns of displaced people after war) contribute to volatility, with stretched services and access to livelihoods negotiated through social structures hardened during war times.[23]

Amongst these violent remnants, international actors might punch above their weight in terms of visibility (those white four-wheel drives are hard to miss). But they might overestimate their influence, as aid and international development assistance have a much smaller positive impact on people's lives and livelihoods than hoped.[24] That also means that economic life and market governance continue to be unchanged,[25] despite economic development policies that outsiders might bring.

For those policies to work, people need to function within the logic that many livelihood or economic development programmes employ. Gelsdorf describes this emphasis on viable groups, characterized by possession of assets and sufficient room to manoeuvre to grab hold of economic opportunities – in other words, an economically ready and entrepreneurial human.[26] But lives lived amid violence are curtailed in their ability to function within these definitional frames, not least because conflict widens the gap between those who own productive means and those who do not. While the latter struggle to survive,[27] the former are the viable populations that can make the best use of markets and economic opportunities: economic and political elites, keen to make sure that they maintain what they have.[28]

There are many examples of this. Local power holders in Afghanistan who are not interested in change – power holders who have not bothered about sharing a peace dividend and who were stabilized by international efforts at a delicate moment.[29] It is what happened in South Sudan when government actors used the years of stabilization and statebuilding to consolidate their murderous alliances. It is the case with the political godfathers known as *parrains* in DRC.[30] The nominal end of violence does not automatically mean an opportune moment for redistribution or for fair and accessible economic opportunities for all.

The role of shocks and coping strategies

Shocks – those tons of bricks that hit out of nowhere – throw lives out of whack and set back livelihood recovery. Illness or a death of a breadwinner means loss of income and often requires borrowing money or selling productive assets to pay for treatment or for the funeral.[31] Without land, people need paid work, but this paid work rarely exists – in Afghanistan, employment opportunities without land are scarce.[32] Those selling off their assets are, in the long run, unlikely to ever catch up again. Piketty unwrapped just how much difference it makes to own assets versus only owning one's labour: the former sets one up for growth, the latter for being stuck at the lower end of the inequality gap.[33] One shock, one everlasting impact.

Disability, caused by experience of a crime, acts as an additional magnifier to the negative livelihood effect of being a crime victim, argue Mazurana et al.[34] Agriculture, a primary livelihood for many, is prone to shocks and often can no longer provide even the most basic cushion against life's unanticipated occurrences.[35] Livestock can be struck down by disease or raided.[36] Poor harvests, smaller patches of land and decreasing soil fertility are livelihood challenges.[37] An urban household that looks well off because it deals in cash may struggle to be food secure without a harvest to fall back on, and cash liquidity does not help when food is unavailable or overpriced.[38] Those with too little land to feed themselves need to take on debt to buy food, which creates extreme volatility, particularly if they do not own any productive assets or have a reliable income.[39]

Some of these things are deeply structural: the hidden shapes underneath the waves of violence. But once economic policy counts on certain ways in which people

are expected to function, the stark disconnect between what capitalism expects of individuals in this situation, and who is able to act on these expectations is obvious. Pain argues that not owning land, not being able to lease or use it on good conditions, being poor or being a woman can all set up people for continued livelihood struggles.[40] These struggles, exacerbated by identity or access, stand in the way of achieving a social status that could become a ticket to other social and economic benefits. People who have been without assets for a long time do not have the working capital they could use to take advantage of transactional growth paradigm opportunities requiring upfront investment, argues Levine, for example, waiting for the best prices in the market to sell one's harvest.[41]

As if not bad enough on their own, the real problem is that shocks overlap. Multiple risk factors and shock feedback loops are difficult to untangle and yet are a major reason for livelihood volatility. Imbrication of risks creates fragility; even a small disruption can then have dramatic, amplified effects. Most recovery support is too short term to mitigate risks long term, meaning risk patterns are not shifted or even recognized – the shapes underneath the visible lines are not given enough time to emerge.

Coping strategies as risks

But humans always seek ways to cope. It might be, for better or for worse, the most remarkable of many astonishing human features.

Coping strategies make up a large part of people's recovery experience. They are uncertain, short term and often do not express a choice, rather working with what is available. The livelihoods approach pays attention to such coping strategies because it offers insights into how people survive, and the differentiated livelihoods that individuals pursue. To answer the baffling question of why livelihoods remain so volatile requires a focus on two relationships that are both connected to coping strategies: first, how the conflict-affected environment interacts with the need to cope, and second, how coping strategies interconnect with each other.

Even after violence fades, violent conflict changes support networks. Who you are – your social networks, class, assets, background or gender – determines access and is a deciding factor in how volatile life is.[42] Personal support structures – and with that resilience – are inevitably altered in the wake of a conflict. 'Support structures' is a disembodied way of saying that to survive, to live, to thrive, you need people. These people – parents, guardians, siblings, friends, teachers or role models – might have died or disappeared because of the conflict. The experience of just not having any people is a fairly common one amongst youth, although they will still be part of networks, communities, villages and categories of experience or identity. But without social connections that could help to get better work, coping can become much harder.[43]

Conflict is also always about exclusion, so the structures that excluded people from resources during times of violence likely remain. Means that might have been used in the past to buffer against bad times might have been destroyed. These impacts and the forces that might come after violence ends (in the form of stabilization, statebuilding, or economic policies) create a risk in the true sense of the word – which is what, actually?

Risk is now a common framework to assess programming in violent contexts, with resilience defined as the ability to manage risks. But there is a dividing line that cuts right through the relationship of particularly northern development actors with people whose lives are shaped by violence: the conception of risk for the industrial Global North is that it can be managed. Risk is generally understood as the balance between certainty of a good outcome and possibility of a bad one and therefore a cost/benefit analysis. As Lang et al. argue, Western models seek a scientific explanation for risk and then build an institution in order to manage it. The explanation – implicit or explicit – given for risk in societies in or emerging from conflict is underdevelopment, hence building institutions to support a particular model of development becomes the approach taken.[44] Western notions of risk involve knowing the costs of something upfront, drawing up a balance sheet of who is likely to get what, then working out what the probable results will be and when they will be achieved.

Risk management from this point of view is about mitigating gaps in information. Global North risk minimization is a transaction, optimizable through knowledge that rarely utilizes the way people living amid violence assess risk. Macamo makes this point: 'The instrumentalist dimension favoured by e.g. development policy tends to ignore the perspective of the individual, an oversight that is probably committed at the cost of a fuller understanding of what is at stake when individuals grapple with uncertainty and insecurity', arguing that understanding and mitigating risk offers a way of gaining insight into social cohesion, order, uncertainty, trust/predictability and, more broadly, knowledge.[45] What is delivered to people after conflict is not risk-free for them. On the contrary, Mallett et al. highlight that 'economic development, including that financed by international aid and managed by governments, is neither a neutral nor apolitical process. It is accompanied by conflict, resistance and negotiation. Indeed, interventions may actively create these dynamics.'[46]

How are these risky dynamics created? They start with muddling up risk and uncertainty: risk comes with management options as possible outcomes are known. Uncertainty, which is what people who live in violent situations often face, means that possible outcomes are infinite or there is no way of knowing. No wonder that on a construction ground with lists of 'what works', uncertainty is not acknowledged – but even the multiple ways in which programme design can create a risk for people are easy to overlook, because risk is framed completely differently when it comes to the situation of those at the receiving end of development policies and programmes.

When development actors speak about risk in what is called the Global South, it usually translates to being vulnerable.[47] The vulnerability framing can obscure that in societies experiencing violent conflict, risk management – and the source of resilience – is not institution-based, but network-based. This is because it is part of the quality of such environments that networks offer capacity when institutions (particularly those of the state) might be absent or not trustworthy. Where relationships matter most, the causes of a risky situation are sought and mitigated within the social world, meaning that, as Barrat et al. argue, risk (and the mitigation of it) is a function of what individuals do.[48] In contexts where people are constantly negotiating uncertainty, the suggestion of a risk-assessment transaction – with clear knowledge of cost and benefit – is far-fetched. Here Sutherland et al.'s concept of 'riskscapes' might be more appropriate,

which reflect multiple layers of risk, including those socially constructed through histories and narratives.[49] These riskscapes are necessary if current risk-management approaches adopted in development are to be shifted towards an understanding that complex risks are created through 'multiple, concurrent threats or emerging global threats'.[50]

And this – in the space where multiple and concurrent things happen – is where the relationship that coping strategies have with each other becomes important.

Each individual risk extends to coping strategies, which can fail and thus require a separate strategy to deal with the failure of the first. In this interaction with each other, one way of coping becomes the seed of the next risk. And one person's need to cope is another person's opportunity. During a seasonal harvest gap in Sierra Leone, families need to buy basic food stuff on credit. Traders will grant this credit, but often with extremely high (up to 100 per cent) interest rates.[51] That extra income has to be found somewhere, probably through another coping strategy to manage the risk of overpriced food during a hunger gap. As a result, households always play catch-up. Except there is nothing playful about it.

If you imagine a Venn diagram of the existing qualities and structures of the conflict environment, externally offered livelihood support programmes, risk and coping strategies, the overlap in the middle is volatility. But spotting the logical relations between the shapes faces the same challenge that overlap syndrome poses in medicine: they cover each other up. A patient shows just one symptom but actually has several illnesses, which makes getting a full diagnosis difficult. It is easy to miss the asthma when you have bronchitis.[52] It is easy to miss the pneumonia when you have malaria.[53] It is easy to miss the coping strategy when you have a supportive livelihood programme.

The free market and the real economy

Markets are often understood to be goods traded and the time needed to produce them. Neoclassical economic theory that supports free markets assumes that it regulates demand and supply and that one of its qualities is that it creates trickle down (as an aside, behavioural economists have something very different to say about demand and supply, namely that demand is created by how information on the supply is offered). Free-market logic is comfortable with creating winners and losers, based on who comes up with the best offer.

That is not what market looks like in conflict-affected situations.

International economic intervention in Afghanistan, for example, has prioritized establishing a business-friendly investment climate (with infrastructure, training, credit facilities, access to information) to ensure supply and demand can work. And yet, even before the intervention, goods got to the market, information and credit were available through social connections. The market that the business-friendly support wants to build is currently not a self-regulating space of supply, and demand is not an expression of dysfunction, but of function: it works based on relationships and elite control. Their goal is not inclusion or a level-playing field: it is control and generating rents.[54]

State institutions to control the market may be weak, but power holders and the institutions they captured or built are not. They have the power to determine an individual's ability to generate income and, more widely, the possibility for post-conflict growth.[55] It is thus more useful to see markets as places of interchange for political and resource gain, with less of a focus on where trade goes, but who does the trading and with what motivation – what Levine describes as a perspective that focuses on 'describing the boxes in the diagram instead of explaining the arrows'.[56] That is why Goodhand distinguishes market objectives into 'combat', 'shadow' or 'coping' needs – which sounds very different from the idea of the market as a free trading space.[57]

The benefits of a free market rarely trickle down because in situations of inequality and poverty, maybe exacerbated if these are affected by violence, markets tend to lack the ability to smooth supply and demand and thus will have peaks and troughs. A select few have the economic means to navigate the peaks, while the troughs will hit the most vulnerable hardest. In Afghanistan, 40 per cent of the onion harvest perishes due to lack of storage facilities, creating price fluctuations.[58] Fluctuations hit the most vulnerable – small farmers – hardest; volatility, inequality and stressful livelihoods create a never-ending cycle.[59] But simply building a storage facility does not shift power away from those who benefit from the peaks. Maintaining regulatory control over the market and resources tends to be the ambition of elites because this assures access to wealth.[60] And since government is not a trusted actor, it is unclear if government intervention would do anything. On the contrary, a government storage silo for onions might provide an additional resource for the elite that is able to capture it.

But even if it could, a government that supports a free market might not have much interest in an equitable market. Remember the Indian vegetables that during the height of violence ensured supply in Pakistan, but at a higher price, making life in conflict more expensive? After the violence subsided, things did not go back to how they once were. Instead, Indian vegetables now are tough competition for Pakistani farmers who are still struggling with even basic recovery.[61] In this situation, a livelihood programme might identify this challenge and encourage the Pakistani farmer to diversify.

Diversification can improve food security. Instinctively, it seems like a good idea and is often encouraged. It can also be an expression of deteriorating and even desperate circumstances that force people into choices from which they do not benefit.[62] It can mean going after precarious jobs and neglecting the time needed to grow food.[63] The volatility and insecurity of livelihoods is extreme, meaning that pursuing a single occupation is often simply not an option. IDPs in DRC, for example, generally pursue manual labour, petty trade and entrepreneurship or employment – where available – at the same time.[64] In Uganda, people commonly have several livelihoods, with subsistence agriculture almost always in the mix. In the absence of policies protecting farmers from poor harvest years, creating other buffer livelihoods is necessary. While this may appear to be useful diversification, often these coping strategies fail to contribute to resilience, as they are not actually diverse enough.

People growing the same crops or selling the same goods are still vulnerable to a breakdown in harvests or a loss of markets for their goods. While combining farming with other trading is still better than not having different sources of income, a diversification that does not diversify the sources of income is not a straightforward

way of becoming less susceptible to shocks.[65] And diversification is not automatically better: if a member of household switches from working on the farm to casual labour – thereby entering a volatile and access-restricted labour market – the food security of the household may be negatively affected, as seen, for example, in Nepal or the DRC.[66] Elsewhere, in Pakistan, small and medium farmers have multiple livelihood strategies and sources, though larger farmers do not. While the latter are likely to have more income from their larger farms, they are also more exposed to market volatility – the very same market volatility that in a free market might be considered a virtue.[67]

How does this link to turning livelihood opportunities into risks? Because believing in a free market and seeing to gain access to it means taking on established, well-connected powerholders. Encouragement to take up formal credit or government-provided infrastructure to become a market entrepreneur is thus inherently risky. Taking on that risk in the first place is likely a coping strategy.

Access to credit and the social economy

The livelihood logic of providing access to credit – often through micro-loans – is that households need to buffer against shocks, smooth consumption and have access to productive means, even if these are bought on credit, to allow economic growth. Microfinance is commonly seen as a key tool in boosting local economic development and supporting post-conflict recovery,[68] reducing vulnerability by opening up possibilities for income generation while also increasing self-esteem.[69] It is based on the notion that infusing a local economy with cash is a broader stimulus and encourages individual participation in a cash economy. Formalizing credit is a way to make conditions clear and predictable and economic lives and uncertainty blueprintable, chartable, projectizable and more resilient against shocks. It is supposed to provide the possibility for long-term investments, for example, in education.

As a stand-alone idea with these principles, offering access to credit may be a positive livelihood programme. It can indeed smooth household consumption, thereby helping people deal with shocks or take advantage of positive opportunities.[70] In Uganda, previously displaced households can strengthen their social capital through having access to credit.[71] Access to credit can have positive outcomes on livelihoods.[72] There are examples of microcredits working for women, for example, in Sri Lanka's Jaffna,[73] or in Bangladesh, where access to credit gives women greater power over decision-making.[74]

But overall, these principles struggle to play out in these ways in conflict-affected environments. Credit and borrowing are about time and uncertainty; they are an investment in a future that nobody knows. When this future will actually arrive is also uncertain: economic models work with a conceptualization of time that is not measured in real time, although Keynes departed from that way of thinking. But even in theoretical time, poor households need to be able to buffer against shocks. But over what time frame, for example, access to capital, markets and microfinance might improve the situation for households that have limited means to insure themselves against shocks is entirely unclear.[75] Being in debt tends to mean higher food insecurity

– which one is cause and which is effect is unclear.[76] In combination with other factors, entering into debt can create volatility through a vicious cycle: availability of credit through official channels boosts consumption, which then requires further coping strategies to meet the increased financial needs of keeping up with consumption.[77]

Debt (both formal and informal) is a major factor in the volatility of livelihoods,[78] and the extent of it can be overwhelming: in Pakistan's Swat Valley, show Javed et al., half of all households have debts (a fivefold increase between 2006 and 2016), with households having to use a third or more of their household income to service them. Of those overstretched households, about 40 per cent is spending more than their income to repay debts, meaning they are borrowing to pay debt while also borrowing to survive.[79] Leaving aside the fact that at the same time the credit market shifted due to the conflict, consideration alone of the possible knock-on effects of debt creates a staggering number of impact chains.

Sometimes, payback involves finding cash, which can be a challenge. But the need to repay can also create unhealthy labour relationships when someone has no other choice but to settle debt through labour, thus reducing the productive capacity of the only asset – labour – many people have. For example, in the brick kilns of Afghanistan's Mazaar, many if not most workers are debtors to the kiln owners.[80] In DRC's mining industry, bonded labour has for many women become a normal part of everyday life, so much so that it is often overlooked as a destructive factor, argue Bashwira and Hintjens.[81] Usually, women work to pay off debts because they effectively assumed responsibility for credit taken on by their husband – sometimes because they themselves cannot get credit.[82] In Pakistan, permanent indebtedness makes people vulnerable not just to exploitative lenders and bonded labour but also to public shaming.[83] Of course, borrowers are in no situation to reject exploitative labour, as doing so will damage their reputations and likely make it much harder to get credit in the future.[84]

Formalizing credit can have advantages as money-lending can create instability in different ways: in Pakistan, farmers may get loans from traders who in turn sell their crops below market rates – this not only curtails one farmer's income but creates price drops for everyone else.[85] But the amount of formalization might be overstated and thus the benefits smaller than assumed. In Sri Lanka, for example, access to formal microcredit has created a new group of – mainly female – home-based entrepreneurs. Despite microfinance usually being designed around mechanisms to avoid spiralling debt, in reality many of them received their loans without an assessment of their ability to pay them back. Nor do they, as women, tend to get the best terms, argue Ranawana and Senn.[86] The result is that women, as a coping strategy, end up taking out new loans that are relatively easy to get in order to pay off old ones, which can lead to spiralling debt.[87]

Needs or credit assessments rarely capture these risks, prioritizing instead observed ability to earn an income. And formal debt can be much harder to manage in a formalized credit environment that replaced social ties, which provided access to credit and also buffered against livelihood volatility and thus allowed poorer households to manage shocks and households that are better off to maintain productivity. In Afghanistan, borrowing money is social glue – it can strengthen family or kinship ties that are an

insurance against future shocks, even more so in communities where religious norms dictate beneficial repayment terms.[88]

Access to credit can for poorer households turn into permanent indebtedness, which combined with a lack of other options means they may have to revert to selling off productive assets. In some cases, consumer pressure, commercialization of life coupled with availability of finance drives consumption in unsustainable ways. Cultures of debt emerge where people take out several loans from different sources and then have to work several, often precarious jobs, to service them all.[89] Being permanently indebted is a common, precarious feature of everyday life.

These scenarios are the exact opposite of building towards a brighter future through long-term investments. Starting from a volatile livelihood makes it very difficult to think of borrowing money for school fees, for example. Money is needed elsewhere, not for investments: in Pakistan, for instance, 30 per cent of borrowing was for household consumption, followed by livelihood/farming activities (29 per cent) and medical expenses (12 per cent).[90] Asset ownership sometimes appears in parallel with increased indebtedness (which would be manageable if the asset might yield a return to repay the debt) but assets can also be consumer goods bought on credit, such as phones.[91] And if loans need to be repaid, savings are usually first made on expenses with vague pay-off in the future: school fees, health care or nutrition.[92]

Thus, what is supposed to smooth consumption and mitigate shocks can increase precariousness, which in violent contexts always has an extra dimension to contend with. Where money is indeed invested in long-term goals, such as securing a job by getting an education, livelihoods in conflict-affected situations mirror the experience that Standing describes for the precariat class in industrialized economies: they have to take on debt to create the possibility of uncertain earnings and then are unable to service the debt since earning possibilities do not materialize and small shocks become devastating.[93]

Entrepreneurialism

Access-to-credit programmes are often linked to supporting small business entrepreneurship to create wealth. Implicitly, it is suggested that an entrepreneur has an economic growth mindset, and that a critical mass of innovative entrepreneurs will create jobs for others.[94] Entrepreneurship and self-employment also come with positive development labels rooted in a free market: independence, fulfilment, empowerment.[95] Underneath runs the idea that people's agency shapes their recovery in what Ranawana and Senn call Sri Lanka's 'hope and growth' post-war discourses on economic development.[96]

Success stories of entrepreneurialism exist, with entrepreneurship a job creator, an expression of a peace dividend or even an 'incubator of peace'.[97] There are situations where populations benefit from entrepreneurs – rather than the state – providing public goods.[98] Entrepreneurship has successfully promoted trust between groups: Rwanda's post-genocide coffee industry, for example, helped overcome divisions.[99] Social entrepreneurship in northern Uganda has been seen to successfully foster

opportunities.[100] Even so, there is a need for a more nuanced picture, and we know little about the relationship between an environment of violence, post-conflict development programmes and entrepreneurship.[101]

Entrepreneurship does not happen in a vacuum and the specific quality of a conflict-affected environment determines what type of entrepreneurship is possible and at what cost. Ambitions of wealth creation, innovation, job creation and economic growth come from a different reality, for example, where an entrepreneur moves in the world like Jeff Bezos, like a bodega owner in New York City, or a small factory owner in Nairobi. These are not situations where markets are primarily governed by power and social relationships, and where violence is an acute and all-consuming risk.

Projecting independent entrepreneurship might not sit well with those interested in maintaining power over markets and sectors and who have the tools of violence at their disposal. Innovation and disruption sound good in Silicon Valley where disruption means potentially lucrative refusal to play by the rules – but even there, argues Lepore, the belief in disruption expresses 'a theory of history founded on a profound anxiety about financial collapse, an apocalyptic fear of global devastation, and shaky evidence'.[102] If that is what innovating and disrupting means, it seems ill-advised to suggest to try it to challenge the interests of the powerful while standing on unsteady ground that the powerful are in a better position to control and reclaim.

Entrepreneurship, particularly opportunity entrepreneurship, also assumes that an individual is able to simultaneously take on unpredictable free market forces and the effect of violence and then find their own innovative ways to buffer against risks. But cattle keepers in South Sudan's Jonglei who lost their cows in a conflict cannot simply dismiss their only known, deeply traditional and identity-building, livelihood and become farmers.[103] For workable livelihoods, their livestock must be restocked, which will only be possible after security has improved and the government has shown the political will necessary to devote resources to benefitting people who may have been adversaries during conflict.[104] In Afghanistan, where farmers were encouraged to be more entrepreneurial, markets can be volatile and prices unpredictable – but how an individual farmer is expected to manage that is not part of an open-access entrepreneurship playbook.[105] In Sri Lanka, it seems likely that there is a link between poverty levels and support for entrepreneurship, but it is unclear whether this is a positive story.[106]

Entrepreneurship support can have a blind spot when it comes to recognizing the potential impact it has on potentially cancelling out efforts to improve views of the government and the legitimacy of the state. An assumption of the transactional growth paradigm is that entrepreneurs require reliable and minimal regulation from the government. However, when entrepreneurship is encouraged in contexts where government draws its resources from creating red tape in the form of bureaucracy or taxation – as in DRC, where the administration and army pose substantial obstacles for business owners[107] – the relationship between entrepreneurs and government can create further tensions, rather than supporting growth for peace. The image of the entrepreneur that emerges from these glimpses – battling Herculean market forces and war-shaped bureaucracies with limited means – is a long way from the idea of the dynamic and independent innovator.

Of course, not everyone actually wants to be an entrepreneur. Not every subsistence farmer wants to transition to running a transport business. Not every cattle keeper wants to become a tailor. But here is the catch: if survival is tough and coping necessary and loans for entrepreneurship are on offer, taking on a loan to build a transport business or to buy a sewing machine is a coping strategy. What emerges are what Lokuge et al. call 'survival enterprises', which, rather than being an enthusiastic fresh start, are a last resort for some.[108]

Figuring out a niche for self-employment and then taking a loan is not necessarily an empowering moment, but may rather represent a lack of choice: it can be necessity, rather than opportunity.[109] That newly minted entrepreneurs take up entrepreneurship support does not mean they are entering into their new livelihoods having carefully considered their passions and analysed the risks and market they will be working in. Entrepreneurship can simply be a means to temporarily escape a terrible situation: it can express trying to cope with and flee from exploitative treatment at the hands of unreliable employers rather than entrepreneurial spirit.[110]

Those that actually do want to be entrepreneurs might never get there if they do not have the right connections. There could be lots of budding enterprisers around that are not part of the social networks – via family, ethnicity, shared military pasts, political or religious connections – that allow them to act on this ambition; there might be local power holders, who make sure that entrepreneurial support on offer goes to those who are in the right networks.[111] To counter that, support to entrepreneurs would need to consist of political work, rather than of providing credit and teaching business plan writing – especially if those taught business plans ignore the demand side and encourage a large number of entrepreneurs to enter the same market at the same time, making it even more difficult to be successful.[112]

Jobs

Tightly linked to the thinking that creates support for entrepreneurs is another central plank of the transactional growth paradigm: job creation. The logic that underpins it as part of conflict prevention is that lack of employment opportunities breeds an angry class of often young people and they are more likely to engage in violence. Jobs are imagined to offer reliable income, allowing households to avoid ups and downs and being able to invest in more long-term endeavours such as education.

The idea that job creation solves deep economic problems has recently come under scrutiny. The OECD, in listing established economic policies that no longer work, argues that 'normal labour market policies have not been able to sustain demand for lower-skilled jobs in the face of automation and globalisation, or counter the growing divide between those in secure jobs and those in precarious ones'.[113] Yet, in many situations affected by violent conflict, the reality is even more removed from even the description of a labour market that underpins seeking a reform of it.

Because . . . where are these jobs?

In eastern DRC, more than 85 per cent of households cultivate or keep livestock for their livelihood.[114] In such situations, notions of economic growth turn towards

expansion, but boosting agricultural production is difficult when the productive means of agriculture are not shared. In Nepal, where agriculture is the main livelihood activity for 80 per cent of households, a significant income lift from increased agricultural productivity is unlikely.[115] Even staggeringly successful agriculture would be unable to absorb all the people looking for work in Afghanistan's Hari Sud valley, leaving migration as the only option.[116] The scale of landlessness in Afghanistan's rural populations makes a mockery of the idea of an agricultural economic miracle.[117]

Just because violence might have ended does not mean that economic systems emerge that create openings for either urban or rural labour markets.[118] The shift from war to a peace economy – especially in cases where war brought high levels of funding or military expenditure benefitting some but not others – is not smooth.[119] Often it makes life a lot more expensive. And in those rare cases where there are jobs, there are also a lot of bad jobs that neither offer a living nor a good work life. It is in the nature of post-conflict environments that often what is on offer are bad jobs designed to give the appearance of employment, while offering none of the associated benefits, such as liveable wages.[120]

The type of work that is available often creates a class of working poor needing to find various sources of income, which does little to address poverty. In DRC's mining sector, both husbands and wives work because living is so expensive and pay so low that fulfilling a family's basic needs requires two incomes.[121] Exploitative, precarious and underpaid work can contribute to volatility and the lack of any real prospect for improvement – this is a more crucial element of economic recovery than anything the growth perspective focuses on, such as access to market or capital.[122] As Mallet and Atim write, 'the labour market is pushing people towards participation in other economic activities at the same time as limiting their capacity to actually do so.'[123]

What emerges is casual labour: uncertain, often detrimental to households (certainly in the short and medium term) and more than anything a sign that households are unable to support their lives through existing and established livelihoods.[124] Casual labour comes with terrible conditions: often dangerous, with no training, no contracts, unreliable working hours, no breaks, poor access to toilet facilities, underpayment. These new uncertain livelihoods interrupt old ones that may be more humble, but also more reliable. Tourism in post-war Sri Lanka – a major area of government support – means that the fishermen can no longer access the waters now reserved for luxury resorts. Youth can get work in the tourism sector, but it is seasonal only.[125]

For women, good salaried employment might be altogether out of reach. Even quite significant shifts – such as migration of the male household head – do not appear to change the kind of jobs women can get. The determinants for what jobs are accessible to women continue to be gender, social norms, wealth (it is more difficult for poorer women to get work) and background (class or ethnicity).[126] Even where women do access work, it does not automatically represent a path to prosperity. Of the little pay that is offered to men in precarious jobs, women often get paid even less for the same work while being treated worse.[127] Syrian refugee women in Jordan, even if keen to work in new types of jobs, experience intimidation to discourage them from acting against tradition; they end up with traditional work and few opportunities for growth.[128] In the

most extreme situations, survival for women can depend on transactional sex as their only livelihood option to meet basic needs.[129]

The labour market in conflict-affected settings is not governed by supply and demand regulation, or merit. Job seekers are part of the social economy, meaning that, just like everything else, access to jobs is governed by social networks and connections; exclusion can happen on the basis of identity. This manifests in several ways, one of them being that labour is not necessarily paid for in cash, but within a social network may be paid for in kind – for example, harvested crops are given to those who helped with harvesting work.[130]

This is the situation in which economic policies land that seek to support a cash economy and job-creating livelihood programmes. They can reinforce the contradictory forces between needing cash and not being able to access it or the inequalities in the labour market – in Afghanistan's saffron production, for example, only lower-paid work is open to women.[131] Saffron, originally proposed as a valuable cash crop to replace opium cultivation, also highlights just how many layers of change these approaches to economic development need to pass. Despite decade-long efforts, the initiative has not been successful for a number of reasons: saffron is a delicate plant that only survives for more than one season under perfect conditions. Upfront costs are high and returns on investment take at least two years to materialize, meaning the number of farmers who can afford to invest in saffron is very limited.

To facilitate a different kind of employment market or different economic roles for women – of the kind that do not build up the class of the working poor – would require quite a different type of job-focused programming. Livelihood programmes rarely envision the economy as a personal space governed by politics and norms. But markets – including labour markets – are not neutral spaces in which everyone negotiates with the same tools. They mirror, and often replicate, deeply-personalized inequalities and structural violence. Structural violence in the labour market might best be solved through protection of workers. But support for unions and workers' benefits is not often on top of the list of the transactional growth paradigm. Supporting workers' rights requires precisely the kind of huge and disruptive shifts that certainly stabilization really does not want to see.[132]

Who gets to work is often identity-based, but economic development programmes tend to be siloed from efforts to change social norms and power relations, and doing so using contextual knowledge. Arguably, a change in social norms – for example, with regards to what type of work is accessible to women – might have greater impact than a boost for a local value chain.[133] But this realization is not even reflected in national or aid budgets: support for women tends to be budgeted for in the softer social sectors. Governance, economic measures, peace and security, infrastructure – hard categories where big money goes – supposedly have little to do with the norms that curtail women's lives.[134]

Jobs are also rarely imagined as a crucial part of how the state-society relationship is negotiated. Kelton's argument of how to rethink the relationship between government services and taxation offers a crucial pointer of what is missing: 'If the government imposes tax that causes people to look for ways to earn the currency, the

government should make sure that there is always a way to earn the currency.'[135] That there is not always such a way creates additional alienation between the citizens and the government.

Migration

Migration is often associated with seeking labour and opportunity. Its effects are most obvious in the role of remittances that migrants sent back to their families, which can play a tremendous part in improving livelihoods back home. The underappreciated phenomenon of diaspora investment, argue Gelb et al., is not sufficiently understood as a development tool.[136] But for many international actors and governments in the Global North, migration has become an uncomfortable topic: its economic benefits recognized, politically it is often curtailed by donor (implicit or articulated) interest in keeping migrants from entering donor countries. When stabilization is explicitly aimed at improving country conditions in order to avoid migration (particularly in the direction of the donor country), encouraging migration as a way out of poverty through putting in place programmes that lower the costs and risks associated with it is a political no-go area. International efforts to curtail migration curb its effectiveness in calming volatile livelihood curves, argue Hagen-Zanker and Mallet.[137]

Migration in the context of violent conflict brings in another aspect, as it calls on international commitments to protection. But the focus here is on the role of migration in supporting livelihoods or in contributing to volatility – in migration's often contradictory experience as both an opportunity and a destabilizing coping strategy. Where conflict is the reason for migration, it can have both stabilizing and destabilizing effects on the individual, community and state levels,[138] highlighting the terrible conditions of war, violence or fear that have provoked the need to migrate and the cause of migration to be overcome in order for livelihoods to stabilize.[139]

Families experience benefits from having a family member migrate very differently, which highlights that the term *migration* can capture many different reasons, motivations and realities.[140] Some effects are easy to see as they are financial. Particularly families in poor regions benefit from remittances;[141] they are in some cases a major source of income.[142] Being a known recipient of remittances also opens other doors. In Afghanistan, for example, those receiving remittances find it easier to access credit through social connections.[143]

But migration as a major livelihood activity seems to have diminishing returns: while more people appear to be migrating, they are in some places bringing in fewer remittances,[144] although on aggregate, remittances are rising fast. Though the movement of people is associated with economic betterment, it also signifies disruptions to livelihoods, which might be a reason why having a member of the family migrate does not automatically improve the livelihoods of families left behind.[145]

However, while labour migration may end up being hugely beneficial for a household,[146] it is also a big risk – so risky in fact that even being able to repay the cost of migration might be out of reach, setting up cycles of debt and bonded labour. Potential

pitfalls of migration include simply not ever making it to the planned destination, falling prey to people smugglers, not earning enough money due to lack of job opportunities, or becoming substance dependent while abroad without family support. Migrants moving to labour markets elsewhere experience first-hand that such markets, argue Mallet and Pain, 'both reflect and reinforce existing social inequality'.[147] Regulations that seek to govern access to labour markets or close off migration routes make migration riskier, costlier, more exploitative and less likely to help people gain better livelihoods.

Those migrating due to livelihood volatility may instead find themselves exploited by the very people facilitating their migration, as well as those offering jobs to new arrivals in places where they lack support structures.[148] This contributes to the creation of a working poor[149] in both urban and rural environments,[150] who experience precarious job security (including the need to pursue several income sources at once), exploitative conditions, lack of labour rights protection or protection from exploitation (including sexual), and a lack of any sense of progressing or 'building' a livelihood that might be associated with the trajectory of recovery.[151] Searching for livelihoods through migration also means exposing oneself to exploitation and discrimination,[152] and people are very aware of this, making migration a last resort: in south-central Nepal, only after having experienced extreme violence in their home area, did people perceive the threat to their personal safety as exceeding the risk of migrating.[153]

Even those who want to migrate often do not get a choice. Access to the ability to migrate is highly uneven, due to social norms of who an ideal migrant is – the reality being that this is usually the person most likely to generate the biggest economic returns. Often these are young men from the non-poorest households.[154] Women continue to be less likely to be able to migrate.[155] Even back home, migration continues to have a social effect and the story is not always positive: wives (as it is mainly wives) left behind are not necessarily doing better emotionally, socially or financially. Migration means rearranging duties at home, as the family is now short of a worker and some women find themselves trapped in existing social structures that determine access to jobs.[156] Others (e.g. in Nepal's Rolpa, from where many men migrate) perform roles from which they were previously excluded due to gender stereotypes.[157] Migration thus places a magnifying glass over the social structures determining who gets access to what kind of benefits from migration.

Often, these treacherous experiences of migration start from a perilous starting point. Migration can be a short-term coping strategy that changes little in terms of improved livelihoods in the long run. Instead, the migratory movement of vulnerable people can increase fragility, due to a number of mechanisms.[158] For starters, much like the fact that not everyone is an entrepreneur, not everyone leaves home ready to take on the bright lights of a big city in search of a better life – for many, migration is an escape from lack of opportunities, lack of land, family disputes or abusive relationships.[159] But sometimes the economic reasons for migration can be too easily misread. Often economic survival strategies are linked to bride price and wedding costs (this can involve significant household investments, e.g. in Pakistan), but development programmes that seek to change the norms of bride price fail to take into account that these are exchanges that create mutualities between households, as well as the fact that almost all households are indebted, often to each other.[160]

Do volatile livelihoods create violence?

The Venn diagram that shows existing systems, what livelihood programmes offer, what risks these bring and how they can turn one livelihood effort into a coping strategy for the failure of another has a number of similarities across contexts. Even where coping strategies do lead to diversification – meaning a livelihood relies on more than one pillar – this rarely provides a path out of precarious hand-to-mouth existence, instead merely somewhat bolstering against shocks.[161] Coping strategies replicate societal inequalities in many different ways. Entering the volatile world of coping strategies is only less risky with strong networks, which can provide credit if necessary.[162] But it is these networks that many economic policies aim to make at least less powerful. What emerges – and is the reason for the livelihood volatility – is a lack of social support for some; perpetual indebtedness (that is passed on from one generation to the next); extreme strategies to pay off debts (including through marrying off daughters to pay debts)[163] or selling off productive assets, accepting malnutrition and curtailing education.[164]

It is also clear that change in one element of the Venn diagram is not enough: to make a difference, two or more constructive developments need to exist concurrently. Otherwise risks buffered and progress made in one area are cancelled out by challenges in another. For example, in order to benefit from the long-term impact of education, an individual may need to migrate to an urban environment, where schooling is on offer.[165] However, rapid urbanization poses a challenge for livelihood recovery, due to a lack of jobs and the competition arising for those that do exist.[166] So both issues of access to schools and access to jobs need to be solved. Programmes aimed at entrepreneurial activities can neglect that an income from the activity may be delayed – crops, for example, need time to grow – pushing people further into economic hardship. A striking example of this cancelling out can be seen in Pakistan, where migration to Iran is associated with remittances and improved livelihoods, but also the risk of opium dependency. This can lead to the family of the addicted migrant being ostracized and losing their access to credit through social networks.[167]

These details of livelihood volatility occur for people whose lives have been shaped by violence. Their environment is marked by continuous and deeply-conflictual structures or persistent outright violence. They are the people for whom violence does not stop, and who feel the blow of shocks. They experience that the end of conflict does not mean a positive change in the structures, and that the reasons why people struggled to make a living during conflict – lack of access to productive resources – do not automatically go away. Neither does the way people do survive: through subsistence agriculture, their networks, stacking multiple income sources on top of each other. This sits in dissonance with the ideas that tend to underpin livelihood support: training, economic growth, free markets, salaried jobs, entrepreneurialism, statebuilding, access to credit. Even if the recent much more sophisticated approaches to livelihood support – such as emphasizing market systems, value chains, social protection, cash transfers and minimum economic recovery standards – are taken into account,[168] juxtaposing reality and approach is proof that Isaac Newton was wrong about his Third Law of Motion.

Newton's Third Law is about the force created by an interaction between two objects, the push and pull, the action and reaction. The force exerted by reaction, so the Third Law, is the same as the force exerted by action. Now, if supporting lives in conflict-affected situations or international development at large were indeed a construction ground, maybe the law of equal force in an interaction would apply.

But humans are not physics and social development is not engineering or mathematics, and, as Maxwell points out, the point of Newton's laws was that they were deliberately ignorant of anything human that could endanger their purity.[169] Equal force in an interaction is rare at the best of times; in conflict-affected environments, it is impossible. Yet, forces and interactions exist: the big systemic ideas that come from statebuilding and neoclassical economics do push and pull on people, setting up contradictory energies between the qualities that characterize violent environments and what many traditional livelihood support programmes want to achieve. And the people, struggling to survive or make a living? Their reaction has no equal force to the actions put upon them.

This Newton-defying distribution of force is unfair by design: it asks those with precarious livelihoods, harrowing experiences of violence and loss, and livelihoods that require permanent social negotiation of access orders, to operationalize hundreds of years of theories of the state and the economy. It is a force that not only suggests a system but also dictates how a person needs to operate within it. That person needs to be disciplined and individualist, boot-strapping and resourceful, resilient and self-sufficient as well as growth-oriented.[170] The reaction from conflict-affected people pushing back on these ideas does not have equal force to what is exerted on them.

The suggestion that it is on the people to make it work is the reason why many programmes shift the burden of systemic change onto the shoulders of those who have been most punished by the system, and then calling it empowerment.[171] When teenage pregnancy became a recognized problem in Sierra Leone, the programmatic response was to educate girls to refrain from consensual sex with their same-age boyfriends. But teenage pregnancy does not always involve a same-age boyfriend and also happens because of sexual violence or because sex is a currency to pay for living expenses.[172] Teenage girls do not have equal force at their disposal to push back. Empowerment language will not systemically change that.

There is an obvious tension here: without shifting power to the people, sustainable change will not be possible. That is the thinking behind the movements towards localization (with the term describing both the ambition to prioritize the fuzzy notion of local ownership and value local capacity and the challenge to define what the local even means),[173] context-specificity and local ownership and transferring the onus on finding ways to survive back onto the population can make lives better.[174] But that means giving up ownership and recognizing when an approach puts people at the mercy of forces that push and pull them in opposite directions.

This is the landscape in which programmes supporting economic growth operate. And maybe rightly so, since the emphasis on economic growth as a post-conflict development strategy is not incidental: there is a link between economic growth (or lack thereof) and conflict. Economic stagnation post-conflict equals a 40 per cent risk of conflict reoccurring; the risk falls to 25 per cent in countries that successfully

maintain economic growth.[175] Lowest income countries struggle longer with the consequences of conflict.[176] The 'conflict trap' posits that poor economic development outcomes and conflict are mutually reinforcing.[177] The prioritization of measures such as investment, aid and debt relief[178] stems from this notion that poor economic development can cause relapse into conflict or aid dependency.[179] Underpinning this idea is a development paradigm that is not very effective in stimulating sustainable economic development.[180]

A conflict-sensitive lens takes into account that economic activity is merely another arena in which the existing rules of the game – for better or worse – are established and lived. Development projects that aim to change or regenerate markets will be subject to the very same rubrics they are trying to make more equitable.[181] In Afghanistan's Nangarhar, for example, crop sales are the most important source of income for households with land; being paid for working in crop fields is the most important livelihood for those without land, alongside employment in the security forces (police or army).[182] The conflict potential then arises from the landless being condemned to often badly paid labour jobs or to joining armies that can swell in numbers, increasing conflict potential.

Disagreement exists on the causality between economic development and peace, with some finding no obvious link and others highlighting the importance of trade.[183] In the past, discussions have centred on the different nature of war economies, with the 'war ruin hypothesis' positing that significant conflict destroys an economy, resulting in a costly and drawn-out reconstruction in contrast to the notion of the 'phoenix factor', which means that devastated economies can be transformed into more efficient and competitive systems through new technologies and institutions.[184]

These discussions do not see the shapes underneath the visible lines of violence. The understanding here is that violence is primarily about outright competition for resources (anything from land, water, minerals, trade routes to gaining control over the lucrative state apparatus, anything that the notion of 'greed' captures) and less about how available resources are distributed (the grievance). The emphasis on the greed element is the origin of the notion that economic growth will prevent conflict,[185] and the reason why redistribution of wealth and income does not feature so much. Of course, resources matter. US military presence in Afghanistan came with a huge wad of cash and created winners and losers, depending on how well a regional ruler got along with US soldiers.[186] As the pursuit of gains also includes what Jackson describes as 'elite opportunism', the manner in which these competitive fights play out is doubly volatile, with loyalties continuing to shift.[187] Changes at both national and more visible local market levels mean that actors will seek to ensure their positions and access to resources is not compromised.[188] These are inherently conflictual processes.

But they are viewed as a problem of scarcity of resources, rather than a problem with distribution of those resources because even the notion of distribution suggests that there are structures in place that need changing. But where the economists meet the statebuilders is in the conversation that after a violent conflict, there are no politics or structures (because there never were or because they have been destroyed)

and everything needs to be built from scratch. The transactional growth paradigm's assumption that markets in such contexts are non-existent or non-functional constitutes a profound misunderstanding that is at the root of many an ill-fated intervention.[189]

Because there is a lot of there there.

Livelihoods, the economy, political structures and the possibility for future violence interlink on a continuum. Coping strategies do not start after violence ends; they are also deep shapes underneath the visible lines. Surviving violence means finding ways to cope by, for example, liaising with local armed groups to protect assets during violence, usually in return for political or material support. How much a household participates in such exchanges depends on how exposed they are to both poverty and violence: the poorer the household, the higher the probability it will support or even participate in an armed group.[190] In Afghanistan, the informal regulation of markets was maintained throughout thirty years of conflict, making the challenge of changing it to state-centric formal regulation markedly greater. Economies during and after conflict are continuous conflictual spaces with economic attributes that differ little in or after violence.[191] Conflict has its own governance structures that continue to influence how economic growth is governed.[192] Sri Lanka's war governance – emphasizing religion, caste and other identity markers – infuses how everyday economic interactions are run.

But rarely is a post-conflict economy viewed through a governance lens, which would involve considering the political and social forces governing and an understanding of how politics or retribution might drive conflict more than competition over resources.[193] Yet, statebuilding and economic policy often work in tandem, with state capacity understood as the ability to implement pro-growth policies.[194] Such policies have often promoted private sector development – sometimes while budding private sector actors are still engaged in military intervention – with little consideration of the social structures and powers that have shaped the context's markets and economy.[195] Statebuilding and economic growth policies draw on the assumption that good institutions and governance inevitably lead to improved resource allocation, increased living standards, job creation and access to services, thereby mitigating the risk of conflict reoccurring.[196] And maybe they will, one day. But the size of economic shifts required dwarfs the policies that are supposed to bring about this change. In the meantime, as the saying (sort of) goes, when the elephants of big ideas fight, the grass suffers.

The big ideas of institutions, free market and a competitive labour landscape tend to not come empty-handed, but often just dip in and out. Many livelihood projects have short planning horizons and create more volatility than they counter.[197] They also bring with them the most unforgiving aspects of the big ideas. Quick interventions at best simply do not work; at worst they raise the stakes but fail to change the rules of the game, meaning that political forces will conspire to resist or usurp the change, enhancing the potential for conflict.[198] Coupled with the disruption of the social and moral economy, this means that inequality and the loss of political, social and moral voice emerge as possible conflict risks – and a sense of having little to lose should future conflict arise.

An optical illusion of hope

Violence is so overpowering, so all-encompassing, that it creates an optical illusion: it lets other factors disappear into the background. The quality of an environment that has experienced conflict is such that many factors interlink: power structures, risks, experiences, poverty, relationships. Livelihood interventions struggle to find entry points and thus often stay two-dimensional, and often within the lane that is marked by statebuilding and economic growth approaches. The effect is sobering: people trying to continuously climb up the economic ladder and finding themselves where they started or even further down.

The whole set-up, in its impossibility, is reminiscent of the Penrose stairs: an optical illusion of a staircase to nowhere, where start and end are synonymous (Figure 5). The Penrose stairs could be a depressing image to use to describe what happens with livelihoods, violence and livelihood interventions. Writing about the stairs in the *British Journal of Psychology* in 1958, the Penroses highlighted the 'contradictory perceptual interpretations' that their image invited, created by 'false connexions of the parts' that allowed 'acceptance of the whole figure' where 'each part of the structure is acceptable as representing a flight of steps, but the connexions are such that the picture, as a whole, is inconsistent'. Father and son Penrose were not writing about livelihood programmes in conflict-affected settings, and yet it sounds as if they were.

Figure 5 Walking the Penrose stairs. Image by Olivier Ploux.

It took the Penroses a while to figure out who their audience was for their insights into how an image can keep fooling our perception. Writing their article, they did not know in which discipline their melange of cognitive chimera and laws of physics would sit. It ended up in psychology, luckily (although Roger later won the Nobel Prize in physics). Because it is a reminder that the work goes on in the mind's software and not hardware, and that checking one's imagery is not a frivolous exercise. To understand the contradictions and what it is we are looking at with the Penrose stairs, the Penroses remind us, 'reappraisal has to be made very frequently.'[199] It is as if they were writing recommendations for development practitioners.

One part of this reappraisal could be to use the Penrose stairs as a necessary mental imagery shift: the shift from growth, from climbing upwards, to being able to resiliently climb stairs up and down (as life often requires us to do), without being jerked about and without being able to know which steps represent a high point or a low point.[200] The reinterpretation of the Penrose stairs could be the shift in metaphors that Raworth requests for economic growth: 'from "good is forward-and-up" to "good is in-balance".'[201] Ending with the Penrose stairs thus suggests that this chapter is not a litany of hopelessness. It is just a reminder of two things.

First, walking up and down the stairs without falling off is a difficult and complex task that connects a lot of strands that do not happen in linear ways. Because the stairs have no obvious beginning or end, they highlight the need for non-hierarchical entry points, appreciating unseen connections, recognizing non-binary choices and moving away from seeking causality along clearly defined lines.

And second, the stairs remind us that we are bad at understanding the whole picture. Not just individually bad – universally, as humans.[202] We think we look at the world in all its dimensions, but our internal representation of the world around us is very much two-dimensional. We give it structure through what we want to believe and through relating it to the things that are important to us.

Our starting point is, too often, our end point.

Vertical columns of accelerated air

The mental landscape

In the late 1960s, US artist Michael Asher created an invisible piece of art. Using industrial blowers, he constructed ceiling-to-floor columns and walls of pressurized air, complementing architectural features in the room. The air created a barrier, imperceptible to the eye, that engineered the path of museum visitors in unexpected ways. One can imagine the scene: most visitors might have simply been guided as the US artist intended, unknowingly adapting their path to navigate the invisible forces. Others might have reacted differently, wanting to push their way through the invisible wall upon noticing the air flow in their way. Cautious candidates probably used their hands to feel their way to the margins of the columns. Others, perhaps, simply turned their attention elsewhere, having found the hidden blockade irritating.

An invisible obstacle. Without guidance as to how to negotiate or avoid it, but powerful enough to nudge people out of their paths or turn them away entirely. A structurally imperceptible change to an existing configuration that fundamentally alters the experience of a space. An inconspicuous addition to the architecture, but one that changes everything. All these aptly describe what Asher's *Vertical Columns of Accelerated Air* were and what they created. This piece of art, a powerful and yet invisible obstacle, also offers a to-the-point aide-mémoire when seeking to understand why programmes designed to make lives amid violence better encounter barriers that might not have been listed in the risk assessment of the decision-maker. Such a barrier may be a lack of community engagement or interest in the programmes. Sometimes, programmes might encounter outright hostility or they might be seemingly successfully implemented; yet, when people are asked about whether their lives have improved, respondents report that they have not experienced their lives as getting better. How people who live their lives amid violence experience the world around them and how they interact with it is shaped by what I call the 'mental landscape'.[1]

The mental landscape helps to unpack why people do not experience improvement particularly after violence has officially ended, as development practitioners expect. Livelihoods remain volatile for the reasons discussed in Chapter 4 – the end of violence that presents as conflict does not mean that violence has ended, or that violence is what creates the most volatility in people's lives. There is an additional jolting contradiction between the hard indicators that are commonly used to measure the physical security

of the conflict environment – number and frequency of attacks, number of deaths and injuries from attacks, number of attackers – and people's perception. Even in situations when physical security looked measurably better, with attacks becoming less frequent, people would often continue to feel unsafe in their villages.[2] The discrepancy between hard indicators and perception did not stop there: even when access to services or infrastructure was measurably improved, people did not seem to universally experience this as making their lives better.[3] The many forces that contribute to the volatility of livelihoods without a doubt play a big role in shaping this perception. But there is something else going on – an invisible barrier for people experiencing what those around them might consider visible, measurable improvement. The concept of the mental landscape helps make sense of this paradox.

The notion of the mental landscape was born out of research in northern Uganda. Life here is completely different from how it was during the active conflict between the government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army. The positive change is remarkable. And yet, people hold a deep sense of disappointment about just how little life has improved. Some of this lack of improvement is also measurable in hard indicators: while women no longer need to fear rebel attacks on their village, they are not always safe at home.[4] For girls to finish school remains a rarity.[5] An increased mortality rate amongst the Acholi people is, argue Otim et al., 'anecdotally blamed on excessive consumption of cheap and widely available sachet-packaged alcohol in the region', which has been identified as a coping mechanism for 'the traumatic stress, resulting from over three decades of civil war, cattle raiding, and armed banditry in the northern region'.[6]

Other aspects are less measurable, but just as real: the conflict's legacy infuses everyday life through memories, alienating structures, lack of trust in a government that never protected the local population, and a rebellion that is not yet fully over, both in its current incarnation and in the political alienation that created it in the first place. People have a strong sense of their political and social marginalization, as well as what stops them from exercising their political citizenship; this is made most obvious through adversarial remarks by President Yoweri Museveni.[7] There is an often-heard lament that one reason for the lack of real change is that the youth is lazy, idle and not interested in working hard to invest in and improve their future.[8] A Lugandan expression that captures this mood from the point of view of the youth is *osilike*, which sparked uncountable trending memes expressing that part of being Ugandan is having to wait, to keep quiet and to see what happens.

The mental landscape

In capturing the layers of invisible influences that guide how a person navigates their world, the mental landscape helps connect how people experience their world, act in it and make decisions – and how all of this shapes their lives today and tomorrow. It describes the deep links between memories of events long gone, the everyday experience of life (and of waiting for life to happen) and how an individual makes sense of it. In that, it owes a debt to Snowden's notion of anthro-complexity, which he describes as 'the science of human complex adaptive systems' that 'allows us to co-create new realities in our uncertainty and volatility'.[9] Linking this sensemaking to

the decisions a person makes – their choices, their behaviours, their actions – allows tracing one's own actions as they are influenced by and then become part of the mental landscape. Maybe it is an attempt from someone who stems from what Yunkaporta refers to in his book on indigenous knowledge as 'print-based cultures' to capture, in a print-culture way, what is in fact a phenomenon that is owned by oral cultures. Yunkaporta writes:

> Oral cultures are known as high-context or field-dependent reasoning cultures. They have no isolated variables: all thinking is dependent on the field or context. Print-based cultures, by contrast, are low-context or field-independent reasoning cultures. This is because they remain independent of the field or context, focusing on ideas and objects in isolation.[10]

Maybe the notion of the mental landscape can counter what Tuhiwai Smith calls the 'systematic fragmentation' that imperialism has thrown upon the people it colonized, picking them apart 'in the disciplinary carve up of the Indigenous world: bones, mummies and skulls to the museums, artwork to private collectors, languages to linguistics, "customs" to anthropologists, beliefs and behaviours to psychologists'.[11]

The mental landscape allows an interpretative angle into the contradictions that for practitioners can be confusing: Why is what seems like objective improvement not experienced as such? This points towards a specific quality that is created by the experience of violent conflict, but what is this specific quality of the conflict or post-conflict environment that magnifies certain processes or renders others ineffective? Does the experience of violence shape what Russel Hochschild calls the 'deep story' – the underlying emotions often shared within a community that identifies through these shared emotions that form the backbone of any explanation of why a situation is the way it is?[12] If the deep story is one of deprivation and marginalization, it supports perceptions and behavioural patterns that make it much more difficult to experience a path of improvement, even if that improvement seems objectively real. And does this mental landscape create certain behaviours that become invisible obstacles to the success of post-conflict development programming, but which development programmes need to learn how to navigate without seeing them?

Acknowledging the mental landscape is not a suggestion to design programmes that support positive thinking. It is not development through self-help. Deep stories of marginalization and the long-term effect of having experienced violence are not attitude problems. But what the mental landscape offers is a way to unpack the deeply human ways of dealing with challenge and using those insights to think in more complex, human, behaviourally informed and realistic ways about how to support those who live amid violence.

The notion of the mental landscape is, however, as much an attempt at developing a solution to a limiting perspective as it is a continuation of such perspective. Maybe even this dilemma is helped by understanding that the way humans are built might not naturally allow us to find ways of broadening our experience to take on board the intangible: we look at the world both in its whole, as *Gestalt* or as a picture in its entirety where we always see things that are new to us as well as in great detail, instantly sorting what we experience as new into categories we already know. Thus,

the sweeping learning and new insights are instantly stacked on an already built shelf. As McGilchrist argues, humans by brain design operate in

> two fundamentally opposed realities, two different modes of experience; that each is of ultimate importance in bringing about the recognizably human world; and that their difference is rooted in the bi-hemispheric structure of the brain. It follows that the hemispheres need to co-operate, but I believe they are in fact involved in a sort of power struggle.[13]

To make the concept of the mental landscape come alive (with all its limitations), it is best to visualize a, well, landscape. A landscape's contours are determined by many influencing factors. Time has transformative impact: landscapes shift with seasons, with weather, with cycles of life. Cycles can make the experience of time seem stop-and-start, circular, repetitive or unswerving – or they can offer an invigorating fresh start. Time builds and erodes foundations, how solid they are, and what they look like. Each new experience of passage of time builds on what came before and what is imagined to come in the future. The same landscape also can look very different to different people, depending on their vantage point: each person taking in and navigating the landscape is a unique personality and ever-changing, going through their life accumulating and shedding experiences, relationships, memories, emotions, hopes and disappointments. Ever-evolving, but also stable, personal characteristics interact with time and foundations to mould a mental landscape. In that sense, the mental landscape is a product, as well as a producer, of human experience (Figure 6).

The mental landscape captures an individual's deeply-personal experiences of life and violence, the lingering histories, narratives and legacies of violence and attempts to stop it; their relationships; their perception of the world and people around them; how
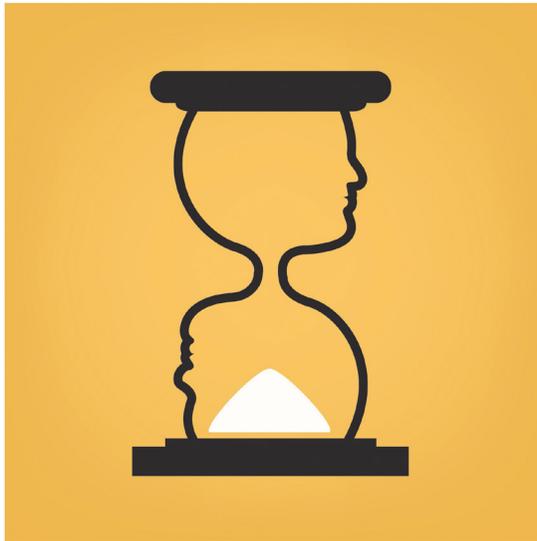
Figure 6 The mental landscape: Time, changing perspectives and shifting foundations. Image by Olivier Ploux.

they identify reasons and causalities; and how they use these identified causalities to make sense of the challenges they face and how they act on them. The role of emotions is important here as they play the role that Illouz describes as 'the inner energy that propels us towards an act . . . where that energy is understood to simultaneously implicate cognition, affect, evaluation, motivation, and the body'.[14]

The mental landscape of lives amid violence is constructed at the intersection of multiple conflict legacies, narratives and experiences, meaning a single person can hold several seemingly-contradictory views. The quality of how someone experiences their life is highly individual, even within communities where people have considerable shared experience or that are not culturally individualistic. In similar situations, two people can have very different mental landscapes but are also influenced by the landscape of their peers.

When – in collecting longitudinal data – you ask the same person three times, spread out over ten years, how they are doing, it becomes clear how much changes and how much stays the same. The same individual's experience, asked about a few years apart, is influenced by many additional factors – such as beliefs, views, personality or mood – beyond how their most recognizable conflict environment has changed. Even a huge longitudinal data set does not present a linear and universal experience of lives amid violence.[15] The list of influencing factors is potentially endless, only ever pointing towards a need to understand that recovery and change have many layers to them.

Individual aspects do add up to and are also shaped by a communal experience, a shared frame of reference that guides how people make sense of a situation. Humans cannot switch off this permanent process of sensemaking and seeking causality. It is how we function and how we also can stand in our own path towards change. The influence of the mental landscape is multilayered, maybe subtly so, yet it is very real both for individuals and communities.

The impact of the mental landscape

Identities are deeply anchored to the experience of conflict. Holding an identity that is connected to the experience of conflict is not just something that is worth a descriptive footnote: it is of consequence. Being the victim of a serious crime or sexual violence has an emotional, physical and psychological impact that often goes unacknowledged in programmes, and yet the impact can show in indicators that measure people's livelihoods and food security.[16] The identity of being conflict-affected creates perceptions and behavioural patterns; these contribute to making it more difficult for people to experience improvement.

For example, women in Sri Lanka who observed the implementation of pro-poor programmes but personally experienced no benefit from them sought out reasons for why that was so. They used their war experience as an explanation for why their lives are not improving. This shifts their mental landscape towards thinking of themselves as war-affected as a defining marker of who they are, which in turn shapes how they interpret subsequent experiences.[17] The mental landscape of being war-affected then becomes what informs the schema – the mental framework that helps organize

knowledge by using default values and articulating expectations. Once the schema dictates that being war-affected creates an inability to experience benefits, this will become a very powerful frame of reference.

This view of identity as a permanent negotiation in which experiences play a part and dictate how information is handled ought not surprise: scholars have long understood the link between identity and cognitive processes that involve a self-referential practice in which the theory of oneself is bolstered through selective picking of relevant information that supports the ever-evolving identity. Kahan calls this 'identity-protective cognition', which is the mechanism that humans deploy when selecting information so that it does not threaten their identity – or, even more so, picking out information that confirms who they are.[18] It is a mechanism that is useful to consider when understanding how holding the identity of 'war-affected' might make it much more difficult to experience positive change.

It is also crucial when it comes to reflecting how standard mental models and ways of thinking about development amid violence continue to be perpetuated. Some of people's behaviours amid violence are at odds with how standard economics thinks about situations of uncertainty, which is a strong reminder how important it is to abandon some of those stereotypical ideas. Standard economics suggest that in a situation of uncertainty, such as violence or political unpredictability, people change their economic behaviour towards prioritizing short-term survival and consolidation over economic expansion, investment or increasing their skills. In short, a common way of thinking is that such situations create short-term horizons for people. And yet, in the original research in Uganda that supported the development of the mental landscape, there seemed to be a link between people recalling the time of conflict and their economic behaviour that showed as being more reluctant to spend money and more likely to be protective of their assets, both of which point towards longer-term perspectives.[19]

In this research, northern Ugandans were offered a guaranteed immediate pay off versus a likely more uncertain pay off in the future. They were, counterintuitively, more likely to choose to wait – *osilike*. In practice, this meant they might likely be less inclined to, for example, start a new business. This might have two different effects: not taking an entrepreneurial risk could undermine a person's success and they might fare worse than their more risk-taking neighbours who have been less exposed to conflict. Or, if we recall the risks associated with becoming an entrepreneur as a coping strategy from Chapter 4, a person who is risk averse due to their exposure to conflict might end up more livelihood stable in the future – but they might have to expend a lot of mental energy on rejecting entrepreneurial support that is offered to them as the best way out of poverty. A crucial insight here is that the mental landscape changed an expected link between behaviour and time: waiting became a solid choice under conditions of uncertainty created by violent conflict; likely because waiting can be valuable as it might allow better access to more information in the future.

The experience of time also plays a role in why people might not feel improvement. Why is the building of a new road, for instance, not taken by people as a clear sign of improvement? Because for people in eastern DRC, for example, seeing a road being built brings the *promise* but not the *fulfilment* of development, meaning they are even

more acutely aware of lack of progress.[20] So the move from hope to actual change is fluid, just as fluid as the experience of time itself: time often passes slowly when things are getting better, meaning that small steps of positive change take a long time to feel that way. But time races when things go wrong.[21]

The mental landscape also captures the ongoing impact of actions, decisions and behaviours. A behaviour in response to an individual experience can lay the foundation for a challenging situation. During conflict, for example, households adopt certain economic behaviours that proved damaging to the economy,[22] creating the experience that economically, the end of conflict is not beneficial. That these shifts happen is observable and known, along with the insight that living amid violence can birth economic behaviours that can persist long after a conflict has ended. This is likely due to the mental landscape shaped by violence and the conflict continuum, where the official end of a conflict does not necessarily signify that it is over to the people who live with the conflict. What we really do not know yet is how to deter households and firms from persisting in behaviours adopted during conflict that are not helpful in changing lives after conflict. Thinking through the mental landscape that the conflict has created might offer an entry point. Another legacy is a mental landscape that affects people's ability to trust, collaborate and plan for the future. Grievances and relations – between individuals and communities – are deep physical and emotional experiences that shape outlooks.[23]

This unending cross-pollination between the many elements that shape the landscape makes up the special quality of conflict-affected environments. It captures the multilayered and circular long-term effect of the experience of violent conflict, which might play a part in why people living with it can find it so difficult to experience, feel, live, taste, perceive and behold recovery. For programmes seeking to support such improvement, the invisible factors of the mental landscape potentially present the toughest barriers to the measurable success they seek.

Many of these forces are experienced in multiple ways: there is a communal experience of structural forces and of shocks, and there is an individual experience. In resilient environments, an individual experiencing shock can be supported by a community; a precarious community can draw from the strength of its individuals. But this mutually protective relationship is put under tremendous stress in war and violence.

Maybe the most important contribution of the mental landscape is its emphasis on nuanced multiplicity. It puts humans in the centre, but acknowledges the many forces that shape humans. It acknowledges that many things go on at the same time, within the same person. They can be contradictory or complementary. They can be confusing and offer moments of clarity. They can become an identity crisis that can only be solved by acknowledging information that creates such crisis. They are a reminder that most developments do not have a single cause and that, as Weber purported, they need to be studied through the meaning that people attach to them, their own *Verstehen*.[24]

The mental landscape and mental health

The ripple effects of violent conflict are pervasive and far-reaching, including for people who did not personally experience direct and immediate life-threatening

violence. Having witnessed a relative or friend dying or being injured, struggling for economic survival, being displaced from one's home and being politically and socially marginalized, even seemingly small but mounting disruptions to daily life, are profound emotional blows.[25] Often research looks more directly at the impact of these experiences on mental health.

A huge number of studies examine the relation between the experience of violent conflict and mental health.[26] A 2002 survey in Afghanistan found that 67.7 per cent of respondents in Afghanistan had experienced depression in the previous ten years.[27] In Sri Lanka, only 6 per cent of people surveyed had not suffered any form of conflict stress, with depression, alcoholism and drug use common.[28] A study with Syrian refugees reveals how the experience of conflict-related violence, displacement, multiple losses, and the need to adapt to the post-emergency context exacerbates pre-existing mental health problems and creates new mental health challenges. Research shows that some groups are more vulnerable to suffering mental health issues, such as victims of sexual and gender-based violence, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) community.[29] What long-term effects are will continue to be the subject of study – for example, on the quality of relationships, on the way the conflict experience and memorialization of grandparents and parents shape their children and grandchildren even if those were born long after conflict ended.[30] Some known and visible effects that have been captured in studies are mental disengagement, substance abuse or other addictions, or violent behaviour associated with mental health outcomes linked to the experience of violent conflict.

The focus on emotions in conflict settings has – justifiably – been on trauma. It is a field of heated scholarly discussion, with therapeutic offers scrutinized for context-appropriateness or ability to deal with the traumatic mental impacts of conflict or violence.[31] Trauma requires in-depth individual diagnosis and is usually associated with a specific event or a specific set of memories that is often, but not always, recalled distinctly. The notion of communal trauma has widened the set of diagnostic and treatment methods and psychosocial support and trauma counselling are now a much more common part of what organizations offer in situations of violent conflict. But trauma is first and foremost an injury: a clearly identifiable damage done, a wound, as the direct translation from its Greek origin clarifies. Diagnosis of trauma guides psychosocial assistance programmes or other processes aimed at healing.

The mental landscape of lives and violence is distinctly different from individual or collective trauma or collective mental health, although trauma can be part of the mental landscape. In an earlier chapter, the notion of conflict recovery was questioned, as it suggests a return to health. Health in this notion has much clearer boundaries and the point of identifying trauma is also often and correctly to find ways to support people in healing. The mental landscape is not per se about healing or about finding ways to create better conditions: it is an acknowledgement of just how much human experiences, narratives, personalities and emotions interact and create the world that they themselves experience.

Despite being distinct from trauma and mental health, it is useful to situate the concept of the mental landscape within the long-standing discussion about whether expressions of trauma, therapy and healing can be universal.[32] A particularly heated debate in the

late 1990s revolved around the lack of evidence that Western talking therapies were more effective than the cultural and religious coping strategies often used in conflict-affected states.[33] Generally speaking, in Western approaches to dealing with trauma, the coping strategies of individuals are supported by services such as counselling. In non-Western societies, coping tends to be founded upon collective experience and the use of community support systems, which engender an emotion-focused approach to coping.[34] What the notion of the mental landscape offers is not a judgement on whether certain therapeutic approaches work better, but a means of understanding behavioural mechanisms in order to facilitate better analysis of the invisible obstacles that stand in the way of a positive experience of recovery from conflict.

Two kinds of coping strategies make an appearance in this book: the coping strategies unpacked in Chapter 4, that can help with survival, but also contribute to volatile livelihoods. The other kind are those that Lazarus and Folkman define as a set of cognitive and behavioural efforts deployed to solve a problem, reduce or eliminate an emotional response, or modify one's initial assessment of a situation.[35] A person will deploy such strategies in order to modify adverse aspects of their life or minimize internal stress.[36] Understanding how these coping strategies interact with the mental landscape faces the same problem that fuelled the earlier debate that has been a major driver of the study of humans through anthropology: really very little is empirically known about the mechanisms of sensemaking, behaviour and decision-making outside Henrich's WEIRD populations and yet anthropology has for years pointed towards the fact that humans in different contexts are fundamentally different in the way they experience the world around them.[37] So little in fact that even the framing of the mental landscape, despite it being an attempt to open up how we think about how we are shaped by how we experience the world around us, is deeply rooted in a WEIRD way of seeing the world that will and needs to be obsolete when non-WEIRD ways of knowing, ways of being, ways of acting, ways of talking about these experiences move centre stage. Right now, the steps towards that are taken from within WEIRD academic disciplines, such as behavioural science, economics or political science. They are an expression of what Yunkaporta describes as

> the most remarkable thing about western civilisation is its ability to absorb any object or idea, alter it, sanitise it, rebrand it and market it . . . in the same way that plants can be tweaked at the genetic level to become the intellectual property of one company and then replace all similar crops in a region, ideas can be re-engineered to serve the interests of the powerful. It's not a conspiracy; it's just power doing what power does.[38]

One such expression of power doing what power does might be the push to understand oral-culture behaviour through print-based culture methods.

Understanding behaviour

The OECD defines behavioural insights as 'an inductive approach to policy making that combines insights from psychology, cognitive science, and social science

with empirically-tested results to discover how humans actually make choices'.[39] Behavioural economics makes the case that to understand personal choices, one must account for the fact that humans are social beings who do not act rationally and never in isolation.[40] Social beings are not the same everywhere and how the elements of the mental landscape interact and with what behavioural effect cannot be generalized. Understanding behaviour in such contexts cannot be arrived at simply by applying behavioural insights gleaned from elsewhere in the world.[41] There is not one special quality that can serve as an explanation for every conflict-affected context.

Even connecting behavioural science with the study of lives lived under the influence of violence is relatively new. Until fairly recently, the still-adolescent discipline of behavioural economics was mainly interested in asking why people made certain economic or health choices, maybe because both seem to have more obvious positive outcomes: it is better to be healthy and not poor. Violent conflict is not like that: its goal is not clear. It is both destructive and constructive. Its conceptualization needs to be contested as any binary explanation along the lines of 'is it greed? is it grievance?' does a disservice to its complexity. An effect is that the disciplines of behavioural economics, conflict studies or even more straightforward political science are not currently in the mainstream understood as deeply relevant to each other.

But, as Wilson notes, particularly behavioural economics and political science have a number of constructive overlaps by introducing questions on how cognitive biases influence people's economic, social and political decision-making.[42] Utilizing a behavioural lens to examine how people make political decisions – behavioural politics – is, however, not the same thing as the historical behaviouralist turn in political science. It is rather the exact opposite: behaviouralism pivoted political science towards studying observable phenomena, with an emphasis on quantifiable cause and effect. Behavioural politics, on the other hand, would likely aim to make visible underlying forces: the invisible columns of air that steer humans in particular directions. These could be cognitive biases or the more metaphysical aspects of politics: culture, narratives, relationships, emotions. Once the invisible factors are recognized as forces, the search for measurable causality becomes a lot more complicated. Once emotions, narratives, sensemaking, behaviours are recognized as shaping the context, context-specific takes on a whole new meaning.

Behavioural insights offer an as yet sparsely-explored angle on conflict recovery. There is a burgeoning literature on how individuals, households, communities and businesses – all, to an extent, regarded as victims of conflict – react to and cope with conflict. However, as Verwimp and Justino argue, the theoretical field that draws out the special qualities and challenges of living with and after conflict has yet to feed meaningfully into development practice.[43]

Empirically-tested results on choice-making, the backbone of behavioural economics, do not normally feature in post-conflict recovery programmes. Slowly, a body of work is emerging that indicates how much the experience of violence shapes behaviour. Its findings are, so far, counterintuitive: research in Sierra Leone shows that those exposed to war-related violence increase their social participation, joining more social and civic groups or taking leadership roles in their community.[44] They are also more likely to give altruistically. These findings correlate with other work highlighting altruistic behaviour

by individuals affected by conflict towards other war-affected individuals,[45] as well as work showing that households that directly experience violent conflict are more likely to attend community meetings, vote and join political groups.[46] These individuals were also less selfish and more inequality averse.[47] This behaviour did not, however, extend to being generous to those who had not suffered from war. This dynamic, argue Bauer et al., could harm social divisions in the long run, thereby contributing to further cycles of conflict.[48] Rather than focusing on the moment, recalling a time of violent conflict raises standards of what is considered fair and willingness to lose out on the small benefits of an offer that is considered unfair.[49] It also makes people more likely to postpone a positive pay-off as far into the future as they can, meaning that the way risk, time and investment are viewed might be fundamentally different from how investment-related risk-taking is usually imagined to work in volatile settings.[50]

Perceptions and the mental landscape

Conflict programming has huge interest in the elements that are the contours of the mental landscape. Programming is just not (yet) framed this way. What else could explain the use of perception surveys? Perception surveys – asking how people perceive of a situation, rather than how a situation measurably is – are a common tool to gauge if a programme is working. Perception surveys have a lot going for them: they are relatively easy to implement, they give a sense of having glimpsed into an individual or group's reality, and provide excellent information for a line chart that shows whether perceptions improve or deteriorate, go up or down.

Perception surveys can be reassuring if they support a particular approach. A British Council/International Alert survey of 110,000 people across 15 countries – including Colombia, DRC, India, Lebanon, Myanmar, Nigeria, Philippines, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine and the UK – on perceptions of peace and security offered strong support for peacebuilding and conflict prevention: a third of respondents perceived dealing with underlying reasons for conflict as the most effective way of reducing it – which is what peacebuilding does.[51]

Perception surveys can also create confusion. What if a programme report reflects perfect implementation, but people perceive no improvement? It turns out that perception surveys in such situations can be a multitool: they can function-shift, depending on the insights they deliver and the situation in which those insights land. In asking people about their awareness of something, however vague and subjective, perception surveys' role is open-ended. If the perception survey shows that a programme is working, the perception survey puts on a judge's wig and becomes quotable evidence. If perceptions are that nothing is improving, a perception survey takes on the status of an idea scribbled on the back of a notebook: it is dismissed as anecdotal, methodologically flawed or badly timed, with the suggestion that improvements will become noticeable to people in due course.

There are indeed methodological and philosophical challenges with perception surveys: they are only a snapshot of how people view aid and post-conflict intervention.[52]

These people might have been asked many times and are tired of answering. The way a perception survey asks a question might not capture what it wants to find out: a question on how people perceive their own safety, for example, can be phrased to capture large-scale or highly specific threats, such as terrorism, migration, urban crime or environmental catastrophe;[53] this means very little to someone who feels that their personal safety is endangered by a land dispute with a neighbour. Perception surveys break a complex and nuanced issue down into something measurable,[54] often even a binary yes/no choice. Crucially, a person's perception is an internal process because, as McGilchrist argues, 'things change according to the stance we adopt towards them, the type of attention we pay to them, the disposition we hold in relation to them.'[55] One's perception might just be dependent on one's perception.

There are also known practical challenges: perception surveys miss the why and thus cannot offer guidance on the how. In the British Council/International Alert survey, that the perception of peacebuilding is so positive says little about specifics of what peacebuilding needs to look like. An insight on a perception cannot help identify whether efforts need to focus on improving perceptions or improving reality. The fake binary yes/no choice is too easily translatable into programmatic decisions that lack nuance. Once stamped anecdotal, flawed or as being just people's thoughts, a perception survey is no longer considered a depiction of reality and is unlikely to elicit follow-up to understand why perceptions and other indicators seem so out of sync.

But perceptions are reality, just as much as virtual reality, as Chalmers argues, is also the real deal.[56] Both offer a genuine experience of the world, in one case as seen through a virtual reality headset, in the other through everyday life and sensemaking. Perceptions are not an ill-informed aberration that requires correction. Perceptions are part of the mental landscape.

How people think is how they act, live, experience and change – in a complex interplay between emotions, risk assessment and action, but more on that further down. Experience and expectation also exist in a feedback loop where people's perceptions are based on what they associate with a change they experience or observe, and how this relates to their expectations. This means that if a positive change is not accompanied by an expectation, its impact may not be perceived as significant.[57]

To suggest that perceptions are reality is not a loopy suggestion, because they have a measurable impact: people who perceived their security situation as having improved also perceived their food security to be better and thus their overall situation to be better.[58] Improved security perceptions change livelihood decision-making. The whole notion of empowerment or self-efficacy rests on the suggestive power of thought: if you believe you can do it, you have a much better chance of doing it. If you perceive yourself unable to do something, it is very unlikely that you successfully will. If you are realistic about obstacles, but still trust that you can manage, the chances of success are highest.

This creates contradictory forces between what people need and what programmes offer them and shows the power of framing. Conflict-affected populations are often met with programmes that seek to support their resilience against shocks – overlooking that populations who have faced war, scarcity and disease for often generations and yet continue to live amid violence seem to hardly lack resilience. Resilience seems like an indisputably good aim – until you consider whether it is really resilience that is lacking or specific resources and how such programmes might interact with

the mental landscape. Increased resilience as a programme aim is often formulated without consideration that resilience responses are common, but also depend on the individual, their social support network and their circumstances.[59] Many people in conflict-affected settings show incredible resilience – particularly women, who, in the midst of physical, structural and economic violence, tend to emerge as survivors.[60] Thus, post-conflict support and resilience programmes that seek to infuse resilience into a population that has shown to be tremendously resilient may inadvertently frame their programmes as people needing help, thus fostering identities that disempower, rather than aid, recovery.

This perspective is at odds with technical, bureaucratic, trickle-down ideas of development, all of which purport to describe objectively beneficial processes or undisputed facts. The power of perception works, of course, for everybody: the belief in technical approaches is also driven by perceptions that suggest that whatever technical approach is on the table is the most beneficial. Perceptions are therefore authoritative on all sides, but are not a good way to measure progress. Instead, they need to be detached from notions of linear progress, regarded instead as capturing the experiential and relational experience of development set out in this book.

But perception surveys can be a litmus test for the appropriateness of an intervention if they are understood as a snapshot in search of a context. A survey in Afghanistan showed just how much respondents experienced humanitarian programmes as so shaped by Global North perspectives – in both broader approach and personal behaviour of implementers – that they were unhelpfully at odds with local interpretations of the world.[61] In Pakistan's Swat Valley, locals who had faced protracted conflict and flooding between 2007 and 2010 perceived the international response from NGOs and governments as unresponsive to local needs, as local communities had been excluded from decision-making.[62] Health workers in Uganda, asked by Namakula and Witter about their perceptions, revealed how personal conflict experiences – abduction, ambush, injury, trauma, poor pay, increased workloads – had shaped coping mechanisms. These insights then informed future health service programming.[63]

Narratives and the mental landscape

Perceptions and narratives are closely linked. Narratives are the rivers that flow through the mental landscape: a striking topographic feature. Like a river, narratives can swell and recede, change course, destroy and give life. Perceptions are the drops of water in the narrative river.

Narratives emerge when perceptions, individual and communal histories, emotions and structures mingle for the process of sensemaking. Sensemaking is an analytical activity that blends all these together to build a rationale that people use to explain why their lives are the way they are, drawing on their identity to pick the information that to them is relevant and plausible, exchanging with those around them, looking backward to imagine what the future might be like.[64] Sensemaking happens both ad hoc – *in* the situation *of* the situation – but also has long arms that wrap themselves around communal and personal histories. If the narrative is shared amongst a group of people who identify as a community, it creates what Russel Hochschild calls the 'deep

story' of a community, which in turn influences personal narratives of why one's life has turned out the way it has.[65] Being able to make sense of one's life, to have a coherent narrative and deep story is important: it is how humans organize their thoughts, their experience and their expectation. In a conflict-affected environment, this also includes expectations of behaviour. These expectations are often similar, regardless of whether those holding them support violence or seek non-violent paths towards equitable social change: decent behaviour conducive to peace includes wanting to be respected, seeking to counter humiliation, finding ways to fulfil aspirations, seeing hope come to fruition, and feeling a sense of belonging.[66]

Narratives are not just stories people tell: they are extremely powerful in shaping behaviour and creating reality. Lewis shows in her work how the interaction between people's networks and narratives creates fertile ground for rebellions to form and gain traction.[67] Thus, narratives strengthen their own existence in the next round of interaction. Exploitative – or what Mallet et al. call 'bad' – work becomes part of live in Uganda, creating lives of 'muted horizons' with limited aspirations.[68] In Sri Lanka, a local community seeking jobs at a luxury tourism resort that is touted as being part of post-war development through the jobs it can offer is told that they lack the necessary skills. Community members do not experience this judgement as an encouragement to seek those skills, but as a script that recreates exclusion and discrimination with the mental landscape then shaped by perceptions of not being able to operate or be productive in this new post-war reality of luxury tourism.[69] Narratives of marginalization can either continue to disempower people or be mobilized to create violent or peaceful contestation.[70]

Of course, part of the deep story comes from usually encountering a meta-narrative perpetuated by those in power to either prop up one group or keep another down. Uganda's national meta-narrative stigmatizes the north.[71] Northern Ugandans' relationship with particularly central government is marked by the knowledge that this government thinks little of them. The meta-narrative propagated of the people in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is that they are entrepreneurs and successful at business.[72] Residents of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa make entrepreneurial decisions nourished by the narrative that they are good at such decisions and that they are crucial to building up Pakistan. Somalilanders share the narrative that they have historically been self-reliant, which gives them the right to be independent and not violent like Somalia. Philipps argues that this shared narrative prioritized keeping the peace above anything else, leading to behaviour that did so. With peace maintained, the imagination of what was politically possible – the self-efficacy of Somaliland, in a way – grew much wider.[73]

The mental landscape and behaviour

The mental landscape – encouraging attention of the many factors that influence human's experience of their existence and the choices they make – is a logical contribution to the send-off for Homo economicus. It has been a long, drawn-out goodbye: anthropologists, sociologists, behavioural scientists and behavioural economists have been standing on the train platform and waving goodbye to the

neoclassical economic theory train for a good half-century. In all these decades, they never stopped encouraging the driver to take the idea of the calculating, rational human away for good. In 2020, the OECD articulated for all of mainstream development policy to see that

> human reasoning is subject to many forms of bias. For example, people tend to operate within particular 'frames' of thought, rather than seeking a full range of information sources, and tend to draw general (and often mistaken) inferences from small samples of experience. 'Herd behaviour' (when people follow others' example, as happens, for example, in financial markets) can be common.[74]

This description of human behaviour, however, sounds limiting: Would rational weighing of options not be better than drawing on frames and narratives? Is a clear and unemotional head not crucial when having to deal with the many overlapping risks of lives and violence? Those overlaps that create the fragile environment in which one shock can be devastating? Loewenstein suggests not. On the contrary, assessing risks through how they feel in the moment – the 'risk-as-feelings hypothesis' – explains decisions that may seem odd.[75]

Risk-taking often has several faces: it is encouraged for economic growth and discouraged if it is done from a wobbly support foundation. The risks that come with taking up entrepreneurship are outlined in Chapter 4. Assessing one's own ability to do damage with one's actions as low risk is based on identity, as we have learned from Dahan et al.[76] Still, risk as an objective category is a crucial element of many schools of economic thought, some of which include the more supportive ideas of offering people ways to buffer against risk through basic income security or other social protection.[77] Few of these ways of looking at risk incorporate emotions.

On a personal level, grappling with emotions as guidance for a risk assessment can often be extremely challenging as they are experienced as overwhelming: conquering fears and discomfort, argues Loewenstein drawing on Schelling, is a source of intrapersonal conflict.[78] In a mental landscape that is already extremely challenging, just how draining it can be to be emotionally involved in assessing what are so many risks in a conflict-affected setting creates a huge cognitive load – or, in other words, just so many different things to deal with and to dedicate headspace to, maybe more information than a human can reasonably hold and actively deal with. But this emotional way of decision-making is also important as it turns out that emotions are not a bad basis for decision-making.[79] So rather than seeking to take emotions out of a decision (in a final nod to Homo economicus), it might be much better to explicitly introduce them. They are there, anyway – along with other factors that influence humans in their decisions and that are part of the mental landscape.

Behaviour and bias

Programmes in conflict-affected settings either implicitly or explicitly support behaviour change. A humble change might be to get farmers to use different seeds.

An audacious alteration aims for a shift in social norms – for example, to make it the norm for girls to graduate from high school. These shifts can be huge and potentially disruptive, as communities have strong standards of what is considered acceptable behaviour – a crucial contour of the mental landscape.[80] Pathways towards social norm change are often unclear,[81] but an example can illustrate the tension between seeking behaviour change and ignoring emotions and biases in the process.

In the marketplace of development programmes, information is imagined as the big bucks that make everything happen. Sometimes, in rare instances, it can: Reinikka and Svensson show, for example, that giving parents and schools information on how to monitor public fund spending on education in Uganda acted as a deterrent to capturing public funds.[82] But such direct success stories of the operational power of information are rare.

Changing social norms to keep girls in school? Offer information about how beneficial it is for girls to get an education. This is imagined as a clean, transactional exchange: information transfer = behaviour change. It is a repetition of how capacity building is imagined or who is imagined to have the power to change something. But now that we know that decisions are not simply taken on the basis of information, but that identity filters information, and that emotions play a huge part in a decision and power in whether or not change happens, the fallacy of this equation is obvious. Remember the teenage girls in Sierra Leone who were told to stop getting pregnant? It was an information-based approach to, as Denney argues, 'change the girls' by letting them know that having a child while still a child was going to make for a much more challenging life. Knowing this did not mean that girls were able to access contraception, that they could resist peer pressure, or the advances of powerful men. Maybe they could not afford to lose the material benefits of transactional sex.[83] Maybe telling girls how bad becoming pregnant would be for them, without offering them a credible way out, had a negative impact on their mental landscape, strengthening their identity as being powerless.

The level of agency expected in scenarios such as the above is staggering: teenage girls were saddled with a near-impossible task. If one still got pregnant – despite being told to know better – she is viewed as unwilling to take into account the information she was given. This not only places the burden of responsibility on the girl, but leaves her feeling as if she has failed. Men and boys, meanwhile, are largely exempt from being held accountable for the consequences of their behaviour.[84]

Images of norms change and recovery that do not pay heed to behavioural mechanisms and power ignore how significant the demands are that they put on people to overcome human nature in situations of stress. The expectations to perform as superhumans that came up in Chapter 4 are back. The onslaught of expectations of populations in FCAS is overwhelming when spelt out in its variants: they are expected to be forgiving, overcome grief, take risks, manage uncertainty, not be afraid of the future, and do all this while being content in an unfair system that is designed to make them unhappy, as Hickel explains:

> Societies with unequal income distribution tend to be less happy. There are a
> number of reasons for this. Inequality creates a sense of unfairness; it erodes social

trust, cohesion and solidarity. It is also linked to poorer health, higher levels of crime and less social mobility. People who live in unequal societies tend to be more frustrated, anxious, insecure and discontent with their lives. They have higher rates of depression and addiction.[85]

Without acknowledging the existence of cognitive biases – and without a growing knowledge base on how cognitive biases work in different contexts, cultures, situations, economic and social systems – programmes that in one way or another aim to achieve behaviour change might be actively hamstringing change, rather than enabling it.[86]

A few behavioural mechanisms and cognitive biases seem to particularly warrant attention to understand what might shape the mental landscape. How people think about time – their time preferences – is one of them. There is time discounting, which means that humans assign the same thing a different value depending on whether it happens in the present or in the future. If time is discounted, the value of the future diminishes and the present becomes more precious, which makes it very difficult for people to do an action today that might only pay off tomorrow. Time discounting might be shaped by culture or experience: if past promises of investments for a better future – possibly by development programmes that were overpromising – failed to materialize, this likely magnifies in due course the urge to discount the future next time round.

In Afghanistan, argues Jackson, time horizons are short because decades of volatility have created a permanent sense of instability that makes it difficult to see the future.[87] The structures that created the volatility (the social rules, economic systems, violence) are strong and seem uncontestable, suggesting the situation is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future, so decisions – whether economic, social or political – are made with short-term benefits in mind. The image of the future here is one of no change, so there is no reason to change today.

In northern Uganda, by contrast, people seem to preserve their hopes that in a changed future, their options will increase. This plays out in the strong tendency to postpone important decisions into the far future, pointing towards learned behaviour that it is too risky to make significant investments of time, effort or resources in the present as these have rarely paid off in the past. By delaying such investments until such time as things improve, people can at least keep their hopes alive while keeping quiet – *osilike*.[88] This is an important part in a situation where families may refuse to look or be incapable of looking to the future as long as they are still waiting for a disappeared loved one to return, argue Mazurana et al.[89] While some of these issues can perhaps be addressed through recognition of how this suffering stops people from imagining a future – for example, a national registrar on the disappeared – it may be insufficient to address the behavioural impact of these cumulative emotions.

Many conflict-affected contexts have experienced broken promises, unfulfilled objectives or poor implementation of support by authorities (either development actors or their governments) This deepens mistrust, which is already the default setting with which many people approach their government.[90] Confirmation bias means that anything that suggests that the mistrust is justified – all it takes is just another unfulfilled promise – is more likely to have an impact on deepening mistrust

than good experiences have on building trust. This means it is very difficult to change perceptions in the aftermath of conflict where people are more attuned to notice continuation rather than change.

The behavioural mechanism of loss aversion – the dislike of losing something, even if it is not valued particularly highly – is underexplored as an interpretative aid in political economy analysis. Statebuilding and stabilization efforts that want to support reforms often overlook that power holders are likely influenced by loss aversion, making it much harder for them to give up power. If they perceive a programme as primarily meaning they will lose something, loss aversion will make it harder to find ways of more equitably sharing resources. Loss aversion has a trickle-down effect that may explain why powerful yet corrupt people continue to get re-elected. How to negotiate with powerholders to get access to resources is usually well established. While voting them out of office may potentially bring long-term benefits, it is likely to mean short-term losses, due to such access having to be renegotiated with whoever replaces them.[91] Dilemmas such as these mean that decisions often come down on the side of addressing immediate access needs and protection – they discount the future.

Even just this short list of how behavioural mechanisms interfere with efforts to change behaviour – against obstacles, social norms, emotions, biases – for a pay-off that will only come much later, requires that a variety of behavioural mechanisms (such as risk-taking, adjusting time preferences, overcoming loss aversion and battling confirmation bias) all be successfully addressed at the same time. This is a huge, potentially humanly impossible, ask.

Paying attention to behavioural mechanisms and how emotions shape the experience of decision-making is setting the scene: to make a decision, people weigh up risks. Weighing up risks is a stressful undertaking, which Peters and Slovic divide into either creating a sense of dread and loss of control or into turning the object of risk assessment into one that is perceived to be overly threatening.[92] Either way, these mechanisms might even apply for what seems like benign concepts that are prominent in notions of recovery.

The mental landscape and concepts of recovery

Programmes to support recovery are rarely, if ever, examined with the question of what cognitive load they put on people for whom the programmes are designed. This might be because so many of the underpinning concepts seem intrinsically benign. Or more than that: they seem positive. Fairness and inclusion are such concepts that are mistakenly assumed to be universally-shared values. But the mental landscape reminds us that it is unlikely that anything is universal as there are just too many influential factors.

In principle, fairness is often a shared value. Particularly in conflict-affected situations where the nature of the state is being contested, the consensus on the need for fairness is striking.[93] Yet, fairness is not a homogenous concept across people – it is personally experienced and contextually defined. Or, as Voss explains in his book on negotiations about how powerful it is to appeal to people's sense of fairness: 'Once you understand what a messy, emotional, and destructive dynamic "fairness" can be,

you can see why "Fair" is a tremendously powerful word that you need to use with care.'[94]

What an individual perceives as fair is determined both by their own standards and by what others offer them. Fairness is not simply created or granted; it is experienced as a personal dialogue deeply informed by an individual's sense of identity and their positioning as recipient of a service vis-à-vis both their own expectations and how they see themselves as compared to others.[95] People can experience or wish for fairness in many different ways, ranging from being treated with respect to experiencing fair resource distribution.[96] Fairness or lack of it is how the quality of a provided service is interpreted, with merely having access to the service not being perceived as creating fairness.[97] Perceptions of unequal access to services, and how such services are delivered, might present legitimacy's most formidable opponent.[98] Proposing equal development in uneven societies is challenging, as offering the same benefits to everyone does not address inequality, yet privileging the most vulnerable in a programme that purports to be about justice and equality can be experienced as unfair by others who also feel vulnerable, but along different identity lines.[99]

Fairness is also an operational concept that is influenced by the mental landscape in largely unexplored ways. In Uganda, rooting behaviour in memories of conflict increased standards of fairness.[100] People who had just remembered the conflict were more concerned with the fairness of service delivery than those who had not. This may be because the former were more acutely aware of the exploitative and often uneven distribution of power that comes with conflict and its resolution. The assumption this leads to is that experience of violent conflict makes experiencing something as fair more difficult. This in turn means that standards in programming with regard to fairness must be highly considered and measured.

This insight into how remembering conflict influences standards of fairness perhaps explains why even services that seem to function well do not improve attitudes towards government. Service delivery is both a process and an outcome, though it is usually only conceptualized as the latter. Fairness is similar in the sense that people may still feel they have been treated unfairly even if the outcome is beneficial to them.[101] How a service is delivered, and through what process, has a strong effect on how it is received – the reason being that the how expresses the real relationship between citizens and their service providers as it currently exists, as well as how a future relationship may be shaped.[102] One reason why service provision may be experienced as unfair is due to the multitude of actors providing a service – as, for example, is the case with water in Sri Lanka – each of which has different rules. NGOs or private sector actors may charge different kinds of fees, which people perceive to be unfair.[103] Even if a service is a good service, it may still be an expression of an underlying relationship of unfairness: for example, when the reason for good service delivery can be found in the personal investment of the person delivering it, rather than in the system.[104] Thus, a good experience is perceived as being the exception in a hostile system, rather than an expression of an improved system.

Fairness is too often performative, expressed, for example, through a normatively-guided allocation of resources – such as handing power to minority representatives – or anchoring fairness in a constitution. However, if this is done at the expense of engagement, or is accompanied by state action that appears to crack down on a

particular group, or if a constitution is blatantly not acted upon, then things soon become complicated in terms of the relationship between the tools of fairness, notions of legitimacy attached to the perceived true nature of state engagement, and whether individuals feel they have been treated fairly. How fairness is experienced and judged is also based on narratives surrounding the state's fairness, which can be self-enforcing, argue Cummings and Paudel.[105] Whether security is perceived as being provided in fair ways is crucial for perceptions of the state – this can be seen, for example, in how the state reacts to cattle raiding in South Sudan's Jonglei state, reactions that are experienced as unfair and favouring groups of people.[106]

Unfairness can be experienced as having one's culture disrespected, or not being able to access state resources. The Dignity Project found that feeling treated without dignity creates negative emotions, which in turn means that people disengage.[107] In Nepal, this can lead to people disconnecting as much as they can from the state.[108] Feelings of unfair treatment cut deep, potentially cancelling out any positive effects, or even creating a negative perception overall.[109] Such feelings are tightly connected with feelings of inclusion and exclusion. Inclusion is too often equated with participation. The idea is that through participatory and consultative processes, inclusion is achieved. The reality, however, is rather more complex, as inclusion in participation is often not voluntary, but part of a survival need. In Afghanistan's networked political and economic world, withdrawing is often not an option, as to do so would cut off all political and economic access, says Jackson.[110] Choosing not to be part of something leaves exclusion as the only available option, with all the detrimental economic and social effects – including physical danger – this brings.

But the parameters along which exclusion happens and along which it is experienced are multifold and sometimes even in contradiction. If a policy designed to create inclusion is captured by powerholders, experiencing that inclusive policy – for example, the ethos of a constitution stating that this is an inclusive state – with the experience of exclusion simply serves to highlight the disparity between the two, which in turn may provoke behaviours that exacerbate detrimental development outcomes. Categorical exclusion of groups of people creates volatility, as it means pitting groups against each other, with those feeling marginalized likely to seek alternative models of being governed. In Afghanistan, this is one reason why members of groups that lost out after 2001 were supporting the Taliban's alternative vision and version of government, thereby fuelling the larger volatility that the Taliban insurgency had created.[111] Overcoming the real obstacles to inclusive service delivery – political influence, resource allocation, bureaucracy[112] – while also addressing perceptions of exclusion represents a huge challenge, with every individual experience of exclusion shaping the wider perception of recovery not happening.

Inclusiveness needs to be meaningful, both in how it is operationalized and how it is experienced. Informal actors, such as village committees, may go a long way towards giving the appearance of community inclusion, but are often hindered by politics or bureaucratic red tape.[113] Inclusion is not an administrative phenomenon – although it can be that too. However, though rules and regulations can be explicitly designed to ensure the inclusion of particular categories of people, other social dynamics may work against this to recreate the exclusion.[114]

Every little thing matters

How can individuals experience programmes in a positive, fair and inclusive way? The answer is that in the mental landscape, every little thing matters. What does this mean? An obvious interpretation could be that a positive process carries more weight overall than a negative outcome. While this may sometimes be true, a better interpretation involves tying together some of the points in this chapter, for example, on the interplay between time preferences, programmatic support and the mental landscape.

Time is a deeply-individualized experience within the mental landscape – it can seem to lengthen when recovery is slow, or conversely shrink when a shock wipes out development successes. Development programmes usually think of time only as a unit of measurement, rather than being part of an experience. For example: How long does it take for programmes to show an impact? How long does it take to deliver change? Here, development's short-termism is notoriously at odds with the long-term nature of social change. It is now received wisdom that early results are necessary to create space for continued work on institutional transformation, the idea being that they build credibility and legitimacy, thereby forging a path towards state capacity.[115] This emphasis on quick results is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it is not unreasonable to argue that people need to see some change in order to believe more will come. On the other, if such change is not measurable (which is often the case with such complex processes as livelihoods),[116] the underpinning short-termism is likely to mean the endeavour is cut short. It, therefore, needs to be a balanced measurement if households are to feel that they are indeed on a timeline of improvement, despite setbacks that may be experienced along the way.[117] When dealing with the memory of past development programmes that overpromised and underdelivered, it can take a long time to recover trust. If people are to be encouraged to invest their time, hope and energy in a development project, then what the project promises – as well as how, to whom and in what time frame it delivers – matters tremendously to how it is experienced.

Risk is another concept that keeps popping up and will continue to do so. The orthodoxy of international development (resilience through diversification; long-term investment in education in order that people can become better players in an economic system that values education) fails to speak to the way risks are experienced and what impact a shock can have. The relationship between time and how risk is perceived is also deeply influenced by the mental landscape of conflict-affected lives. Risk definition and risk-management strategies are both shaped by and part of the mental landscape, with two potential effects observable on how the future is valued depreciation (only the here and now matters, meaning it is crucial to act for short-term gain) or appreciation (waiting for a better time is the only sensible option, meaning the lowest risk is ascribed to not taking any action at all).[118] The former emerges in Afghanistan, where permanent volatility and an inability to manage multiple high risks have resulted in people developing a short-term perspective. However, in more rural areas, where social ties may be less volatile, argues Jackson, this short-term approach to managing risk may not be as strong.[119] In Uganda, meanwhile, deferring any kind of decision or activity seems the most sensible way of dealing with risks, as it postpones

having to make decisions on the grounds of treacherous knowledge. However, what seems a sensible behavioural choice given the circumstances and experience, can play a large part in why people are unable to feel that their lives are getting better.

In fact, in the research we often struggled to find variables expressing which factors were helpful or detrimental to managing risks that could be consistently applied across our various research sites. Households take a huge risk when investing in education as the livelihood pay-off, if it emerges at all, remains unseen for a long time. Investment in education thus represents a disproportionate risk. In Uganda, most households were paying between US$100 and US$200 in school fees – equivalent to the entire amount of cash accumulated in a year. Thus, outlines Levine, it is easy to see why spending US$1,000 to send a child to secondary school is not only out of reach for most families but requires considerable imagination and trust, as well as the realistic possibility that the child will be able to earn back (in a shorter period of time) what amounts to five years of household cash accumulation.[120]

In Uganda, households can thus either invest in the present or the future when it comes to education, with the trade-off clear: higher food insecurity today versus potentially better food security in the future. However, investing in education – if done at all – is applied primarily for boys, with girls much more readily taken out of school.[121] This is one reason why school attendance in northern Uganda declined substantially, especially for girls – those families who continued to send their children to school often did so by dramatically reducing their capacity to manage risks, selling off household assets such as land and livestock, while others, argue Atim et al. simply saw greater benefits in directing their children's livelihood capacity towards working, as they found it difficult to imagine what a livelihood based on an education might actually look like.[122] It is the case that education represents the most stable predictor of better long-term food security outcomes, as well as asset ownership, in Nepal,[123] Uganda[124] and Sri Lanka.[125] Pakistan, however, reveals the nuances of this – here, while better education usually means greater asset ownership, this is not the case for those with only primary education (in fact, asset ownership appears to decrease in such cases).[126] In Uganda, even if people are able to balance present and future circumstances, girls benefit little from any calculation that prioritizes investment in education.[127]

There is an imbalance in current understandings of risk and what matters to people. Despite the conceptualization of risk as being primarily driven by economic concerns, a major driver of such decision-making is how choices impact how people feel. In northern Uganda's Lira, for example, the risk of going without income does not outweigh how taking on undignified work makes people feel, meaning they ultimately choose an economically riskier existence over one that also makes them feel bad, says Mallet.[128] This turns young people towards self-employment, which, while riskier, provides more dignity. By contrast, in other contexts, self-employment – whether pursued for reasons of dignity or as a coping strategy – creates such volatility that a dignified pursuit of livelihoods ultimately becomes impossible.

An individual's ability to feel that their life is getting better is directly related to their ability to assess and manage risks. Risk and risk management is commonly understood in a very narrow sense – the former represents the likelihood of exposure to detrimental effects, while the latter represents efforts to manage and buffer against

such exposure. While part of development is helping people better deal with risks, the irony is that there is currently a diminishing appetite for risk in the aid world, which is under increasing pressure to show guaranteed and quantifiable results.[129] Better risk management is very difficult to quantify as a development outcome.

Risk is experienced in multiple ways, frequently impinging on feelings that things are improving. It is experienced and managed within a chain of events, with the moments that appear risky to beneficiaries not necessarily easily identifiable using a measurement process based on counting. This can be seen in Nepal, where despite an increase in the number of health centres, they are perceived as being risky when it comes to providing health services – opening hours are too short, and the availability of staff, medicines and resources too unreliable. As a result, those who can afford it choose private clinics, while those who cannot turn to traditional healers, who are not reliably able to offer high-quality treatment.[130]

Risk has many faces, which plays a part in why it is so difficult to *feel* recovery – there is always another identifiable obstacle around the corner. People's experience of recovery is shaped by their ability to manage risks, which in turn is deeply linked to how they experience the possibility that those governing them will put in place policies that help buffer against shocks – for example, through reliable and affordable service provision. Thus, risk is not a matter of being able to accumulate cash, but rather being able to rely on public services and navigate the rules governing access to them.[131]

Post-conflict lives are lived with constant risk, which is the most direct explanation as to why development models based on free-market economics and trickle-down ideas fail in building better lives for people. Additionally, people often struggle to feel their own recovery due to persistent feelings of uncertainty, something the economic models currently on offer do little to counter. This is a crucial point, as it is recognized by mainstream economists that risk, uncertainty and vulnerability are not only a symptom of poverty, but a cause.[132] People's choices are deeply shaped by their experience of poverty,[133] often creating a cycle whereby escaping poverty becomes ever harder, with the choice of activities on offer providing limited returns in exchange for less risk.

The mental landscape as context

Context-specificity is an axiom for programming, but an assessment of context rarely involves even broadly scanning the mental landscape. A mental landscape-based approach to contextualized programming would involve an understanding of the specific ways in which people behave (and which known behavioural biases are relevant), their ways of thinking, and their culture, tradition and social norms. Needs assessments and community consultations have gone some way towards avoiding programmes being imposed that may seem appropriate to implementers, but are of little relevance to the communities. There are, however, limits to what a one-off consultative process can achieve, and there may even be detrimental effects if the articulation of needs inadvertently increases people's expectations of what they consider fair, thereby making implementing a programme that is experienced as fair even more difficult.

The one-off consultative approach also risks being remembered as a moment of unfulfilled promise. Broken promises are hugely damaging, provoking both present-day disappointment and erecting barriers to future participation in development programmes. If a process is experienced as unfair, communities will disengage, further facilitated by a projectized approach in which development is not a permanent consultative process but a linear series of consultations followed by implementation.

That a mental landscape is multilayered and often contradictory highlights the potential futility of influencing perceptions through a direct path. In Nepal, for example, people can hold both negative and positive views of the state simultaneously, depending on which experiences take precedence at any given time. Experience of programmes provided by the state is crucial in this, with views strongly influenced by how the state articulated a particular programme's objectives and the extent to which these were achieved.[134] Thus, fully achieving modest ambitions is perceived as being better than only partially achieving high ambitions. Applying this insight to other programmes potentially explains why the lack of long-term positive impact shown by high-profile economic development programmes makes achieving positive perceptions of the state extremely difficult. Thus, a programme's objectives need to resonate and be realistically achievable – an approach that is often at odds with how programmes secure funding, which involves overpromising on what their likely outcomes will be.

These findings point towards the need for a radical shift in how development practice is understood. This involves, first, using observed behaviours as the defining measure, rather than perceptions or articulated social norm shifts. These observed behaviours must be seen as part of the mental landscape, which requires using an entirely different set of research methods to gain insight into behavioural mechanisms. For example, perception surveys need to be complemented with experimental behavioural research in order to understand how the mental landscape translates into behaviour.

Second, it is clear that post-conflict programming is not automatically a positive or even attractive proposition. While access to services or structural improvements are a crucial part of the recovery experience, often provision does not mirror experience – when something is being built, it may not represent an encouraging experience to those at the receiving end. Thus, those responsible for the building need to insert themselves more into how such building is experienced. In this regard, understanding how behaviour relates to fairness is crucial. Programmes working to deliver services need to pay extra attention in attempting to target those most in need, and ensuring that resources are not co-opted by powerful political or armed groups. Even if a political settlement is deeply unfair and wider power dynamics are extremely inequitable, focusing on equity of fair delivery – fair as articulated according to local standards – is vital in post-conflict settings. A way of handing over power in transformative ways would be to hand over knowledge on behavioural mechanisms to communities.

Third, using a shift in perceptions as a measure of improvement is only useful if linked to an understanding of how such a shift changes people's actions, thereby creating a constructive chain of behaviour change. Thus, improving perceptions needs to be coupled with clear means of enabling better decision-making and action-taking. Improving perceptions is not an isolated undertaking, but is deeply rooted in behavioural concepts of managing expectations, working with cognitive biases

in positive ways, and utilizing the powerful tool of framing. Rather than framing a development programme in the language of needs – which paints communities supposed to benefit as being needy – asking 'what is going to support recovery?' potentially leads towards considerations of hope, positive reinforcement experiences and social shifts.

And lastly, the mental landscape is not something that happens to other people. Thinking on the power of narratives or how biases play out in international development or how development practice is shaped by identity-protective cognition continues to be curiously one-sided (although, to be fair, it is also advancing rapidly). While a start has been made (e.g. in the World Development Report 2015),[135] international actors rarely reflect on how their own narratives of progress, values, decisions and morals that underpin their notions of good governance or best practice came about – and whether these may put them at odds with their development partners.[136]

Without investment in understanding the mental landscape and how it shifts, development programmes are likely to continue encountering people's invisible barriers. Programmes tend to lack the tools to navigate these strong currents of air. Invisible, but real.

A satellite image of the neighbourhood

How who you are matters

In the early days of the Covid-19 response in Europe, everyone over the age of sixty was assigned a blanket identity: you are vulnerable. You are at risk. Social media quickly filled with tips about how to make elderly parents aware of their vulnerability. This seemed strange at first: Why would the older generation need to be reminded of this, rather than being keen on protecting themselves? Because, it turned out that it was a widely-shared experience amongst the middle-aged generation that their elderly parents were carrying on as normal, even though large parts of the global population were avoiding social contact and only leaving the house with a face mask.[1] Despite being assigned the identity of being vulnerable, stubborn octogenarians seemed to not connect with that identity.

Thanks to Covid-19, middle-aged children all over the world were having a realization of a long-term challenge for development programming: identity and category are not the same. To make programmatic responses workable, you need categories. These are assigned, although the origins of the word suggest that the naming initially was more of an accusation, along the lines of 'this is what you are'. But categories are not easily created from identities. Because identity is not a clear-cut and easily organizable tool – it is, as the origin of the word suggests, the 'sameness' that one needs to feel to make it meaningful – it is very difficult to use identity to target groups of people with particular messages or programmes. Yet, identity is in every interaction and experience. It is the most visible feature on the horizon of the mental landscape.

A satellite image of identity only shows the big, bold lines. In a photo of a landscape, these would be such things as the boundaries of large roads, buildings or fields. What makes the field distinguishable from the building is texture or colour, but that still leaves large categories such as 'building' that are represented without nuance. The satellite image of the early days of Covid-19 categories showed one big, bold line, separating those over sixty years from those younger. The category could not have been clearer.

But what if the satellite zoomed in to show more detail? How do the buildings in the neighbourhood look when viewed from street level? What does a peek into people's houses reveal? The picture completely changes: one road may be lined with expensive townhouses, while another is crammed with high-rise flats. Who gathers around the table when the family dinner is called might look very different from one house to the

next. A neighbourhood perspective of the thick-line categories of Covid-19 might reveal that a frail forty-year-old evaded being classified as vulnerable, while an eighty-two-year-old free of any medical conditions and physically fit did not. If the aim was to reach the most vulnerable to protect them from Covid-19, targeting likely failed twice: in pursuit of clear categories, it overlooked identity, missing out on protecting the forty-year-old while alienating the eighty-two-year-old who did not appreciate being classified as vulnerable.

Much of development programming is based on satellite images, with broad lines demarcating categories of people, often along well-established lines. This creates two contradictions.

The first contradiction stems from the assumption that identities and categories tend to be synonymous and that, if anything, this is even more so the case in situations of violent conflict. This is linked to the visibility of the strong colourful lines that are violence and the hidden shapes underneath: it is assumed that the shared experience of violence is so universal that it has the same effect on each person and thus can be used to strengthen operational categories. But violence impacts people in different ways, depending on context and who they are.[2] The experience of violence and the mental landscape of lives instead create individual identities that have fuzzy edges. Identities shift – shaped and changed by the experience of a violent and conflictual environment and the people in it. The contradiction is to try and acknowledge that individual experience matters and is part of how a person will engage with a programme, and yet that delivering a programme only works when individual identity is ignored in favour of broad categorization.

The second contradiction is that the operational emphasis on identity and category sends a mixed message: as programmes generally seek to change behaviours, norms, ideas, they expect – demand, even – flexibility when it comes to someone's identity. But they do so by stressing often-narrow confines of a categorized identity – a mix of signalling to stay in one's lane while at the same time stretching to new capabilities. While new research suggests that it is important to anchor a sense of self in flexibility, rather than consistency,[3] this might be a particularly big ask for people whose world is shaped by violence and whose way of thinking about themselves is determined also by living with such violence. Identity is an integral part of the mental landscape: it is the underlying cartography that interacts with everything else. But identity is also, much like legitimacy, a co-constructed process that never stops: identities are simultaneously fluid and rigid.[4] Identity is a dialogue with the self, with myself. This dialogue is informed by my own experience of my life, my understanding of who I am; how the structures I encounter shape that; and how my ever-evolving being continues to fit into the world around me. The contradiction is that targeting happens on the basis of a strong identity, so for people to access programmes, they deprioritize the fluidity of their own identity – only to then encounter programmes that ask them to change who they are.

The many versions of identity

There are many definitions of identity, but they share one characteristic: identity is nourished from the inside, from a person's beliefs, belonging, self-image and how

they experience the outside world's reaction to these. Identity emphasizes uniqueness, even if that uniqueness can be shared with other members of an identity group. Whether identity is primordial or socially constructed is a question that has kept social anthropologists, philosophers and psychologists busy for decades. Our understanding of identity and the extent to which it is constructed from the inside or the outside will continue to shift as we learn and as the world changes.

The effect of identity, however, is not internal. Humans, argues Datta, put their identity to use when making a decision, including an awareness of how others might see their identity. Perceptions on all sides can not only stifle decisions, they can also 'create animosities and strained working relationships that lead to inaction on all sides'.[5] Identity is also linked to behaviour in very concrete ways: West and Michie, in introducing the plans, responses, impulses, motives, evaluations (PRIME) Theory of Human Motivation, describe identity as playing 'an important role in motivation . . . it is all the momentary thoughts (labels, attributes and personal rules), images and feelings we have about ourselves. It is the source of self-control and potentially a powerful source of motives.'[6]

For people who have lived with violence, identity thus particularly matters as a concept and definitional tool and as a way in which they imagine what they might be able to do. Identity is almost always central to a conflict, either through targeting, organizing or sharing of the deep story that provides the framing for how groups of people make sense of their shared experience. Identity and the politics surrounding it are crucial, both within the dynamics of violent conflict and the process of moving out of or recovering from it.[7]

As a political instrument, identity can create contestation or justify violence. This most prominently happens in wars that were openly framed as a clash of identities (as in Sudan).[8] Access to resources, participation and opportunities are tightly regulated by identity markers such as gender, age or connections to government.[9] Women tend to find themselves at the bottom end of the social markers or networks that govern access, even when it comes to such basic needs as sufficient food – if a young women is forced to eat last as part of household hierarchies, there is rarely enough left for her.[10] Identity is often shaped at the intersection between geographic location and geopolitical interests: if a government has a strategic interest in a particular location, it can easily create an identity of service-recipients there by declaring a geographic location worthy of support.[11]

Psychosocial divisions are often drawn along identity lines.[12] Identity is also dangerous, as it can mean political engagement is fractured, alienated and organized along identity lines. While shared identity may lead to better governance through better accountability,[13] it can create boundaries of exclusion that provoke experiences of deprivation – something that constitutes a major conflict factor.[14] Identity can shut out, but is also the vehicle for possibility. In the aftermath of conflict – particularly, argues Steflja, when it comes to reconciliation – understanding identity is crucial to ensuring recovery is not constructed along the very lines that created conflict and tension in the first place.[15] Furthermore, identity can be a healing part of lives amid violence. Understanding one another's culture (essentially, the identity of the other side) and reshaping identity-based narratives have long been recognized as a way of addressing divisions in post-conflict situations.[16] An emerging field of international

development work is focused on the role of identity narratives – the consensus that has begun to form is that these play a large part in support for radical groups.

Ethnicity can form a key component of identity – it can legitimize and delegitimize, and is a fluid construct. Even so, ethnicity-based identity – with its suggestion of primordialism – acts as a useful mobilizer and is particularly powerful at the local level, where identities based on nationhood or the state seem far removed.[17] Thus, conflict and ethnicity are deeply intertwined, and often articulated through mobilization and violence along ethnic lines. The prominence of ethnicity decreases the salience of other forms of identity relevant to how individuals and communities relate and connect to one another. During conflict, people may come to regard ethnicity as their primary means of defining identity – an emphasis that becomes difficult to counter in post-conflict scenarios.

Conflict can also transform how ethnic identities are defined.[18] In DRC, for example, new administrative structures have emphasized ethnic identity by creating majority governance and minority underrepresentation. Seeing one's ethnic group essentially take over a province is not just an expression of identity, argue Calderón and Englebert, but plays a role in forming or solidifying the identity of that ethnic group.[19] Mamdani takes this argument further, arguing that the notion of majorities and minorities were a crucial part in constructing the idea of the nation state, particularly the colonial nation state, itself.[20]

One prominent version of the ethnic identity category is tribe, which is often misleadingly used in an absolute way. This also means that the category tribe takes over a larger and more influential explanatory space for a situation of violent conflict than is afforded other explanations. Tribe is not an organic phenomenon, but rather involves administrative structures offering power to particular groups of people. Membership of a tribe is often determined through relationships – co-constructed with existing members to develop a definition of what it means to hold this particular identity. In South Sudan, for example, broad tribal categories fail to capture the many nuances that underpin what is most visible as 'tribal conflict'.[21]

Living with violence also usually means that who you are shapes your livelihoods, particularly in a social economy: how individuals navigate the shocks and peaks of whatever circumstances they find themselves in depends to a large extent on how they are connected within their social network.[22] Those connections come from who they are. Identity also regulates how a person experiences their encounter with the state: who you are determines if the state is experienced as threatening, constructive or neutral, depending on what identity categories the state might favour. Identity determines the lived experience of people in terms of their access to resources, power and other social support. Identity interacts with the mental landscape and with foundations of legitimacy: paddy farmers in Sri Lanka, for example, experienced how the state amplified their identify into the national narrative, casting them in the light of the national foundation of what Sri Lanka stands for. When the paddy farmers learned that their irrigation water was to be reduced in favour of providing drinking water, they protested on the basis of their identity as Sri Lanka's salt of the earth. When the state, by providing further irrigation services, confirmed that identity, the state also strengthened its own social foundation by getting the paddy farmers on board.[23]

Categorizing identities

It is not without irony that the mechanisms of conflict or colonization – applying labels to people – are very similar to the mechanisms of programmes that seek to support recovery from or prevention of conflict: applying labels to people. Identities that are narrow create the possibility of being outside the identity. Narrow spaces with hard lines drawn around them create winners and losers. The existence of winners and losers creates conflict, as they suggest zero-sum situations. Maybe the labels applied with the ambition to counter the conflictual labelling are more nuanced – but they are labels all the same.[24]

But are these labels, these experiences, based on identity? Or are they an expression of category? The two are often used interchangeably – and yet, they are completely different. Category is the satellite image; identity is the neighbourhood picture. Categories help make sense of the messy business of identity. Yet, what looks like a benign process can be brutal when categories are used to assure representation because, argues Tuhiwai Smith, this 'gives the impression of "the truth"'.[25]

Category is sorting, it means taking recognizable features to create a group. These features can be abstract or concrete, but they become a defining element of a category because they are viewed as prototypical, exemplary, or help define the category. Hall offers a more historicized version of categorizing, showing how Western systems of classification created colonial subjects that were recognizable through stereotyped characteristics, which then became '"the evidence," by which the subject is known'.[26] Categories can thus also be an ideologically-informed abstract that is designed first to then fit humans into it. In that way, category can be both inductive and deductive.

Category is the hard edge of identity – and yet, scholars tend to talk about 'identity politics'. 'Category politics', suggested by Lee Biacchi, might be the better term to capture the operational dimensions of using (usually socially constructed) categories for political purposes, but the term never really caught on.[27] Maybe this is a nod to just how personal it feels to be judged, excluded and treated on the basis of personal characteristics.

If this seems a long way from the discussion about mental models in international development and the limiting suggestive power of building and construction grounds, it is not. Humans function in categories: Lakoff, who stressed the importance of framing, also wrote that 'most of our words and concepts designate categories'.[28] One of Wittgenstein's most famous insights is that the limits of one's language are the limits of one's world: what you cannot describe in a category cannot be imagined.

It seems that to talk about anything, humans are stuck with the mental urge to put things into boxes. These boxes are pre-designed not on the basis of who is to be put into them, but who does the packing. By calling it identity politics, rather than category politics, the naming of the phenomenon makes it personal: how you are treated depends on who you are (your identity, nourished from within), not on how others use what they can recognize of you as a category. That identity and category are conflated in this unhelpful way is so normal, it seems barely noticed. And yet, it sets up the first contradiction of development programmes.

The first contradiction: Identity as category

Development programmes cannot function without categories. Even the basic connection between a programme and the people for whom it works is described by the mother of all categorizations, the satellite image line that divides the giver and the receiver: the category of the beneficiary.

The notion of the beneficiary is a unifying one. It suggests an identity umbrella that does not categorize people, but rather is inclusive. Anyone can be a beneficiary: men, women, children, old, young. Beneficiary is a super category with wide open arms that seems to unite, unconditionally, under the principle that benefitting is a good thing. 'Beneficiary' thus is an ideal type of the utilitarian blend of identity and category. But this way of thinking has hard edges: it creates the basis for the decision of who is targeted by a development programme and who is not. It presupposed that even the pluralistic umbrella category has borders that are drafted by a shared experience. Violent conflict is often what is put forth as the shared experience that unites people into the beneficiary category.

There are two challenges with this: first, the experience of violent conflict is not only communal, unifying and shared. It is experienced differently by different people with different mental landscapes. And second, plurality cannot work if it comes with conditions of how to belong to the plural, as Gümüsay reminds us.[29] If inclusion in the big tent of beneficiary requires a shared experience, then it contradicts its own principle. Conditional plurality is not plurality at all. It links back to the urge to seek causality: a particular shared experience (e.g. violent conflict) is viewed as the cause of being a beneficiary. The logic of causality and category-making remains intact.

Categorizing people requires labelling. And labels are a burden. Carrying a label, whether self-ascribed or assigned by those in power, means fencing in. Labelling, argues Goh, is part of a particular way of thinking about humans and their potential to act and interact: as resources, as 'human assets and human capital'.[30] Labels are what turns humans into functions (Figure 7).

Once the beneficiary is labelled, individuality is lost; identity foregone. Because, argues Gümüsay, what is unnamed is the standard; all naming denotes a deviation from the norm. If development efforts, collectively, name people as beneficiaries, they categorize and reduce them to their most obvious characteristic, taking away individuality.[31]

The category of beneficiary is most of the times just viewed as an operationally necessary organizing principle. At worst, it strips people of their individual humanity and strengthens unhelpful mental models of the dividing line between giving and receiving. At best, it is well-meaning: labelling someone a beneficiary is meant to be inclusive, welcoming and expressing an orientation towards needs. Rather than being particularly insightful about who the beneficiaries are, however, it is more of a description of how development actors view themselves: as those providing benefit.

Providing something that is named beneficial is liberating. It liberates from needing to engage and from relinquishing power. It makes it ok, as Khan argues, to not involve the designated beneficiaries in the process of designing the programme that is supposed to benefit them: 'You may do a few token interviews, spend a week in the field, and already pretend to know enough about their lives and problems to

Figure 7 Labels are a burden. Image by Olivier Ploux.

allow you to carefully craft a $50m set of products or services to "help them"'.[32] It validates taking a quick glance at the satellite image of the neighbourhood. Of course, contesting the term 'beneficiary' is part of current development sector discourse and common repertoire of rethinking. The term is slowly being replaced with other ideas – 'constituent' being one option in a nod to acknowledging that receivers also have power. Or at least theoretically, they should have. But how the term 'beneficiary' links to the broader contradictions and challenges of how the sector grapples with category and identity is a lot less debated.

When development programmes conflate identity and category, several processes converge.

Categorization has a purpose: it is called targeting – targeting of those who will supposedly benefit from a programme. Currently, targeting happens on a communal or categorial level, with each programme designed to benefit a particular constituency of women, young people or people who share a background. Such benefits are designed to be enjoyed by individuals within the constituency, with these individual experiences then combining to create a communal benefit. Yet, the mechanisms with which this communal work is expected to support individual recovery are underexplored. Understanding the link between identity and targeting is crucial to understanding where change – which is not evenly spread nor evenly experienced – happens. In Nepal, for example, higher castes are getting better off faster even if receiving similar benefits.[33] In eastern DRC, family planning programmes hoping to have an effect must take account of various identities, such as family role, demographics, income, where people live, gender, religion, and individual experiences and values.[34]

A popular targeted category is, for example, 'female-headed household'. It suggests that the primary concern for a household is that it is female-headed or that the greatest challenge for the woman leading the household is doing just that. The strategies for identifying this category could involve emphasizing objectivity (is the woman objectively heading the household because there is no other male adult around) or subjectivity expressed through self-identification (which is less likely in this case).[35] Usually, a programme starts from an identifiable characteristic, for example, being female and leading a household. It then assumes that this characteristic is crucial to identity, meaning that being female and head of household is experienced by this person as a defining attribute of their lives. Sometimes these features can be mixed with an observable lived experience, such as living in a conflict-affected area.

But what, asks Levine, if a woman bringing up her family alone has other things to worry about? What if she does not think of herself primarily as a female heading a household? What if her main concern is that she is engaged in a court case over land rights, which she is fighting together with a number of other people?[36] If she were asked about her needs, she might request legal advice. But she is rather more likely to receive non-food items aimed at supporting her female-headed household. This mixing of individual identity and category happens in other ways, too. A lot of research on northern Uganda lumps together the many different mental landscapes of people under one category: the Acholi people. A lot of work on Afghanistan starts from the impact and role of the Taliban, rather than acknowledging that individual villages might have very different experiences in forty years of conflict.[37]

The Covid-19 categorization problem shows that this phenomenon is not unique to settings that have experienced violence. Wiley, in describing voter manipulation by Cambridge Analytica, highlights the destructive spiral that unnuanced labelling creates:

> White voters, Latino voters, women voters, suburban voters, etc., are all frequently discussed as unidimensional and monolithic groups, when in fact the salient aspects of many voters' identities do not actually reflect the labels that pollsters, analysts, or consultants use to describe them. And this in turn alienates certain people.[38]

The satellite image might give a good overview, but it tells us nothing about the neighbourhood. The single mother in charge of a household might devote as little thought to the fact she has children but no husband, as the eighty-two-year-old who is vulnerable to Covid-19 pays attention to the fact that she is in the latter part of her life that make her so. To either, that part of who they are might just not be particularly important. Help that is on offer based on categories might simply not resonate with how they see themselves.

Categories, despite being the preferred tool of development, can thus create alienation, which means undermining effectiveness. If, for example, aid is targeted on the basis of identifying the most vulnerable in a post-conflict setting, the impact of such aid on recipients may be diminished by this approach, or the programme may be experienced as unfair. Alternatively, if aid is targeted on the basis of what seems

an urgent problem – provision of drinking water in Sri Lanka, for instance – it can undermine the negotiation of legitimacy and the state–society relationship. Addressing a basic need often does little to improve the drivers or root causes of a situation. Inconsistencies in how vulnerabilities are identified across different agencies further muddle any potential positive impact of this approach.[39]

Broad categories fail to capture that people from seemingly similar backgrounds may have to choose vastly different livelihood strategies. For some in Nepal or Pakistan, it is obvious that migration is their best route to finding a better life. This in itself becomes a facilitator: yesterday's migrants become today's relationships and networks that allow migration from a community to remain a possibility for those who are part of the community. Yet, these networks can also be exclusive, as can be seen in the fact that it is primarily young men who have the means to migrate, based on the histories and networks of migration in which they find themselves.[40] Identity-based access or inability to gain access to resources that can help with change can be passed on through generations.[41]

Representing categorized identities is not the same as genuine representation, with Rwanda's efforts to include women in parliament a prominent case in point. Despite 56 per cent of parliamentarians being women – a figure unmatched by any other legislative body in the world – this supposedly positive push for representation was aligned with a drive to nullify political dissent.[42] Additionally, as is seen in Uganda, the emphasis on providing services to those in particular categories (e.g. the most vulnerable) can be a touchy subject, as being in a category suggests there is still something to rectify, for example, through compensation. Adequate service delivery on the basis of a particular claim of injury or vulnerability is not a tool, says Levine, that will enable individuals or groups to experience justice for past violence.[43] In Indonesia, for example, the failure of a post-conflict reconstruction programme to take account of the sociopolitical and identity-based diversity of communities resulted in its work being ineffective.[44]

Categorizing inclusion

The goal of categorization is inclusion. Inclusion has been a particularly prominent concept in conflict transformation and prevention over recent years, but it is not new. The UN has since 2012 emphasized inclusion in peacebuilding efforts, arguing that post-conflict reconstruction offers opportunities to integrate inclusion into the development of new institutions and processes.[45] Much practical development discourse conceptualizes inclusion as a benign undertaking, without conceptual clarity that to include one category might require making decisions also on which category to exclude. Despite categorization being thought of as helping to find the easiest way to target the most vulnerable, it has the unintended consequence to also create vulnerability, exclusion and reinforce unhelpful processes.

Notions of equality or inequality cannot function without identity categories – after all, how are inclusive systems to be measured if not on the basis of including particular

categories of people? Whether such categories are explicitly articulated is unimportant, as they are visible to everyone involved. Though caste is not discussed in Sri Lanka and has not been a category in the country's census for a long time, Lall argues that caste is omnipresent in people's experience of themselves and their surroundings.[46] Identity categories here are the basis of governance, determining who gets access to what. Breaking through the governance mechanisms imposed by identity categories – for example, by seeking access to resources that are commonly denied members of particular castes – can lead to punishment through sharpened exclusion.

Categorical labelling – often considered necessary if resources or programme benefits are to be distributed along manageable lines – creates a false and often misleading image of homogeneity.[47] The language of inclusion, how it is to be operationalized and what processes or structures someone should be included within often circumvents deeper questions of individualism and identity.

The importance of individuality

Humans are individual, complex, contradictory and ambiguous. Our flaws and errors are what make us human. But once categories and labels are applied (by those who have the power to name), individuality becomes a privilege. Development is often focused on what is materially and quantitatively measurable, with relatively little focus placed on what is subjective and individual. Being a person with many facets and nuances is a special favour granted to few.[48]

But the experience of conflict is also an *individual* experience, even for those who are part of a seemingly homogeneous category or who live in societies where the individual matters less. The focus on the individual may seem surprising given that previous chapters stressed the livelihood experience of households, the importance of social networks and of communal narratives in decision-making processes.

This is where the mental landscape concept might help: it is more complex than disaggregating by category, gender or demographic marker. Rather than simply looking at different categories of people – for example, women, IDPs – a mental landscape perspective allows for an understanding that even seemingly homogenous categories house heterogeneous experiences.[49] This goes beyond even the important perspective of intersectionality,[50] incorporating individual experiences that are influenced by personal histories, beliefs and personality traits. While people may appear to be placidly pursuing economic activities, undercurrents of dealing with the impact of war may remain. Women beedi rollers in Sri Lanka, for instance, perform their day-to-day work in the knowledge that justice for war crimes has not been served, and that they are victims of exploitative set-ups.[51] We have clear indications that how people feel is important for development outcomes – being treated with decency influences how people experience the state; hence it may be useful to include an indicator on the experience of personal treatment when evaluating service delivery.[52]

Layered alongside communal or household-level experiences is an individual's own mental landscape. Individual experiences are shaped by the changing make-up of households, income generation, health shocks, social networks, risks arising through

new income-generating activities (such as migration or entrepreneurship), and shocks located in the physical and natural environment. Such aspects are multifaceted and changeable, and so their impacts are not easily captured. As a result, crude measures such as improved food security tend to be employed, rather than attempting to assess an individual's mental landscape in terms of, say, dignity, hope or joy. Conflict resolution and justice is also often highly individualized – post-conflict cases of rape or land disputes with neighbours that are experienced as aftermaths of a conflict call into question the idea of a communal experience of post-conflict recovery.[53]

How people experience their lives and the emotions connected to their everyday survival is a complex process – it involves measuring risks; taking into account lessons learned from the past; the level of trust in how a post-conflict situation is playing out; situating one's room for manoeuvre within prevalent social norms; weighing up relationships; making a living; and overcoming behavioural mechanisms that may be detrimental to long-term improvement. However, all too often these multifarious changes within the mental landscape are reduced to process-focused programme delivery that requires a catch-all category. The contradiction this sets up goes even deeper, as conflictual environments often are those that function on a social economy and where collective well-being is prioritized over individual freedom. The way such collective well-being is maintained, argues Hickel in his study of why Western liberal ideas of democracy are rejected in South Africa, is through hierarchies in households, particularly in rural South Africa.[54]

Shifting towards a perspective that acknowledges individuality does not take away from communal experiences. Because, after all, as Katz et al. argue, defining identity requires some group attributes, but even though the identity can be modular and thus shift.[55] But it opens up nuanced reflection on how something feels to an individual: How does an individual experience livelihood programmes, relationships, stabilization? It makes room for the activity we all do: sensemaking. We all make sense of the big and small things all the time in our mental landscapes.

The understanding of individuality in the economy allows an analysis of why, for example, individuals choose to reject a livelihood option that offers an income, but not a dignified existence. If a livelihood option offers decency, the individual experience of the economy is vastly shifted. If a livelihood offers a degrading or uncertain existence – as in the markets of Uganda's Lira or in the tourism sector in Sri Lanka's Passikudah – the economic experience can lessen one's dignified identity.[56] Such insights underscore the need to revise the highly-influential notion of a 'hierarchy of needs' that Maslow suggested;[57] a revision would need to follow Eisenberger and Lieberman's critique that shows that Maslow's arguments that physical survival is always the highest priority for humans has been debunked by studies that show that humans think of meeting their social needs as crucial as their physical ones.[58]

Programmatic approaches that settle on working towards good-enough delivery take attention away from such individual details, leading them back to focusing solely on communal experience. However, even in societies where decision-making tends to be communal, individuals depart from such community processes in myriad ways. In fact, many development programmes support positive deviance from communal norms where they are identified as being an obstacle to social change. All of this is not without contradiction.

The second contradiction: All change, please

The second contradiction is a mixed message to the so-called beneficiaries: now that you have been boxed in, please change.

Most development programmes seek to change behaviours, norms or ideas. Supporting change suggests that there is flexibility in people and in how they are seen or targeted by programmes. But this message of flexibility and possibility for change is delivered within the often-narrow confines of a categorized identity. Change that has to happen from predefined categories is obviously much, much harder. Typical beneficiary categories might signal to people that they are vulnerable, excluded, need to be empowered, that they are the victim of damaging social norms, that they need to find out what is good for them and maybe even that they are the weakest of the weak.

This identity that is projected onto people is difficult to reconcile with the change development programmes simultaneously suggest: make your voice heard. Be on the inside. Be invulnerable. Go against the norms in your social world, even if you have to go it alone. Be an expert on everything that touches your life. Have agency. Have power.

It demands superhuman qualities of people to ignore this contradiction and embrace the change a programme wants to deliver, all the while battling likely hostile political structures and the many effects that violence has on lives. Additionally, it suggests that individuals should have full knowledge on everything that concerns them – from social norms to health to infrastructure.[59] While everything is always in movement, labels and categories make change harder. Once a category is applied – even if done with the best of intentions – creating constructive alliances across labels can pose a particular challenge, argues Nguya.[60] This is further exacerbated by the destructive self-image individuals may apply to themselves or their communities if they label themselves as conflict-affected. Newson's work on identity fusion describes the porous interaction between an individual's identity and a communal identity to the point of fusion, which in different contexts has created some of the most destructive social behaviour known. While this work looks at violence committed in the name of specific group identities, it serves as a reminder just how much group identity shapes individual action.[61]

There is no shortage of examples of programmes that implicitly require their identified beneficiaries to be superhuman. In Afghanistan, individuals are expected to overcome norms that prevent women from working in public places or that push families into marrying their daughters off at a very young age.[62] In DRC, change of social norms by utilizing accountability mechanisms is a long and difficult process.[63] In Sierra Leone, teenage girls are expected to have full ownership of their own bodies, able to reject advances of often powerful men that can support livelihoods to families in exchange for transactional sex and despite living in a society that does not grant them such ownership.[64] The burden of change is thus put on those who might be least likely to be able to pursue it. Development programmes, argues Buell, rarely start their identification process of those who are supposed to benefit with the question who actually has the power to create change.[65] And yet, it seems a crucial question to ask for each programme design: What is it about a particular context, the people in it and

their relationships that might make the change possible and lasting? It is a question that warrants careful unpacking of categorical thinking that is expected to bring about success and change.

The gender effect

One such category that makes a regular appearance in programming is gender. Categorizing gender as a major marker of identity is the bread and butter of international development, for obvious reasons: the effect of gender is visible and measurable. There are many examples of how this plays out: female-headed households in DRC tend to be worse off, with fewer assets and less land.[66] In Sri Lanka, female-headed households are less food insecure, but even so still less well off, while in other contexts, female-headed households face significantly worse food insecurity.[67] Traditional gender roles continue to shape women's access to education: if their duty is to fetch water, this leaves less time for other pursuits.[68] Moreover, girls who need to travel a long way to school (presumably without access to affordable transport) are more likely to drop out, whereas travel time has no impact on boys' attendance.[69] Women's work is less well-paid and usually involves lower skill levels and worse conditions. Furthermore, social expectations around what women are allowed to do constrain choice,[70] with certain categories of jobs – such as truck driving, which is a lucrative livelihood – barely accessible to women. As a knock-on effect, women travel less frequently and shorter distances, curtailing their access to other communities and alternative insights. Because women are not connected with transport networks, their ability to carry goods is reduced, meaning they can only become petty traders with few goods on offer.[71] On top of all this, female-headed households tend to have more trouble accessing services.[72]

Even so, these broad insights show that gender matters, they do not unpack what gender as a category actually means. The term 'gender', really, is a lazy shortcut to bypass the need to be more specific about people, their situation and how it intersects with their identity. Identity influences experience both externally and internally. Externally, identity is easily instrumentalized to support structures favourable to those holding power. Internally, identity shapes how a process is experienced.

Unsurprisingly, given that gender is often considered the most obvious identity marker, it is utilized as a powerful tool to ensure existing power relations are not threatened. In Sri Lanka, for example, women are hidden away through roads and buildings being designed into cul-de-sacs. As fetching water represents women's primary means of accessing the outside world, locating water taps within the cul-de-sacs guarantees that gender borders are not crossed and women, quite literally, stay in their place.[73] Thus, the perception that women are not full participants of community life is perpetuated by design.

Women tend to experience conflict and post-conflict contexts very differently from men, primarily due to historical gendered identities putting them at greater risk.[74] The focus tends to be on women's perceived role as victim of violence. This in turn means that much programming aimed at women is conceptualized through a

victim lens, with less attention paid to the many other facets of their experience, in particular as it relates to violence.[75] The emphasis on rape during conflict overlooks other types of sexual violence, making it difficult to judge whether programmes aimed at restricting conflict-related rape actually help in reducing violence against women.

The dominant conceptualization of gender is primarily centred on paying attention to the different experiences of men and women, rather than the interaction between the two. Yet it is relationships that matter most in terms of influencing how situations are navigated.[76] Thus, the broad categorization of gender employed by the current paradigm often does more to obscure the real issues at stake than shed light on them.

Identity as an interpretative lens

The question of what current approaches to identity as category obscure, rather than unveil, takes us to a different way of how the notion of identity could be used. Instead of being employed as a tool to categorize, identity could also be a perspective and an interpretative lens.

Often the notion of inclusive politics, institutions and economies[77] is coupled with an emphasis on working at the local level, which is considered a conduit to emancipation and inclusion through enabling the voices of those who have traditionally had less of a stake in public discourse to be heard.[78] Accepting identity as the lens by which the local is understood offers an alternative perspective on the many layers of life that constitute the local, including its networks, economy, salient issues and identity-based experiences of the state–society relationship or the mental landscape.

Thus, an identity-based view of local markets would not seek to record what is being traded, or how value chains or the quality of goods could be improved. Instead, the focus would be on who is in the market, how their identity impacts their experience, and what relationships they require to utilize the benefits their identity brings – or, alternatively, to overcome the obstacles it creates.[79] The situation is further complicated by the fact that each person can simultaneously hold multiple identities, which cumulatively can lead to exclusion or play out against each other in other ways. One useful reminder that perception surveys offer (despite their shortcomings) is that the perspective of people is crucial. Given that stabilization and recovery policies are developed from the perspective of the state, the link between community perceptions and top-down development approaches continues to be weak, despite persistent calls for a more pragmatic, locally-owned approach to peacebuilding. Locally owned is challenging to implement in diverse communities, where perspectives on what causes insecurity, what creates safety, and what sustainable recovery entails, will likely be disparate.[80] Such detail cannot be captured by a satellite image of the neighbourhood.

A few examples from different contexts show how the many axes of identity intersect with structures and power and how identity as an interpretive lens allows these to become seen.

Employment and income, for example, are often moderated through identity and the connection this identity creates.[81] In Sri Lanka's Jaffna, relevant identity axes are livelihood, geographic location and occupation.[82] This means that livelihood is determined by who you are and where you are: if you are in urban areas of Jaffna, there might in theory be more opportunities to earn an income. But these opportunities intersect with who you are, as most opportunities are only open to those with certain identity markers and corresponding networks are in place.[83]

Jobs are linked to identity and thus impact the mental landscape. In Afghanistan, becoming a tailor represents a type of economic insurance for young men – it is something to fall back on. For women, by contrast, it is an expression of having broken out of the social constraints that surround which jobs a woman can undertake – being a tailor in the market is a more visible livelihood activity than women have traditionally been allowed to engage in. The achievement this represents in terms of shifting social norms is tempered by the poor terms and conditions under which women work.[84]

Livelihood opportunities are not the only area where access is negotiated on identity. In northern Uganda, only certain elites appear able to access social protection benefits.[85] The experience that specific benefits are closed to whole groups of people and individuals further strengthens an identity of marginalization, which might make it much more difficult for people to engage with development programmes that seek to empower. Such programmes could just be experienced as overpromising or not being realistic and thus a waste of time. This can be hugely damaging to both the perception and the hard reality of recovery, as it cross-pollinates structures that in turn further sharpen the experience of marginalization.[86]

In Uganda, the parallel importance of individual and group experiences is also highlighted by an individual's continued emotional connection to their place of origin. This has a strong impact on their sense of self and outlook on the future, say Stites et al., which are based on the rural identity of origin, rather than the chosen or pursued identity of urban migrant.[87] Identity is also expressed through cultural practices. The extent to which a state allows or dismisses these is an influential marker as to how various identity groups experience their lives under the state. Not having one's customs recognized through official holidays or customary law – for example, in Nepal – creates a much tenser relationship with the state.[88]

Identity and exclusion throw up the issue of what achieving equality actually means. Does it mean offering the same access to everyone, or offering greater access to those excluded in the past in order that they can 'catch up'? Nepal's approach of providing the old age allowance to the lowest caste on more favourable terms has backfired: Dalit groups (members of the lowest caste) are now viewed as receiving overly favourable terms that are unfair to others.[89] Even the 'citizen' – that supposedly most unifying of categories – is open to identity-based interpretation, which translates into differentiated access to resources. Who a person is in the eyes of the state determines how the state – or the networks underpinning it – treats that person.[90]

Identity-based institutions sit alongside networks of access – these are mutually constitutive, with the latter shaping how identity is reflected in the institutions such networks create. Often, aid agencies look at these identity-based institutions as an expression of local cultural identity and tradition, without connecting them to the

networked goods they create. An example could be the identity of leadership of a tribe. To an aid agency seeking identity categories, someone declaring themselves a chief may sound like expressing a deeply rooted cultural identity. Such a person would be a welcome community entry point for agencies. What they might, however, be witnessing is elite capture of resources and the agency has just strengthened such gatekeeping through offering outside resources.[91]

This is what some of the critique of the local turn in peacebuilding captures, with Miklian et al. arguing that the global structures of aid flows are fundamentally in contradiction to the aim of empowering locally-owned ventures as agents of change.[92] In practice, the model is unworkable due to the structural conditions of the global aid landscape.

In effect, there is a disconnect between how the locally-led approach is conceptualized and the structures and institutions within which local ownership is meant to be successfully operationalized. Using the case of Nepal as an example, Miklian et al. highlight the stark contrast between international interveners' interpretation of 'the local' versus the reality on the ground, where the structural framework in place is insufficient to deliver locally-led recovery. The study highlights the importance of structuring the intervention framework according to local needs, local identities and a locally-owned approach to programming.

Perhaps though, Miklian et al.'s criticisms are reflective of how the existing paradigm understands the local as being counter to the international – it is a label that, again, might say more about the labeller than the labelled. It fails to acknowledge that even within the local exist myriad possibilities and identities (and mental landscapes) that blur the lines between who is who and what. The relational theory perspective highlights that there is no objective truth in who people are, and that the purpose of interaction is to create relationships. We often think of identity as a singular, individualized label. Relational theory, by contrast, situates an individual's understanding of who they are within their networks. Chapter 8 will show the many ways in which relationships are social glue, and so are key to capacity and keeping institutions running.

When statebuilding meets identity

Statebuilding efforts seem to happen a long way away from the categorized targeting of beneficiaries. But these two are connected by a very short road. When crude categories employed in the design of development programmes are combined with attempts at stabilization and statebuilding, an emphasis on identity can advance or even create exclusionary structures. Identity can be decided upon many axes. Who gets to decide which aspect gets priority is a question of power: power holders can entrench notions of what value to society a group holds and what role they are allowed to play. Although this value and role is constructed, power can give it a sense of pre-determination or normality.[93]

Articulated identity creates conditions of access or exclusion, which in turn shapes how a service or a resource is received.[94] If a state or a development agency

chooses to prioritize one part of identity over another, it creates either alienation or people instrumentalizing their identities for better access. A citizen's identity matters in the exchange of services, treatment, perceptions and legitimacy – how the state engages with that identity is what determines if the relationship improves. While it is clear that a state's moral authority can only be asserted if it is seen to treat citizens respectfully, from a mental landscape point of view, it is difficult to say with certainty what respectful treatment actually looks like. In Nepal, for example, the notion of the state providing infrastructure, physical security and material support while respecting local customs is inextricably paired with an understanding that this needs to happen in a way that is fair to groups, while also being beneficial for individuals.[95] However, what determines the experience of fairness is fluid in this context – it can be based on personal experience or an observation of how the group is treated. That almost everyone interviewed felt their group was more marginalized than at least one other group suggests the mental landscape is shaped at least in part by the experience of being pitted against each other in conflict, something that has not been overcome simply by announcing a peace deal.

Thus, if an individual receives a service based on who they are (i.e. they perceive that they have an entitlement to access), they may experience it as positive. Alternatively, an individual may experience the same service as negative if they perceive they are receiving it *despite of* who they are (i.e. they believe access is only being given grudgingly). How a service is provided is likewise dependent on an awareness of identity. This awareness can lead to service provision creating certain behaviours that deepen the identity-based beneficiary experience.[96] In Pakistan, people experienced that when receiving a health service, they were treated differently based on their caste/ethnicity, and essentially, ranking – in other words, their place in the political settlement and the rules with which governance is enacted.[97] Where someone receives a service, as well as their past experience of it, contributes to a service's perceived quality.[98] These experiences linking identity with access can also be shaped more positively. In Nepal, for example, the government's commitment to equality (and a Maoist insurgency heavily fuelled by identity politics) have dampened the impact of identity on people's ability to access services.[99]

Let us take a look at a common statebuilding process: supporting decentralization of government to increase people's proximity to government and avoid conflictual centre/periphery dynamics. In recent years, many countries have increased their number of administrative structures by dividing provinces, districts or states into new, smaller entities. This reflects an international consensus that assumes decentralized government has a positive accountability effect. Yet, recent examples – including Uganda, South Sudan and Sri Lanka – show how decentralization can also be a tool for patronage that can, counterintuitively, entrench centralized power.[100] The DRC offers a particularly poignant example of how statebuilding, power and identity create an exclusionary mix. In 2015, the DRC increased its number of provinces from eleven to twenty-six through *découpage* – the division of the country into smaller administrative districts. Research on the impact of this decentralization focused mainly on how this changed the sharing of resources, as well as its feasibility and affordability.[101] At first glance, it may seem that administrative structures are of little consequence to questions

of identity. However, if we draw the link between how individuals experience their lives after violence and how broad managerial-based development interventions influence these experiences, a different picture emerges.

This occurs when identity becomes synonymous with ethnicity, as well as the notion of origin, and is incorporated into administrative structures. The example of DRC demonstrates this chain of events. Englebert et al. trace how the redrawing of administrative boundaries affected the ethnic make-up of the new provinces.[102] The new boundaries meant that some residents were no longer considered autochthonous to their province, which – given that DRC's concept of autochthony is informed by the notion that every Congolese can trace their ancestry to a chiefdom in a specific province – is important. Inevitably, then, this had implications for broader reconfigurations of identity and representation. One of Englebert et al.'s main findings is that decentralization creates ethnically homogenous provinces, which has a knock-on effect on those who hold government positions in these provinces. Crucially, the process of decentralization in DRC has left about four million people living in a province where they are not considered autochthonous, hence they have no claim on representation. This use of ethnicity as a hard currency with which to purchase political positions has shifted the meaning of ethnic identity towards one that incorporates government-imposed limitations of access to power and resources. Of course, one could argue that in practice ethnicity is often used to create winners and losers – rarely, though, is this so openly done through administrative structures aimed at supporting power monopolies based on local interpretations of identity.

Administrative structures become the tool that makes some people no longer local by removing their autochthony, thereby creating a new structure of inequality that is reinforced by statebuilding's emphasis on decentralization and administrative clarity. The concept of autochthony appears to stand in contradiction with previous points made in this chapter. In DRC, the fact that everyone has a province of ancestral origin – which cannot be altered by being born or living elsewhere – might be seen as akin to having a non-negotiable, unchangeable aspect of identity. In reality, however, Englebert et al. argue that 'the concept is more narrative than empirical' and deployed strategically.[103] While the notion of a fixed identity may appear useful in some respects, it is more beneficial to think of the underpinning interests that fuel the notion of autochthony. The desire for representation entitlements to be non-negotiable simply underscores the need to engage with identity in all its many facets. While, as Englebert et al. argue:

> representativeness is inclusive: it recognises that everyone is entitled to a degree of representation, but who is everyone at the provincial level? Obviously, a Mongo from Equateur would have weak grounds for claiming representation in South Kivu. And resources are quite limited, particularly at the provincial level. Thus, autochthony provides parameters for representativeness: 'to each first dib over his/her[/their] region' (field interview 51). It can be understood as a practical norm that develops as a provincial corollary to representativeness. In the end, it is the notions of inclusiveness and representation that, paradoxically, end up being mechanisms of exclusion.[104]

Thus, a mechanism supposedly aimed at taking power and resources away from the centre (following established notions of good governance) ends up excluding people on the basis that a part of their identity is instrumentalized as being non-negotiable: 'Non-autochthonous people de facto enjoy fewer political rights and have more limited access to state-mediated material benefits.'[105]

In the long run, identity and how it is shaped by the administrative structures that influence lives amid violence plays a major role in the politics of recovery. In her work on Rwanda, Hintjens highlights that the poorest communities have found it most challenging to express their political views and articulate their identities outside the official categories imposed on them by the state and external interveners.[106] As a result, ethnic identity becomes linked to political expression and representation and in turn public discourse (which is controlled by political elites or legislated through such notions as autochthony), thereby likely replicating the social and political structures that were in place prior to the civil war and genocide. In the intersection between identity, category and statebuilding, much that is supposed to change stays the same. It is reminiscent of the mechanisms of stabilization that stabilize the very structures that brought about the need for stabilization.

The wisdom of astronauts

Identity is not a thing as such. Identity is definitely not the same as category. Identity is not a pattern that can be captured on the satellite image and increasingly, in a digital age, it becomes what Katz et al. describe as 'intricate individual mixes of attributes, the result of careful and ongoing discovery'.[107] But despite all the intricacy, there are categorical operational needs, too. With this tension in mind, is it worth asking how identities can be used to make engagement meaningful, to not send mixed messages about being who you are and needing to change, and to increase contextual understanding? It seems like an impossible task, suggesting that the satellite image needs to be interpreted in two ways: first, offer the big overview picture and then provide granular local, individual and nuanced detail. Is that even possible?

That question might best be asked of people who know how to look at the big picture of planet earth and extract a lot of nuanced detail from it. When in doubt, ask an astronaut.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) gives five tips for getting nuanced information from a satellite image: look for a scale; look for patterns, shapes and textures; define the colours; find north; and consider your prior knowledge.[108] It turns out, the astronauts' guidance works for when seeking to understand and navigate identity, category and change.

NASA tells us that when looking at a satellite picture, a common mistake people make is to look for familiarity. While it is nice to find your house on an image, immediately zooming in on familiar structures defeats the whole purpose of the big picture. A satellite image wants to do the exact opposite: it wants to offer little detail but a big-scale broad perspective that pushes the view over the horizon and allows the

viewer to think of consequences in a much bigger way. How big a perspective does the scale of the image allow? What connections can a large scale uncover? If applied to understanding identities, this is a reminder to allow the big picture to sit without seeking familiarity: maybe it is necessary to abandon previously-held ideas about how certain groups experience their lives and identities. An example of what this means comes from the aforementioned dysfunctional Covid-19 identities: one piece of advice when dealing with stubborn octogenarians ignoring their Covid-19 vulnerability was to resist the 'righting' reflex (the tendency of health professionals to advise patients about the correct 'right' path for good health), which assumes that patients have experienced their health as always being clear about right or wrong choices, or that they like to be told what is right even if they believe otherwise.[109]

What would the broad view over the horizon suggest in this situation? It assumes that the patient might have specific motivations to behave in a certain way. Understanding these with empathy – trying to look beyond one's own horizon – might lead to more fruitful long-term insights beyond telling people what is right for them. For development programmes, that would mean to ask what are the long-term insights on how identities, conflict, access to resources and the experience of violence play out.

Then, the NASA scientists suggest, do what humans do best: look for patterns and textures. Bare earth will offer a different pattern than a concrete parking lot. Sometimes patterns mix, suggesting areas of change. Are there patterns in how certain identities overlap with certain experiences? Are these patterns shaped around locations, certain moments in time, certain ruptures? Do the same two factors always go together as assumed – for example, are female-headed households really always the most vulnerable? What other factors always co-exist to maybe create this vulnerability? Do these other factors always occur in the same way? Given that we know that peace dividends do not automatically trickle down to the wider population,[110] is a pattern detectable of overlap between groups of people who do benefit and those who do not? Does the pattern always look the same, or does it shift – opening up access to some and closing it to others? What factors make it shift: Does the satellite image indicate great ruptures? Do these patterns repeat?

Then, in defining colours, define why certain features appear in the way that they do: What is the characteristic of the landscape that makes it appear in certain colours? On a satellite image, water is black, cities are silver, plants are green. The nuance in the colours is a good reminder how much underlying structures and characteristics determine how something looks. When labelling an identity, thinking of the need to define colours properly is helpful: Is there a misinterpretation of how something appears? A satellite image only becomes meaningful if colours, patterns and scale are put in context and in relation to each other. Without doing that, 'a white patch might be a cloud, but it could also be snow or a salt flat or sunglint'.[111] Context, advises NASA, will guide the viewer to understand the sources of the phenomena that appear on the page.

And then find north. Having a fixed point allows understanding in which direction trends go. In the situation of Covid-19 messaging to elderly parents, finding north might mean figuring out who the patient is willing to listen to (their trusted messengers) rather than assuming that they can all get behind one shared scientific authority.[112]

But the most powerful tool of all in making nuanced sense of a satellite picture is to know the place that is shown on the image. To learn, it is best to know what you are looking at. An astronaut who knows that an area had experienced a wild fire will be able to interpret the visible burn scar as what it is. Knowledge that an area has undergone change in land ownership and land usage means that the shift in texture in land and vegetation becomes a record of those shifts. History and life show up on the image for those who know how to read it. Without it, there is no other way but retrofitting a visible phenomenon to a range of possible interpretations that are plucked out of nowhere. It is absurd to suggest that that would be a good way to approach a satellite image. Yet it is how understanding context is approached by development programmes all the time.

Approaching interpretation of a picture like an astronaut means that the categories visible on the satellite image can become entry points to understanding the individualized experience, rather than being seen as static lines. Big patterns are an invitation to delve deeper into the picture, to seek out individual identities, into mental landscapes and relationships to unpack the texture, colour and shapes in greater detail. Satellite images are helpful in this process, as long as their scale is always clear. Because, one truth of the need to understand that each individual has their own perspective on who they are is that maybe every time when one person takes a close look at the identity of another, seeking to take a neighbourhood picture, the best they can hope to get from that person's point of view is a satellite image. Neglecting people's individual experience in support of a bigger picture is very similar to taking a satellite image at great scale and treating the information it offers as if it was a detailed photograph of the neighbourhood and as if it could comprehensively tell the viewer what matters to the people in the picture.

You can't make bricks without straw

People and states

Max Weber's ideas about the state – control, capacity and legitimacy – have had one particularly influential legacy for international development: the central assumption that there is a direct and linear connection between how people feel about the state in which they live and how well this state delivers services. This idea has fuelled an emphasis on service delivery, but more like service delivery plus: service delivery not solely for the sake of giving people schools, water and health care but to achieve the legitimacy of the state.

How exactly this legitimacy might come about has been the subject of generations of scholarship; it has had a slightly-shorter existence as a development mental model. In this hugely-influential development paradigm – which has dominated the past two decades – services are imagined as a currency with which legitimacy can be bought.[1] The statebuilding narrative changed accordingly in this time, having started with a narrow focus on institutions and capacity towards one in which responsive statebuilding was conceptualized 'as an effective political process for citizens and states to negotiate mutual demands, obligations and expectations', as the European Report on Development argues.[2] This conceptualization 'placed the concept of legitimacy – as both a means to building state capacity and an end in itself – at the centre of the state-building agenda'.[3]

This mental model continues to fuel a number of quite wild imagined causality chains that go something like this: delivering on basic state functions builds strong institutions that become the foundation for economic growth and enable service delivery, which helps repair or build state–society relationships. A better state–society relationship increases the legitimacy of states or governments and with that its capacity, which decreases any motivation to rise up against the state and this all builds peaceful societies.[4] From this perspective, constructing a hospital is like a deposit into the savings account of state legitimacy, which pays interests in the form of peace dividend, which creates peace.

All of this sounds vaguely plausible if one stays within the logic of the transactional growth paradigm. Distilled to its essence, achieving legitimacy through service delivery is in this logic imagined as a straightforward transaction within value-for-money investment and development indicator pay-off, with all the criteria that constitute the

kind of economic transaction that underpins thinking in the transactional growth paradigm, which Philipsen outlines as having price as 'the exclusive criteria. No longer was it necessary – or even possible – to distinguish between goods and bads, between use value and exchange value, or to figure out whether a "service" provided a service or a disservice'.[5] Because transactional growth thinking is the comfort zone of much development programming in conflict-affected settings, it is not surprising that the service-legitimacy link continues life as a central assumption in many development programmes.

Within this logic, provided that a service or state function is delivered through a fair process and is of a high quality, it seems obvious that such delivery will positively influence how people feel about government and, perhaps, by extension the state. However, it turns out that this supposedly straightforward relationship between service delivery and legitimacy is very difficult to prove, which is why there is little work that links state service provision to state legitimacy with substantive empirical data.[6] Rather, once you start poking around, what exactly constitutes services and legitimacy becomes opaque, but what gains luminosity is the insight that the relationship between service delivery and legitimacy is far more complex than the dominant hypothesis suggests.[7]

Maybe complex is too neat a way to say: this relationship is all over the place. Some services at first do not appear to play any part at all in how people felt about government. In some places, *certain* services *sometimes* seem to influence how *some people* feel about *some part* of their government. Sometimes that was a negative, sometimes a positive feeling. Sometimes that a service simply existed was important. Sometimes that a service existed could make the perception of it worse – if the service was, for example, made a little more accessible for some, but not truly accessible for all or if people were able to receive a service, but felt treated with disrespect by staff delivering the service, who represent in that situation the human face of the state. Seemingly small details – such as school fees, travel distance or opening hours – can strongly influence how an individual experiences the state in such situations.[8] However, this influence is not necessarily experienced in a linear way and could change if a service changes, based on the context, place or time.

That the relationship is all over the place means that it is impossible to reliably predict the direction of change should these services improve or worsen. And yet, that is what a lot of development programmes do: try and predict that relationship. Tweak a bit of service delivery here to get a bit more legitimacy there. The reason why that approach or prediction and manipulation does not help is because it clashes with the messy reality: if one were to draw a diagram of how people feel about services, states and governments, it would be one disordered jumble of colour-coded multidirectional arrows, dotted and solid lines (some of them crossed), and feedback loops. The diagram would likely instinctively feel like a pretty good representation of reality; but it would also be a pretty bad map if the aim was to find causality in the relationship of services and legitimacy to then tweak a programmatic approach.

This is unsettling. That causal services/legitimacy relationship has made appearances in so many policy documents and programme designs and now the rug is being pulled from under this dominant development principle. But what does the floor look like that the rug used to cover?

Legitimacy: Moving from transaction to co-construction

If legitimacy were a house made of clay bricks, the clay from which the bricks are made warrants our attention. Clay comes in many forms. First, there is colour: red, grey, muddy brown, white, speckled mixes of all of these. Some types of clay consist of multiple layers that were formed over centuries and have different qualities, serving as a physical reminder of how texture and stability are shaped by time. When clay is wet, it can be moulded. When it is dry, it is rigid, but can be made flexible again by adding water. When it is fired, it irreversibly changes its properties: the fierce process of heat is such a shock that it determines an unalterable outcome. After firing, the only change that can happen to clay is shattering and, thus, destruction. Clay can absorb toxins or shut out water; it can soak up and repel. It is never pure and it has long geological memories.

There are many, many more interesting things to know about clay, but I will stop here. Yet, when it comes to the bricks that are expected to build the house of legitimacy, it is the surprisingly complex and versatile humble clay that offers a good mnemonic aid.

If the clay represents the people, the societal groups and even the different types of authorities that are supposed to jointly build the state's legitimacy, then it is helpful to remember the previously listed properties of clay: there are many different types. These types have been influenced by time in many different ways, they have been part of sometimes stressful processes that have altered their texture (sometimes irreversibly), and they can simultaneously absorb one thing while rejecting another. Imaging people as clay is a good reminder of just how many different elements there are to the process of building legitimacy and that it is nowhere near as simple as stacking one identikit brick on top of another.

Traditional legitimacy theory assumes that a common set of values is necessary to develop and articulate legitimacy;[9] and that legitimacy has clearly identifiable sources.[10] Within this framing, however, scholarship has broadly settled on two opposing understandings of legitimacy: what we might call here the wet clay and fired clay versions of legitimacy. Under both versions, legitimacy can come from a variety of sources, such as tradition, charisma, performance or processes. Yet, the wet clay school of thought thinks of legitimacy as something that can be moulded, viewing legitimacy as relational and subjective, argues Gippert.[11] Whether an actor is legitimate depends on whether the relevant target audience perceives them to be. Perceptions can change as clay can be moulded and absorb or reject. Legitimacy that is based on relations and the subjective experience of state performance means that the relationship between government and citizens is changeable, depending on state performance and whether there are somewhat agreed standards as to what a good performance looks like.[12] As part of this performance process, a state has earned legitimacy when the public accepts state authority over other sources of authority.[13]

The fired clay thinkers imagine legitimacy as created by objectively adhering to a set of agreed standards. What standards? In international development, probably a set of DIN norms articulated along Western democratic benchmarks.[14] The main difference between these two understandings of legitimacy is what distinguishes wet and fired

clay: one offers negotiation and moulding, the other is settled (through a previous process) and any change to it means destruction. But wet clay, process-driven legitimacy is complicated, however, because what makes for a good, legitimacy-achieving process is usually answered in the international development sector with fired clay thinking. A good process in this definition is imagined as participatory, fair or inclusive.[15] It is how the state makes decisions or includes people and how it performs against those decisions. Procedural justice, argues Tyler, means that citizens perceive state agents to be neutral and fair.[16] Yet, depending on whether citizens experience procedural interactions with state agents as fair or unfair, they will in turn develop positive or negative views about state authority,[17] moulding and reshaping the wet clay as they go along, but encountering fired clay values, championed by, for example, the OECD as one of the most prominent actors prioritizing process legitimacy.[18]

When the question of legitimacy emphasizes process – is the state able to be inclusive and fair? – then legitimacy is implicitly framed as a capacity issue: if only the actors were better at performing or processes, there would be more legitimacy. This view comes from the aforementioned (in Chapter 2) circular logic of gap filling that we often encounter in international development: issues are to be identified and compartmentalized in ways that allow them to be addressed through available interventions, of which one just happens to be capacity building that is designed to fill a gap.[19] But thinking in gap-filling terminology about capacity tends to forget that there is a much deeper historical connection between state capacity and historical state legitimacy.[20] There is something deep in the layers of the clay, formed over centuries, that influences its textures today. This forgetfulness is the reason why what emerges is, to varying degrees, the suggestion that the source of creating legitimacy is a straightforward exchange. A transaction. A trade of goods with a clear view of input and output: service for legitimacy. A give-and-take that lives comfortably in the logic of the transactional growth mental model.

Yet, the notion of a measurable economic transaction is somewhat strange here. What is exchanged is not like for like and thus input and output are actually difficult to put in relation to each other. You can count the number of water points and, to a certain extent, keep tabs of whether the water is clean and if there is enough of it, but how do you count legitimacy? How much does 100 per cent legitimacy weigh? But if legitimacy cannot be measured, is it prudent to quantify its source by suggesting it is schools and hospitals?

There are workarounds and all of them highlight the difficulties. The most common tool to get to measuring legitimacy is the trusted perception survey discussed earlier, which prioritizes empirical value-based legitimacy – that is, the extent to which people trust an authority or believe them to be at least trustworthy.[21] People's relationships with government are examined by asking about the extent to which people feel government cared about and reflected their priorities, both at the local and national levels. In the longitudinal panel survey that was conducted as part of the SLRC research programme, this meant to focus on specific government actions, rather than on overall acceptance of the government as an authority.[22] This is the process that McLoughlin describes as requiring acceptance of the rules and expectations that guide government actions more generally.[23] The research approach to ask about government action as a tool to

measure legitimacy equates the state with whatever government is currently in charge. This equation was chosen in the SLRC survey by design, not by accident, because the concept of the state in conflict-affected environments can be rather alien to people, whereas government is tangible. The survey rounds sought to understand how the link between the state fulfilling a function and the positive impact this has on state-society relationships could be strengthened – that it can be is, fundamentally, the premise of the statebuilding approach.[24] In a way, seeking to understand which currency can be used to purchase legitimacy buys into assumptions about causal pathways. It is just too comfortable to focus on the tangible and quantifiable, which then perpetuates the idea of a transactional nature of legitimacy.[25]

This transactional model suggests that increased or improved capacity/charisma/performance/process will mean more effective delivery of certain functions and services. Since functions and services are sources of legitimacy, this will in turn result in better legitimacy. This view emphasizes – in many nuanced ways – that there is a currency with which the goods of legitimacy can be bought. Mental models that understand service delivery as a vehicle to legitimacy think of this as linear transaction: more services = more legitimacy. Recent emphasis on results, indicators and measurement has given such transactional thinking even more power.[26] But as the SLRC learned, improvements in particularly access to services – a common measure of input – appears to have little systematic influence on people's perceptions, meaning more services are unlikely to lead to a better state–society relationship.[27] As Brinkerhoff et al. argue, the relationship between services and trust is complex and non-linear. It is also dynamic, responding to changes in government approaches.[28] At best, service delivery may result in a kind of probationary period, with beneficiaries suspending judgement over their relationship with the state.

It is very challenging to move away from the transactional view on services and legitimacy, particularly because it does offer room for nuanced questions: Is a negotiated transaction still a transaction? Are processes and performance so changeable that the clear path of a transaction becomes very muddled? The answer is yes to both – but at the heart of this nuance still sits the notion of an exchange with clear inputs and outputs.

Recent scholarship on legitimacy and services has been working to break up this notion. One reason why this is necessary is the one mentioned earlier, which McCullough and Toru highlight: the idea of legitimacy as the result of service delivery pits a good that cannot be counted (legitimacy as well as accountability) against one that can be (delivery).[29] What makes legitimacy uncountable is that it is judged on shifting parameters and in different ways by groups and individuals. Furthermore, McCullough and Toru argue, legitimacy may be a psychological, rather than material, phenomenon. Hence, the transactional model of state legitimacy – with services as the currency to be exchanged – fails to capture the reality of what, why and how people experience state-provided service delivery.[30] Other scholars find different words to describe the nature of legitimacy and the process of negotiating it. Legitimacy, says Gunasekara, is textured.[31] It is both functional and symbolic, argues Godamunne, incorporating the actual actions and expectations of the state.[32] Legitimacy comes from the experience of government fulfilling its core functions, outlines McLoughlin, and includes the norms

of what citizens think is right and fair for a society,[33] as well as their expectations of what these functions should deliver, and the quality of actual delivery.

Several elements become prominent in this rethinking and moving away from the idea of a transaction: the ideas of norms, co-construction and salience. Away from the transactional mental model, legitimacy is no longer understood to be a simple business deal, but an expression of what people expect the state to be, what functions it fulfils and what values it projects, says Godamunne.[34] Expectations and norms are the most important mediator of whether an experience is considered positive or negative, as Nixon et al. argue.[35] But while this is a standard view of legitimacy, what often goes underappreciated is the interplay between experience, mental landscape and social economy, and the impact service delivery can have on all of these elements, becoming both a source and result of legitimacy negotiations. All of these play a particularly complicated role in situations of violent conflict.

Legitimacy in situations affected by violent conflict

Legitimacy, and particularly state legitimacy, has gained increased traction as a concept also in peacebuilding. But working with the ambition to increase state legitimacy in situations of violent conflict comes with an obvious caveat: Von Billerbeck and Gippert highlight that even for violent contexts, legitimacy is still understood in ways suggested by classical legitimacy theory, which focuses on the relationship between the nation state and its citizens. But where is the nation state in conflict-affected situations? The point of such environments is that the state is often absent.[36] What is international development's answer? To build the state or, as Ferguson phrases it,

> couldn't the Democratic Republic of the Congo solve all its problems, reformers seem to say, if only its government would start to behave like that of Sweden? Well, maybe so, but it's the sort of ahistorical and asociological formulation that is worse than useless. Yet what happens when states of the imagined, poverty-fighting kind are simply not present?[37]

If there is no state, where, then, does the starting point lie for state legitimacy?

Things are getting complicated.

The notion of a state–society relationship or a social contract sets up a binary absent from many places that have experienced violence, or in which the state has barely been in existence. The social seeps into the state, just as the private sector seeps into society, making the edges of this proposed binary very fuzzy indeed.[38] A characteristic of many of the places that are affected by continuous and historical violent conflict – DRC, South Sudan, Afghanistan – is that a reliable and recognizable state entity has been wholly absent from people's lives.

For a state to have moral authority over its citizens requires that the state exists. To imagine a reciprocal and protective relationship between state and citizens requires that the category citizen is meaningful as a unifier. But what if there is no state (yet) that grants its citizens rights? What happens if there is a state that explicitly protects

some, but not others? What if there is no unifying definition of what the state needs to be that all citizens can comfortably accept – the unifying narrative that becomes the benchmark against which legitimacy is measured? What if, even if the state is not much more than a hollow fantasy, it could establish some legitimacy through performance and processes?

The nature of the conflict environment makes it particularly difficult to answer these questions. Part of the model that assumes that legitimacy is created through service delivery is the assumption that expectations and perceptions of the state are uniform between or within groups (the aforementioned recognizable categories of people). But what makes a conflict environment a conflict environment is that these perceptions can vary greatly depending on which part of their identity is particularly important to an individual in a given moment – in other words, which of the categories that might be applied to them from the outside do they prioritize – and also which government authority an individual has in mind when it thinks of the state.[39] Conflict might create different narratives amongst different groups of what they are entitled to, based on the previous treatment they received. Part of such entitlement is the expectation to be treated fairly, but what if conflict does indeed create different standards of what is considered fair (as we have seen in the research on northern Uganda previously mentioned)?[40]

Even being treated respectfully when receiving a service is not as straightforward as it sounds. Different people have different standards, different mental landscapes that determine what respectful means to them. In Nepal's Terai, for example, people expect the state to provide infrastructure, physical security and material support. But it has to be provided while explicitly respecting local customs and while being both fair towards groups and beneficial for individuals. However, what determines an experience of fairness is fluid in this context – it may be based on personal experience or an observation of how a group is treated.[41] Cummings and Paudel report that almost everyone interviewed in Nepal felt that their group was the most marginalized, revealing that in terms of the mental landscape, even supposedly unifying announcements – whether it is the offering of a new service or a new constitution – do not automatically overcome the experience of being pitted against each other in conflict.

In addition, some services are always experienced communally – such as schools or hospitals – while some are very individualized (such as pensions). Individualized services or benefits require relatively little engagement or capacity on either the side of the recipient or the state, argues Gelb. This is different for services which are received as a collective, such as education or land reform. This, Gelb expands, using the case of South Africa as an example, means that 'the transaction between provider and recipient is complex and requires substantial capacities on both sides'.[42] Because for the community to benefit from a communal service requires high state capacity and that high state capacity would need to deliver a community-unifying service in this complex setting. It is not difficult to see why finding a communally-shared unifying narrative of legitimacy based on service delivery is extremely challenging.

Development has tried to smooth out these challenges in order to not lose the positive momentum that services promise for legitimacy, for example, by designing individual ways to complain if a service was not accessible or delivered sub-standard.

This might work as it seems that simply having access to a grievance mechanism can have a positive influence on the perception of government.[43] Grievance mechanisms are potentially useful for programme implementation, as offering a path to express discontent may result in better overall impact if one is seeking to help support state legitimacy by delivering a service. Even so, merely offering a grievance mechanism to report on unsatisfactory services is not enough. In some instances, monitoring to improve services can actually increase levels of dissatisfaction, as happened in the case of health centres in Peru.[44] Here, people coming in with extremely low expectations to receive a health service were made aware of a complaints mechanism, which in turn created a time lag between raised expectations (and thus dissatisfaction) and improved services.[45] Woolcock describes this phenomenon as 'impact trajectories'.[46]

Another area where there is never just one straight story is power. Situations of conflict are characterized by the fact that power can be a fluid, even fickle thing, influenced by a rapidly changing context and by an evolving set of actors that makes the environment extremely fragmented. Environments of conflict are characterized by both polarization and the fact that these poles have blurry edges. This means that populations are divided into clearly demarcated groups or categories that can also overlap (which is in an often-unhelpful way mirrored by the categories assigned to people to make them beneficiaries) or be marked by side-switching.

Within these groups, individuals have varying experiences of their environment and how they navigate it, including at times being a member of seemingly competing groups. These patterns are equally relevant for the pathways to legitimacy. The experience of legitimacy differs not just between groups, but also across individuals within these groups. The audience to whom state legitimacy is supposedly projected is therefore often, as Zaum argues, highly fragmented, which makes it difficult for actors to ascribe, seek or claim legitimacy.[47] Whalan maintains that it is impossible to acquire a single legitimacy, as so many relevant audiences exist in conflict and post-conflict contexts, including the incumbent government, parties to conflict, local populations and international interveners.[48] A shared basis for legitimacy across multiple audiences is not apparent within most fragile and conflict-affected states. International actors thus struggle to gain legitimacy, primarily because they have to juggle the demands and expectations of multiple audiences, with little understanding of how each conceives and interprets legitimacy.[49]

These processes influence both the sources and actors of legitimacy.[50] State-focused interpretations of legitimacy assume that power is institutionalized in the state and that power is indivisible.[51] The state-centric emphasis in international development discourse means that power is imagined to rest with the state (the ruler), which is in a hierarchical relationship with the ruled.[52] But another characteristic of conflict-affected states is that power is not exclusively associated with the state, which may have a limited presence or even be non-existent.[53]

And even beyond that, there is hardly ever just one powerholder. Governments – this exquisite collection of individuals, networks, ideologies and traditions – are often talked about as if they were monolithic entities following clear rules. In this imagination, the government as a representative of the state becomes a force that can maintain an even-handed, equitable approach. In a conflict-affected environment,

this is by definition and manifestly not the case. By its very nature, the post-conflict or conflict state treats different people differently and deploys diverse tactics and rules for various groups. Power allows access to state resources that are then used for constituency building to maintain power. Some people or groups become part of the constituency while others are kept away. In South Sudan, the state has rarely been defined through its institutions, but often through its changing history: South Sudan as a state is only meaningful in relation to the fact that it once was part of Sudan and is now independent.[54] Here, instead of being a legitimate entity created by its capacity to deliver services, the state is just one thing: a power created by history to extract, to hold relationships, to keep positions.[55] This highlights another challenge in conflict and fragility engagement: in states that exclude certain groups from power, how can participation of all be encouraged as a way to avoid the swings of political contestation that contribute to fragility?

The transactional growth paradigm is, as a philosophy, not exclusive to formal statebuilders. Non-state actors, controversially, are skilled statebuilders, too. Krieger shows that armed groups will pursue policies designed to enhance legitimacy, which can involve offering governance services to civilians – after having gained some form of control over a territory or population – to strengthen their claim to power.[56] The fact that those contesting state power often do so by offering services (such as the LTTE in Sri Lanka,[57] and more recently Daesh or Al Shabab) points towards the power of framing the state as a service deliverer. They recognize services as a currency that is worth capturing. In Afghanistan, for example, the Taliban gained legitimacy amongst the local population by providing better services than the government, which at the time was weak.[58] In contrast to this stands the area near Kandahar City, which has received most official reconstruction funding since 2001. Here, basic health services or a primary school were unavailable, with any delivered public goods captured by an elite of landowners without a need to gain legitimacy amongst the population.[59]

Establishing state presence through service delivery creates visibility, which is understood as helping people understand what role the state plays.[60] The emphasis on service delivery 'to the people' prevalent in insurgency rhetoric from Sri Lanka to South Sudan highlights the value of this. Delivering services is power, underpinned by decisions on who gets those services and who does not. How such power is used – whether it is broadly aligned with what are considered the correct rules by beneficiaries – represents the process by which the decision, and by extension the decision-maker, becomes legitimate.[61] It is not merely that the role of the state is varied. In some cases, the notion of the state having a set role can be quite alien. Thus, expectations of local and national governments are low, as are levels of accountability.[62] The notion of a direct link between services and legitimacy also overlooks the fact that there will be forces actively working against this. Insights from Afghanistan reveal that warlord legitimacy is in part based on their ability to maintain power locally through preventing centralized statebuilding. They are successful in doing this due to their power being sufficiently flexible to withstand change, while sturdy enough to prevent inroads for other power holders.[63]

There are other processes that create moments of legitimization, most prominently elections. They are a crucial statebuilding moment: once a country can hold elections, it shows that it exists as a state. That is why the elections in DRC in 2006 were so crucial for Joseph Kabila. That is why South Sudan's government, despite never allowing the possibility that the SPLM would not win a landslide in 2010, ran an internationally-supported election – which was fraudulent, brutal and really put international actors in a bind.[64] That is why, in Afghanistan, once legitimacy was officially bestowed through a flawed election, argues Jackson, this started a cycle in which the officially legitimated power was used to regulate access to resources, which in turn could be deployed to ensure that the processes bestowing legitimacy (such as the next elections) go in the powerholder's direction.[65] In the battle between the Taliban and the Afghan government that ensued, it is striking that in 2021, the Taliban won.

Legitimacy-seeking interventions are not activities that happen solely between the state and citizens. On the contrary, in places where citizens do not view the state as the sole holder of power, they can grant legitimacy to a greater number of actors. How effective legitimacy-seeking interactions are plays out in many ways. When a government allows humanitarian access into opposition-held areas, for example, it does so not to help its enemy, but to ensure that negotiations with humanitarian actors do not confer power or legitimacy on the opposition. The effect here is preventing legitimacy of an opponent. If a group of people emerges from marginalization, then those who helped them do so effectively will be considered legitimate, regardless of whether they continue to act in the interests of the previously-marginalized citizens going forward. This is the case with the SPLM/A in South Sudan, which in the eyes of many derives legitimacy from its history of fighting against Khartoum's oppression. While the legacy of this legitimacy has been eroded by years of post-independence civil war, attitudes towards the SPLM/A can still be expressed with appreciation of what they have previously done.[66]

Though the Taliban's use of ideologically infused force was considered illegitimate locally, the group's ability to bring justice by using coercive power at the same time increased their perceived legitimacy in the eyes of certain sections of the population and amongst parts of the international community.[67] The crucial difference between legitimacy for the state versus legitimacy for the government is that in the framework of stability, one ought to be independent of the other. A change in government ought not to jeopardize the legitimacy of the state, regardless of whether a government is considered legitimate by particular groups of people.[68] Thus, a complicated relationship between legitimacy and force exists – one that is deeply influenced by the perceptions and experiences of local populations.

In Afghanistan, when local populations perceived services provided by external actors as effective, this had a positive impact on the legitimacy of these actors – whether it was the Taliban or international NGOs. However, this relationship between service provision by non-state actors and legitimacy is not automatic and requires governance effectiveness to be attributed to a specific actor.[69] Insights from Bangladesh show that citizens equate the presence of foreign aid with government competence, meaning that international development assistance improves an individual's perception of the domestic government's legitimacy.[70] Under these

circumstances, Ciorciari and Krasner argue, the legitimacy of external governance actors is determined by their performance.[71] As a result, external actors that perform well can help create so-called islands of effectiveness within conflict contexts. It is also likely that external actors can more easily acquire legitimacy through service provision as they are likely seen as less involved in local dynamics and politics. More generally, contracting out core sovereign functions to external governance actors is characteristic of states with limited reach. Thus, international actors also have a role in how legitimacy is negotiated and are therefore part of the transactional imagination of legitimacy.

The received wisdom continues to be that the answer to issues of legitimacy comes in the form of good development outcomes, achieved through fair processes.[72] At the heart of this assumption are notions of currency and exchange that can be expressed in an equation that runs along the lines of: good services + good delivery = acceptance of the state = state legitimacy = peace = development = good services. But such linearity does not exist in lives shaped by violence, as we have seen in previous chapters. Socio-economic shocks come from many directions and take many different forms (some related to the history of conflict, some not; some becoming shocks only because conflict has destroyed possible coping mechanisms).[73] What happens to this presumed relationship between services and legitimacy in situations of a shock to the system? In the case of flood and drought in Sri Lanka, the state delivered below some community expectations – crucially, how the state's performance was judged depended on perspective, as arguably state performance in this moment of shock was relatively evenly spread. However, the historic experiences specific communities had had with the state mattered more than what it did during the moment of shock.[74]

The insight that the how matters has big implications and presents avenues for improving programming. While the experience of a particular service or interaction is subjective,[75] it is also dependent on norms that dictate what decent treatment looks like. It is significant that improvements in access to services appear to make less of an impression on people than being treated with decency and having practical ways of seeking redress for a problem.[76] Measuring access to school, for example, says little about the quality of education.[77] But it is the quality that matters to people's experience of the service and thus by extension to how they experience their government.

There is a danger of the quality issue being treated superficially without consideration of the long-term consequences. Quality matters more than the question of whether a service is there. The experience of quality is diminished when supposedly free services – such as health or education – come with hidden costs, such as informal payments to teachers or travel costs to attend a facility.[78] While community consultation seems to positively influence how people feel about government, no amount of consultation can make up for the damaging effect of receiving a poor-quality service or experiencing entrenched structural unfairness long term.[79] The example of a hostile labour market, which is often experienced as working against an individual making a decent living, is apposite: no amount of community consultation can address the deep marginalization that results from being at the mercy of exploitative and precarious practices.[80] Rather than building the state's capacity to deliver, a better image of the state is likely to be achieved if service delivery is done with transparency, participation and accountability.[81]

Such thinking only runs in one direction, overlooking the fact that each element is infused with expectations and experiences, and is a two-way interaction between government and citizens. People observe if their state acts according to acceptable rules – what these rules are, however, changes according to history, discourse and experience. This is why it is important to look at what is salient in a particular situation.

Saliency

Once mainly used in psychology to determine what kind of stimulus creates a reaction, the concept of salience is now more widely applied and the language starts popping up more and more in international development. The concept is rooted in and remains tightly linked with behavioural science: salience bias is an individual's tendency to attach greater meaning to what is most important to them, while discounting other elements that may be equally influential. The source of this individually assigned importance is not necessarily recognizable to or shared by others. Thus, salience directs attention towards the question of which mechanisms – emotional or cognitive – are responsible for placing an issue at the forefront of an individual's thoughts, and/or determining whether they consider it worthy of attention.

The notion of a particular issue having salience is prominent in many scholarly areas. In religion, the notion of salience expresses the extent to which religiosity influences opinions and values on specific issues.[82] In her sociological work on racism, DiAngelo proposes that saliency may help identify which part of an individual's identity responds to a particular situation or debate,[83] similar to what Stone et al. describe as an identity quake.[84] Behavioural economics also uses the term 'availability', whereby judgement is dependent on recent exposure to or personal experience of an issue – whatever is foremost in someone's mind will shape how information is interpreted or what actions are taken.[85] Nudge theory uses the concept of salience to refine receptiveness to a nudge,[86] while critiques of nudge theory have highlighted its manipulative approach, which mainly seeks to shift the salience of issues rather than resolve an issue.[87]

In terms of understanding how state legitimacy is negotiated between state and citizens in situations of or following violent conflict, salience offers a constructive and transformative perspective on why a service sometimes seems to matter for legitimacy and at other times it does not.[88] What is it that makes a particular service a salient issue in the negotiation of state legitimacy? Another way to approach this question is to consider how a political culture is created in the interaction between citizens and the state. How do political and psychological lives intersect? Political culture – a term introduced in 1956 by Almond and elaborated upon by Almond and Verba in *The Civic Culture* – refers to the cognitive, evaluative and expressive processes that are relevant to politics. The concept explicitly links the psychology of individuals or groups (as expressed through narratives, group experiences and culture) with what Czudnowski calls the 'structural-functional characteristics of political systems'.[89]

Salience is both the result of and vehicle for these structural-functional characteristics. If a state and its legitimacy is understood as being the result of a process of communication and interaction between the state and its citizens (the wet clay school

of thought), then the concept of salience transcends previous notions of legitimacy as being built on a transactional principal–agent relationship with clear rules (the fired clay thinking) towards a notion of co-construction, rather than transactionalism.

One salient issue in this is power: the question of what currency is used to negotiate the everyday relationship between a citizen and their state has become steadily more strongly focused on power, in particular Beetham's suggestion that legitimate use of power occurs when it is in line with values held by a society.[90] Articulating what the shared values of a society are and what may be salient issues for the negotiation of this relationship – which McCullough et al. did for the case of Pakistan's Swat Valley and which offered refinement of this thinking – potentially provides a better starting point for understanding the most effective conduit for co-constructing better state–society relationships – a better understanding of what moulds the wet clay.[91]

Co-constructing legitimating narratives

What is co-constructed legitimacy? Rather than understanding legitimacy to be the outcome of transactions, the concept of co-construction suggests viewing legitimacy as something created through an ongoing dialogue of legitimating narratives taking place between a state and its citizens, or between parts of the state and groups of citizens along the lines of salient issues.[92] Beetham describes this process as the mutual construction of legitimacy through conforming to justifiable rules shaped by norms, expectations and beliefs shared across powerful and less powerful groups.[93] Thus, rather than being a one-way street (or coming as an already fired clay pot), legitimacy is jointly constructed (moulded out of wet clay) by a state and its citizens. The collaborative perspective also acknowledges that many different experiences are involved in the creation of legitimacy and that these experiences often manifest as identities. It takes us back to Heimans and Timms's notion of new power, with its emphasis on 'the human instinct to cooperate (rather than compete) by rewarding those who share their own assets or ideas, spread those of others or build on existing ideas to make them better'.[94] Building a solid foundation by creating it oneself also speaks to a deep human instinct: the pattern to value higher what has been created through one's own work, effort and input, which has aptly been named the 'IKEA effect'.[95]

The notion of co-constructed legitimacy must start with a broad perspective of what underpins this process: politics. Hudson and Leftwich offer just such a perspective, describing politics as being

> about the structures, institutions and operation of power and how it is used in the competition, conflict and deliberation over ideas, interests, values and preferences; where different individuals, groups, organisations and coalitions contest or cooperate over resources, rights, public rules and duties, and self-interest; where deals are struck and alliances made or broken; and where establishing, maintaining or transforming political settlements, institutions and policies is an ongoing process.[96]

There is a lot going on, most of which extends way beyond the notion of the simple transactional process of offering a service and gaining legitimacy in return that is such a stalwart of development. Power and relationship management is mediated through the expectations people have of the state – what services and protection it ought to provide, as well as what morals it should promote. This starts from an individual's mental landscape and extends to groups who have expectations and narratives of what governance ought to look like, and therefore what kind of state is appropriate to fulfil this – in other words, what rights and traditions a state should protect, what values it should project, and how it should exert its power.[97] These expectations vary depending on the group or individual's perspective. But it is a relationship that goes both ways and involves many angles: what the state is imagined to be starts in the mind of an individual, these individual notions build up across groups and then what societal groups expect creates a shared imagination that the state then responds to or co-shapes to form how a state is imagined (Figure 8).

Co-construction is a stalwart social theory as nothing is imagined to happen in isolation. Giddens argues that individuals both create and are shaped by social systems, thus recognizing the duality of agency versus structure is critical.[98] Citizens can grant legitimacy while the state seeks such legitimacy for the purposes of maintaining control, meaning legitimacy is itself a process, rather than an outcome.[99] Thus, how the state interacts with groups of people is dependent on the need to control, exclude or appease these or other groups – and the levels of legitimacy already negotiated with those groups. Mitchell explained this process as the 'state effect' where the state is an effect of these negotiations and perceptions, rather than a fixed entity. In this sense,

Figure 8 Co-constructing the state. Image by Olivier Ploux.

the state is what the process focusing on salient issues delivers. The state is thus not distinct from society, because what Mitchell refers to as an 'elusive, porous and mobile' boundary between the two is part of the outcome associated with the process of negotiation and co-construction, as part of shaping and executing power relations.[100] To have the state emerge as an effect of this, however, does create the notion of the state, as Gunasekara et al. argue, as 'an entity that is above and distinct from society. The state effect, therefore, provides a certain appearance of order and undermines the contingent nature of service delivery, power, citizenship and governance.'[101] What the notion of co-construction acknowledges is that norms are not, as Schmidt has argued, static but are instead 'dynamic' and 'intersubjective constructs'.[102] They change over time, depending on what happens.

A co-constructed image of the state links together state narratives as held by state agents or citizens; distribution arrangements (who gets what); co-constructions of social reality (how people experience their lives and how states view their citizens); and their expression through formal and informal institutions (the spaces in which contestation happens).[103]

These processes are also shaped by the political settlement. The political settlement is a concept that is best explained as the tacit or explicit rules that dictate how politics are done and distribution arranged. Whether one can actually speak of a political settlement in situations of continuing conflict and upheaval has been a matter of much public debate between Khan and Kelsall, with the former positing that continued conflict is not incompatible with a political settlement,[104] and the latter conceptualizing the term as an agreement (possibly implicit) on distribution of benefits and power that ends outright conflict.[105]

The process of co-constructed legitimacy through salient issues has many facets and phases, potentially involving services that are contested or services that have been co-opted by some groups. Such groups – those holding power in the political settlement – can in turn use services to construct a narrative of what constitutes legitimate state behaviour. They can set the tone. Should they lose their place in the political settlement, the tone will inevitably change, as will the salience of particular issues. And the quality of conflict-affected environments and relationships is that things change. If perceptions are shaped by expectations and experiences, it matters little how well a particular service is actually being delivered if the wider context is one of government failure.[106] Perceptions will determine whether people trust a service enough to use it,[107] with absence of trustable government regulation or staffing acting as an impediment to how people engage with a service.[108] The reason for a particular service becoming a pivot for legitimacy, argue McCullough and Papoulidis, can be found in the role it plays in distribution arrangements.[109]

These distribution arrangements are the history and experiences of different groups of people within the state. Thus, a group that has been marginalized in the past will continue to consider all interactions with the state through the perspective of marginalization. This means the quality of such interactions matters, as does the predictability and expectation of how an interaction will go. Process matters, because if people feel excluded or unfairly treated, their perceptions of government will be damaged.[110] Furthermore, information is important – people want to be in the know and to feel they are being listened to. Failures

in these areas can fuel notions of marginalization on the basis of group identity, which is experienced as deliberate neglect. Because the quality of everything matters, including that of the state itself. As McCullough and Toru argue in their work on Pakistan, it is wholly unlikely that a post-conflict or conflict state will automatically become concerned with seeking legitimacy in the eyes of all its citizens – a fragmented state that has in the past pitted citizens against each other does not become all-accommodating through service provision.[111] Rather, those representing the state will consciously choose to build better relationships with some groups while – in cases where investing in a legitimate relationship would bring much higher costs – neglecting or even mistreating others.[112] The end of outright war does not de facto mean all citizens are suddenly perceived as being worthy of protection and support. Feeling protected by the state, however, is an important point, as legitimacy is deeply connected with physical protection. No amount of service delivery can make up for people feeling insecure at the hands of the state.[113] Examples of this chain of events are too numerous to list – but prominent ones in South Sudan, for example, are the experiences of the Murle or the Lou Nuer people.[114]

However, the absence of a service-delivering or even a protecting state does not mean the notion of the state is rejected altogether. In Pakistan, expectations of the state are determined by how far removed the respondent is from the power holders. Some overlaps do exist between different groups, all of whom agree that the state should provide infrastructure and basic services, as well as uphold values. Those further removed from access to power also expect the state to provide jobs.[115] Sri Lanka – where a long history of social protection provision has existed alongside a fragmented state–society relationship, and where the country's citizens continued to expect service delivery by the state throughout the civil conflict – provides a further reminder of important nuance. Here, the symbolic value of the state expressing concern through social protection guides much of how people experience the state. Thus, if a service is delivered with an undercurrent of marginalization or maintenance of the status quo, it is this aspect that will shape the relationship, rather than the simple fact that the service has been delivered.[116]

While the quality of service delivery can matter (and is a value in itself), better quality does not guarantee legitimacy. This is because salience means that issue trumps process.[117] If a service is to contribute to legitimacy, it must be politically salient to people – that is, it must carry meaning as a political expression. This meaning is rooted in norms about how the state should behave. In other words, as McLoughlin argues, a service must project people's expectations and hopes for a fair society.[118] This also points towards the dynamic nature of legitimacy negotiation, which can change depending on expectations or experiences, and varies according to group – marginalization may mean the state has little or no interest in negotiating its legitimacy with groups deemed unimportant or a threat.[119]

Statebuilding is about the relationship between people and institutions,[120] meaning how the state is experienced dependent on identity. As varied as identities are therefore the expectations of the state. In Sri Lanka's Rajanganaya, paddy farmers view themselves as deliverers of the state's identity, while the Estate Tamil Community in Nawalapitiya draws its understanding of their identity within the state from the type of work available to them: labourers in tea plantations.[121] Other expectations held by

other groups in different settings include providing citizenship (and documentation of it), land rights, jobs (preferably salaried government jobs), rights protection, infrastructure, physical security and resources, or the state's role as a moral guardian, such as an upholder of fairness in Nepal[122] or Islam in Pakistan; or as a protector of rights, such as in Sri Lanka where social protection forms the bedrock of Sri Lankan identity.[123]

In Pakistan, people talk about the troubles of navigating bureaucracy, the challenges of accessing health services, and experiencing violence from the military during the Taliban insurgency. Yet, for groups closer to power holders, paying a bribe to a bureaucrat or accessing special health treatment through connections represents a viable solution argue McCullough et al.[124] For members of groups less connected to power, however, issues such as needing to bribe bureaucrats, disrespectful treatment by health staff, and not receiving compensation for property destroyed by the army were expressions of state coercion, and did not chime with their expectation of the state.

Taxation is another expression of the relationship between people and institutions, with the multitude of taxation experiences highlighting the multifaceted nature of this relationship. In Nepal, post-conflict state taxation is extremely low, suggesting that the expected relationship between the state and its citizens is somewhat loose. Taxes are, however, paid in other ways, indicating that this relationship is not reflective of a benign low-tax regime, but is in reality rather fraught, with informal taxes imposed to fill the resource gap in service delivery. Just as the quality of processes and delivery matters, so, argues Mallet, does the quality of taxation as part of legitimacy.[125]

Examples of co-constructed legitimacy

A few examples are particularly poignant for this process of co-constructing legitimacy. One of these is the story of Sri Lanka's welfare state and protracted civil war.[126] Sri Lanka has a long history of providing health and education services, with the country ranking 71 on the Human Development Index, much higher than any of its neighbours.[127] When examining everyday experiences of the state in areas that continued to receive services even at the height of war, it becomes clear that delivery of services was not considered a bonus, but rather the bare minimum Sri Lankans expected the government to provide even in times of violent political contestation. Thus, how the state was perceived depended not on its delivery of services but on how the person being asked about their perceptions had experienced their interactions with the state – something like their own personal co-construction. While some communities expressed gratitude for services, others highlighted ongoing discrimination.[128]

For South Sudanese, who have a long history of service provision by international agencies and NGOs, there is no expectation that the government will deliver these services, hence there is no diminishment of how the state is regarded if the government fails to do so.[129] Perceptions of the state are thus shaped by past experiences with state institutions, as well as by the long history of international presence. As a result, dissatisfaction with services is often directed at international actors or NGOs, which highlights the difficulty of building legitimacy using a currency from which

it is disconnected – if no expectation of state-provided services exists, the absence of such services does not disappoint.[130] In South Sudan, the received wisdom of the transactional equation ignores history and politics, in which legitimacy is negotiated according to the history of struggle against marginalization and exploitation by the Sudanese government, the long-standing involvement of international actors, and issues of ethnic identity.[131]

Due to the state's lack of history as a provider, as well as the other priorities people have, services are not the lines along which state–society relationships are negotiated. Instead, such relationships are context-specific in very localized ways,[132] meaning the currency used to increase legitimacy may not be provision of services, but could, for example, be whether fair inclusion of a citizen's identity group is provided for by the state or whether the state is outright violent against certain groups.[133] What is already a challenging proposition is made more complicated by the fact that how people define, experience and act on fairness is influenced by their own experiences of conflict and the narratives they hold. Service delivery can reproduce conflictual distinctions, for example, class relations between upper and lower classes in Swat.[134] Instead of bringing stability for all, service delivery here entrenches the conflictual structures that fuelled uprisings in the 1970s and late 2000s. In short, as Lall writes about Sri Lanka, the way services are provided tends to support the status quo, entrenching poverty and power relations.[135]

In Sri Lanka, perceptions linked to the state and service delivery are shaped by ethnicity, location and experiences with previous state programmes, as well as personal histories of war and displacement.[136] Here, where the state has a history of service delivery, a direct link between service delivery and perceptions of the state was impossible to establish. Who you are matters in how the state is perceived, with different identity groups having had very different experiences with the state in the past, translating into different expectations of what the state should be doing for them in the present. Whether the state is at war or not has a bigger impact on how people perceive it than whether it delivers services or not.[137] Welfare provision is important to the social contract if that is what citizens expect the state to deliver.[138]

One thing clearly demonstrating that this is not a straightforward transactional relationship is the finding that the 'how' matters in the co-construction – the quality of a service and how people feel treated when receiving it are more relevant than a service's accessibility or existence. The perception of the state in relation to service delivery is influenced by both micro-level factors (do people see the service? Is it seen to be delivered without giving political favours to some? To what extent does it reflect community concerns?) and meso-level factors, including the ability of the state to connect with the community using service delivery as a vehicle, and whether or not services are appropriate for and delivered to different groups. Thus, fairness does not necessarily mean the same for everyone, argues Philipps, meaning it is important that the diverse experiences of different groups are reflected in what is delivered to them.[139] The transactional imagination of legitimacy is disconnected from how narratives work: if the narrative is one of marginalization and having been treated unfairly, expectations of fairness are based on what people feel entitled to. If the sense of entitlement informs the understanding that one deserves more than members of other groups, programmes

designed using parameters of fairness – such as equal access for everyone – will be perceived as unfair by those who feel entitled to a bigger share.

Feelings and standards of quality are highly individual, something broad-brush statebuilding approaches do not take into account. But even when things improve, this does not necessarily mean that the service received is experienced as good. Access – a common measure of service delivery – is a nuanced issue. Asking people about the distance to their nearest service, for instance, fails to capture other access-constraining factors, such as money, discrimination, identity or social norms. In Nepal, improved roads enabled better access to schools, schools seemed to admit people regardless of background, and administration of schools was deemed effective.[140] The school's admittance policy was more important than the improved access because the fact that a school building exists does not mean that a Nepalese family can afford to pay school fees or that teachers are present, paid or well-trained. Similarly, while health clinics may be present, they are regularly understaffed and lack essential equipment and medicines.[141] Delivering a bad service can actively make perceptions of government worse. The how of delivery, as it is shaping perception of fairness and participation, is a crucial ingredient of the mental landscape.[142]

The challenge of buying legitimacy through services is magnified when placed alongside the finding that the experience of conflict can potentially raise perceived standards of fairness.[143] However, for an environment coming out of conflict, delivery of services to a universally shared fairness standard is likely impossible. Another twist comes from the fact that if services can also act as signals for wider norms – with a higher standard of fairness interpreted by citizens as being the standard of fairness they should now generally expect – then experiencing a bad service may deepen feelings of marginalization and exclusion because increased legitimacy means changed beliefs and perceptions, but changing beliefs and perceptions is a long-term, multilayered process in which service delivery can at best be but one ingredient.[144] Service delivery can only help in building trust in the state if it reflects the needs of the population, and if the population experiences a 'listening' government.[145] We know communication and grievance channels to be a critical element in state–society relationships. However, will a government that is consolidating its power in post-conflict stabilization stop to listen?

What makes a service a salient issue for negotiating legitimacy?

McCullough argues that 'services become salient when they are connected to meta-narratives that delegitimize an authority. These meta-narratives tended to be about disputed distribution arrangements, particularly between elite groups and excluded groups.'[146] Putting together the two insights elaborated above on salience and the co-constructed nature of legitimacy means matching whatever notions are currently present in people's minds with what is considered to be abiding according to the rules and perpetuated shared values. Identifying the salient issue requires an

understanding of needs, of the services people expect of the state, and of where they feel undersupported (to the point that this lack of support provokes confrontation). Understanding what matters links back to the need to experience a process as fair, even if an outcome is unfavourable. Ayliffe et al. show that when citizens see their highly salient concerns about service delivery addressed, and when they experience this through a process of social accountability, accountability then becomes a conduit through which co-constructed legitimacy is negotiated.[147]

Given the multifaceted nature of a state's relationship with its citizens, seeking to alter just one aspect of this relationship (i.e. service delivery) not only disregards the whole, but potentially creates imbalances elsewhere. Particularly so if basic elements of the state–society relationship continue to be out of whack, for example, Kelton's point made earlier that it is the role of the state to facilitate a situation in which a citizen is actually able to fulfil the obligation such state puts on them.[148] Or, indeed, if what the state wants from its citizens is rethought along the lines that modern monetary theory does: that a state is not actually interested in getting tax dollars, but in creating citizen demand for the services that a government has to offer: 'It's not our tax money the government wants. It's our time. To get us to produce things for the state, the government invents taxes or other kinds of payment obligations.'[149]

Nuance matters: history, culture, economics, social norms and expectations create narratives that determine whether expectations of the state are fulfilled or disappointed in terms of particular issues or concerns. This means not all services can be used as currency with which to buy legitimacy – rather, each service may have a different role to play in negotiating a state–society relationship. This can be thought of as the 'salience' of a particular issue, or what McCullough et al. call a 'hot' function of the state, that is, a pivot around which the mechanism of legitimacy turns.[150]

Schmidt offers a discursive institutionalism framework, which emphasizes the interactive processes of negotiation: it means that dynamic values are projected onto or projected off institutions. Crucially, and in contrast to the transactional notion of creating legitimacy through service delivery, it puts ideas and discourse centre stage. In Schmidt's analysis, distinction should be made between what she calls 'coordinative' discourse amongst policy actors (which is mainly about agreeing policy approaches amongst those responsible for them) and 'communicative' discourse between political actors and the public.[151] In a situation of violent political contestation, coordinative discourse is usurped into this contestation – including contestation between international actors and government actors – with communicative discourse then deeply marked by the conflictual relationship.

Schmidt's analysis of how discourse gains importance suggests a process for how an issue may become salient in legitimacy negotiations. An idea may land successfully if the audience is receptive at the time, and the message is

> deemed convincing in cognitive terms (because justifiable) and persuasive in normative terms (because appropriate and/or legitimate). . . . This suggests not only that the ideas in the discourse must 'make sense' within a particular ideational setting but also that the discourse itself will be patterned in certain ways,

following rules and expressing ideas that are socially constructed and historically transmitted.[152]

If we go back to Sri Lanka's Rajanganaya, rice paddy farming constitutes the most important part of livelihoods. It is deeply connected with the notion of post-colonial Sri Lankan Buddhist state development as having been built through rice paddy farming, and in the past has been supported by the state facilitating irrigation for paddy farmers. Rice paddy farmers, therefore, feel deeply affected if they perceive the state as no longer supporting their work and no longer linking as strongly to Buddhism, argue Gunasekara et al.[153] Irrigation provision is an issue around which negotiation of a state–society relationship pivots.

In Pakistan, meanwhile, state legitimacy hinges on land rights, argue McCullough et al. This is due to a history of landed elites dominating access to land via control of the justice system and therefore land title issuance. It has provoked uprisings and insurgencies in cases where tenants have learned that the state is unwilling to protect them. Negotiations of legitimacy thus pivot around the extent to which the state demonstrates a willingness to protect tenants over pleasing landed elites; but the experience of bureaucracy in the form of direct treatment by civil servants is another pivot around which the state–society relationship turns, with improved everyday interactions likely to undermine those who highlight the disrespectful, elitist and corrupt nature of the Pakistani state.[154]

In Nepal, according to Paudel et al., the pivot issue is the type of health service that people can access. Despite health services nominally being free, they are not experienced as such by all groups due to the often-hefty travel expenses involved, and the fact that the service provided is perceived as being poor.[155] Thus, a situation in which a service is being provided and therefore legitimacy supposedly strengthened is in fact experienced as further neglect. In South Sudan, the issue with salience is a lack of protection from the army during cattle raids, especially amongst groups regarded as possibly opposed to the government.[156]

McLoughlin's work on education in Sri Lanka – in which she shows that the assumed 'virtuous cycle' between service delivery and state legitimacy unravels if and when individuals and communities perceive unfair service processes or distribution – provides an excellent example of this process. In a divided society, whether services underpin or undermine legitimacy can hinge on competing perceptions across different groups. In Sri Lanka, reducing access to higher education for the Tamil community resulted in de-legitimation of the state within that ethnic group.[157] Here, higher education is the issue through which legitimacy is earned or lost by the state.

Expectations of the state are built around critical junctures jointly experienced by citizens and the state – citizens articulate values, norms and expectations that are shaped both by their experience with the state and how it responds to these expectations. These can, argues McLoughlin, become the foundation for how the state is imagined, and therefore be manipulated by those who hold the power to do so.[158]

So, what makes a service salient? While a variety of processes may be at play, all are rooted in narratives that explain the nature of state authority and how it links the

experience groups or individuals have of it. Whether a service is salient or whether a critical juncture makes a service salient is determined by the ongoing process of co-construction between a state and its citizens.[159] Some services are not salient for legitimacy (or at least they were not at the particular time we were conducting our research), and it is possible that these are the services chosen by development actors because it is easier to deliver them in an accountable way.[160]

McCullough uses the notion of a 'teachable moment' to help unpick the circumstances under which a service may become salient:

> If a service is gaining salience in the negotiation of legitimacy, people's experiences of the state through that service are more likely to provide 'teachable moments' – moments when people are faced with a representation of the degree to which the state respects them as citizens. When a service is gaining salience or has become salient, people's negative experience of the service is likely to be linked with wider delegitimating narratives about the state. Of course, many factors influence whether people connect an experience of the state to wider delegitimating narratives of the state. These factors include a person's group identity, the collective memory of his/her identity group and his/her exposure to alternative narratives of the state.[161]

There is a danger of refocusing attention on services that are deemed salient and investing in those over others, which may delay service delivery in other sectors. Furthermore, a service that is salient today may not be salient tomorrow due to shifting co-construction mechanisms and an ever-changing mental landscape, but even so remains a vital service throughout.

When a government or a development actor misses the scope of salience of an issue, the fallout may be more visible than the legitimacy potentially gained by the state delivering on a salient issue to the expectations of its citizens. As ever, it is easier to spot things going wrong than things going right. The Sri Lankan state lost legitimacy within the Tamil community after it reduced access to higher education because, argues McLoughlin, it failed to recognize that this was the community's salient issue.[162] In Sierra Leone, the example of education as a salient issue for youth could mean that it is mobilized by post-conflict interveners as a conduit for legitimation. Matsumoto argues that post-conflict education reform to date has not been sufficiently drastic, and so has failed to meet the expectations of Sierra Leonean youth.[163] Education thus needs to be contextualized in the economic realities of society, rather than treated as an institution-building exercise.

While education is a salient issue, it clashes with a statebuilding and transactional economic growth approach to development, creating the kind of dashed hopes that in the mental landscape can manifest as an unwillingness to invest in the present, in context of hope of a better future. This means that even if the process of accessing education is experienced as good, the same does not necessarily apply to the outcome (anticipated improved job prospects). Here, simply offering process-based justice is not enough to compensate for disappointing outcomes (such disappointment arising primarily because expectations are based on unrealistic grand development mental

models and narratives). In both Sri Lanka and Sierra Leone, the impact on how particular groups viewed or interacted with the state marks education as a salient issue. In Uganda also, education is a salient issue.[164]

In other contexts (e.g. Nepal or Pakistan), education may not be a salient issue for legitimacy – or at least a clear distinction must be made on whether it is provision of education or provision of quality education that is the salient issue.[165] Levy argues that high-quality outcomes in education are linked to non-hierarchical governance, meaning that local accountability on quality matters more than national accountability on provision.[166] Outcomes do matter: even if it is clear which issue or service a state–society relationship pivots around, delivery of that service must be satisfactory in multiple ways. In Nepal, it was not merely good education that improved perceptions, but good exam results.[167]

Legitimacy, saliency and identity

The relationship between services and legitimacy is often imagined as lacking any nuance – that is, it is either entirely successful or a complete failure. Often, internationally supported programmes aimed at supporting legitimacy purport to do so on the basis of a unified, homogenous audience – they use the categories discussed in Chapter 6. Such categories linked with service delivery provide the state with a vocabulary of caring say KC et al.: Nepal's old age allowance, for example, offers such caring extended to one particular category of people and it has been viewed as the state expressing some care towards the vulnerable.[168] But that does not mean that recipients of the old age allowance might not feel governed by an authority lacking legitimacy in other issues that are salient.

Legitimacy is a fluid process often received and perceived very differently depending on who the individual or group of people is, and the ways in which they are interacting with national or local authorities. McLoughlin sums up the need to think about the services/legitimacy link in a more holistic way, suggesting that relevant research should move 'from the material to the non-material, from snapshots to longer-term observations, and from politics as background to politics as the locus of explanation'.[169] Using politics as an explanation is necessary if the delivery of a particular service does not serve as a salient issue in the negotiation of state legitimacy. In this case, legitimacy will not simply be channelled through better service delivery. However, identifying what the salient issue is in the relationship between citizens and the state can play a significant role in negotiating the state–society relationship, though this requires careful research and analytical framing with an understanding of what the rules are of the politics involved, the political settlement.[170]

A common thread of the recent literature on statebuilding and legitimacy that advocates an approach that seeks to understand local context is identification of the key issue dictating legitimacy. Engagement with important local actors – such as traditional chiefs and religious leaders – is likely to improve a government/intervener's chances of legitimation, primarily due to these so-called stakeholders having considerable influence over the local population in terms of values they hold and the issues they care most deeply about.[171] Nakagawa, for example, advocates a deliberative

approach, highlighting the importance of understanding the history and culture of a particular context in order to re-legitimize non-Western polity and sustain peace.[172] Karim, meanwhile, contends that the nature of state–citizen relationship building can have a potentially transformative effect on perceptions of legitimacy.[173] This might be good news since, as Beath argues, it is harder to change people's perceptions than their behaviour.[174] Although, we know of course from examining the mental landscape that behaviour and perceptions are also in a co-construction relationship.

Performance-based legitimacy also can improve perceptions of the state which, argue Schmelzle and Stollenwerk, requires a set of shared goals between citizens and the state/intervener.[175] These shared goals should be interpreted as the salient issue through which legitimacy is negotiated. Weyland, in his work on mental short-cuts used by policymakers, has long argued that cognitive heuristics – such as availability, representativeness and anchoring – matter more than considered judgement.[176] Once we recognize that combining the concept of salience with the co-constructed nature of legitimacy inevitably creates processes that are shaped by both behaviour and perceptions, Weyland's insight can be employed in helping us understand the pathways by which salience and co-constructed legitimacy work in tandem – again a useful nod to the concept of the mental landscape.

Putting the straw in the clay bricks

To achieve stronger legitimacy in this process of co-construction, actors need to know what the salient issues are and have the resources to deliver on those issues: in short, they need relevant and correct information and the right materials. Acting on unrealistic assumptions or planning using incomplete or wrong information will almost inevitably mean any results will not last.

There is a saying that 'you cannot make bricks without straw'. Straw, in the old days of brick-making, was necessary to stabilize the clay. Bricks made from only clay meant that the building would collapse. Without straw, bricks become a crumbling mess. Without clay, straw houses become merely flimsy temporary constructions. Clay and straw working in tandem offer a useful mental prop for thinking about how legitimacy is created and maintained: building legitimacy cannot work by separating actors (represented by the clay in all its versatile glory) and the straw that represents services. For services to play a role in the construction of legitimacy, the service in question and how it is delivered must represent a salient political issue to the actors. Salience is achieved if a service expresses a shared set of norms, which can shift depending on the experience citizens (or different parts of their identities) have of their state. Such service can be salient for legitimizing or delegitimizing a state, as it can also highlight when distribution of this service is contested.

Various concepts have been offered to unpack these complex processes of legitimacy negotiation and the salience of issues. Of these, social accountability offers a practical concept that can help in supporting both improved service delivery (a good thing in itself) and the improvement of state–society relations through increased legitimacy and accountability. The transactional view of service delivery represents

what Ayliffe et al. describe as 'thin' accountability, with measurement based on a simple counting mechanism, in this case whether or not a service has been delivered. 'Thick' accountability, on the other hand, takes the quality of service delivery into account, including the ability to reach across the societal divides that mark societies in conflict – something that is only possible if a state opens itself up to interactions with its accountability-demanding citizens.[177] 'Thick' accountability is, therefore, an expression of a social contract in which all the signatories matter. In order for this vision to be realized, however, there must be space for citizens to participate safely, with hope and dignity, and without huge opportunity costs that endanger livelihoods.

One way for a state to regain its legitimacy footing could be to develop a moral economy in which legitimacy is earned and manifests itself not according to wealth, but through understanding the needs of local populations and providing them with whatever is necessary for a sustainable livelihood.[178] This theory can be applied to government and international actors present within conflict contexts, where failing to acknowledge or account for the moral economy almost certainly hampers the effectiveness of interventions. Here, the current approach of linking stability, government legitimacy and building a state muddles three very different elements. In many places that have experienced conflict, government is about ownership of resources, rather than about caretaking of state resources for redistribution amongst citizens. The state, if it even exists separately from a government, tends to have limited reach and/or little history of connecting reliably with people. The state and its ownership by a government may thus be first and foremost a destabilizing actor.

That certain issues are salient for state–society relationships points towards the need to give communities space. Only then will they be able to articulate their salient issues, which is important not only in terms of broader legitimacy negotiation, but, as Haider argues, to allow communities to prioritize their own needs, thereby strengthening community cohesion.[179] Such community approaches to identifying the salience or priority of an issue can then be used to articulate what locally-owned programming needs to look like.

Applying the more holistic, all-encompassing perspective of co-construction does mean a rebuttal of prominent discourse on legitimacy. Looking at perceptions of government and linking these to the experience of and access to services illuminates that neither good processes nor good outcomes guarantee a direct relationship with how service delivery influences legitimacy. The relationship differs between contexts, but also changes over time, as norms and expectations change. And such perception change happens at a different level – what Nixon calls 'bigger' and 'deeper' variables, such as regime change, a new constitution, or shifts in how different identity characteristics (such as gender, ethnicity or location) relate to the state or its representatives.[180] What is most visible – the built structure of a service – is least important to changing people's perceptions.

The mental landscape concept can help here. McLoughlin argues, for example, that legitimacy is best understood as a phenomenon created through non-material things, such as thoughts and behaviours.[181] Adding a relational perspective to the mental landscape perspective further shifts legitimacy away from being a measurable good towards an emphasis on how particular moments/experiences strengthen or weaken

how legitimacy is negotiated in relationships between state and government and society and individuals. The realization that the link between a high-quality service and government legitimacy was not empirically measurable – and thus at the very least not straightforward – emphasizes the need to pay attention to the mental landscape because attitudes and beliefs about authority and what it ought to deliver matter more than actual service delivery.

A mental landscape perspective on legitimacy also highlights the extent to which social norms shape behaviour, and how good behaviour is conceptualized. Additionally, the broader perspective offered by the mental landscape serves to emphasize that how people experience their lives, their governments and the relationships that arise thereof, may offer a route towards establishing a relational view of development.[182]

When we take all these insights and apply them to the relationship between services and legitimacy, it is not one that creates the other – it is how the two interact, cross-pollinate, mutually constitute each other.

Legitimacy cannot be created without the interaction that takes place between actors and issues, their histories and meanings.

You cannot make bricks without straw.

Mortar stronger than bricks

Connections and relationships

Bricklayers say that mortar should never be stronger than bricks. Because when rain gets trapped inside bricks the water needs a way out. Porous mortar is its only path. If the mortar is stronger and denser than the bricks, the moisture cannot trickle away and the damp wall will become unstable. In construction work, building a structure that is durable and capable of weathering any storm requires connections that give. Connections that are, in a sense, weak links. That is why lives amid violence and international support efforts for the people who live them are nothing like construction work. Because here strong, thick, close connections create stability and capacity. Connections and relationships matter above anything else.

On an individual level, those implementing programmes tend to be acutely aware of the need to be connected to and talk to the right people. Nobody disputes how damaging the common international model is that rotates new staff every couple of years into country offices; staff who then have to build their own connections that tend to emerge just as they are about to leave again. In such short time frames, it is nigh impossible to move away from the notion of a transaction or an exchange and thus seek relationships in a utilitarian way.

But relationships and connections matter beyond improving how international actors and the people they encounter interact. They are not just about human connection (although they are that, too). Relationships are a programme's capacity. They allow collaboration and adaptation. They facilitate learning. They are statebuilding: what shape the relationship between state agents and citizens takes is key to legitimizing state institutions.[1] They are the local, that mythical place that is conjured up whenever the conversation turns to the need for development to be locally led and locally owned.

Hidden behind the disembodied language of 'institutions', 'organizations' or 'the local' are people. People and the relationships they have with each other. What each individual brings with them – their mental landscape – determines what the relationship will be like. Personal histories condition how someone speaks, trusts, deals with tough situations, defines accountability or with what feeling about their work they go home each night. All this is mortar. It keeps things together. It needs to be the strongest part of it all.

And yet, somehow, in the everyday practice, relationships still come second to programme frameworks, strategies and transactions. If they do exist in the imagination, they are too often mixed in with the dominant transaction thinking. This chapter will be the embodiment of this dilemma, seeking to grasp the intangible, human, non-technical 'Gestalt' of humans with each other by unpacking it pixel by pixel, with the hope that what remains is the overall image, not its pointillist detail. Such unpacking has to start from the point that transactional relationships, optimized around a trading relationship with instant benefits, overlook that relationships are not just about figuring out how to get the most out of them as quickly as possible. They are also about what can be given.

Relationships as capacity

The power of connections and connectivity plays out in many ways and at many levels.

In his work on Afghanistan, Pain emphasizes the human impact on seemingly rigid structures by looking at villages as 'behaving'. Villages differ in their 'village behaviour', for example, in their ability to resolve disputes or provide such public goods as security and basic services.[2] Thus, a village benefits from its capacity for collective action and governance. But where does this capacity come from? One way of exploring this is to look at the quality of relationships, and specifically the difference between high- and low-quality relationships when it comes to the provision of public goods.

With this in mind, Pain compares villages in the mountains with those in the valleys of Nangarhar province. Here, Pashai Mountain inhabitants forged collaborations with previous enemies in order to resist the communist government in the late 1970s, and proved more successful at doing so than those from the valley villages. Drawing on Keiser, Pain outlines the differences between villages that cultivate for a tradeable surplus, which makes them more independent economic units. Mountain villages were more reliant on relationships, as their livelihoods were more diverse and thus more interconnected – a knock-on effect being that they had stronger mechanisms to resolve disputes. When the time came to politically organize and resist, therefore, the relationships connecting mountain residents provided the capacity to do so.[3] The sheer power held within these relationships and their histories makes it clear that one-size-fits-all solutions cannot work if they attempt to change the way things are done in a village.[4] Jackson calls this situation in Afghanistan a 'government of relationships', rooted in deep history as *mujahideen* fighters.[5]

In their work on the DRC, Calderón and Englebert unpack similar mechanisms. Starting from the question of why institutional capacity varies so widely between the country's twenty-six provinces, they find a number of brick-like characteristics that determine capacity. Having electricity and natural resources helps, as does a longer history of being a province. However, one crucial ingredient for state capacity is whether a governor is expected to remain, or has already been, in power for a long time. In terms of determining the length of service for a political position, relationships are crucial – in this case, the ability of an individual's 'success in balancing their

relations with Kinshasa patrons and provincial clients'.[6] This appreciation of capacity as relationships – or capacity as the outcome of successful patronage relationships both up- and downstream – is a crucial step towards better understanding of what a useful development investment might look like, and whether it has a chance of succeeding. Calderón and Englebert are bold in their recommendations that seeking to work with the governors who are least entangled in patronage networks – which may be the preference of international actors – will potentially yield fewer results, as 'with capacity a function of political longevity, it might, counter-intuitively, pay to work with governors who are comfortably embedded in their local and national patronage networks and able to focus on the relatively long term'.[7]

Engaging with those deeply embedded in patronage relationships is uncomfortable for development practitioners who have internalized an emphasis on supporting the most vulnerable and ignoring the productive capacity of power. Kelsall's work on political settlements reminds us that power relations and institutions underpin political stability, and so are critical to development outcomes and that programming and policymaking in any particular context is informed by the breadth and depth of social foundations and the power configuration of the political settlement.[8] It is delusional to try and escape power politics. However, this mantra often sits in opposition to another development truism, which is that development actors should not undermine official structures (which usually means state structures). Yet, religious leaders, for example, can often hold more power on certain issues than government or other non-state actors, and yet are rarely viewed as part of state power structure that needs to be viewed with caution.[9]

In attempting to address (or sidestep) this dilemma – that is, supporting the most vulnerable without supporting existing patronage networks or undermining official structures – another piece of recurring development programmes imagery often comes into play: the injection. This is where the memory and mental model of the Marshall Plan comes back to the fore: an injection of resources, an injection of skills, an injection of values or behaviours. In capacity building, this approach reduces capacity to being merely technical skill,[10] when in reality – as we have seen – it encompasses relationships, mental models, behaviours and identity. However, concern for the most vulnerable and consideration of how best to use capacity are not mutually exclusive, yet making it work requires some changes.

Sometimes the conductive nature of relationships is underutilized in a purely technical sense. Development, systems, economics – all ultimately consist of people who have direct or indirect relationships, which in turn shape their ability or willingness to act.[11] Where networks do exists, they tend not to be used for disbursal – for example, the old age allowance in Nepal could potentially be more effectively disbursed through existing networks of volunteers or support groups, rather than through state structures.[12] Utilizing such social pathways is necessary to integrate development or recovery efforts into local realities.[13] Relationships always create livelihood security or insecurity, for example, when it comes to land distribution and the relationship between landowner and labourer.[14] In Uganda, relationships allow people to migrate because people move to areas where they have a connection – this can be seen in urban settings in Uganda, where connections can facilitate the finding

of work and accommodation.[15] In urban areas, relationships not only allow people to function, but determine how they invest their money or knowledge.[16] In this sense, relationships determine the direction of development, acting as a conduit for further learning, investment and economic decisions. This takes us back to the social economy – borrowing money is not simply an economic interaction, but a social and networked one, in which one's social reputation is both at risk and also potentially strengthened by being part of the village credit network.[17]

If capacity is reimagined as relationships, rather than as technical skills, then it follows that it should not be thought of as an ability that individuals/groups either do or do not have – that is, something that can simply be taught. Rather, it is changeable, negotiated on an ongoing basis, and influenced by internal and external events. Outcomes are, however, not inevitably predetermined by relationships – networks can be built and new connections established.[18] Here, Denney emphasizes the need to pay attention to both a system's formal connections and its less visible elements, such as personal relationships.[19] Personal relationships provide a safety net against shocks. People may, for example, get jobs in a city and survive for a while, but in the long-term networks are essential to make such a lifestyle sustainable.[20] A shift towards relationships as the measure of engagement or capacity renders meaningless those approaches in the current paradigm that tend to forget about people, such as stabilization and development as transaction. This is in stark contrast to the statebuilding imaginary, which disconnects institutions from the people who inhabit them.

Also rendered meaningless are the modular approaches to development that continue to dominate the language of capacity building. These, argues Denney, overlook the connections between 'units' of capacity, which – as linkages in the system – are arguably the most important element.[21] A relational perspective looks first at connections, then at the package each relationship brings. It might introduce to international development 'functional development', inspired by economist Lerner, who coined the term 'functional finance' for economic policymaking, suggesting that policies would need to emphasize how they would work in the real world, rather than keeping faithful to an underpinning pure ideology of needing to balance the budget.[22] Functional development would take us from the pure ideology of project implementation to asking how would this function in the real world, with the existing relationships?

The relational perspective

A relational perspective alters how we look at identity: it posits that how an individual experiences who they are and the events they are subject to is interpreted and understood through the relationships they have and the interactions that happen within these.[23] As Yeganehlayegh puts it:

> A basic postulate of the relational perspective is that the nature of human nature is relational. That is, that the basic and universal characteristic of human existence, in whatever time and whatever culture, is that human beings become

human in relation to other human beings: that 'identity' is the constellation of meaning that emerges as each shares experience in relationships, and that 'culture' is the bank of meanings of a particular human group. Having said that we have said a great deal.[24]

Wright argues that there are two kinds of human relationships. The first, between people who are familiar with each other, is sufficiently nuanced that those in the relationship can see each individual as a unique being. The second, between strangers, occurs 'on the basis of categories and roles, not as unique, whole persons. Thus stranger relationships are generalized, fragmented and partial.'[25] Here, Wright distinguishes between personal and individual identity: while the former is nuanced, all-encompassing and shaped by people with deep knowledge of each other, the latter is generalized and categorical, as well as being changeable depending on utility.[26] In the context of the conflating of identity and category discussed earlier, the emphasis on categories emerges as another obstacle in the way towards genuine relationships.

Relationships are both a motivating factor and interpretative tool.[27] Fromm's argument that relationships are an expression of the need to connect with the outer world in order to counter isolation, helplessness and a lack of power rings particularly true of lives amid violence.[28] Characteristics of the violent environment likely act as amplifiers: if you live in a social economy – where relationships determine the economy – then relationships that are strained by conflict, identity and isolation have an even greater impact on livelihoods and the mental landscape.

This links the understanding of relationships as capacity to the previous discussion on identity and category: using a relational perspective means that someone's identity can never be captured through categoric markers such as gender, age or location, or even level of vulnerability (the thick lines on the satellite image) – which is what a categorical approach does. The danger is of course, as Tuhiwai Smith argues, that the transactional mental model brings its drive for causality also to the study of relationships, meaning that 'relationships between or among groups of people are basically causal and can be observed and predicted'.[29]

A relational approach might describe a woman as the mother of two teenage daughters; the categorical approach would simply refer to the woman as the head of a female-headed household. One is contextualized, the other functional. This gaze matters in terms of how roles or relationships are filled with meaning. The influence of identity is so strong, it shapes what people can learn and what they can perceive of the world around them. It is also a human mechanism that people reject something (or only grudgingly work with it) that is on offer to them if it feels inappropriate.

The single mother running a household or the 82-year-old under threat from Covid might not foreground those aspects of themselves. Thus, when they encounter those who have come to help on the basis of a defined category that is not relevant, the help offered does not resonate with the truth of their existence. In the language of relational theory, one could say that such encounters do not create a relationship capable of sparking meaningful conversation. A relational perspective takes into account both

the broader forces that influence identity and the individualized context, thereby navigating a path between policy-usable broad evidence and context-specificity.

The local as relationships

Current development discourse emphasizes the need for programmes to be locally owned. This local turn has been much debated,[30] and over the years been interpreted in many different ways by practitioners and scholars. For the EU, it has meant grounding itself in processes, reflected in policy documents that highlight the importance of policies being locally owned.[31] Yet successfully fulfilling a locally-owned approach remains a challenge. Why?

One reason is that 'locally-owned' and 'context-specific' are concepts that, though easily deployed, are not so easily filled with meaning. Some missteps are obvious, such as using English alone to train South Sudanese chiefs who do not always speak English in justice and governance issues.[32] However, other less obvious ways of working can be equally damaging, says Maxwell, such as not providing full information, not allowing sufficient time to root a programme locally, and involving, but then failing to hand over to, local actors and authorities.[33] All these issues can arise even within programmes that nominally have a veneer of local ownership.

What is notable by its absence in the design of programmes seeking social change is an assessment of existing social conditions and relationships. There are two elements to this. The first is that implementers generally fail to take genuine stock of their own ability to be experienced as a collaborative and reliable learning partner who listens to 'beneficiaries' – or even to grapple in productive ways with their narrow mandates or restrictions. Particularly in cases where international and national actors meet, the emphasis can be on mandate, rather than on creating a productive relationship. The higher up the chain of authority the mandate is determined, the more sluggish the ability to adapt to national or local interests. A good example of this was the UN mission in Cambodia, which, argues Travouillon, created an imbalanced relationship between national and international actors.[34]

The second element is outward looking. It is concerned with how implementers imagine the areas in which they work: this imagination often reduces elaborate social networks with individual connections to broad-brushed categories. Programmes easily assume a uniformity across identifiable broader categories, those that show up comfortably on the satellite image. For example, what image springs to mind when considering the 'local' in development? Many will alight on 'the village': the shape of dwellings; traces of livelihood activities; visible community structures where community interaction happens. Such an image runs the risk of focusing primarily on physical structures, rather than the people who construct and make use of them – this is what the people do who look for familiar structures in the satellite image and miss the big picture. Other, more metaphysical, notions of 'the local' may perhaps be arrived at by deduction: local is *not* the centre of power, *not* very connected. The local also has characteristics of demography, tradition, customs – maybe even capacity if a particular local authority is seen as technically proficient or lacking. Other

categories include household size or income, access to services, and relationship with government,[35] which allow for more obvious comparison between localities and therefore adjustment of interventions. Again, missing here is any meaningful consideration of relationships.

Using relationships as an interpretative tool can help explain variations – or, in the more common parlance of development programmes, context. Elites in different villages behave differently because they are acting on the basis of different relationships. In terms of Afghanistan, Pain describes these relationships as determining how customary village leaders, elites and other households interact with each other, what responsibilities they each have, and how they are held accountable for them.[36] Situating this context in a relationship map that includes how local relationships interact with outside relationships allows us to see how outside connections influence more local networks.

Thus, the notion of the local goes hand in hand with an understanding that it is not how structures appear (one village may look much the same as the next in terms of buildings and demography) that provides insight into context, but the fact that these structures are filled with people, all of whom have relationships with each other and outsiders. Such an understanding can help explain why one village offers a very different life to its inhabitants than another.

Local differences can result from a multitude of factors, such as the financial capacity of the local administrative unit, the level of political stability, a location's micro-climate or even a slight difference in soil quality. However, comparisons along those lines often fail to shed light on why areas with apparently similar characteristics perform so differently. This is where relationships must be taken into account: Who are the leaders who hold the key relationships? What kind of connection do they have with central power holders?[37] What is the history of social relations that shapes how today and tomorrow look?

Local dynamics and demographic shifts become explicable through the perspective of relationships. Decisions on whether to send a child to school are not based purely on the best interests of the child or the affordability of education, but take into account the broader needs of the family.[38] These needs are in turn shaped by the kind of networks a family is part of. Returning to the 3D visualization of architectural plans used in Chapter 2, using relationships as a way of understanding the local can be likened to looking not only at the plan of a building, but how it might fit into its physical and metaphysical (planning or social) space/context. Local ownership is cast in a rather different light when juxtaposed with the reality of ownership as constructed through relationships and networks – revealing that the apparently benign notion of leaving the vision, design and implementation of a development project in the hands of beneficiaries risks co-option by a system that functions by ensuring not everyone gets access to networked goods.

Though local ownership primarily means having relationships (which can either be supportive to all or detrimental to some), often a parallel system of development intervention and local relationships takes root and grows. Relationships are thus also what creates a duality of rule –[39] alongside the visible administrative structure is a system of invisible governance where who you know matters (with whom you know often

dependent on who you are).[40] In DRC, the system of connections to authorities that can facilitate access – referred to as *branchement* – often bypasses the actors nominally in charge of resource distribution.[41] These relationships happen at various levels, with ethnic groups in DRC seeking to ensure they have representatives in government in order to facilitate access to resources. More generally, such relationships may be place-bound, connecting people of a particular locale, or can cross the boundaries of place to link centre and periphery.[42]

Can an approach that considers relationships as capacity contribute to a different version of the local turn? Assuming this is the case, a capacity assessment would not ask questions about technical knowledge (Are systems in place? Can people work within them?), but rather look at people (Who are they? What relationships do they have and why? What is it about the nature of their relationships that may or may not give them capacity?). Such a perspective would also need to recognize that relationships can be simultaneously stable and volatile – that is, they can be both very difficult to change and yet fundamentally altered according to circumstances. This links to the insight that violence, as Mallet writes, 'has long roots, and short triggers'.[43] When violence breaks out, it is rarely because a new set of relationships has emerged, but rather because existing deep relationships have undergone a shift or a trigger. Again, this needs to be recognized. In the context of the village, therefore, a relevant question to ask is: How does a combination of incentives (to engage in a relationship), preferences (about what the relationship ought to produce) and capability (to utilize this relationship) produce or hinder capacity to provide public goods (including peace and the absence of physical violence)?

Given there are often patterns to these relationships, the temptation arises to schematize and categorize – that is, make relationships a recognizable tool like categories. However, while relationships often have similar functions in terms of regulating access to resources, they are underpinned by the connections between people, which are unique, shifting and often unpredictable. They rotate, intersect, reconnect and interrupt. Acknowledging the intensely personal nature of relationships serves as a reminder that, when it comes to regulating local dynamics, standardized interpretative approaches cannot work. The mental landscape is personal, even if it is influenced by community.

Often, when development programmes want to express how different forces link together, how one action in one area has an impact in another, the imagery becomes not just broadly mechanical but concretely focuses on cogs, write Evans et al.:

> the metaphorical device of the 'machine' is a longstanding and recognisable rhetorical tool in political science, and was used to facilitate discussions about systems, relationships and interdependencies. We aimed to get out of sector or research silos and help participants examine the whole complex system of governance, including sub-systems (broadly defined as the systems e.g. policy and delivery frameworks and networks and partnerships between government ministries and agents that lie within the core functions of the state). This also includes consideration of legislation, reform, feedback loops, interdependencies and the actors (the 'mechanics') involved. The machine metaphor also referred to the skills that actors (the 'mechanics') need in order to diagnose and repair

Figure 9 People as the cogs in the system. Image by Olivier Ploux.

> the ineffective machine system and its sub-systems (both technical expertise and understanding of the political context and actors).[44]

Cogs also show rotation, intersection, connection and interruption. They just do it from the safe space of machinery: without people. But behind each machine-image system cog, there are people and their relationships (Figure 9).

People and their relationships represent adaptive capacity. Strong relationships within implementing agencies and across implementers and constituent communities mean that programmes can more easily be adapted to changing needs or circumstances – here, the natural process of learning, changing and adjusting is centred around human interaction. Productive relationships between donors and key state actors are also necessary in order to understand a state's strategies in co-opting or repressing certain groups, and therefore working with the state to formulate more constructive and less conflict-prone strategies.[45] A relational approach is capable of changing dynamics between state actors and citizens in crucial ways.[46] The capacity this creates for collaboration, shifting narratives and improved citizen-state interactions is perhaps one of the most underexplored areas in current programming supporting lives after violence.

Relationships have a price

In reality, it is unlikely that reimagining the local as relationships and relationships as capacity will create a flurry of programme designs that emphasize pumping resources

into social interactions. The cards are stacked against such a pivot. This is because the relationship approach between international actors and national or local actors is woefully inadequate, dominated as it is by two modi operandi: (1) relationship between donors and international NGOs or contractors (INGO); and (2) relationship between INGO and local NGO or civil society organization. Both involve a top-down relationship that undermines the effectiveness and quality of aid.[47] Furthermore, existing peacebuilding discourse privileges knowledge produced and disseminated by OECD-country academic and governmental institutions (no matter how much people might claim for this not to be true), thereby maintaining the status quo in terms of top-down approaches to post-conflict programming. In order for a peacebuilding's social contract between local and international actors to flourish, local knowledge and research need to be taken up and promoted by post-conflict programmers.[48]

But, what if 'the local' is understood as relationships and relationships as capacity? This would require two things: Kaldor argues that the key to forging a relationship between the state and a population – one that is based on trust and which can therefore underpin legitimacy – is to respect human equality and the various ways of being human.[49] Programme implementers would need to acknowledge this, along with the insight that relationships cannot simply be bought, but require genuine interest, investment, loyalty and an understanding of what the salient issue is through which legitimacy and relationships can be strengthened or weakened.[50] Furthermore, the price to be paid for relationships may be too high for those unable to be part of the networked goods and who thus continue to experience exclusion.

The power of relationships is visible in the fact that aid agencies tend to work with focal points: individuals or groups empowered by their access to resources through the aid agency or by the sheer coincidence that their category matters to the programme. Usually, however, such engagement happens with powerful people (who are most accessible), who are assumed to act in the broader interests of their community but are often viewed by that community as acting as gatekeeper to the resources they wish to get access to.[51] In essence, existing, often exclusive relationships, get reinforced. A locally-appropriate approach to relationship building needs to be multifaceted. Changed employment practices are a practical way to reflect the importance of relationships: local employment needs to make sure that it does not damage the relationships in place and that the non-local employer is not extractive, using an employee to gain access.

The technical approach effectively pretends that these kinds of networks can be neutralized, despite most arguments advocating for a changed approach to development stressing the political nature of development.[52] The relationships perspective adds to this by linking real capacity for social change with the connectedness of networks and relationships. Development has struggled when it comes to recognizing that it is at heart a political undertaking – thus, an approach to thinking and working politically not only acknowledges this, but allows context-specific political decisions to be made. This simply cannot happen if the relational aspect is ignored in favour of focusing purely on the technical aspect.[53]

The ways in which relationships shape encounters can be clearly seen in the conceptualization that the state is not a set of institutions and values, but an effect

produced by its interactions with citizens in areas such as service delivery. The starting point should always be the social relationships and networks that citizens are a part of, which in turn produce their narratives on how the state is experienced.[54] In a relational approach to statebuilding, state legitimacy is developed through personal relationships between citizens and state representatives responsible for delivering public goods. Relational statebuilding can either be pre-emptive (through relational contact) or reactive (via procedural justice).[55] Thinking of relationships as the ordering principle also offers a way of dealing with the dilemma of whether donors ought to work with non-state actors. Here, the relationships offered by a non-state actor can – without disempowering the state – fill the gaps left where state-related relationships do not reach or are not meaningfully inclusive. If the relationships of people who ought to benefit from services are established with non-state actors, this creates an effective argument for using such relationships.[56]

Relationships – at what price?

A first step in answering the aforementioned question would be to examine the kinds of networks people belong to, the basis of that membership, and what members receive from their networks. Networks may be grounded in a shared history, or they may be value or work-based – people in our research most readily participated in and talked about religious or farmer's networks.[57] Alternatively, they may be driven by concrete exchange value: whether a person receives basic services depends on with whom they are networked.[58] Sometimes the relationship can pay off in immediate ways, for example, when traders need to get favours from the army or police in order to trade.[59] In markets, the use of power and connections to benefit from market rents that then maintain power and connections has been articulated in a substantive body of scholarship, most notably in Goodhand's description of the rentier economy.[60] Urban life is only possible through connections, which are often more difficult to come by than in the village. So, while development or access to services may be less prevalent in the village, these drawbacks are countered by stronger social networks, which act as safety nets, credit markets, a means to access work, and a provider of candidates for marriage.[61] Social networks may also have straightforward operational significance, in terms of accessing information (e.g. about migration routes or how to send money home).[62]

The next step in answering the question would be to examine the characteristics that make networks unattractive or impenetrable: Who tries to avoid a network? Who is not let in? Women are routinely excluded from networks that allow access to the 'networked' goods, which is also a likely reason why women tend to have a more negative view of government.[63]

The quality and accessibility of a relationship will also be an entry point for people seeking to access services or resources – with the extent to which they actually manage to do so potentially subject to measurement. At the receiving end, it may be the experience of a relationship that determines how a service is perceived, which in turn

can serve as an interpretative tool for understanding why different communities access services in different ways.[64]

Another step would be to emphasize that even service delivery is relational – it is not a transaction in itself and certainly not one in which service delivery is the input and state legitimacy the output. That relationships between the state and its citizens have transformational power in terms of changing local perceptions of legitimacy is perhaps obvious. Such positive relationships facilitate information sharing and improve social bonds, and are an important part of statebuilding in post-conflict contexts. When relationships were built between state agents and citizens, perceptions of the police improved, argues Karim.[65] Thus, adding the relational aspect to the mix assists greatly in unpacking how relationships between citizen and state are negotiated.

Rather than employing a top-down approach to statebuilding, there is a growing argument for a social contract approach to peacebuilding and recovery, which centres on international engagement and the fostering of relationships at the local level. This, argue Bojicic-Dzelilovic et al., bypasses a number of obstacles associated with the liberal peacebuilding model, including the state and national elites who tend to dominate the international–local interface in post-conflict contexts. The development of an international/local social contract builds a relationship between communities and governance structures at the local level.[66]

Social contract building is a survival and recovery strategy aimed at gaining access to resources or navigating obstacles, for example, police or army trying to extract benefits from a situation.[67] McLoughlin suggests taking into account relations between those being governed and the authorities governing them, as well as the extent to which those being governed are able to challenge or change that relationship.[68] Part of this relational aspect involves the expectations and norms of what governments ought to provide – in short, the beliefs and mental landscape that underpin whether a relationship is experienced as disappointing or empowering.[69]

Relationships can be benign and malignant, extractive and nurturing, powerful and ineffectual, instrumentalized and discarded, empowering and disempowering, steady and changeable, often all at the same time. This plays out in numerous ways. For example, access to markets may be regulated by how people with power negotiate it amongst themselves, or social norms may dictate that women cannot have a public market stall.[70] Relationships can also take the form of patronage (using state resources to facilitate access to resources or jobs for one's network) or clientelism, which describes relationships between individuals in hierarchical networks.[71]

The need to access resources means that power is too readily abused, such as when local elites operate against communal interests. In Afghanistan, for instance, community development councils (CDCs) can be seen to take on the same characteristics as local elites.[72] Using a technical lens can obscure how technical solutions get politically usurped to guarantee resources, with peacebuilding committees, for example, often mirror images of the power held by political parties.[73] If the technical solution is to give more power to decentralized government officials, it is almost inevitable that this power will become part of the resource network that feeds upwards – for example, through provincial governor's connections in DRC or how local taxes are raised and spent in the interest of local elites in Nepal. In Uganda's Lira, meanwhile, efforts to

build a new market place empowered already powerful traders, crowding out those who were poorer and less politically connected and who were thought to benefit most from the new market place.[74]

Network ties can hold together a system-wide regulation of access. Though capable of provoking tremendous volatility, these networks can be extremely stable when it comes to excluding people,[75] with exclusion usually being the worst scenario a household can face. Nothing can make up for it. If exclusion from a network is identity-based, then the divisive nature of the networked goods becomes abundantly clear, as is the case in Sri Lanka.[76]

Networks regulate and govern access, regardless of what other institutions are officially in place. The shells of institutions do not provide the means to actually get things done, including participation in the economy, which is conducted along the lines of connections. The major point that can be drawn from this is that there is, as Jackson points out, no governable 'public good', since everything thought of as a public good – security, access to services, economic possibilities – is in fact a good held with the intention of delivering individualized or network-specific benefits.[77] The strength of connection is the value of the network – thus, while these connections have a price, it is not the case that they can be bought off the shelf. Instead, they rely on notions of exchange, benefit and circumventing circumstances that are less profitable. They are, in essence, society, as they govern all aspects of public and private life,[78] which is why reform efforts based on notions of duty or obligation towards a particular set of rules or values are doomed to perpetual failure.

If we accept there is no such thing as a genuine public good – as governance cannot happen unless it is profitable to powerful actors or networks – the reasons why local governments struggle become more apparent. In Nepal, for example, formal rules on taxation are undermined by political relationships, as the people representing the formal government are not the ones holding the crucial relationships. In the true sense of the word, therefore, governments are disconnected from their people.[79] This requires a redefinition of what a common good is – rather than being a service equitably distributed by an umpire-like state, it is in fact something handled by power holders in order to serve a network that is more or less exclusive.[80]

The art of performing

A pretty reliable way to bring a casual conversation to an awkward halt is to profess a love of performance art. And yet, thinking about performance art offers a good prop for thinking about how to prioritize relationships in international development. Most people cringe when they think of performance art: the thought of being asked to participate in whatever stilted action a performing artist is putting on! Pretending that a person just sitting there and staring into space is normal! The horrors of making eye contact, having been caught in a flash mob! Wincing is a helpful reaction. Discomfort is kind of the point because the imagery so far on offer is way too comforting. Technical drawings at a construction site. Gardens, with their growth that responds to nourishment. When reality is much more difficult than piling up bricks

Lives Amid Violence

and requires instead ingredients like clay, stray and impenetrable mortar or actions like reinterpretations of satellite images, or when the soul ready to nourish someone else realizes that helping is complex and not always welcome or helpful, the single imagery becomes hollow. The notion of the humble aid worker as a digger driver or construction foreman or gardener working away in the development space turns out to be just a little ridiculous.

The development space, while an imaginary forum, exerts the power of a real, physical venue. And, as Parker reminds us, venues come with scripts and often these venue-induced scripts are not fit for purpose: they determine behaviour and they limit possibility.[81] So she suggests choosing venues that displace people from their ingrained scripts, signalling the expected ways of working through this choice.

The construction ground? Too mechanistic – pull lever here, get result there. Complexity reduced to causality. The illusion of planning and sticking to it.

The garden site? A bit looser, but still reassuring in its frame of linear causality. Things might not grow at the speed or to the size as planned, harvests might fail, but there is still a distinct series of causal steps: fertile ground + seed + water + sun + caretaking = some sort of result.

If the point is to jolt people into remembering that their work is not well served by staying in comfort zones, then whatever cringy images pop up in front of their inner eye when they hear 'performance art' will probably do the job (unless they are a fan of performance art).

How is performance art as an aide-mémoire different from engineering or gardening? While the shape it takes can vary widely, there are a few characteristics that make it what it is. It is defined by an action, carried out by an artist. Performance art is often interdisciplinary, using music, acting, stage craft, visuals, sound. It is fleeting. But crucially, it is a relationship-building conversation between artist and audience.[82] Sometimes, the artist is there to build relationships within the audience, such as Allan Kaprow's 1959 '18 Happenings in 6 Parts' which conducted the audience to move in tandem to jointly experience the happenings that were the art piece. The art presented diminished in importance over the experience of jointly partaking. Without a doubt, some members of the audience found it excruciating to be made part of it. The only permanence of performance art is in the relationship that has been built.

Performances are for the audience, but also with the audience. The audience holds all the power to shape how the performance will go through the dynamics it develops in its relationship with the artist. What the created piece of art looks like and what it turns into is entirely dependent on the interaction between artist and audience. That is also why performance art waves goodbye to pre-identified causality. It does not describe one linear process. And the impact on individuals in the audience – whether it works, so to say – is entirely dependent on who the individuals are, their mental landscape, and what kind of relationship the performance artist is able to build with them.

Relationships are the capacity to make things work. To put that insight centre stage will require ditching the hands-off approach to relationships and forging deep transformative collaborations at all levels. It requires accepting that state functions start, for better or for worse, from relationships that the people who make up the state have with each other. It means that when adaptation is required, programmes can be

pivoted on the strength of relationships. But if relationships are to provide adaptive capacity, then investment in them needs to be entirely different. These collaborations should not be outcome-driven towards development – they *are* development. They are also, simply, what has in the past allowed humans to thrive.[83] Such an approach would mark a shift from, for example, intervention thinking to deeply-collaborative country platforms, which Papoulidis describes as

> government-led coordination bodies that establish a center of gravity for governments and partners to make sense of complex political, social and economic realities, agree on shared priorities and solve collective action problems. . . . The country platform model helps to promote development and aid effectiveness principles, like mutual accountability, country ownership and inclusive process, in ways that the external delivery of disjointed, one-off projects cannot.[84]

Such an approach would also mean establishing genuine local ownership through relationship building, rather than interveners simply rotating in and out every few years or sometimes even months. It would mean that the documents that underpin programmes, and with that relationships, need to be real: they can no longer be logframes and theories of change and project evaluation reports that form part of the theatre of human interaction in the development space. Instead, they have to be genuine, collaboratively-developed records of exchange and aspiration, seeking to express in the way a document does that what cannot be so simply expressed: the joint endeavour, the trust, the love of a future that looks different than the present.

Additionally, relationships allow statebuilding to be viewed through a different lens. If it is social networks and social capital that define state capacity, then addressing lack of capacity through an outcome-based approach (which prioritizes training in order to achieve higher levels of capacity) is doomed to fail. It is only through building meaningful relationships that state capacity can be improved. Particularly in situations of violent conflict, engagement between those seeking to provide support and the people with whom they hold relationships must be reshaped to allow openness and honesty about the politics and power underpinning development engagement, as well as the challenges inherent in a system that still broadly thinks of itself as supporting a quick exchange, a transaction between provider and beneficiary.

There are obstacles in the way. Most international staff, in addition to being rotated in and out of a country lack the time, knowledge or incentives to make a relational approach work. Career incentives to become a country expert are limited and learning in country often consists of learning from what other internationals who have been there a little longer think – or how they have learned to navigate their headquarter (HQ) so that they can actually get something done. Having learned these things, most people move on and if they remain in country for long, they tend to be viewed with suspicion, their relationships often viewed as suspect for fear of having been co-opted or developed blind spots.

With these institutional constraints in mind, maybe the notion of performance art seems flippant, ridiculous even, as an image to describe how billions are to be spent in pursuit of a better world. Maybe other images work better, such as Heimans and

Timm's notion of the 'full-stack society' where 'participation is deep, constant, and multi-layered, not shallow and intermittent', drawing on the language of collaboration that software engineers use to bring together the many elements of the full stack of a coherent piece of software:

> This is a good analogy for the kind of world we need to create, one where people can more meaningfully participate in and feel ownership over every aspect of their lives – their engagement with technology platforms, their work, health and education, and of course democracy and the experience of government itself.[85]

Both versions of the relational approach, with all its unpredictability, however, are a step towards abandoning the notion of having figured out the motivations of the other – the mindset that feels so cushioned by a linear belief in causality.

Maybe performance art helps to remind us of the necessity to not continue to seek simple causality but nuance in all our interactions and our pursuits of knowledge. The cringe we experience when relationships get awkward might be a reminder of our own learning, rather than a nudge to seek shelter in comfortable zones. Hari writes that

> when you expose yourself to complex stories about the inner lives of other people over long periods of time, that will repattern your consciousness. You too will become more perceptive, open and empathetic. If, by contrast, you expose yourself for hours a day to the disconnected fragments of shrieking and fury that dominate social media, your thoughts will start to be shaped like that. Your internal voices will become cruder, louder, less able to hear more tender and gentle thoughts.[86]

When life gets complicated, those tender voices might need to push causality to become the last thing on our mind.

A reminder: Why a revision is needed

Development is rooted in Western concepts and underpinnings, and the transactional nature of how people think about and do development may be preventing them from seeing the true cost (or potential) of working with the people who live amid violence. International engagement in conflict-affected settings needs to change for many reasons. Numerous scholars and advocates have articulated this – the surge of activism on the decolonization of aid and international models and the attendant discourse change have been invigorating. Tuhiwai Smith puts her finger on the profound need for change when she calls for the need to 'confront' the 'self-generating arrogance' of all that underpins the 'Western academic canon in its entirety, in its philosophy, pedagogy, ethics, organizational practices, paradigms, methodologies and discourses.'[87]

The crucial debate continues and will need to grapple with many issues: What does decolonization really mean in this space? How can values be different from place to place, but humanity still find a shared understanding of what it means to be – collaboratively – human?

Another need for change is that post-conflict development is not delivering well as aid practitioners like to think it is. When a programme is not working, the instinct of development practitioners is often to identify the glitch and fix it. Explanations are easy to find: there were delays in contracting, funding or recruitment. Maybe it was not the right community that was targeted. Perhaps local cultural or social norms prevented full engagement with the programme's aims or authorities were not on board. This way of thinking is alluring, holding out the promise that with just a little more funding, a little more work, a small adjustment, results will be achieved. But this dominant inner logic of development, the tinkering based on readily available normative ideas limits the imagination.

There are further realizations that due to increasing evidence are increasingly difficult to dispute. A situation rarely truly becomes post-conflict. This is especially the case for people and communities trying to make sense of their lives after conflict, with Mallet and Pain arguing, 'the standard "vehicles for recovery" are not, by themselves, fit for purpose. They need to be supplemented with additional approaches'.[88] Falling short on promised delivery is not just a reputational or value-for-money risk for the aid community – it creates a situation where it becomes increasingly risky for would-be constituents to engage with development interventions. Development programmes are often designed and implemented with notions of risk that do not in fact apply to the lives of those targeted. Constituents may be asked to engage in transactions they would otherwise not have been involved in, thereby opening themselves up to risk of harm in a manner they have little to no say in.

Although principles of 'do no harm' exist, how such harm is delineated is down to those running a programme, and is often equated with whether a programme will exacerbate drivers of conflict. The original principle of do no harm was slightly different and might be valuable to reclaim: if cure is possible without harm, cure. When it is not, the aim is to reduce the harm done by the disease, rather than implementing a course of action that does as little damage as possible. If, in a situation of violent conflict, international actions exacerbate the damage, 'do no harm' has to mean that programmes actively address that damage.[89]

All these are good reasons for revisions, but the mindset, the mental models and maps of how development ought to work can struggle to catch up with the realization that, really, things are not working. That very mindset stands in the way of constructive and collaborative working and learning about complicated and ever-evolving processes and relationships. It does not deserve protection. It deserves to be, kindly, let go off to make room for leadership that delves into mental landscapes, rejects capitalist imagery for social progress, and puts humans centre stage. But what if the mindset does not want to leave because it is much more than a way of thinking and rather is an identity?

The inner work: Understanding and challenging the development mindset

Shifting an identity is scary, threatening, destabilizing. That holds true also for the identity that is bestowed by a shared mental model of development amid violence. To avoid the mechanisms that Kahan has identified as 'identity-protective cognition',[90] it is critical to separate identity from information: if my identity – my 'we' – is that of the critical researcher in international development or the well-intentioned practitioner, then whatever I learn about how my analysis is wrong or my programmes do not have the intended effect must not threaten the way I think about and define myself. If it does, my human wiring will get me to reject this learning.

Learning how to learn what contradicts who I am without feeling that this is a personal threat is, possibly, the most difficult step in adjusting the mental models that underpin programming for people who live with violence: it is not about being right or wrong. Or about having found and then carefully crafted the image of ourself we hold dear. It is not about being able to easily converse with people of the same tribe, those with whom I effortlessly share an identity. Most of all, it is not about a straight line between who I think I am or want to be, how I explain causality in life and how the work that I do makes best use of that causality. To adjust the mental models of causality that infuse development programming means to let go and to recognize our own patterns of identity-protective cognition, to understand that we dismiss information when it suggests that our own way of seeing the world and the causality in it can carry risks for others.[91]

Berzonsky's notion of informational processing style can help with this: he suggests that those who build their identity on this style remain sceptical of their own thinking and actively seek out information that helps them deal with this scepticism.[92] Those with normative identity-processing styles more easily fall into identity-confirming information processing, simply adopting what the group that they see as their 'we' adopts. Then there are those who avoid information that might challenge their view of who they are: in this diffuse-avoidant processing style, the here and now is what dictates how information is used, without reaching much into deeper questions that might question a broader identity. Simply knowing about these identity-processing styles might allow different information to be considered without the sense that the 'deep story' or the sense of self through a coherent narrative is threatened. Knowing that these processes are human opens the door to allowing them to work on oneself and then unpack them to get to the bottom of why adjusting a mental model, a tired frame of reference or a revision of what development amid violence needs to consider is so difficult.

If it makes the transition easier, this new identity and new approaches to leadership it needs to bring can still be presented in management speak: it is reflexive leadership that, explains Goh, involves

> a commitment to cultivate awareness of, and to question, our position, experience, values, beliefs and cultural background in our interactions with others in ways that

do not marginalise other voices. . . . It also involves inviting reflexivity through conversations that facilitate making ourselves and others mindful of the purposes and consequences of our actions.[93]

In recent years, useful shorthands have been attached to the mechanics of human thinking. Kahneman's notion of 'fast' and 'slow' thinking and Sunstein and Thaler's 'automatic' and 'reflective' systems describe the contrast between a quick reaction based on existing mental models and reflective consideration that takes into account an individual's interests and context, thereby pushing them to expand their knowledge before making a decision.[94] For development programmes in violent settings, the 'fast' or 'automatic' response mental models are statebuilding without politics or livelihood support without reflection on economic systems. Such programmes draw on the available normative ideas of what development ought to look like.[95] The greater the implicit consensus about the right model, the right sequencing, the right building blocks and the right nexus, the stronger its availability to the development sector and the individuals in it for fast thinking.

But a profound change does not simply come from tweaking what is top of mind. it starts with examining the dominant mental models and questioning them. But, being a slow thinker and stepping off a well-worn programmatic path is daunting. It is a very tough thing to do in a discussion with colleagues who might feel the pressure to deliver their programme or to spend money, and are thus not very welcoming of profound questioning. Breaking away from the architectural blueprint is not easy.

A 'slow' or 'reflective' response requires first to understand the source of beliefs that might inform fast thinking. But the source of beliefs, you might say, is clear: It is evidence. But something strange has happened to research in its interaction with the 'what works' way of thinking: it has given research insights the chance to be elevated to proof – something so clear and certain that any decisions stemming from it will undoubtedly be right.[96] Evidence is a popular companion for tweaking. It is a less popular dinner guest when it suggests that 'what works' is complicated: systems thinking, collaborative relationships or long-term time horizons.

There is a lot of evidence that points towards the need for development practice to reflect on its role, ways of thinking, on the need to champion systems thinking, consideration of relationships and paying heed to how people experience their lives. There is a lot of evidence just how desperately those representing international development – as individuals, as members of our group, as the collective – have sacrificed depth and reflection for transaction and impact.

There is also a huge and growing amount of evidence on just how much we as humans need to take into account our human flaws, that, as Chabris and Simons show, make us overestimate our powers of perception, our memories, our abilities, our knowledge, our skill at identifying causality and our potential.[97] Goh writes about toxic management cultures in value-based organizations that de-emphasize trust or a shared endeavour and prioritize performance, replicating the very transactional and neoliberal thinking that often the organization is set up to counter.[98] And maybe because such toxicity remains, the shared principles need to be stronger and accountability for consequences made part of the shared professional code.

This can be very tough indeed.

Thus, development work in violent contexts continues to be embedded in the comforting notion of causality. Bailey and Chandran, after long careers in the World Bank, the OECD, and other prominent development organizations, write that the notion of a clear plan is disingenuous since 'we know almost nothing about the first (or second, or third) best strategy. We lack the certainty that comes from interrogating historical data, arguing about lessons learned, debating the results of randomized controlled trials (RCT). Our technocratic safety blankets are threadbare.'[99] The certainty that evidence-based policy promises need to make room for embracing uncertainty without giving up learning, experimenting, acknowledging that international development was never as sure of itself as it purported to be. It is okay to now put the questions out in the open.

There are consequences to repeating the same mistakes over and over again. Beyond financial and reputational fallout, the most important consequence of all is disengagement. Development and humanitarian practitioners disengage with their programmes because, despite working in jobs that are value-driven, roles are not set up to allow these values to shine through. This makes dealing with the everyday frustrations of implementation much more difficult. Often, programmes do not deliver as desired – maybe because their design is disconnected from the reality of how economics, power and politics actually work.[100] Imagining development practice and policymaking as delivery and transactional is not helpful as these need to be dynamic, interactive and relational processes. This is the case even – in fact, particularly – when it comes to such seemingly technical challenges as service delivery, livelihood support, economic growth and supporting people who live with violence.

Big ideas towards change really are necessary. The empirical evidence dotted throughout this book makes the case, on practical grounds, why a new way of thinking about development is needed, possible and what it could look like. It acknowledges that, in practical terms, this might mean tinkering, which can be, as Blattman argues, more effective at preventing violence than big transformative approaches.[101] But tinkering in practice and transforming an idea, a mindset, an approach are not in contradiction. What needs transforming is the mental model that keeps returning to transaction, growth, linearity, causality, certainty, and manipulation. This is not an impossibility: it is within our reach as we can already imagine what it might look like, even if putting it into practice will be tough. One way to make sure it does not fail is to not simply try to abolish one way of thinking but consciously replace it with something new.

A new mental model. What exactly it looks like has yet to be developed. Sjöberg writes about the need to learn a new language when he explains how to understand nature through 'landscape literacy'. Landscape literacy is the ability to read the meaning of an observable natural phenomenon and then develop the language to describe this meaning. This takes time and effort: 'Television has taught us to see nature like a film, as something immediately comprehensible and available, but that is only an illusion. The narrative voice-over is missing when you go outdoors.'[102]

The current mental model of international development in violent conflict situations also suggests a sonorous narrative voice-over, projecting omniscience, authority and clarity. The required new mental model is different: it relies on literacy of ever-changing mental landscapes, expressions of power and constraints that call
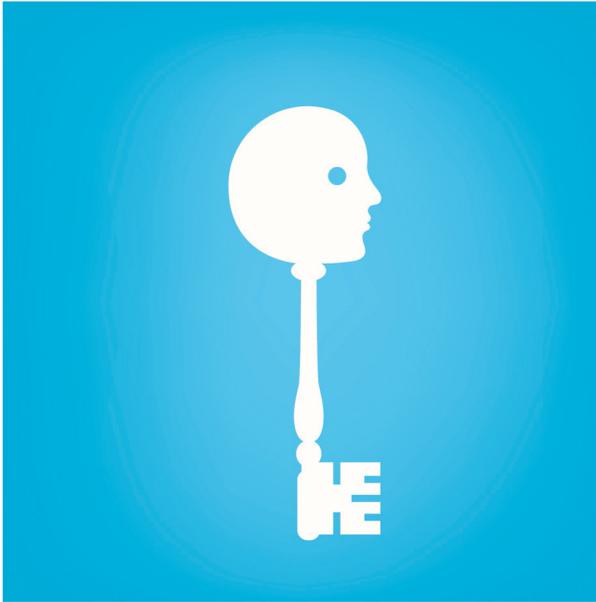
Figure 10 Humans are key. Image by Olivier Ploux.

for inner work. This new mental model needs to query – without being dismissive – transactional thinking, limitations, bureaucratic theatre, metaphors, words, and claims of causality the moment they are expressed. Its starting point is the understanding that the limits of our thinking are part of our complex voices, but that these limits do not need to be taken as a given. The new mental model has to allow looking each other in the eyes and understanding the baggage and influence that everyone's mental landscape brings. The new mental model explicitly acknowledges power in its many manifestations while committing to reshaping it.

Transforming the mental model suggests something radical and yet so obvious: in all of this, humans are key (Figure 10). With all their messiness, ideas, landscapes, languages, hopes, dreams, connections, set-in-their-wayness – and their ability to change.

198

Stories

It's people who tell stories.
It's people to whom stories are told.

People, the tellers of stories,
tell stories to other people.

People, told stories, tell stories.
Stories told, get retold.

What the tellers are told,
become the stories that take hold.

But it's people who tell the stories.
– And it's people to whom stories are told.

Tell a different story.

Michael Onsando

Afterword

Practicalities

Stephanie Buell and Mareike Schomerus

The report by a European think tank was well referenced and a brilliant example of operationally-relevant evidence. Using a synthesis of best practice, it made the convincing and empirically-grounded argument that to achieve sustainable results for populations in humanitarian emergencies, all food aid needed to be complemented by nutrition support. It arrived at the Sana'a country office of an INGO by email from their headquarters. The Sana'a country office was busy implementing a multi-sector response in the midst of Yemen's ever-worsening civil war.

The grant that funded this response included a set of food security activities – distributions of food baskets to families who had lost their income because they lived in regions where markets had become inaccessible due to violence and cholera. Getting the baskets to the families was complicated and required securing supplies, negotiating with local authorities, setting up safe distribution points. This was tough work and every small step on the path of getting food to the families was a major effort for the food security team; it included lots of paperwork for authorizations. This was on top of the steady stream of donor requirements such as updated workplans, results frameworks and quarterly milestones.

Then the check-in call with the US headquarters came – and with that the request to use the latest evidence from that research report and incorporate community-based nutrition activities in the food distribution programme. The ask was to divert budget (since no additional resources were available) from food baskets to holding consultations with mothers on nutritional needs. It was a good, evidence-based suggestion to improve emergency programming.

But to the person overseeing grant implementation in Sana'a, it did not feel like an opportunity to make things better. It felt like a threat. Or maybe even worse.

Receiving that report felt like an aggression, delivered by sector experts in the faraway HQ. It felt like HQ was throwing additional challenges at an already stretched team: realign budgets. Hire staff. Acquire additional government permissions. Conduct a new vulnerability assessment and redraft beneficiary lists and tables. Hold another round of consultations. Cross over into another sector (because nutrition and food distribution are not administered by the same people; they are different sets of expertise). Each one of these steps posed a risk of disruption to the existing food basket distribution – a programme that to the team in Yemen had a clear and obviously helpful goal that needed no revision.

What happened? The Yemen team tucked away the report. They tried as best as they could to find reasons to continue working as they were and ignore the research evidence. They crafted explanations for the nutrition expert in HQ who wanted to see the change in programmatic approach implemented. The Yemen team was neither lazy nor stubborn. Nor had it not been able to understand what the research evidence was telling them. But the people in the team just could not, fundamentally, see that the proposed change with its revised best practice was possible or would work in their circumstances. Just trying would have meant to risk all access negotiated and all planning already done on how to get food baskets to people. And even though the report contained seemingly practical recommendations, once it had arrived on a desk in Sana'a with the request to the grants coordinator to operationalize it, these recommendations gave very little suggestions as to how and why exactly. It came across as a solution to a problem the team did not believe it had. From the point of view of a practitioner in the midst of extremely challenging contexts, listening to research recommendations and suggestions to solve a problem offered by someone else without asking the implementers first can be jarring. It can feel like someone is ripping up your hard work and handing you an unfamiliar blueprint emphasizing some nexus that you did not feel you needed.

The purpose of this afterword

This afterword is written to find ways to ensure that the book that preceded it should not feel like that report on the link between nutrition and food security. Despite the deluge of debunking, unpacking and connecting that happened in the pages that come before it, the idea is not to make people working in international development and humanitarian operations to feel that all has been disproven and that they are left empty-handed, deflated and alone.

Practitioners might like some answers: practical, usable, operationally relevant suggestions for what to do. But the preceding book offers chapter after chapter of breaking down existing imagery and mental models and proposing different ways of thinking and working written by someone whose day job description sounds like a school assignment: discuss.

When research meets practice, it can often get a bit tense. For practitioners, research is wordy, complicated and suffers from a distinct lack of reality check. To avoid ending the text with exactly this feeling, the two of us discussed many iterations of the need for the research reality. This afterword is where research and practice meet to try to not make listening to suggestions to change feel like a chore. This is where Stephanie remembers what it felt like when she was that grants coordinator in the Sana'a office years ago, and how she feels today (still trying to tackle the issue of what works as a country director of an INGO in yet another country labelled as fragile).

Being asked to change a programme approach (whether by a research team, HQ, or anyone else external) can feel like a personal attack on your work, beliefs, competency. It is difficult to simply experience and treat it as the opportunity it might

be. Instead, there is an acute danger to progress and everything achieved so far to be scrapped in order to start afresh. What about the families, the communities to whom the food baskets were going? The people who constantly had to put up with proposed activities but were never given the power to truly reject a plan? Were a smaller number of them better served by a food security/nutrition nexus approach? What about the people that would have to be removed from the recipient lists in order to rebalance the budget?

Another reason why Stephanie was not able to view the new research evidence on food security as a fruitful inspiration on how to improve the relationship between the programme and affected communities was because it forced her to put her energy into servicing the relationship between the country office and HQ. It took a lot of effort placating the HQ into thinking their demands were being considered while at the same time knowing that putting them into practice would be impossible, and not something the team was willing to do given the risk to ongoing programme operations.

It is easy to suggest that development practice can only work if relationships are its centre. But in reality, practice means having to simultaneously hold multiple relationships, and give due attention to all of them. Yet, because relationships between development programmes and affected communities are so uneven, so unfair in their distribution of power, the relationships of power (with funders, HQs, host governments) usually get prioritized. Perhaps shifting money from the food basket distribution line to community dialogue sessions on nutrition would have been what the community members wanted, even if it would mean all the extra work and a reduction in scope. Nutrition would have clearly been the better, more sustainable option for that reduced number of people. But, the Yemen team – and Stephanie – could not even consider that at the time. They had not prepared to solve long-term nutrition; instead, all their capacity was poured into keeping on track with the next step in the food basket distribution workplan. It would probably have been good to change that, but that change was impossible to put in action from an alienating recommendation in a research report.

Practical ideas for revisions and changes

The recognition that change is necessary and that it requires acting accordingly encourages us to issue an invitation: to those affected, to those interested and to those who work to design, implement, support and manage development programmes. The invitation is to have the courage to forego the temptation to keep doing things in the same way. To shift the status quo by using the very tools of thinking, analysis and engagement that this particular grouping of 'we' have at their disposal. We like to think that we use the tools all the time, but in reality, often neglect them when we seek to find a way of working that is altogether different from looking at a map and following an indicated route towards a mental image of reconstruction that is deeply rooted in transactional approaches to social change. We often neglect those tools when failing

to resist the temptation of the one-liner or key performance indicator that cannot capture the ambiguity, the doubt, the contradiction that all need to be part of wanting to support people who have lived with violence and its many entanglements, often all their lives.

What follows are no catchy new images but practical ideas for revisions and changes. These are not recommendations of the type usually to be found on the final pages of research reports. They are more of the Penrose Stairs-kind of the need for permanent reappraisal – where you keep walking through ups and downs. They are closer to the notion of Elworthy's inner work than to advice on how to design a programme. Because how we think about our own role determines how much impact our work will have. Thus, we ought to chew over how this inner work might link to practical considerations for those designing, funding or delivering programmes in situations affected by violence.

This is not evidence-free anarchy. Neither is anybody singing Kumbaya around the campfire. It is a simple straightforward suggestion that the managerial approach to development sits well within a mental model that assumed, in addition to all its transactional offers, that knowledge transfer has just one direction. To not consider one's own role but to ascertain that its place is undisputed is just another way to maintain power. That even suggesting a change towards more reflective ways of working sometimes gets accused of being fluffy and unrealistic is primarily an indicator of how much power in the development sector continues to remain undisputed and how little the sector lives up to its own values.

Constituents, clients, and community members that form the target of programmes often experience the aid worker as someone who is very good at setting the wrong goals. Even when pre-set outcomes are met, constituents often do not experience the promised recovery a project was supposed to bring. Instead, they continue to live in survival mode in situations of uncertainty and instability, unaided by the development programme that had promised so much.

Being true to lived experience and prioritizing local perspectives cannot just be an exercise in handing over programmes and tools to local actors. Rather, from the beginning, programmes need to be based on perceptions of what matters, how people form and maintain relationships, and how negotiation of these relationships forms the basis of multiple identities. As these elements are less visible, and do not have a clear role in the current practice of development, they tend to be set aside as unimportant, even irrelevant. Over time, this has resulted in development programmes becoming disengaged from local experiences, as truly taking on board all information derived from them (as opposed to a convenient selection) would implicitly challenge the very basis of such programmes.

Putting research insights into practice is also a relational process. This is reassuring: it means that this is not lonesome travelling. It is about an honest relationship, being very clear what a programme can and cannot bring to the journey and then asking for the way from those who live in the area – rather than wave a construction plan at them. It is also about the acknowledgement that for people living with violence, engaging with development practices can be risky.

Why we need to rethink the risky business of development

In the space between doing harm and not getting it right is where arguably the majority of programmes fit. It is fraught with risks in terms of programme success and impact. But it also offers an opportunity to better understand, define and, if necessary, adapt what is being asked of the people and communities who are subject to these programmes. Instead of thinking of one side as giving and the other side as receiving or benefitting (in transaction thinking), people running development programmes need to consider the types of behaviours they are expecting and what this means for people's time and resources, how what they are offering impacts people's existing relationships and coping mechanisms, and on what foundations these programmes are built. It matters little, really, to programme constituents what practitioners call themselves (development practitioners? humanitarians?). Or what frame of reference they use (durable solutions-minded? Triple Nexus? gender transformative? lifesaving?). Instead, it is about how what practitioners do and how they act will impact the lives of those they are seeking to support. This consideration – alongside the risk of getting it wrong – comes up far less often than it should in discussions of programme design.

Risk assessments and suggested mitigation strategies are a standard part of most programme documents. Risks can be broad: the risk of violence, deterioration, shocks, doing harm. When risk assessments consider the practicalities of delivering a programme, they cover the logistical (the road might be prone to flooding), the threatening (travellers on the road might be attacked by armed groups), the relational (local communities might not want outsiders to use the road) to the conceptual (the road might threaten the local economic system). With such a straightforward categorization of risks, mitigation strategies are also seemingly easy to put together: reduce road travel in the rainy season by shifting to air transport, shift the responsibility for delivery onto people who have to travel on the road anyway because that road leads to their home, increase the number of community consultations, and make promises to carry out spot monitoring in order to avoid possible incidents. Some risks are more internal: the risk of not achieving the results expected. That is a terrifying risk to most implementers and funders and is most easily countered by working to consensus models of what programming ought to look like and more realistic expectations of what can be achieved.

Understanding how development actors and the people they want to reach experience risk differently offers a useful reminder to consider whether development and humanitarian work is appropriate or offers potential harm, and what types of behaviour and expectations are being pushed onto communities. Risk is also a crucial part of what makes change so difficult to achieve. There is no shortage of recommendations that make very clear what does not work, but these rarely lead to meaningful reflection or action. Why? Because, for individuals making decisions about development programmes, it can be too risky to act, to shake up the status quo. Scenes like the following happen all over the world, all the time. It might sound familiar to you, too.

An INGO with programmes in situations affected by conflict and fragility usually has a toolkit of standard approaches for their field staff and partners, who then tailor these to the specific needs of the communities in which they work. Staff monitor progress against goals or desired outcomes – these are quite lofty. Field and partner staff see very real suffering every day; this and the high expectations of outcomes are stressful and staff is overworked. To cope, teams stick with the busy momentum of programme delivery and the busyness makes it difficult to spot when something is not quite right. Yet, despite the high workload and incentives to just keep going, one staff member thinks that a particular set of activities is inappropriate, perhaps even that the whole approach should be reconsidered. They could speak up and flag the issue, but that would mean navigating the organization's hierarchies and systems. They would be asked to provide evidence that something is not working, offer concrete suggestions of what should happen instead, and in some sense, are made to feel that they should be providing proof that their proposed new approach will guarantee better results. Most of these conversations might happen with an equally-overworked country director who has to fear the reaction of their HQ or cuts in funding if a programme is not implemented as planned. Or worse: the innovative programme might be slammed across newspaper pages and ridiculed.

The pressure on the staff member to make a convincing case is high. What if others think that they are simply not doing a good job? What if their general observations are not considered sufficient evidence? What if they are unable to present a clearly-outlined alternative set of activities? Even if the staff member dares to challenge received wisdom, others in positions of power – management, donors – or those dependent on funding and established budget lines may not be so keen to act. Perhaps the staff member has criticized an approach to programming that everyone else considers standard or even best practice. Now they have brought attention to themselves. If feathers have been ruffled, this attention is likely negative. And what if the staff member's judgement is indeed wrong? Will they be punished, maybe fired? Will others not dare to speak up in future? Weighing up possible consequences of sharing an observation can paint a pretty bleak scenario and one that makes it much more attractive to not question and keep going: implement as per the workplan. All of a sudden, one begins to wonder if maybe the real location of fragility is in the systems and the set-ups of those working in the so-called fragile settings.

Maybe this scenario sounds like a collection of bad management clichés. Many organizations are starting to embrace adaptive ways of working, and organizations will seek to change their programmes when they have evidence that something is not working. But there it is again: evidence. Who gets to define that something is not working? Such evidence rarely exists in an easily-digestible way for issues that defy quantification. Someone may intuit that a programme is off – perhaps through speaking to communities or through their own observation – but others might not accept this as proof strong enough to abandon a pre-packaged toolset that is used across numerous contexts and backed by a set of expert advisers at HQ. Pronouncing doubt about the usefulness of the toolset can endanger credibility with donors; the threat of less funding is the cord that ropes in critical, innovative thinking. With the burden of proof and the risks so high, it is perhaps unsurprising that keeping calm and carrying on wins over speaking out and changing.

There are ways out of this.

Practical approaches

All of the ways that might lead out of this require broadening the imagination and telling different stories of what is possible: what levels of honesty, what kind of relationships, what depth of collaboration, what type of change, what extent of patience. But sometimes the freedom to imagine is helped by a few practical steps. This next section offers suggestions on how development practitioners could shift the mental models that often currently inform ways of working. There are no solutions on offer here and the suggestions are also explicitly inward-looking: their purpose is to give individuals tools, ways of thinking, and reflections that can inform the joint work of creating a new discourse and maybe even a new mental model. The section's ambition is to create a language that supports finding collaborators, building relationships and infusing humanity into work that in recent years has been too shaped by the belief in direct causality, in what works and by political pressure on funding.

To see how development practitioners can move aside to allow affected communities to occupy the driving seat in shaping their lives amid violence, this section offers reflections on the inner work – the work that emphasizes working for communal benefit rather than individual acclaim. Inner work requires asking questions that invite reflection or even meditation on how you, as an individual, fill your work with meaning. The section also makes concrete suggestions of what programme decision-makers could try to change in their work to be less solo engineers following an established path.

This work has to start with awareness of the mechanisms that underpin the current ways of working. Awareness of confirmation bias (believing and seeking out information on what you already believe), availability bias (acting on what is top of mind) and the urge to find clear causality (always seeking patterns) is a first step towards doing the inner work necessary to recognize why we believe what we believe. If we are constantly too busy to take note of such biases, then finding a coalition that will help create work conditions conducive for reflection could be a game changer. Having different types of allies when pursuing radical change is important, and can buffer against fear of failure. It is important to say out loud how scary it can feel to be the one voice in the room to suggest that a new approach is needed.

There needs to be more clarity on what it means to say something is not working. This requires defining what forces pull on the grey area between doing harm and something working – what politics, what perception of risks, what established discourse. Finding coalitions and collaborating from the outset with constituents, partners, colleagues and funders on what this area looks like, and when to flag issues, would help – especially if a commitment is given to avoid making the process of giving feedback feel like an inquisition.

The work is only possible with honesty about what it means to receive funding, who gets it and why, and what it means to manage it. Flexibility is key, as onerous contract and budget modifications are a huge barrier to change. Layering interventions – essentially not going all-out based on just one model or assumption – can help distribute risk through placing bets on several different approaches. So, we are revisiting each chapter to ask: What could be small, but potentially transformative changes? What are reflective inner work questions worth asking?

Revise the image

The official end of conflict suggests a moment of clarity. But it is often, usually, a moment in which pressure to act can cloud judgement of international actors. The fear that a country might slide back into violence restricts response options to stabilization, which can freeze the very same politics into place that fuelled the conflict. Can there be a more future-oriented, rather than ossifying, perspective? It has to be owned by the individuals and communities affected by violence, but removed from the power shuffles that follow its end. The role of aid actors is likely better to be limited to facilitate articulating that perspective and vision and supporting its operationalization.

Things to try:

- Check your mental model: Does it look and sound too much like a construction ground? Do the actors around whom stabilization and statebuilding is planned even feature in the planning? Who holds a collaborative relationship with them?
- Understand the characteristics – the relationships, the mental landscape, the salient issues – of a context before engaging at all and continue to question your insights. In a stabilization effort (which due to political agendas can sometimes be the only strategy on the table), the timing of interventions is key to avoid freezing problematic elements in time. At the outset, there is a need to articulate who the winners and losers of stabilization efforts will be, and work to mitigate the risks faced by those will lose out needs to be considered or put in place.
- The risk of selling an impossibly ambitious idea of recovery is high, which is why setting expectations with community members (including on possible losses) is key. Additionally, practitioners need to explore what smaller outcomes can be pursued with short- and medium-term benefits that a community can experience. Ideally, these would have fewer practical risks associated with them, and demand less in terms of initial engagement with the community when trust is not yet built; making them more achievable in the short term.
- Forward-looking visions need clear and honest accountability: Who has ownership of this new vision of the future? Who draws the red lines? Who will ultimately determine the winners and losers? In order to avoid a cycle of broken promises, it is critical that practitioners are honest about their ability to support the agreed-upon vision within the limits of the set accountability – even if it conflicts with other priorities. Community members must be able to enforce these limits and reject work that is simply not good enough or appropriate.

Inner work questions

Can I more humbly acknowledge how little I may understand a dynamic and evolving situation? Can I be more honest about how much patience I have to work in a situation that might take years to change? Can I live with working for years and not seeing the obvious results I was hoping for?

Revise the system

The economy – growing it, and people's interactions with it – is mostly measured in terms of its most tangible currency: money. The connections, social and moral values underpinning an economy are more difficult to imagine and still harder to quantify, meaning they often get overlooked. Picturing an economy as social relationships presents a particular challenge for those development actors driven by mainstream economic thinking. However, in many places affected by fragility and conflict, economic systems are completely different than the mainstream suggests and the notion of creating a free-market economy creates brutal forces on the people who live with violent conflict. Bulldozing over existing mechanisms and relationships risks tearing apart the social and moral fabric that the economy also is.

Things to try:

- Shift the timelines: economic change takes time. Donors and implementers must be prepared to invest in much longer-term economic programming after a conflict to allow appropriate time for the experience of recovery – thinking in decades is necessary. This may mean putting strategies in place to address both donor, implementer and community fatigue.
- Economic short-term thinking requires an alignment with broader economic goals that support fair distribution and are sustainable as it is understood and articulated by community members and, ideally, backed by national government planning departments.
- How do people currently work to secure their livelihoods? How do they access credit, markets and income without the offer of a development project? Understanding this is key – and the need may be obvious – but what it means to work within these boundaries is perhaps less evident. Expanding on existing means by which communities build local economies, and setting up necessary protections, may be a more effective way to support economic recovery, but importantly, is also a better way of understanding how things function and local pathways of change.
- Even with a recognition of the importance of the social and moral underpinnings of the economy, development programmes and activities will cause a ripple in a system. The impact these will have on relationships should be mapped out in advance, and safety nets and protection need to be set-up, especially when activities ask people to take economic risks.

Inner work questions

What economic theories inform how I understand an economy? Does transactional thinking shape how I view my relationship with programme constituents? How are my own incentives structured? How do I think about the material aspect of my work? How do I think about the social aspect? Is one stronger than the other?

Revise the cliché

The aid community does not always seem to accept that the end of violent conflict does not automatically improve the situation for people. It is easy to overlook the struggle, instability, poverty and volatility that persist and programming here is particularly susceptible to availability/familiarity and confirmation bias. The idea that economic development is a force for conflict prevention strengthens the straightforward cause-and-effect thinking that underpins much current engagement. However, there is no one solution and nobody can assume that we know the start and end points of people's journeys towards more stable livelihoods.

Another key point is to be transparent about the pressure to act – as an aid community – when a conflict has just seemingly come to an end. Such pressure can result in inappropriate, slapdash programmes launched with a view to positioning an agency within a certain sector or context to secure funding, territory and future programming. However, just as this is the time when the pressure to act (and spend) is highest, so too is the risk to affected communities. Thus, practitioners must be particularly alert to what doing harm may look like.

Things to try:

- People do not tend to emerge from conflict with a great deal of entrepreneurial agency. Rather, their time is spent on self-preservation, with what little resources they have directed at pay-offs that appear more certain than those offered by riskier development interventions. This is in contrast to how development agencies assume people should act, and so teams, programmes and donors must be reminded of this at every step, with success indicators created accordingly. Promising an end point (e.g. this job training will create a sustainable income) that does not materialize can dash hopes, making the next phase of recovery harder.
- End goals should be replaced with short- and medium-term goals that are tied to constituent satisfaction rather than being set in stone at the outset. Adaptive programming is better suited to complex situations where an obvious solution to people's varied challenges does not exist. With all adaptive programming though, there needs to be genuine community engagement and adaptations need to be informed by feedback and learning.
- Although livelihood interventions have become more sophisticated, this is generally not reflected in post-conflict settings, where the default assumption is often that any programme is better than nothing. It should not be assumed that because a market does not work to neoliberal standards, it is not functional. Socially-embedded economies are complex, sometimes delicate, and require time to unpack. Thus, programmes need to work with the social networks within these contexts, rather than reaching for off-the-shelf interventions.
- Migration, with all its challenges, remains a common livelihood strategy. But donor support for migration policies and programmes is heavily influenced

by their domestic political agendas. Even so, there are relatively simple ways of ensuring safer migration and supporting households left behind when a relative leaves to seek work. In contexts with high levels of out-migration, this is an area of programming that warrants further exploration.

Inner work questions

If we accept that perceptions are crucial to how people experience their lives after violence, what, then, are the perceptions that shape our own actions? Is our perception of giving and delivering informed by a transactional model of development, which in turn shapes our development practice? What if we were to focus on community building rather than structural building?

Revise the terrain

The mental landscape of lives amid violence comes with a particular set of opportunities and risk – from people's propensity to collaborate to having higher standards of what is considered fair, to how risk itself is assessed.[1] How people perceive the reality of a situation may be quite different from what is assumed by those looking in from the outside. The behaviour of people and communities may seem puzzling without understanding what shapes the mental landscape. Of course, it is neither possible to know how people feel about every single situation, nor is it helpful to simply track change in perceptions. But it is important to acknowledge that how people feel about their situation and how that feeling shapes their behaviour constitutes a huge part of lives after violence. It also informs how they experience their access to opportunities and engagement with programmes. It is non-negotiable if development wants to honour its own values to seek what in 1965, Standing Rock Sioux Vine Deloria Jr, then head of the National Congress of American Indians, referred to as 'the consent of the governed, time to develop what we think should be developed in our own way'.[2]

There is a second aspect to the mental landscape and it is more inward-looking, reflective. It is about our own mental landscape and the extent to which knowing more about human behaviour and mechanisms would give us a language to assess our reactions and to question our limiting behaviour. In the international development sector, echo chambers and group speak on the dominant mental models are real. And yet, behavioural science tells us that we are good at overestimating the extent to which we know what other people are thinking or the extent to which they are in agreement. But, writes Gilovich, we have a 'systematic defect in our ability to estimate the beliefs and attitudes of others'.[3] Unless doubts are articulated and shared to give others the chance to agree, the assumption that the silent majority is in agreement and unable to change an approach will simply become the guide for all – likely conservative rather than progressive – decision-making.

Things to try:

- Labelling a programme as being post-conflict, or someone as being a conflict-affected beneficiary, may unhelpfully prime people. Language is very, very powerful. It is important to note the effects of such priming as it might impact collaboration and people's self-efficacy.
- It may seem obvious that programmes should be fair. However, for populations that have experienced violence, this requires particular attention, as standards of what is perceived as fair might be higher and there may be a willingness to punish unfair offers, including what is on offer from a development programme. Although fairness is something that is experienced, this does not mean that programmes should simply do as they usually do and hope for the best. Instead, there is space for discussion with communities about who should get what, what distribution is considered fair and a shifting of power from the programme to the community.
- How people experience, feel and perceive their situation needs be a key part of needs assessments, and also inform vulnerability and targeting criteria. In practice, this means stepping away from externally-assessed needs, and instead focusing on programme design methods that pay genuine attention to how people can participate and if they feel that their participation is meaningful, with space left for ongoing adaptation, as dictated by what comes out of these assessments.
- The fact that perceptions about behaviours and actual behaviours do not often line up (e.g. around levels of collaboration following a conflict) means that programmes may have some work to do on making certain outcomes more visible. In wanting to encourage collaboration, a first step may actually be to highlight existing instances of it, whether they are directly linked to programme activities or not.

Inner work questions

Do I have the tools to understand what it means to offer careful support? Do I take emotional measures just as seriously as material progress indicators? Do I have my own ways of sustainably dealing with the challenge of living on this planet every day? Do I have sufficient resources within me to listen to others and take on board their suffering? Do I have hope? When delivering my work, do I have sufficient patience and interest to allow others to receive it with dignity?[4]

Revise the self

Categorizing people – women, IDPs, ethnic minorities, conflict-affected – is a tool for programme implementation, but it is not a neutral undertaking. It has a deeply problematic history. People often have multiple identities that defy easy categorization. Not all categorizations are equal and when they determine who gets what in terms of a programme, the situation becomes even more complicated. Categorization creates a risk of marginalization and can fuel grievances, as well as potentially encouraging people to play the system. Given categorization is a tool for programming, there is an

incentive to match programme categories to people – whether out of familiarity bias in only recognizing what we have seen or experienced previously or simply because it is logistically easier to apply categories that have been used in other contexts.

Things to try:

- For every act of categorization, practitioners need to determine who the winner and losers are and ask whether such categorization can, therefore, be justified. If certain people or groups are marginalized, then a safety net needs to be in place or efforts made to coordinate with agencies that can offer support to counter that marginalization.
- Practitioners need to be willing to ask – themselves and the communities in which they work – which identities matter in a specific situation. Who and with what power decides on the categories? Can multiple categories be considered? What are the histories of categorization in a community?
- Policymakers and practitioners construct programmes around groups and communities, yet expect individual behavioural change. Thus, knowing more about what drives behaviours is key, as well as how people's individual identities overlap with different groups – irrespective of how they might be categorized.
- Because labels do not often overlap with how people see themselves or define their own identities – including the categorical names that are still so prevalent of beneficiary and non-beneficiary – groups may disengage with the aim of a programme, and participate only on a transactional basis of receiving a good or service. Broadening out categories into identities and letting them be defined by people – with the ability to change these over time – is key not only to building meaningful relationships but also to better understanding what groups of people have the capacity for change and where attention should be turned.

Inner work questions

How does my own identity feed into my work? How do I define and shift it, depending on the emphasis I require? Which parts of my identity do I want others to acknowledge and how? Which parts of my identity do I want to de-emphasize and why? Which parts am I afraid to lose, holding on unhelpfully? How does this shape my interactions? How and why do I perpetuate working practices that I consider problematic? How does my identity as an aid worker shape the way I do things and I am willing to try new things?

Revise the framing

State legitimacy cannot simply be bought through the transaction of service delivery. But if service delivery is not the key to building state legitimacy, then what is? The answer lies in questioning the assumption of a transactional relationship. Policymakers and practitioners should look at historical distribution inequalities, as well as other

context-specific legacies (whether services, functions, or other factors) relevant to the co-construction of state legitimacy.[5] This is more complicated than building schools or supporting curriculum development. The existing paradigm that suggests such a strong link between legitimacy and services means that there is a constant fear that lack of service delivery might result in de-legitimation. What to do when groupthink around transactions is so strong?

Things to try:

- It is worth stating the obvious: high-quality services are a good thing. Support for such services should not be dismissed merely because they cannot buy state legitimacy. Even with this being the case, services continue to be instrumentalized, which makes service providers (or support/funders of it) actors in the ongoing attempt to construct of legitimacy (or, in some cases, contribute to de-legitimacy). Aid partners are contributing to existing patterns of resource distribution, and therefore the saliency of certain things over others in the construction of state legitimacy. This is not a responsibility that can be ignored, and so weighing these risks when making programme design decisions is a duty.
- Understanding what might help improve state-society relationships relies mostly on better context knowledge and a strong grasp of how perceptions of services and functions fluctuate within it.
- For programmes and policies explicitly aimed at supporting state legitimacy, areas of investment – including on service delivery – need to be prioritized. This means identifying which services or functions are most salient to the construction of state legitimacy, and focusing resources accordingly. It also means setting up close monitoring systems to track how changes in these services feed into legitimation narratives.
- States engage in strategies of both co-optation and repression with different groups.[6] Closer inspection of the incentives underlying such strategies, as well as greater emphasis on situations where it is politically more expedient for a state to co-opt, may incrementally decrease use of repressive tactics and so help build legitimacy.

Inner work questions

Am I viewing my role and my work through a transactional lens? Can I step aside from a space where my presence is not required? Do I recognize when there are others better suited than me? Do I listen? What categories do I get put into to create my own identity quakes?

Revise the scaffolding

Relationships are important. Networks are capacity, systems and institutions. This is not merely a facet of life; it is its very fabric. Thus, claims of local ownership and local solutions require knowledge of and relationships with people and networks. This

rarely happens because relationships are often intangible, evolving and difficult to map. The main impediment is that investing in relationships is political, and requires that international implementing partners relinquish some of their power. The incentives of the aid architecture mitigate against doing so, and in areas where there are conflicting priorities, whoever holds the funding holds the control.

This situation means communities and programme constituents face a degree of risk in engaging with partners that cannot meaningfully invest in local relationships, resulting in relationships (or, really, a set of transactions) that are unlikely to be durable. Instead, communities look to patronage systems, coping mechanisms or the networks that underpin markets, all of which will remain beyond the term of any programme cycle and can offer greater certainty in terms of an acceptable outcome. Aid workers and agencies should not seek to compete with these relationships, but instead invest in actors and processes that are there to stay, and are already part of the fabric of local relationships.

Things to try:

- Local organizations – no matter how informal – that already deliver services or functions in line with what communities want need to be strengthened and supported. Although it is tempting for a programme to want to be more centre stage, supporting actors already there in a meaningful way (meaning, not just grants for activities but actual material support to salaries and running costs) is likely to be more effective.
- Relationships are adaptive capacity and so ought to be the highest priority: they are what allows work to continue and programme goals to change without breakdowns.
- Relationships cannot be built overnight. The longevity of programmes – and the networks and relationships they rely on – really matters, with meaningful change in people's lives impossible to come by in twelve-months cycles.
- Patronage networks should not be outright judged, but rather viewed as part of the system that regulates distribution of resources. Just because practitioners might not agree with a pattern of distribution does not mean it can be ignored, and a new (often inadequate) system put in its place for a temporary time and expected to take hold after the programme has ended.
- Communities and constituents are less likely to find a programme risky if it is embedded in non-temporary structures and people. Meaningful investment in these elements is therefore key, and doing so goes some way to resolving the question of sustainability as well as trust and local ownership.

Inner work questions

Do I develop meaningful relationships? What do they mean to me? What do I do to nurture them? What causes me to withdraw? How do I define my notions of a good relationship? What drains me? What gives me energy? How do I deal constructively with tension in the spirit of collaboration?

The process towards new mental models and collaboration

Supporting people affected by violence is not a one-way street nor a single-minded undertaking. We hope that the need and courage to ask questions of oneself and of the system is a prominent takeaway. That means going back to the information and insights you have gleaned over the years and giving yourself the space to re-interpret them. This is learning.[7] In asking questions and acting upon information from the people who are in the know – that is, those who live amid violence – meaningful programmes might truly become led by those who are the local. We believe that – having disentangled yourself from the incentives that encourage you to remain on the established road – other options will seem much more feasible, with trial and error and adaptiveness a much better process for achieving development outcomes. This requires reflection, honesty, courage, nourishment and patience. It also requires engagement and genuine relationships with the people on all sides of the international development system.

Thinking back on that situation in Yemen, it is clear that things have changed. So has Stephanie (she says so herself, writing this paragraph): I won't pretend that I always or ever feel capable of doing all the inner work; however, I am better able to live with the contradictions that come with the territory of trying to support people whose lives are shaped by violence. I have learned to live with the ambiguity and uncertainty. The idea is now to embrace the comfort of learning and abandon tired mental models, while also creating the space and structures to allow others to do so as well. What will hopefully follow are more joint endeavours, collaboration and looking at our shared humanity with fresh eyes. It is a tough commitment, but necessary so that lives after violence are not mere replications of lives during violence.

What form development outcomes might take from such a shifted approach is not drawn on a map. Outcomes can only be found through the hard work of working jointly through many obstacles that lie before communities who have experienced conflict and those who seek to meaningfully support them. And they can only happen if those working in this space are able to take a step back, reflect, adjust and abandon ways of thinking about the world that ultimately do not help to make it a better place.

If this can happen then, one day, rethinking and reacting will have changed things so much that the revisions offered here will be old and outdated.[8] We look forward to that day.

Postface

The roots of this book: Ten years of the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC)

Mareike Schomerus and Marcus Langley

Eleven years ago, ODI in London launched a far-reaching multi-pronged large-scale research consortium that sought to understand how people secure their livelihoods in environments affected by violence and violent conflict. The Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC)[1] was a consortium that brought together 16 organizations,[2] dozens of researchers and hundreds of enumerators who worked in 9 countries and published more than 150 outputs.[3] The SLRC was funded primarily by the UK's development department, the Department for International Development (DFID, 2011–20) and then the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO, 2020–1), Irish Aid (IA) and the European Commission (EC).

Few researchers from so many different backgrounds get to work together for this long, to use their empirical information and to push their ideas to battle with the huge undertaking of creating knowledge. We were lucky, not aware of the challenges we were facing, and cognizant of carrying responsibility. Even fewer research directors then get to sit down at the end of such a huge collective effort to attempt to somehow tie the work of so many people together.

The SLRC research is diverse and was conducted in a range of dissimilar settings. This is both a challenge and an opportunity for a book that offers a set of overarching deductions towards a revision needed within international development policies of how to understand what lives amid violence are like. How does one go about trying to put this knowledge – some written, some unspoken; some new, some old; some direct, some incidental – into words? In this particular case, it meant, quite literally, spreading out hundreds of papers on the floor and approaching them with the intellectual tradition used to treat systematically-gathered qualitative data that can be coded according to emerging themes. Grounded Theory would call these emerging themes theories;[4] in this book, they are framed as chapter headings. What was to be in those chapters then became – during head-clearing walks – the topic of a lot of inner monologue (sometimes not so inner, to the delight of people passing by). The mechanisms and connections drawn here between many known issues and decades of development ideologies in the context of violent conflict are thus both a closure of one research effort and conversation about development amid violence, and simultaneously, we hope, the launch of another.

Ten years of violence: An overview of events

SLRC set out in 2011 to understand how people in conflict-affected situations continue to survive in times of and after acute violence. When concluding in 2021, SLRC had generated a deep evidence base for policy and practice of international development programmes on how people make a living, educate their children, deal with illness, and access other basic services in fragile and conflict-affected situations (FCAS). The researchers further examined what influence people's access to services had on their relationship with the state. Collectively, SLRC asked: What challenges do people face? And to what extent do these differ, depending on how individuals have experienced the violence around them – as victims, secondary victims, perpetrators, observers? These questions took researchers and enumerators to subnational regions in Afghanistan, the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Nepal (Terai/Madhesh region of Nepal, Bardiya in western Terai and Dhanusha in eastern Terai), Pakistan (Swat Valley), Sierra Leone, South Sudan (Jonglei, Equatorias), Sri Lanka and Uganda (Acholi and Lango), as well as to refugee camps for Syrians in Jordan.

During the SLRC's empirical in-country work (carried out between 2011 and 2019), the lives of individuals, communities and societies were shaped by social, political, economic and environmental events. It is this point in time which provides the context for country-based insights. Some of the countries experienced major shocks during this time; others continued sometimes long-term historical trends. Many had both. For people in all situations, this period of ten years was one in which they lived amid violence in some way or another.

Afghanistan

In 2011, Afghanistan's political, economic and social landscape contained a multitude of very different actors.[5] Life continued to be heavily disrupted by military intervention, terrorist attacks and humanitarian crises, including the country's worst drought for a decade. That year, civilians bore the brunt of violence between the Taliban and Afghan and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) troops; US forces killed Al Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden in Pakistan; and Afghan leaders and international governments convened at the second Bonn Conference to set out a roadmap for international cooperation in Afghanistan beyond 2014 (when the US-led coalition was planning to withdraw).

But 2011 was also only one moment in time of Afghanistan's modern history, which has been shaped by violence in two distinct phases: Soviet occupation from 1979 to 1989 and civil war from 1996 to 2001. The United States led the invasion of the country in October 2001 in a military operation framed as retaliation for the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, DC. Shortly afterwards, the US-allied Northern Alliance entered Kabul to overthrow the Taliban-led Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. At the first internationally-supported Bonn Conference in late 2001, signatories from different Afghan groups chose Hamid Karzai as the leader of the Afghan Interim Authority. At first, the commitment from international partners

to build a democratic state and transform Afghanistan's economy created a sense of optimism.[6] Reality soon set in as continued military tension led to deaths, interrupted public service delivery and a quashed economy, plunging four in ten people into poverty.[7] Ever since, the impact of the invasion on Afghanistan's political, economic and social landscape continues to be felt.

Net official development assistance (ODA) and official aid to Afghanistan were consistent over the period 2011–19, totalling US$43.74 billion.[8] International aid peaked in 2011 at US$6.75 billion, with some estimates suggesting aid accounted for 40 per cent of the country's GDP.[9] Up until 2021, aid to Afghanistan had been distinguished by military and non-military aid: military aid was provided to maintain the international security presence in the country since 2001, while non-military aid encompassed infrastructure development, education, healthcare and other services. Aid flows into the country had come through three main channels: directly to the government through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF); through local and international NGOs; and through channels outside the governmental network.[10]

In February 2020, after a series of failed withdrawal agreements, the United States and NATO allies signed a peace agreement with the Taliban, committing to the withdrawal of all troops within fourteen months, subject to all parties upholding the deal. Following a hasty Western withdrawal in May 2021, the Taliban launched a major and very successful military offensive in a bid to capture major towns and cities, including Kabul. This resulted in the fleeing of President Ashraf Ghani, the fall of the government and the de facto takeover of the country by the Taliban.

Following the Taliban's 2021 offensive, the US and UK governments committed humanitarian assistance and development aid to Afghanistan.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has a history of violence. Five years after independence from Belgian rule, Mobutu's Western-supported coup of 1965 launched his totalitarian regime of what came to be known as Zaire. The First Congo War (1996–7) ended when Laurent Kabila, supported by Rwandan troops, seized power.[11] Civil violence continued in the now-renamed Democratic Republic of the Congo; estimates suggest between 2.7 and 5.4 million excess deaths from 1998 to 2008 occurred, mainly from starvation and disease.[12] The Second Congo War (1998–2003), again fought with influence from many international actors, ended when Laurent Kabila's son Joseph was sworn in as leader of the transitional government of the DRC. Because of the crucial role played by many international actors (Rwanda, Angola, Uganda and others), either the Second Congo War or the entire period from 1997 to 2003 has been referred to as Africa's Great War.[13]

In 2006, the country held its first officially democratic elections in almost half a century, officially electing Joseph Kabila as the president. This ended neither political volatility nor violence, which continues primarily but not exclusively, in the east of the country. The most prominent armed group in the period since 2006 – but being only one of many armed groups – were the M23, which in 2012 and 2013 displaced

140,000 people in North Kivu. Armed violence is still common today: the UN Joint Human Rights Office reported that more than 1,300 people had been killed by armed groups between January and June 2020, a threefold increase from the same period in 2019.[14] Even when overall there has been some reduction in violence, people do not necessarily experience a decrease. SLRC research shows marked disparities in perceptions of safety amongst individuals and communities, even where violence was measurably reduced. One reason might be that violence is not the only disruptor: the eastern province of South Kivu – which has a population of approximately six million people – has also faced crop disease, food insecurity and economic shocks.[15]

In 2015, the government partitioned six of the country's eleven provinces into twenty-one new provinces, creating a total of twenty-six.[16] This process of decentralization – known as *découpage* – reorganized state institutions, and changed the meaning of ethnic representation, which has been a backbone of how political representation is understood in DRC.[17]

Between 2011 and 2019, DRC received US$25.89 billion in ODA and other forms of official aid. This peaked in 2011 at US$5.53 billion, but fell to US$2.1 billion by 2016. However, since then international aid to DRC has again gradually increased.[18] Since 2011, UK aid programming to DRC has focused on supporting children into education, improving access to clean water and sanitation, reaching women and children through nutrition interventions and delivering family planning interventions.[19]

Nepal

Nepal's recent history of violent conflict and political upheaval is most visible in the civil war between Maoist insurgents and the Nepalese government (1996–2006), in which 13,000 people lost their lives.[20] A Comprehensive Peace Accord formally ended the insurgency, but the Accord did little to address the multifaceted and complex root causes of the conflict, including ethnic and regional inequalities and ruling by a dominant elite class. The country's transition from monarchy to republic was officially concluded in 2008, yet the transition further contributed to volatility.[21] Since the signing of the Accord, service delivery has improved across Nepal. Barriers to accessing primary and secondary education, particularly in rural areas, have diminished.[22] It has been a real struggle for many Nepalese to survive and ensure that they have enough to eat.

In January 2011, the UN ended its peace-monitoring mission in Nepal, signalling another key milestone towards peace in the country. Yet, political tension continued. The Constituent Assembly dissolved in 2012 having reached an impasse on the new constitution. The signing of a revised constitution in 2015 was met with violent protests during which forty people were killed. The devastating earthquake of April 2015 claimed the lives of more than 8,000 victims (injuring a further 21,000) and led to an economic loss of US$6 billion. Coupled with rapid inflation, this challenge has further impacted people's ability to sustain livelihoods.[23]

Prime Minister Oli was elected in 2018 after campaigning for legislative change to hold perpetrators of violence during the insurgency accountable. However, the

government made little progress towards this, instead introducing new laws that further restrict free expression.[24] In July 2021, Prime Minister Deuba took office.

Nepal received US$9.65 billion in ODA and official aid between 2011 and 2019.[25] UK aid prioritized economic development, with 550,000 people supported to improve their rights to land and property between 2011 and 2015. Programmes sought to improve access for women and girls to security and justice services. In the direct aftermath of the earthquake, more than one million people received humanitarian aid.[26] The EC also provided earthquake response funding to Nepal, alongside supporting sustainable rural development, education and democracy and decentralization efforts for the period 2014–20.[27]

Pakistan

Pakistan's recent history is one of multiple instances of conflict that disrupted the country's social, political and economic landscape.[28] Conflict over the Kashmir region between Pakistan and India has defined much of Pakistan's conflict history since partition in 1947. Since 2010, violence has continued in the Kashmir Valley, with notable incidences in 2010 and 2016, when anti-Indian protests fuelled months of civil unrest, with civilians killed by Indian security forces in a highly-militarized zone.[29] The primary cause of violence in Pakistan's northern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa over the past fifteen years has been the emergence of the Taliban who took control of Swat District and infiltrated Lower Dir District in 2007, resulting in a two-year conflict between the Taliban and the Pakistani army.[30] Agricultural livelihoods in Swat were destroyed,[31] with approximately two million people internally displaced as the army reasserted control over Taliban-occupied areas.[32] As fighting calmed, civilians returned home and the region transitioned nominally from a humanitarian crisis to a post-conflict context.[33]

In 2010, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also suffered from significant floods that destroyed infrastructure and further displaced communities already affected by conflict; the shock weakened multiple livelihood sources.[34] In the short term, cash grants and food supplies were delivered by local agencies in partnership with international organizations.[35] However, whether this immediate support was able to restore livelihoods or service delivery in the district is questionable.[36]

Post-conflict intervention from the international community in the past decade has been both rapid and consistent. During the time of the SLRC, Pakistan, as an important geopolitical strategic partner, received US$24.19 billion, peaking in 2015 at almost US$4 billion, as ODA and official aid.[37] Between 2011 and 2015, the UK government prioritized tackling extreme poverty, building peace and stability, empowering women and girls and the effective delivery of public services.[38] Since 2015, Pakistan has been DFID's largest country programme, with funding amounting to £302 million in 2019–20, spanning human development, climate and humanitarian interventions.[39]

Sierra Leone

From 1991 to 2002, ambitions by Sierra Leone's rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia to overthrow President

Momoh's government fuelled a brutal civil war that killed an estimated 70,000 people and hurt many more, including through abduction and rape.[40] Nearly 2.6 million people were internally or externally displaced. The conflict ended in 2002 when, following several failed interventions, an international military collaboration successfully defeated the RUF. Presidential and parliamentary elections followed the same year.

By 2011, observers noted President Koroma's progress in stifling corruption and improving access to services, particularly education and healthcare.[41] In the following decade, Sierra Leone continued its transition from conflict-affected to post-conflict, stabilizing both politically and economically. The country's recovery, however, was significantly hampered by the Ebola epidemic, which at its 2014–5 peak crashed the country's economy and forced schools to close for ten months.[42] Prior to the outbreak, Sierra Leone had aimed to become a middle-income country by 2035. Today, the country has high youth unemployment and faces governance challenges, a legacy of its protracted civil war.[43] After his election campaign on an anti-corruption platform, Julius Bio became president in 2018.

Since the end of the war, the country's healthcare sector received $360 million of funding from international actors. Net ODA and official aid received by Sierra Leone totalled US$5.51 billion during the period 2011–19. International aid almost doubled between 2013 and 2014 before falling again from 2015 onwards.[44] In recent years, UK aid has prioritized tackling the Ebola outbreak, including through the deployment of military personnel, health workers and civil servants. The British government has also channelled funding into providing basic services such as water, education and health to the most vulnerable, as well as investment in infrastructure.[45]

South Sudan

The world's youngest recognized sovereign state, South Sudan has had a short but violence-laden history. South Sudan's birth was made possible by a referendum that had been part of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, signed in 2005 between the Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), to end a war that had begun in 1983 and had claimed roughly two million lives as a result of violence, famine and disease.

International support for an interim semi-autonomous southern Sudan was guided by the then-dominant statebuilding discourse, emphasizing the development of state capacity and improvement of service delivery.[46] In January 2011, the referendum vote confirmed the country's decision to secede from Sudan; this was followed by jubilant celebrations on 9 July 2011, the day independence was declared. Only months later, the G7+ launched the 'New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States'; a statebuilding approach designed to support conflict-affected countries, including South Sudan.[47] From 2005 until South Sudan's civil war began in 2013, donors delivered substantial levels of financial and humanitarian aid, and supported the building of state institutions.[48] The civil war between the newly sovereign South Sudanese government and opposition forces triggered Africa's biggest refugee crisis, with at least 2.2 million

people displaced over the years that followed. By 2020, violence between the warring parties had officially ended, though conflict between subgroups (some supported by the official warring parties) continues, along with prolonged displacement. South Sudan's statebuilding efforts have created limited accountable institutions; governance is still weak.[49]

Since 2011, South Sudan has been the recipient of significant levels of international aid, totalling US$13.89 billion to 2019. This has gradually increased since 2011, with levels peaking in 2017 at US$2.1 billion.[50] FCDO's 2020 profile of their work in South Sudan highlights recent priorities, including preventing and alleviating famine, providing education for girls and offering essential health services.[51] The South Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan has coordinated the majority of all humanitarian funding to the country, with the United States providing almost US$3 billion since 2011. The plan has helped provide food assistance to millions, treated children and women for malnutrition and provided millions of emergency health kits.[52]

Sri Lanka

Civil war between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who were fighting for an independent Tamil state in the north and east of the country, resulted in the death or disappearance of up to 100,000 people, displacing a further 800,000. The twenty-six-year-long war formally ended in 2009 with the government taking the majority of the LTTE-occupied areas of the country by force. Violence remains through ethnic cleansing, abductions, torture and the restricting of the Tamil community's political and social rights. Sri Lankan women continue to experience physical and sexual violence, particularly in the conflict-affected northern and eastern parts of the country.[53]

The Sri Lankan government's official approach to post-conflict recovery has been to boost the economy, stabilize livelihoods and engender reconciliation, but Sri Lanka's economic performance has been mixed. Poverty levels are slowly falling: in 2016, 4.1 per cent of the population lived below the poverty line, compared with 8.9 per cent in 2009–10.[54] However, in conflict-affected areas, rates are considerably higher; in Kilinochchi (the former de facto capital of the LTTE-controlled area), almost one in five people live in poverty.[55] Access to services has improved in northern and eastern regions, and the government has prioritized infrastructure development.[56] However, such access remains uneven: communities already marginalized or in poverty still struggle to access sufficient schooling, for example.[57]

Net ODA and official aid received by Sri Lanka totalled US$3.08 billion in the period 2011 to 2019. However, in 2018, the country experienced a net loss of US$247 million.[58] Since 2009, aid from traditional development partners has decreased, with non-traditional donors increasing their presence and support along with international development banks and multilateral agencies.[59] More recently, the World Bank has focused development funding on health (through the strengthening of primary healthcare and the establishment of a Covid-19 emergency response fund), early years education as well as climate change and disaster risk management.[60]

Syria and Jordan

Syria's recent history is characterized by bloodshed, political upheaval, economic shock and humanitarian crises. The Syrian civil war commenced in March 2011 and continues to have an impact on the entire region. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) estimates the death toll to be as high as 560,000.[61] By 2017, approximately 6.6 million people had been displaced internally and more than five million Syrian refugees had fled into neighbouring countries including Jordan, which, as of June 2018, had registered more than 650,000 Syrian refugees.[62] Hosting refugees has placed a significant financial burden on the public purse, overwhelming the Jordanian government's attempts to deliver services. While Syrian refugees were initially restricted from engaging in both formal and informal modes of employment, the signing of the Jordanian Compact in February 2016 committed 200,000 formal jobs for Syrian refugees.[63] The Syrian civil war entered its tenth year on 1 April 2020, with violent conflict from multiple factions continuing to disrupt and wreak havoc across the country.

Syria received more international aid in the period 2011–9 than any of the other countries in which SLRC worked. Net ODA and official aid – which has risen rapidly since 2011 – totalled US$54.32 billion over the period. In 2017 alone, aid to Syria peaked at US$10.43 billion, constituting 6 per cent of all international aid that year. Over the same period of 2011–9, Jordan received US$19.4 billion in international aid.[64] In recent years, USAID funding to Syria has focused on the provision of emergency food, health, livelihoods, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene services for internally-displaced and vulnerable populations.[65] In 2012, the UK government provided £910 million for humanitarian operations in Syria, which facilitated the distribution of food aid and supported families to send their children back to school. However, the UK's Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) has reported that the UK response has been slow to shift from emergency relief to longer-term programming to support livelihoods.[66]

Uganda

Uganda has a long history of violent conflict, with the most recent one between the government and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) officially lasting from 1986 to 2008. In this brutal war that saw atrocities being committed by all sides, approximately 300,000 people lost their lives and, at its worst, almost 2 million people were living in 251 forced displacement camps across the northern region, notably in Acholiland and Lango.[67] Key infrastructure – including schools, hospitals and roads – was destroyed during the violence, with the Ugandan economy losing an estimated US$1.7 billion over the course of the conflict.

Peace talks facilitated by then semi-autonomous southern Sudan resulted in a cessation of hostilities between the factions in 2006.[68] However, alleged LRA violence continued and in 2011, US president Obama deployed anti-LRA military advisers to support with the Uganda government's ongoing fight against the resistance. Incidences of LRA violence have been reported in both Uganda and DRC throughout the past decade; by 2020, low-level LRA activity remains in eastern DRC and in parts of the Central African Republic.

Within Uganda, conflictual dynamics have reached new heights, with President Museveni clinging on to power, including in the hotly contested 2021 elections, in a manifestation of what Tapscott calls 'modern authorianism'.[69]

Uganda received US$16.01 billion in international aid between 2011 and 2019. Notably, despite growing political tensions, aid increased over this period, peaking in 2019 when net ODA and official aid totalled US$2.1 billion.[70] Recent UK aid spending in Uganda has focused on economic development (through increased border and customs resources to ensure smoother trade and the development of public-private partnerships), strengthening education and health systems nationally, tackling violence against women and girls and providing humanitarian support through food parcels, immunizations and access to clean water primarily for refugees who fled to Uganda.[71]

The specific quality of conflictual environments

This book ends ten years of research by sketching what is generalizable and how these generalized insights need to transform development practice. It offers a big picture through a stylized way of looking at SLRC findings. This stylization points towards a number of specific qualities that seem to occur in all environments that experience violent conflict. These qualities are not new discoveries, but they are rarely articulated because research into the issues of how lives fare amid violence is simultaneously both abundant and scarce.

While there is no shortage of data, quality is patchy and how insights have been used inconsistent. When the SLRC started, information on the programme impact was of a particularly low quality or drawn from murky sources. Often, evaluation simply involved recording what had been done, rather than unpacking the effects of a programme.[72] Sometimes how data was handled is the problem, rather than lack of it. South Sudan, for example, had surprisingly good data systems (before it succumbed to civil war in 2013) due to monitoring systems put in place during its war with Sudan. Yet, such data was barely used in developing a long-term perspective, including understanding what programmes had worked and what research gaps remained.[73] In other areas, supposedly bona fide evidence must be treated with suspicion – for example, data from eight national surveys in the DRC, rather than providing readily accessible and credible statistical insights, requires at a bare minimum background material and analysis of the politics underpinning the data collection.[74] Even then, the data should be taken with a pinch of salt. When these shortcomings add up, what information carries what can become knowledge or even received wisdom turns out to be rather feeble.

Challenging assumptions: The empirical work

The SLRC's empirical work can roughly be divided into two phases.

SLRC Research Phase I: 2011–17

Building on a number of systematic and comparative country or sector-specific evidence reviews,[75] SLRC I, headed by Rachel Slater as research director and Paul

Harvey as chief executive officer, set out to test key assumptions of causality or theories of change in international development programmes in FCAS, such as how people respond to policies and services in terms of their engagement with others and society. An example of one such theory of change is that people's satisfaction with a received service translates into better state-society relations. This legitimizes and builds the state, which stabilizes conflict-prone contexts and makes future conflict less likely. Thus, service delivery is viewed as a tool for conflict prevention. Researchers further answered research questions on statebuilding, state legitimacy, social protection and livelihoods; queried how international actors sought to support state capacity; and analysed livelihood trajectories to understand what might make for better livelihood support programmes.

It turned out that it was a good idea to test these assumptions: research in this phase could not empirically establish the crucial link between access to or satisfaction with services and increased legitimacy of the government or even improved perceptions; thus, we could not offer empirical evidence to support this particular theory of change. Researchers also learned that livelihood trajectories after a violent conflict are not automatically pointing upwards. Rather, despite overall more reliable access to food, the majority of individual households continued to face very volatile food security. Even when the overall situation seemed to objectively improve – measured, for example, by the fact that fewer violent attacks happened, roads were built, services became accessible – people rarely felt that their situation was coming along or that they were recovering.

Phase II: 2017–21

SLRC II picked up the challenges that the findings of SLRC I posed: what it would take for people to actually experience their lives as getting better emerged as one of the big programmatic questions.[76] Why did livelihoods continue to be so volatile? What exactly made the relationship between service delivery and state legitimacy so unpredictable? And did experiencing violence change how people behaved in their lives even years later? Did violence influence the points made previously more than we assumed?

SLRC I had also highlighted just how much development actors need detailed, granular analysis. They need such analysis to unpack, with great rigour, how an issue plays out in a particular situation. To capture these various needs, SLRC II focused on understanding the reasons for the volatility of livelihoods, how insights on human behaviour might help explain the legacy of violence on people's experience of recovery, and under what circumstances legitimacy could be shaped by service delivery, with Mareike Schomerus as research director. A number of focused post-doctoral/doctoral research projects unpacked power, poverty and politics in the DRC.

To focus on the big picture and the emerging themes that guide this book requires leaving certain things out: detailed, context-specific history and theory, or in-depth engagement with the huge bodies of scholarship that exist on the issues discussed. Such work has happened in the individual SLRC publications. Each empirical SLRC publication is a stand-alone piece of research; and all of the publications are available online at www.securelivelihoods.org.

Over the ten years of the SLRC, during the two phases just described, SLRC researchers embedded their work in or developed new theories, historicized,

developed new framings and, in some cases, utilized new language. Reading this book is no substitute for reading the myriad and focused research SLRC offers on specific contexts and issues. Reading any book is no substitute for learning from people and with people for whom written text is not the main means of communicating their thinking.

Research methods and data sets

The SLRC fulfilled a recommendation for research into protracted crises, which was to invest in long-term (ten to twenty years) data collection in order to analyse changes over time.[77] The SLRC used a number of research methods, including structured surveys, open-ended interviews, behavioural experiments and action research. Analytical frameworks from different academic disciplines included the livelihoods approach or political settlements analysis.

The quantitative core of SLRC's work was a structured longitudinal individual panel survey: over a succession of survey waves, the very same individuals were interviewed. We interviewed in total more than 10,000 individuals. We did this at two points in time (2012 and 2015) in the DRC and in Sri Lanka, and at three points (in most cases 2012, 2015, 2018) in Nepal, Pakistan and Uganda. Interviewing the same respondents twice or even thrice has created a rigorous, longitudinal data set that tracks changes in people's livelihoods, their access to and satisfaction with basic services (health, water, education) and their perceptions of and relationships with authority over time. Crucially, it allows for identification of the links between these elements. In the final survey round in Nepal and Uganda, we added questions on how people's identity intersected with their everyday experiences. The survey data was analysed using a comparable analysis across variables on specific services, even if this came at a cost for the sample size. This data set (cleaned and anonymized) is available on the website of the UK Data Service for other researchers to use.[78]

SLRC's multi-method work beyond the structured survey covered a vast array of topics, amongst others malnutrition;[79] counting how many edicts are passed;[80] how people plan when to have babies;[81] what social norms shape access to water;[82] construction of rural roads;[83] resettlement of displaced people;[84] changing approaches to providing refugees with jobs;[85] resort tourism;[86] interplay between church/state traditions;[87] why a population census is just not happening;[88] the true meaning of payroll systems;[89] why unlawfully erected buildings tend to not go away;[90] how decentralization links to ethnic representation;[91] transactional sex;[92] and gender-responsive budgeting.[93]

SLRC ways of working

As a complex, long-running and international research consortium, SLRC aspired to work with a number of principles.[94] Some of these were articulated early on,

others evolved throughout the programme: the arguments had to be empirically and theoretically sound. The research had to have practical value for those deciding on development spending and programming in FCAS. In practice, this often prompted SLRC researchers to keep asking why things are the way they are. What are the underlying assumptions driving a decision? What information or political source sits at the heart of why things turn out the way they do?

The SLRC research of course has limitations; most individual publications highlight conceptual, data or analytical constraints. We faced difficulties, including how to collect robust data in contexts affected by conflict; how to find language that is simultaneously accessible, context-appropriate and nuanced; and how to articulate lessons that not only highlight what is wrong, but offer constructive suggestions of how things could be done better. We grappled with finding explanatory concepts that had not been shaped by orthodoxies that had been developed in contexts very different from those where the research was conducted, and had become received wisdom through long histories of power. These discussions were also possible because the empirical and theoretical work of the SLRC did not start with the consortium's inception: SLRC researchers came with experience, knowledge and sometimes long careers dedicated to the themes of the research – building on the insights of other scholars from different places and eras that made similar arguments.

Some of these arguments have been around for decades and have yet to make it into development mainstream thinking. The question of why that is the case also became part of interactions within the SLRC – and maybe one of its most important non-tangible products: we wrestled with systemic knowledge hierarchies (and the funding and managerial models that have enabled those and continue to underpin them) and with the reasons why certain frameworks become dominant or why some institutional perspectives or writing styles win out over others – and how these hierarchies continue to be translated into decontextualized development programming.[95] These debates need to move centre stage; SLRC can hopefully make a learning contribution in these processes.

The next step: A revision

Amid the plethora of profound disruptions and more gentle shifts, one-off events and long-term trends, the SLRC researchers set to work, defining their starting point through systematic evidence reviews and concept development. In some countries, changing circumstances on the ground made research easier; in others, meaningful research became impossible. Shocks disrupted the lives of the people whose experiences we were researching. At various points, the political space for change and development reform seemed to widen or contract. Even so, over time the patterns presented in this book began to crystallize. Ten years of research about what matters to people whose lives have been shaped by violence point towards a specific quality of post-conflict environment, which right now is not yet reflected as development practice's starting point and thus requires a revision.

In distilling and stylizing what ten years of research tell us about the changes that need to happen to improve lives amid violence, it is tempting to resort to clichés. Being an author of this book, which draws on the work of so many researchers, means balancing precariously on the shoulders of giants. Yet the image does not fit. These giants, the SLRC colleagues (ranging from those named as lead authors on a publication to those who dedicated their time to supporting others, improving systems and processes, or collecting data) are amongst the smartest and most committed people you could hope to meet. But the point here is that it is not necessary to be a giant in order to grapple with the nuances and complexities of how development can make people's lives amid violent conflict better.

There is, though, perhaps a crucial difference separating the SLRC researcher from the decision-maker in the wider aid architecture, in that the former – unconstrained by aid politics – is free to wrestle with difficult, challenging and often contradictory insights in their quest for learning.

If, ultimately, this book is able to convey this spirit of grappling, of being unafraid of big ideas and turning them into small changes, of genuine questioning and learning, of listening and respect, and of intellectual honesty including about one's own limitations, then that would be ten years of research very well invested indeed.

Notes

Chapter 1

1 (Yanguas, 2018).
2 (Sturge, Mallett, Hagen-Zanker, & Slater, 2017).
3 (D'Ariano, 2018).
4 (Rigterink & Schomerus, 2016).
5 (Gümüsay, 2020, p. 98).
6 (Chabris & Simons, 2010).
7 (Ingram & Papoulidis, 2018, 8 November).
8 (Glennie, 2021).
9 (Aid Re-Imagined, 2020, 11 December).
10 (Philipps, 2020).
11 (Green, 2015, 28 August).
12 (Smith, 1999, p. 25).
13 (Peace Direct, 2021, p. 33).
14 (Mohsin, 2020, 10 December).
15 (Kelton, 2020, p. 153).
16 (Errington-Barnes, 2021).
17 (Raworth, 2018, p. loc652; Sen, 1999).
18 (Perera, 2017, p. 4).
19 (Grant, 2021).
20 (Gümüsay, 2020, p. 23).
21 (Datta, Jagati, Vijaykumar, O'Donnell, & Basnyat, 2019 (December 18)).
22 (Goffman, 1974).
23 (Lakoff, 1990, p. 1).
24 (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).
25 (Thibodeau & Boroditsky, 2011).
26 (Hari, 2022, p. 20).
27 (Raworth, 2018, p. loc373).
28 (de Coning, 2010, p. 292).
29 (Liu & Hanauer, 2011, p. 8).
30 (Raworth, 2018, p. loc2388).
31 (Raworth, 2018, p. loc2385).
32 (Popova, not dated).
33 (World Bank Group, 2016).
34 (Nixon, Mallett, & McCullough, 2017).
35 (Maxwell, Mazurana, Wagner, & Slater, 2017).
36 SLRC partners over the years included Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA); Feinstein
    International Center (FIC, Tufts University); Focus1000; Afghanistan Research

and Evaluation Unit (AREU); Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI); Wageningen University (WUR); Nepal Centre for Contemporary Research (NCCR); Busara Center; Nepal Institute for Social and Environmental Research (NISER); Narrate; Social Scientists' Association of Sri Lanka (SSA); Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); Women and Rural Development Network (WORUDET); Claremont Graduate University (CGU); Institute of Development Policy and Management (IOB, University of Antwerp); International Institute of Social Studies (ISS, Erasumus University of Rotterdam).

37 Detailed information on the specific areas in each country can be found in the postface of this book.

38 (Gunasekara, 2020).

39 (World Bank, 2021j, p. XV).

40 (Valters, 2015b (26 June)).

41 Ingram and Papoulidis refer to this way of working as the 'old paradigm'. (Ingram & Papoulidis, 2018 (November 8).

42 (Moro, Santschi, Gordon, Dau, & Maxwell, 2017).

43 Philipps has refuted this notion in her study of Somaliland, where the shared experience of war and the consolidated narrative on how damaging war was created peace within a (non-sovereign) state that does not at all look Weberian (Philipps, 2013).

44 (Moro et al., 2017).

45 (Bressan, 2020).

46 (Beehner & Young, 2012).

47 (Grimm, Lemay-Hébert, & Nay, 2014).

48 (Nay, 2014).

49 (Bressan, 2020).

50 (Graff, 2020).

51 (Rocha Menocal, 2011, p. 1719).

52 (von Billerbeck & Gippert, 2017).

53 (Hagmann & Péclard, 2010).

54 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille, & Morris, 2017).

55 (Department for International Development, 2010).

56 (Moro et al., 2017).

57 (Escobar, 1995).

58 (Said, 1978, reprinted 2003).

59 (Escobar, 1995).

60 (Hickel, 2020; Kothari, Salleh, Escobar, Demaria, & Acosta, 2019).

61 (Rampton & Nadarajah, 2017).

62 (Richmond, 2011:1).

63 (Mac Ginty, 2014).

64 (Nilsson & Marín, 2019; Richmond & Mac Ginty, 2014).

65 (Leonardi, 2007; Santschi, 2016).

66 (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2017).

67 (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015).

68 (Bojicic-Dzelilovic & Martin, 2016).

69 (Miklian, Lidén, & Kolås, 2011).

70 (Hughes, Öjendal, & Schierenbeck, 2015; International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2017; SIDA, 2017).

71 (Douma, Hilhorst, & Matabaro, 2016).

72 (Criado Perez, 2019).
73 (True & River-Morales, 2018).
74 (Holmes, Slater, Acker, & Berezovskaja, 2014).
75 (Edmunds, Juncos, & Algar-Faria, 2018).
76 (Denney & Mallett, 2017; World Bank, 2011).
77 (Geda, 2011).
78 (Petersen & Pedersen-Engberg, 2013; UN, 2013).
79 (Edmunds et al., 2018).
80 (Tartir & Ejdus, 2017).
81 (Juncos & Blockmans, 2018).
82 (Mallett, Harvey, & Slater, 2014).
83 (Stites & Bushby, 2017).
84 (United Nations Development Programme, not dated).
85 (Stites & Bushby, 2017).
86 (Lenzen, 2016).
87 (Barder, 2012, 15 May; Denney, Mallett, & Jalloh, 2015).
88 (UK Government, 2013).
89 (Goddard, 2002 [1929]).
90 (Baum, 1900, p. 14).
91 (Baum, 1900, p. 64).
92 (Baum, 1900, p. 109).
93 (Campbell, 1973, first published in 1949; Vogler, 2020, 25th anniversary edition).
94 (Keen, 2012).
95 (Nayeri, 2019, p. 3081).
96 (Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI), 2015).
97 (Rist, 2006).
98 (Cooper, 1997).
99 (Valters & Whitty, 2017); I am grateful to Craig Valters for helping me clarify the framing of these points.
100 (Mitchell, 2021); for a critique of what the approach did, see (Valters & Whitty, 2017).
101 (Denney & Mallett, 2017).
102 (Valters, 2015a).
103 (Pain & Huot, 2017a).
104 (Pain & Huot, 2017a).
105 (Stites & Bushby, 2017).
106 (Denney, Mallett, & Jalloh, 2015; Minoia & Schrade, 2018).
107 (Easterly, 2003; Stewart, 1995).
108 (Walker, 2020, p. 35).
109 (Marriage, 2006).
110 (Elworthy, 2017, p. 137).
111 (Lang, 2012).
112 (Opitz-Stapleton et al., 2019, p. 9; Shitemi, 2012).
113 (Lemoigne, 2012).
114 (Opitz-Stapleton et al., 2019, p. 9).
115 (Garvey Berger & Johnston, 2015).
116 (Jackson & Minoia, 2016).
117 (Opitz-Stapleton et al., 2019, p. 9).
118 (Maxwell et al., 2017).

119 (Denney, Gordon, Kamara, & Lebby, 2016; Nixon & Mallett, 2017).
120 (McCullough et al., 2019; Mallett & Pain, 2017).
121 (Jackson, 2015; Nixon & Mallett, 2017).
122 (Gunasekara, Surenthiraraj, & Tilakaratne, 2019).
123 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017; Valters, 2015a).
124 I am grateful to Todd Foglesong, as ever, for this insight.
125 (Walker, 2020, p. 8).
126 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
127 (Gümüsay, 2020, p. 176).

Chapter 2

 1 (Martin-Kessler & Poiret, 2013).
 2 (United Nations General Assembly Security Council, 2015, 30 June).
 3 (Howden, 2013, 23 December).
 4 (Schomerus & de Vries, 2018).
 5 (Branch & Mampilly, 2005; Maxwell, Santschi, Moro, Gordon, & Dau, 2015; Schomerus & Allen, 2010; Schomerus & de Vries, 2018; Young, 2005, 2012).
 6 (Anten, Briscoe, & Mezzera, 2012).
 7 (Philipsen, 2015, p. 155).
 8 (de Vries & Glawion, 2021).
 9 (Verwimp, Justino, & Brück, 2019).
10 (Stabilisation Unit, 2014).
11 (Blum & Rogger, 2016).
12 (USAID, 2009).
13 (Stabilisation Unit, 2014).
14 (Sturge, Mallett et al., 2017).
15 (Caplan, Hoeffler, & Brinkman, 2015).
16 (Walter, 2014).
17 (Caplan et al., 2015).
18 (Hoeffler, 2019).
19 (Anten et al., 2012; Minoia & Pain, 2015).
20 (Goodhand & Walton, 2009; Nilsson & Marín, 2019).
21 (Lyall, 2020).
22 (Englebert & Tull, 2008).
23 (Maxwell et al., 2017).
24 (Davenport, Melander, & Regan, 2018).
25 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
26 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
27 (Pain & Huot, 2017b).
28 (Lall, 2017).
29 (De Vries & Schomerus, 2017; Gordon, 2014; Maxwell et al., 2015).
30 (Godamunne, 2019).
31 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019; Upreti et al., 2012).
32 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
33 (Veenhoven, Ehrhardt, Ho, & de Vries, 1993).
34 (Edwards & Yilmaz, 2016).

35 (Lindner, 2003).
36 (Pain, 2012).
37 (Weijs, Hilhorst, & Ferf, 2012).
38 (McCullough, Toru, Syed, & Ahmed, 2019).
39 (Jené & Englebert, 2019).
40 (Levine, 2016).
41 (Nguya, 2016).
42 (Maxwell et al., 2017).
43 (Saparamadu & Lall, 2014).
44 (Aoife McCullough et al., 2019).
45 (Minoia & Pain, 2017a).
46 (Minoia & Pain, 2017a).
47 (Minoia, Mumatz, & Pain, 2015).
48 (Ranawana & Senn, 2019).
49 (Philipps, 2013).
50 (Lenzen, 2016).
51 (Weijs et al., 2012).
52 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
53 (Gordon, 2014).
54 (Anter, 2014, p. 10) Niklas Luhman in 1996 dismissed the attempt to define what a state is as too complex (Luhmann, 1996, p. 463).
55 (Weber, 1922, p. 29) (translation by the author).
56 (Evans, Marquette, Patel, & Pedley, 2019, 12 February).
57 (Anter, 2014, p. 195).
58 (Lottholz & Lemay-Hébert, 2016).
59 (Boege, Brown, Clements, & Nolan, 2008).
60 (Clements, 2008).
61 (Ekström, 1992).
62 (Ekström, 1992).
63 (Ringer, 2002).
64 (Turner & Factor, 1981).
65 (Lottholz & Lemay-Hébert, 2016).
66 (Lottholz & Lemay-Hébert, 2016).
67 (Philipps, 2020).
68 (Giddens, 1972).
69 (Bates, Greif, & Singh, 2002).
70 (Denney & Mallett, 2017).
71 (Grävingholt, Leininger, & von Haldenwang, 2012, p. 8).
72 (Marquette & Beswick, 2011; Moro et al., 2017).
73 (OECD, 2008).
74 (Denney & Mallett, 2017).
75 See for instance (Ghani & Lockhart, 2009; Levy & Kpundeh, 2004).
76 (Whaites, 2008, p. 5).
77 (Lepore, 2019, loc165).
78 (Jackson, 2016).
79 See for example for the case of Uganda (Wiegratz, Martiniello, & Greco, 2018).
80 (Hagmann & Péclard, 2010).
81 (Gordon, 2014).
82 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).

83 (OECD, 2010a, 2010b).
84 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
85 (Lacher, 2012; Malejacq, 2020).
86 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
87 (Maxwell, Gordon, Moro, Santschi, & Dau, 2016a).
88 (Minoia & Schrade, 2018; Schomerus & De Vries, 2014).
89 (Isser, 2013).
90 (Denney & Mallett, 2017).
91 (Venner, 2015).
92 (Huang & Harris, 2006).
93 (Denney & Mallett, 2017).
94 (Jackson, 2016).
95 (Donais, 2012).
96 (Edmunds et al., 2018; Juncos & Blockmans, 2018).
97 (Huang & Harris, 2006).
98 (Ajakaiye & Ali, 2009; Lucas, 2014; Mlambo, Kamara, & Nyenda, 2009; Petersen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2013; UN, 2013).
99 (IMF and World Bank, 2001).
100 (Lucas, 2014).
101 (Petersen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2013).
102 (Baser, 2011).
103 (Denney & Mallett, 2017).
104 (Denney, Mallett, & Jalloh, 2015).
105 (Huang & Harris, 2006; Ribeiro, 2005).
106 (Moro et al., 2017).
107 (Haque, 2018).
108 (Edmunds et al., 2018; Mac Ginty, 2008)
109 (Denney, Mallett, & Jalloh, 2015; Morgan, 2006).
110 The literatures on hybrid political orders, institutional multiplicity and twilight institutions are testament to this (Boege et al., 2008; di John, 2008; Lund, 2006).
111 (Denney, Mallett, & Jalloh, 2015).
112 (Mallett & Denney, 2015).
113 (Denney, Mallett, & Jalloh, 2015).
114 (Jackson, 2015).
115 (Denney & Mallett, 2017).
116 (Eriksen, 2017).
117 (Denney & Mallett, 2017; Jackson, 2015; Jackson & Minoia, 2016; Pain, 2016).
118 (Denney & Mallett, 2017).
119 (Denney, Jalloh, Mallett, & Tucker, 2014).
120 (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2013).
121 (Maxwell et al., 2016a).
122 (Timilsina, 2007).
123 (Craze, 2020).
124 A fraction of a then divided SPLA (SPLA-Nasir) carried out a massacre of an estimated 2,000 civilians in the town of Bor in South Sudan in 1991.
125 In 2013, SPLA soldiers loyal to the president marched through Juba, conducting house-to-house searches and killing male Nuer on the spot.
126 Author interview, Juba, 22 May 2019.
127 (Saparamadu & Lall, 2014).

128 (African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan, 2014, p. 107).
129 (African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan, 2014, p. 105).
130 (Geda, 2011).
131 (Jackson & Minoia, 2016).
132 (Jackson, 2016).
133 (Eriksen, 2017).
134 (Lepore, 2019, loc125).
135 CIC/ DAC (2008, p.13).
136 (Migdal, 2012).
137 (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019).
138 (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012).
139 (Olson, 1993).
140 (Musa & Horst, 2019).
141 (Miliband, 1969).
142 (De Soto, 2000).
143 (Wakenge, 2018).
144 (Jackson, 2015).
145 (Jackson & Minoia, 2016).
146 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
147 Applying biases from behavioural economics to broader political processes is not that unusual: D'Anieri does it to explain international relations in reference to Ukraine and Russia, for example (D'Anieri, 2017).
148 (Calderón & Englebert, 2019).
149 (Hagmann & Péclard, 2010).
150 (Englebert & Tull, 2008).
151 (Moore, 1978).
152 (Hickel, 2020, loc3426).
153 (Eriksen, 2017).
154 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
155 (Denney & Mallett, 2017).
156 The report referenced here states: 'The overall assessment results suggests that the Republic of South Sudan (RSS) has made sufficient progress on all five peace and statebuilding goals (PSG) since the CPA interim period and independence in July 2011 to move beyond the crisis stage of the fragility spectrum' (Government of the Republic of South Sudan, 2012, p. 1).
157 Author interview, Juba, 22 May 2019.
158 (Jackson & Minoia, 2016).
159 (World Bank Group, 2017).
160 (Jené & Englebert, 2019).

Chapter 3

1 (OECD, 2020, p. 18).
2 I am indebted to Stephen Gelb for his help with framing this chapter.
3 (Gunasekara, 2020).
4 (Berdal & Malone, 2000; Collier & Hoeffler, 2004; Keen, 2012).
5 (Chimni, 2010).
6 (Girvan, 2007, p. 2).

 7 (Fagen, 2011).
 8 (Justino & Stojetz, 2018).
 9 (Suleri, Shahbaz, & Ali Shah, 2016).
10 (Arias, Ibáñez, & Zambrano, 2019).
11 (Upreti et al., 2012).
12 (Hickel, 2020, loc1806).
13 (Gunasinghe, 1984).
14 (Godamunne, 2019).
15 (Criado Perez, 2019, p. 12).
16 (Criado Perez, 2019, p. 12).
17 (Corlet Walker, Mair, & Druckman, 2018).
18 (Jerven, 2013; Jerven & Johnston, 2015; Mallett & Slater, 2012a; Marivoet, De Herdt, & Ulimwengu, 2018; Porteous, not dated).
19 (Corlet Walker et al., 2018).
20 (Minoia & Pain, 2017a).
21 (Mallett & Atim, 2014; Pain & Mallett, 2014).
22 (World Bank, 2020).
23 (Marivoet, De Herdt, & Ulimwengu, 2019).
24 (Minoia & Pain, 2017a).
25 (Mallett & Pain, 2017).
26 (Wiegratz et al., 2018).
27 (Mallett & Pain, 2017).
28 (Schomerus & de Vries, 2018).
29 (Stites, Atim, & Tracy, 2018).
30 (Philipsen, 2015, p. 238).
31 (Raworth, 2018, loc567).
32 (Piketty, 2013).
33 (Hickel, 2020, loc875).
34 (Illouz, 2007).
35 (Lepore, 2019, loc680).
36 (Philipsen, 2015, pp. 49-50).
37 (Schomerus, 2021).
38 (Paffenholz, 2021).
39 (Philipps, 2013).
40 (Schomerus, 2021).
41 (Cramer, Sender, & Oqubay, 2020).
42 (Ferguson, 2009, p. 170).
43 (Minoia & Pain, 2017b).
44 (Pain & Huot, 2017a).
45 (Denney, Jalloh et al., 2014).
46 (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010).
47 (Piketty, 2013).
48 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
49 (Desai, Acs, & Weitzel, 2015).
50 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
51 (Goodhand, 2005; Minoia & Pain, 2016).
52 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
53 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
54 (Henrich, 2020).

55 (Desai et al., 2015).
56 (Ferf, Hilhorst, & Mashanda, 2014).
57 (Suleri et al., 2016).
58 (Thomas, 2015, 2019).
59 (Hickel, 2020).
60 (European Report on Development, 2009, p. 90).
61 (OECD, 2010b).
62 (Boex & Yilmaz, 2010).
63 (Slater, Mallett, & Carpenter, 2012).
64 (Van de Walle & Scott, 2009, p. 9).
65 (World Bank Group, 2003).
66 (OECD, 2010a, p. 7).
67 (Godamunne, 2015).
68 (Brinkerhoff, Wetterberg, & Dunn, 2012).
69 (Karim, 2020).
70 (Godamunne, 2017; Whaites, 2008).
71 (Gilley, 2009; Nixon et al., 2017).
72 (Gilley, 2009).
73 (McLoughlin, 2018).
74 (Nixon et al., 2017; World Bank Group, 2017).
75 (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012).
76 (Heimans & Timms, 2018, p. 2).
77 (Heimans & Timms, 2018, p. 2).
78 (Nixon & Mallett, 2017).
79 (Nixon & Mallett, 2017).
80 (Nixon et al., 2017).
81 (Jackson & Nemat, 2018; Nixon & Mallett, 2017).
82 (Acharya, Upreti, Paudel, Tandukar, & Harris, 2016).
83 (Ferf, Thieme Groen, Mashanda, & Milabyo, 2016).
84 (Securely Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2021d).
85 (Nixon et al., 2017).
86 (European Report on Development, 2009; OECD, 2010a).
87 (Hirschman, 1970).
88 (Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner, 2006).
89 (Dewey & Bentley, 1949).
90 (Mulligan, 2006).
91 (Barth, 1959).
92 (Cramer, 2002).
93 (Henrich, 2020, loc977).
94 (Henrich, 2020, loc901).
95 (Raworth, 2018, loc1540).
96 (Henrich, 2020, loc948).
97 (Polanyi, 1944).
98 (Minoia & Schrade, 2018).
99 (Granovetter, 1985; Gunasekara, 2020).
100 (Siméant, 2011).
101 (Meagher, 2010).
102 (Minoia, Mumatz, & Pain, 2014).
103 (Graeber & Wengrow, 2021, p. 23).

104 (Jan & Harriss-White, 2012; Minoia & Pain, 2017b).
105 (Mallett & Pain, 2015).
106 (Nguya, 2016).
107 (OECD, 2020, p. 18).
108 (Criado Perez, 2019).
109 (Lyall, 2020).
110 (Siméant, 2011).
111 (Scott, 1976).
112 (Nixon et al., 2017), see (McLoughlin, 2015a, p. 4).
113 (Fassin, 2009).
114 (Jackson & Minoia, 2016).
115 (Shaw & Ghafoori, 2019).
116 (Minoia & Pain, 2015).
117 (Minoia et al., 2014).
118 (Minoia & Pain, 2017a).
119 (Pain & Huot, 2017b).
120 (Pain & Mallett, 2014).
121 (De Vries, 2012).
122 (Mallett & Atim, 2014).
123 (Mallett & Atim, 2014).
124 (Pain & Mallett, 2014).
125 (Minoia et al., 2014).
126 (Minoia & Pain, 2017b).
127 (Minoia & Pain, 2017b).
128 (Hagen-Zanker et al., 2014).
129 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
130 (Amanela et al., 2020a).
131 (Minoia & Schrade, 2018).
132 (Craven-Matthews & Englebert, 2018).
133 (Yanguas, 2018).
134 (Pain, Jackson, Huot, & Minoia, 2017).
135 (Mazzucato, 2021).
136 (OECD, 2020, p. 7).
137 (OECD, 2020, p. 7).
138 (OECD, 2020, p. 10).
139 (OECD, 2020, p. 12).
140 (OECD, 2020, p. 18).
141 (OECD, 2020, p. 16).

Chapter 4

1 (Maxwell et al., 2017; Sturge, Mallett et al., 2017).
2 (Sturge, Mallett et al., 2017).
3 (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2017b).
4 (Huot & Pain, 2017).
5 (Pain & Huot, 2017b; Pain, Huot, & Ghafoori, 2016a).
6 (Gunasekara, 2020).

 7 (Maxwell et al., 2017).
 8 (Thing, 1983).
 9 (Maxwell, Gordon, Moro, Santschi, & Dau, 2016b).
10 (Levine, 2016).
11 (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2017a).
12 (Ferf et al., 2014).
13 (Gelsdorf, Maxwell, & Mazurana, 2012; Maxwell et al., 2016b).
14 (Shahbaz et al., 2017).
15 (Marshak, Mazurana, Opio, Gordon, & Atim, 2017; Mazurana & Atim, 2014a, 2014b).
16 (Gelsdorf et al., 2012; Maxwell, Gelsdorf, & Santschi, 2012).
17 (Black et al., 2019).
18 (Kitara et al., 2012).
19 (Ferf et al., 2016b; Shahbaz et al., 2017; Sturge, Mallett et al., 2017).
20 (Sturge, Hagen-Zanker et al., 2017).
21 (Pain, Huot, & Ghafoori, 2016b) Pain et al. cite Boyce and Hartmann's (1983) account of life in Bangladesh and their description of 'quiet violence', also called 'a silent violence' in Watt's analysis (2013) of the West African Sahel food crisis of the 1970s' (p. 38).
22 (Nguya, 2019b).
23 (Shahbaz et al., 2017).
24 (Levine, 2016).
25 (Arias et al., 2019).
26 (Gelsdorf et al., 2012).
27 (Pain et al., 2016b).
28 (Shaw & Ghafoori, 2019).
29 (Jackson, 2014).
30 (Jené & Englebert, 2019).
31 (Levine, 2016; Shahbaz et al., 2017).
32 (Pain et al., 2016b).
33 (Piketty, 2013).
34 (Mazurana, Marshak, & Atim, 2019; Mazurana et al., 2016).
35 (Huot & Pain, 2017).
36 (Maxwell, Santschi, Gordon, Dau, & Moro, 2014).
37 (Maxwell et al., 2017; Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2017a).
38 (Upreti, Uprety, Hagen-Zanker, KC, & Mallett, 2014).
39 (Sanguhan & Gunasekara, 2017).
40 (Maxwell et al., 2012; Pain et al., 2016b).
41 (Levine, 2016).
42 (Pain et al., 2016b).
43 (Mallett, Atim, & Opio, 2016).
44 (Lang, 2012).
45 (Macamo, 2012, p. 267).
46 (Mallett, Opio, & Atim, 2016).
47 (Bloemertz, Doevenspeck, Macamo, & Muller-Mahn, 2012, p. 1).
48 (Barrat, 2012).
49 (Sutherland, Scott, Brooks, & Guy, 2012).
50 (Opitz-Stapleton et al., 2019, p. 9).
51 (Denney, Mallett, & Jalloh, 2014).
52 (Gibson & Simpson, 2009).

53 (Bassat et al., 2011).
54 (Minoia & Pain, 2017a).
55 (Justino & Stojetz, 2018).
56 (Levine, 2014).
57 (Goodhand, 2005).
58 (Minoia et al., 2014).
59 (Minoia et al., 2015).
60 (UNDP, 2008).
61 (Suleri et al., 2016).
62 (Maxwell et al., 2017).
63 (Ferf et al., 2016a).
64 (Nguya, 2019b).
65 (Levine, 2016).
66 (Maxwell et al., 2017).
67 (Suleri et al., 2016).
68 (Marino, 2005).
69 (Yogendrarajah & Semasinghe, 2013).
70 (Mayadunne, Mallett, & Hagen-Zanker, 2014).
71 (Malual & Mazur, 2017).
72 (Mayadunne et al., 2014).
73 (Yogendrarajah & Semasinghe, 2013).
74 (Chowdhury, 2009).
75 (Stites & Bushby, 2017).
76 (Shahbaz et al., 2017).
77 (Ranawana & Senn, 2019).
78 (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2019).
79 (Javed, Ali, & Baig, 2019).
80 (Minoia & Pain, 2017a).
81 (Bashwira & Hintjens, 2019).
82 (Bashwira & Hintjens, 2019; Javed et al., 2019; Shaw & Ghafoori, 2019).
83 (Javed et al., 2019).
84 (Pain et al., 2016b).
85 (Suleri et al., 2016).
86 (Ranawana & Senn, 2019).
87 (Gunasekara, Philips, & Nagraj, 2016).
88 (Shaw & Ghafoori, 2019).
89 (Ranawana & Senn, 2019).
90 (Javed et al., 2019).
91 (Sanguhan & Gunasekara, 2017).
92 (Javed et al., 2019).
93 (Standing, 2011).
94 (Desai et al., 2015).
95 (Yunus, 1999).
96 (Ranawana & Senn, 2019).
97 (Brück, Naudé, & Verwimp, 2013; International Peace Institute, 2017).
98 (Nenova, 2004).
99 (Tobias & Boudreaux, 2011).
100 (Sserwanga, Kicono, Nystrand, & Mindra, 2014).
101 (Brück et al., 2013).

102 (Lepore, 2014, 23 June).
103 (d'Errico, Kozlowska, & Maxwell, 2014).
104 (Santschi, Moro, Dau, Gordon, & Maxwell, 2014).
105 (Minoia et al., 2015).
106 (Lokuge, Senn, & Ranawana, 2019).
107 (Ferf, Thieme Groen, Mashanda, Milabyo, & Sturge, 2016b).
108 (Lokuge et al., 2019).
109 (Gunasekara et al., 2016; Ranawana & Senn, 2019).
110 (Mallett & Atim, 2014).
111 (Mallett, Opio et al., 2016).
112 (Minoia et al., 2014; Minoia & Schrade, 2018).
113 (OECD, 2020, p. 10).
114 (Ferf et al., 2016b).
115 (Upreti et al., 2014).
116 (Minoia & Pain, 2017a; Pain & Huot, 2017b).
117 (Pain & Huot, 2017a).
118 (Pain, 2012).
119 (Jackson, 2014; Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2017a).
120 (Mallett, Atim et al., 2016).
121 (Bashwira, 2019).
122 (Mallett, Atim, & Opio, 2017).
123 (Mallett & Atim, 2014).
124 (Sturge, Mallett et al., 2017).
125 (Gunasekara et al., 2016).
126 (Ghimire, Hagen-Zanker, & Bhujel, 2019).
127 (Centre for Poverty Analysis, 2018b).
128 (Ritchie, 2017).
129 (Mwapu, Hilhorst, Mashanda, Bahananga, & Mugenzi, 2016).
130 (Minoia & Pain, 2017a).
131 (Minoia & Pain, 2016).
132 (Mallett, Atim et al., 2016).
133 (Minoia et al., 2014).
134 (Holmes et al., 2014).
135 (Kelton, 2020, p. 65).
136 (Gelb, Kalantaryan, Mcmahon, & Perez Fernandez, 2021).
137 (Hagen-Zanker & Mallett, 2014).
138 (Perrinet, Grossenbacher, & Goetschel, 2018).
139 (Hayes, Lundy, & Hallward, 2016; O'Malley, 2018).
140 (Stites et al., 2018).
141 (Pain & Huot, 2017b).
142 (Suleri et al., 2016).
143 (Hagen-Zanker et al., 2014).
144 (Mallett & Pain, 2015).
145 (Dan Maxwell et al., 2017).
146 (Mayadunne et al., 2014).
147 (Mallett & Pain, 2015).
148 (Hagen-Zanker et al., 2014).
149 (Mallett, Atim et al., 2017).
150 (Pain et al., 2017).

151 (Mallett & Atim, 2014; Mallett, Atim et al., 2016).
152 (Gelsdorf et al., 2012).
153 (Carling, 2002).
154 (Hagen-Zanker et al., 2014).
155 (Carling, 2002).
156 (Ghimire et al., 2019).
157 (Hagen-Zanker et al., 2014).
158 (ICRC, 2016).
159 (Stites et al., 2018).
160 (Javed et al., 2019).
161 (Gunasekara et al., 2016).
162 (Pain et al., 2016a).
163 (Bashwira & Hintjens, 2019).
164 (Javed et al., 2019).
165 (Stites et al., 2018).
166 (Maxwell et al., 2012).
167 (Javed et al., 2019).
168 (Mitchell & Coles, 2011; Stites & Bushby, 2017; The SEEP Network, 2017).
169 (Maxwell, 2019).
170 (Hickel, 2020, loc1272).
171 (Hickel, 2014).
172 (Denney & Gordon, 2016; Denney, Gordon, & Ibrahim, 2015; Denney et al., 2016).
173 (Barakat & Milton, 2020).
174 (Levine, 2016).
175 (Brandon, 2018).
176 (Kugler, Kang, Kugler, Arbetman-Rabinowitz, & Thomas, 2013).
177 (Stern 2003).
178 (Brandon, 2018).
179 (del Castillo, 2015).
180 (Barbara, 2008).
181 (Mallett, Opio et al., 2016).
182 (Pain & Sturge, 2015, p. 15).
183 (David, Bastos, & Mills, 2011; GSRC (2015).
184 (Kang & Meernik, 2005; Nkurunziza, 2018).
185 (Maxwell et al., 2016b).
186 (Jackson, 2014).
187 (Jackson, 2015).
188 (Nkuku & Titeca, 2018).
189 (Minoia & Pain, 2017a).
190 (Justino, 2009).
191 (Maxwell et al., 2017).
192 (Ferf et al., 2014).
193 (Mallett & Pain, 2015; Maxwell et al., 2016b).
194 (Calderón & Englebert, 2019).
195 (Minoia & Pain, 2017a).
196 (Haque, 2018).
197 (Sturge, Mallett et al., 2017).
198 (Mallett Opio et al., 2016).
199 (Penrose & Penrose, 1958, p. 31).

200 (Svarverud, Gilson, & Glennerster, 2012).
201 (Raworth, 2018, loc795).
202 (Svarverud et al., 2012).

Chapter 5

1 This concept was first introduced in (Amanela et al., 2020a).
2 (Amanela et al., 2020b).
3 (Ferf et al., 2016; Mallett & Slater, 2017; Marshak et al., 2017; Sanguhan & Gunasekara, 2017; Shahbaz et al., 2017; Sturge, Hagen-Zanker et al., 2017; Sturge, Mallett et al., 2017)..
4 (Black et al., 2019; Kitara et al., 2012).
5 (Atim, Mazurana, & Marshak, 2019).
6 (Kabwama et al., 2016; Otim, Juma, & Otunnu, 2019).
7 (Alava, 2019; Alava & Ssentongo, 2016).
8 (Amanela et al., 2020d; Atim et al., 2019).
9 (Cynefin Co, not dated).
10 (Yunkaporta, 2019, p. 71).
11 (Smith, 1999, p. 31).
12 (Hochschild, 2016).
13 (McGilchrist, 2009, p. 3).
14 (Illouz, 2007, p. 2).
15 (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2021d; Sturge, Hagen-Zanker et al., 2017) The dataset that SLRC compiled from three rounds of structured surveys can be accessed for future analysis here: https://beta.ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue/studies/study?id=8230&type=Data%20catalogue.
16 (Mazurana & Atim, 2014a).
17 (Ranawana & Senn, 2019).
18 (Kahan, 2017).
19 (Amanela et al., 2020d).
20 (Ferf et al., 2014).
21 (Maxwell et al., 2017).
22 (Ibáñez, 2016).
23 (Maxwell et al., 2016b).
24 (Weber, 1978).
25 (Jensen & Shaw, 1993).
26 (de Jong, 2002).
27 (Cardozo et al., 2004).
28 (Somasundaram & Jamunanatha, 2002).
29 (Hassan, Ventevogel, Jefee-Bahloul, Barkil-Oteo, & Kirmayer, 2016).
30 On how being a child of a person who was a child in Nazi Germany impacts upbringing and personality, see (Bode, 2009).
31 (Douma et al., 2016).
32 (Rathi, 2018).
33 (Summerfield, 1998, 1999, 2001).
34 (Cherewick et al., 2015).
35 (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

36 (Cherewick et al., 2015).
37 (Hickel, 2020, loc1114).
38 (Yunkaporta, 2019, p. 75).
39 (OECD not dated.).
40 (Henrich et al., 2010; Wilson, 2011).
41 (Henrich et al., 2010).
42 (Wilson, 2011).
43 (Verwimp et al., 2019).
44 (Bauer et al., 2016).
45 (Cecchi, Leuveld, & Voors, 2016).
46 (Bellows & Miguel, 2009).
47 (Bellows & Miguel, 2009).
48 (Bauer et al., 2016).
49 (Amanela et al., 2020c).
50 (Amanela et al., 2020d).
51 (Williams & Efendic, 2019).
52 (Donini, 2011).
53 (Nilsson & Marín, 2019).
54 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
55 (McGilchrist, 2009, p. 11).
56 (Chalmers, 2022).
57 (Nixon et al., 2017).
58 (Sturge, Mallett et al., 2017).
59 (Bonanno, Galea, Bucciarelli, & Vlahov, 2007; Friedman, 2012).
69 (Jayasekara & Najab, 2016).
61 (Donini, 2011).
62 (Khan, 2018).
63 (Namakula & Witter, 2014).
64 (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005).
65 (Hochschild, 2016).
66 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017; Schomerus, 2021).
67 (Lewis, 2020).
68 (Mallett, Atim et al., 2016).
69 (Gunasekara et al., 2016).
70 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
71 (Alava, 2019; Alava & Ssentongo, 2016).
72 (Suleri et al., 2016).
73 (Philipps, 2013).
74 (OECD, 2020, p. 18).
75 (Loewenstein, Weber, Hsee, & Welch, 2001).
76 (Kahan, Braman, Gastil, & Slovic, 2007).
77 (Ferguson, 2009, p. 177).
78 (Loewenstein et al., 2001, p. 5).
79 (Loewenstein et al., 2001, p. 4) citing (e.g. Wilson et al., 1993; Wilson & Schooler, 1991).
80 (Atim et al., 2019).
81 (Denney & Gordon, 2016).
82 (Reinikka & Svensson, 2011).
83 (Denney et al., 2016).

84 (Denney & Gordon, 2016).
85 (Hickel, 2020 loc2589).
86 (Denney & Mallett, 2017).
87 (Jackson & Minoia, 2016).
88 (Amanela et al., 2020d).
89 (Mazurana & Atim, 2014a).
90 (Sturge, Hagen-Zanker et al., 2017).
91 (Jackson & Minoia, 2016).
92 (Peters & Slovic, 1996).
93 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
94 (Voss & Raz, 2016, p. 124).
95 (Nixon et al., 2017).
96 (Maxwell et al., 2016a).
97 (Paudel, Upreti, Acharya, Tandukar, & Harvey, 2015a).
98 (Jackson & Nemat, 2018).
99 (KC et al., 2014b).
100 (Amanela et al., 2020c).
101 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
102 (Nixon et al., 2017).
103 (Acharya, Upreti, Paudel, Tandukar, & Harvey, 2015).
104 (Nixon et al., 2017).
105 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
106 (Maxwell et al., 2014).
107 (Wein, 2021, p. 15).
108 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
109 (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2017a).
110 (Jackson & Minoia, 2016).
111 (Jackson, 2015).
112 (Acharya et al., 2016).
113 (Acharya et al., 2016).
114 (World Bank, 2013).
115 (World Bank, 2011, p. 128; Nixon et al., 2017).
116 (Ferf, Thieme Groen, Mashanda, Milabyo et al., 2016a).
117 (Sturge, Mallett et al., 2017).
118 (Suleiman Amanela et al., 2020d).
119 (Jackson & Minoia, 2016).
120 (Levine, 2016).
121 (Marshak et al., 2017).
122 (Atim et al., 2019).
123 (Upreti et al., 2014).
124 (Marshak et al., 2017).
125 (Mayadunne et al., 2014).
126 (Shahbaz et al., 2017).
127 (Marshak et al., 2017).
128 (Mallett & Atim, 2014).
129 (Denney & Mallett, 2017; Valters & Whitty, 2017).
130 (Paudel et al., 2015a).
131 (Minoia & Pain, 2017b).
132 (Dercon, 2004).

133 (Haushofer & Fehr, 2014).
134 (KC et al., 2014a).
135 (World Bank, 2015).
136 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).

Chapter 6

  1 (Agronin, 2020, 19 April).
  2 (Fernando & Moonesinghe, 2012).
  3 (Grant, 2021).
  4 (Englebert, Calderón, & Jené, 2018, p. 10; Laitin & Posner, 2001).
  5 (Datta et al., 2019, 18 December).
  6 (West & Michie, 2019).
  7 (Hintjens, 2008; Steflja, 2010).
  8 (Leturcq, 2009).
  9 (Santschi et al., 2014).
 10 (Denney, Mallett et al., 2014).
 11 (Sanguhan & Gunasekara, 2017).
 12 (Aitken, R., 2008).
 13 (Calderón & Englebert, 2019; Easterly & Levine, 1997; Habyarimana, Humphreys, Posner, & Weinstein, 2007).
 14 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
 15 (Steflja, 2010).
 16 (British Council, 2019).
 17 (Moro et al., 2017).
 18 (Aitken, N., 2008).
 19 (Calderón & Englebert, 2019).
 20 (Mamdani, 2020).
 21 (Gordon, 2014).
 22 (Levine, 2016).
 23 (Gunasekara et al., 2019; McCullough & Papoulidis, 2020, 28 January).
 24 (Nguya, 2019a).
 25 (Smith, 1999, p. 39).
 26 (Hall, 1992, p. 215).
 27 (Bacchi, 1996; Roggeband & van der Haar, 2017).
 28 (Lakoff, 1987, p. xii).
 29 (Gümüsay, 2020, p. 168).
 30 (Goh, forthcoming).
 31 (Gümüsay, 2020, pp. 54–5).
 32 (Khan, 2015, 13 May).
 33 (Sturge, Hagen-Zanker et al., 2017).
 34 (Gruda & Hilhorst, 2019).
 35 (Nguya, 2019a).
 36 (Levine, 2014).
 37 (Mallett, 2015; Pain, 2016; Pain & Sturge, 2015).
 38 (Wiley, 2019, p. 77).
 39 (Nguya, 2019a).

40 (Hagen-Zanker & Mallett, 2014; Hagen-Zanker et al., 2014).
41 (Centre for Poverty Analysis, 2018a).
42 (Hogg, 2009).
43 (Levine, 2016).
44 (Rima, 2010).
45 (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2017).
46 (Lall, 2017).
47 (Nguya, 2019b).
48 (Gümüsay, 2020, p. 63).
49 (Nguya, 2019b).
50 (Nixon et al., 2017).
51 (Jayasekara & Najab, 2016).
52 (McCullough et al., 2019).
53 (Tandukar, Upreti, Paudel, Acharya, & Harris, 2016).
54 (Hickel, 2015).
55 (Katz, Ogilvie, Shaw, & Woodhead, 2021, p. 192).
56 (Gunasekara et al., 2016).
57 (Maslow, 1943).
58 (Eisenberger & Lieberman, 2009; Rock, 2009).
59 Khwaja makes the convincing point that community participation only leads to
   better outcomes when the issue is one about which the community can be reasonably
   be expected to provide relevant contextual knowledge (Khwaja, 2004).
60 (Nguya, 2019a).
61 (Newson, 2017).
62 (Pain et al., 2016b).
63 (Milabyo, Kyamusugulwa, Hilhorst, & Bergh, 2019a).
64 (Denney et al., 2016).
65 (Buell, 2021).
66 (Ferf, Thieme, Groen, Mashanda, Milabyo et al., 2016b).
67 (Sanguhan & Gunasekara, 2017).
68 (Acharya et al., 2016).
69 (Atim et al., 2019).
70 (Stites et al., 2018).
71 (Ferf et al., 2014).
72 (Sanguhan & Gunasekara, 2017).
73 (Lall, 2017).
74 (Handrahan, 2004).
75 (Hilhorst & Douma, 2018).
76 (Hilhorst, Porter, & Gordon, 2018).
77 (SIDA, 2017).
78 (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015).
79 (Minoia & Schrade, 2018).
80 (Nilsson & Marín, 2019).
81 (Nkuku & Titeca, 2018).
82 (Lall, 2016).
83 (Mayadunne et al., 2014).
84 (Pain & Mallett, 2014).
85 (Marshak et al., 2017).
86 (Lall, 2016).

87 (Stites et al., 2018).
88 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
89 (KC et al., 2014b).
90 (Gunasekara et al., 2019).
91 (Suleri, Shahbaz, Commins, & Mosel, 2017).
92 (Miklian et al., 2011).
93 (Lall, 2016).
94 (Lall, 2017).
95 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
96 (Lall, 2017).
97 (McCullough et al., 2019).
98 (Godamunne, 2017).
99 (Paudel et al., 2015a).
100 (De Alwis, 2020; Green, 2008; Green, 2011; Schomerus & Aalen, 2016).
101 (Iwerks & Toroskainen, 2017 (April); World Bank, 2010).
102 (Englebert et al., 2018).
103 (Boas & Dunn, 2013; Englebert et al., 2018, p. 19).
104 (Englebert et al., 2018, p. 20).
105 (Englebert et al., 2018, p. 26).
106 (Hintjens, 2008).
107 (Katz et al., 2021, p. 39).
108 (Riebeek, 2013, 18 November).
109 (Scott, 2020).
110 (Mallett & Pain, 2017).
111 (Riebeek, 2013, 18 November).
112 Stieg (13 March 2020).

Chapter 7

1 (World Bank Group, 2003).
2 (European Report on Development, 2009, p. 91).
3 (European Report on Development, 2009, p. 91).
4 (OECD, 2010a; 2010b, Whaites, 2008; Teskey, Schnell, & Poole, 2012).
5 (Philipsen, 2015, pp. 38–9).
6 (Godamunne, 2016) McLoughlin's detailed qualitative study is a notable exception (Mcloughlin, 2017).
7 (Ferf et al., 2016b; Mallett, Acharya, Mashanda, Sturge, & Uprety, 2016; Mallett, Hagen-Zanker, Slater, & Sturge, 2015; Moro et al., 2017; Nixon & Mallett, 2017; Nixon et al., 2017; Shahbaz et al., 2017; Sturge, Hagen-Zanker et al., 2017; Sturge, Mallett et al., 2017).
8 (Shahbaz et al., 2017).
9 (Hurrell, 2007).
10 (OECD, 2010a).
11 (Gippert, 2017).
12 (Levi, 2018).
13 (Karim, 2020).

14 (Zaum, 2013).
15 (Nixon et al., 2017).
16 (Tyler, 2006).
17 (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003).
18 (OECD, 2010a).
19 (Nixon et al., 2017).
20 (Englebert, 2000).
21 (Nixon & Mallett, 2017; Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2017b).
22 (Nixon et al., 2017).
23 (McLoughlin, 2015b).
24 (Nixon et al., 2017).
25 (Denney & Mallett, 2017).
26 (Valters & Whitty, 2017).
27 (Nixon et al., 2017).
28 (Brinkerhoff et al., 2012).
29 (McCullough, 2019 #439).
30 (McCullough, 2020 #964).
31 (Gunasekara et al., 2019).
32 (Godamunne, 2017).
33 (McLoughlin, 2017).
34 (Godamunne, 2017).
35 (Nixon et al., 2017).
36 (Gippert, 2017).
37 (Ferguson, 2009, p. 168).
38 (McCullough et al., 2019).
39 (Maxwell et al., 2016a).
40 (Amanela et al., 2020c).
41 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
42 (Gelb, 2008, pp. 2–3).
43 (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2019).
44 (Aston, 2020).
45 (CARE, 2015).
46 (Woolcock, 2013).
47 (Zaum, 2017).
48 (Whalan, 2017).
49 (von Billerbeck, 2017).
50 (Gippert, 2017) Von Billerbeck and Gippert further argue that legitimacy in conflict
    has not been systematically studied, with clear evidence gaps remaining on the trade-
    offs and dilemmas that legitimacy can introduce.
51 (Coicaud, 2002).
52 (Gippert, 2017).
53 (Whalan, 2017).
54 (McCullough et al., 2019; Moro et al., 2017).
55 (McCullough et al., 2019).
56 (Krieger, 2018).
57 (Fernando & Moonesinghe, 2012).
58 (Weigand, 2017).
59 (Pain et al., 2016b).
60 (Nixon et al., 2017).

 61 (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2019).
 62 (Tandukar et al., 2015a).
 63 (Malejacq, 2020).
 64 (Schomerus & de Vries, 2018; Young, 2012).
 65 (Jackson, 2015).
 66 (Moro et al., 2017).
 67 (Weigand, 2017).
 68 (McCullough et al., 2019).
 69 (Stollenwerk, 2018).
 70 (Winters, Dietrich, & Mahmud, 2018).
 71 (Ciorciari & Krasner, 2018).
 72 (Commission on State Fragility, 2018; World Bank Group, 2018).
 73 (Sturge, Mallett et al., 2017).
 74 (Godamunne, 2017).
 75 (Nixon et al., 2017).
 76 (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2017a).
 77 (Lall, 2016).
 78 (Paudel, Upreti, Acharya, Tandukar, & Harvey, 2015b).
 79 (Nixon et al., 2017).
 80 (Mallett & Atim, 2014).
 81 (Marshak et al., 2017).
 82 (Hoge & De Zulueta, 1985).
 83 (DiAngelo, 2018).
 84 (Stone, Patton, & Heen, 1999).
 85 (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973).
 86 (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008).
 87 (Noggle, 2018).
 88 (McCullough, 2020; McCullough, Lacroix, & Hennessey, 2020; McCullough &
      Papoulidis, 2020 (January 28); McCullough et al., 2019).
 89 (Czudnowski, 1968).
 90 (Beetham, 1991).
 91 (McCullough et al., 2019).
 92 (McCullough, 2020; McCullough et al., 2020; McCullough & Papoulidis, 2020
      (January 28)).
 93 (Nixon et al., 2017), see (Beetham, 1991).
 94 (Heimans & Timms, 2018, p. 21).
 95 (Norton, Mochon, & Ariely, 2011).
 96 (Hudson & Leftwich, 2014, p. 5).
 97 (McCullough et al., 2019).
 98 (Giddens, 1984).
 99 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
100 (Mitchell, 1991).
101 (Gunasekara et al., 2019, p. iv).
102 (Schmidt, 2008).
103 (McCullough & Papoulidis, 2020 (January 28)).
104 (Khan, 2018).
105 (Kelsall, 2018).
106 (Tandukar et al., 2015b).
107 (Denney, Mallett, & Jalloh, 2015).

108 (Paudel et al., 2015a).
109 (McCullough & Papoulidis, 2020 (January 28)).
110 (Nixon et al., 2017; Rothstein, 2009).
111 (McCullough et al., 2019).
112 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
113 (Shahbaz et al., 2017).
114 (Maxwell et al., 2016a).
115 (McCullough et al., 2019).
116 (Godamunne, 2016).
117 (McCullough & Papoulidis, 2020 (January 28)).
118 (McLoughlin, 2017).
119 (McCullough et al., 2020).
120 (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2017a).
121 (Gunasekara et al., 2019).
122 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
123 (Godamunne, 2015).
124 (McCullough et al., 2019).
125 (Mallett, Acharya et al., 2016).
126 (Godamunne, 2019).
127 (TRT World, 2019 (12 December)).
128 (Godamunne, 2015).
129 (Maxwell et al., 2016a).
130 (Maxwell et al., 2014).
131 (Moro et al., 2017).
132 (Godamunne, 2015).
133 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
134 (McCullough et al., 2019).
135 (Lall, 2017).
136 The study highlights that people's perceptions vary considerably by location, ethnicity and programme experience and are also influenced by the trajectories of their life experiences of war and displacement, along with the overall history of programme delivery (Godamunne, 2017).
137 (Godamunne, 2017).
138 (Batley, McCourt, & McLoughlin, 2012).
139 (Philips & Mayadunne, 2016).
140 (Tandukar et al., 2015b).
141 (d'Errico et al., 2014; Maxwell et al., 2014).
142 (Nixon et al., 2017).
143 (Amanela et al., 2020c).
144 (Nixon et al., 2017).
145 (Wong, 2016).
146 (McCullough et al., 2020).
147 (Ayliffe, Schjødt, & Aslam, 2018, p. 23).
148 (Kelton, 2020, p. 65).
149 (Kelton, 2020, p. 26).
150 (McCullough et al., 2019).
151 (Schmidt, 2008, p. 8).
152 (Schmidt, 2008, p. 11).
153 (Gunasekara et al., 2019).

154 (McCullough et al., 2019).
155 (Paudel et al., 2015b).
156 (Maxwell et al., 2014).
157 (McLoughlin, 2018).
158 (McLoughlin, 2017).
159 (McCullough & Papoulidis, 2020 (January 28); McLoughlin, 2017).
160 (Aston, 2020).
161 (McCullough et al., 2020).
162 (McLoughlin, 2018).
163 (Matsumoto, 2011).
164 (Marshak et al., 2017).
165 (Shabaz et al., 2017; Upreti et al., 2014).
166 (Levy & Kelsall, 2016), drawing on (Levy & Kelsall, 2016; Pritchett, 2013).
167 (Tandukar et al., 2015a).
168 (KC et al., 2014b).
169 (McLoughlin, 2017).
170 (McCullough et al., 2019).
171 (Schatzberg, 2001).
172 (Nakagawa, 2018).
173 (Karim, 2020).
174 (Beath, Fotini, & Enikolopov, 2013).
175 (Schmelzle & Stollenwerk, 2018).
176 (Weyland, 2005, 2006).
177 (Ayliffe et al., 2018).
178 (Siméant, 2011).
179 (Haider, 2009).
180 (Nixon et al., 2017).
181 (McLoughlin, 2015a, p. 1).
182 (Nixon & Mallett, 2017).

Chapter 8

1 (Beath et al., 2013; Fisk & Cherney, 2016).
2 (Pain & Sturge, 2015).
3 (Pain & Sturge, 2015).
4 (Mallett, 2015).
5 (Jackson, 2014).
6 (Calderón & Englebert, 2019, p. vi).
7 (Calderón & Englebert, 2019, p. vi).
8 (Kelsall, 2018).
9 (Gruda & Hilhorst, 2019).
10 (Denney, Jalloh et al., 2014).
11 (Denney, Mallett, & Jalloh, 2015).
12 (KC et al., 2014b).
13 (Suleri et al., 2017).
14 (Pain & Sturge, 2015, p. 16).
15 (Stites et al., 2018).

16 (Stites et al., 2018).
17 (Shaw & Ghafoori, 2019).
18 (Stites et al., 2018).
19 (Denney & Mallett, 2017).
20 (Stites et al., 2018).
21 (Denney, Mallett, & Jalloh, 2015).
22 (Wray, 2018, p. 2).
23 (Yeganehlayegh, 1981).
24 (Yeganehlayegh, 1981, p. 59).
25 (Yeganehlayegh, 1981, p. 60).
26 Cited in (Yeganehlayegh, 1981, p. 60).
27 (Mitchell, 1988).
28 (Fromm, 1982).
29 (Smith, 1999, p. 54).
30 (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013).
31 (Ejdus & Juncos, 2018).
32 (Maxwell et al., 2016a).
33 (Maxwell et al., 2016a).
34 (Travouillon, 2017).
35 (d'Errico et al., 2014).
36 (Pain, 2016).
37 (Calderón & Englebert, 2019).
38 (Stites et al., 2018).
39 (Englebert & Dunn, 2013).
40 (Calderón & Englebert, 2019).
41 (Nkuku & Titeca, 2018).
42 (Calderón & Englebert, 2019).
43 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
44 (Evans et al., 2019, 12 February).
45 (McCullough et al., 2020).
46 (Karim, 2020).
47 (Tzifakis & Huliaras, 2013).
48 (Goetze, 2019).
49 (Kaldor, 2009).
50 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
51 (Ali Shah & Shahbaz, 2015).
52 (Booth & Cammack, 2013; Booth & Unsworth, 2014; Carothers & de Gramont, 2013; James Ferguson, 1990; Leftwich, 2000; Mosse, 2004; Unsworth, 2009).
53 (Denney & Mallett, 2017).
54 (Gunasekara et al., 2019).
55 (Karim, 2020).
56 (Denney & Mallett, 2014).
57 (d'Errico et al., 2014).
58 (Jackson & Nemat, 2018).
59 (Suleri et al., 2016).
60 (Goodhand, 2005).
61 (Pain et al., 2016a).
62 (Stites & Bushby, 2017).
63 (Upreti et al., 2014).

 64 (Denney & Mallett, 2014).
 65 (Karim, 2020).
 66 (Bojicic-Dzelilovic, Kostovicova, & Rampton, 2014).
 67 (Suleri et al., 2016).
 68 (McLoughlin, 2015a).
 69 (Nixon et al., 2017).
 70 (Mallett & Pain, 2017).
 71 (Moshonas, 2019).
 72 (Pain, 2016).
 73 (Jackson, 2015; Tandukar et al., 2016).
 74 (Denney & Mallett, 2017; Mallett, Acharya et al., 2016).
 75 (Jackson, 2016).
 76 (Sanguhan & Gunasekara, 2017).
 77 (Jackson, 2016).
 78 (Jackson & Minoia, 2016; North, 1990).
 79 (Mallett, Acharya et al., 2016).
 80 (Mallett, 2015).
 81 (Parker, 2018, p. 55).
 82 (Parker, 2018, p. 167).
 83 (Raihani, 2021).
 84 (Papoulidis, 2019).
 85 (Heimans & Timms, 2018, p. 253).
 86 (Hari, 2022, p. 103).
 87 (Smith, 1999, p. 147).
 88 (Mallett & Pain, 2017).
 89 Maté makes a similar point about treatment for drug addiction (Maté, 2008, p. 322).
 90 (Kahan, 2017).
 91 (Kahan et al., 2007).
 92 (Berzonsky, 2011).
 93 (Goh, 2017, p. 111).
 94 (Kahneman, 2011; Thaler & Sunstein, 2008).
 95 (Aston, 2020).
 96 (Rigterink & Schomerus, 2016).
 97 (Chabris & Simons, 2010).
 98 (Goh, 2017, forthcoming).
 99 (Bailey & Chandran, 2020).
100 (Mallett, Opio et al., 2016).
101 (Blattman, 2022).
102 (Sjöberg, 2014, loc.1829).

Afterword

  1 (Amanela et al., 2020a).
  2 (Lepore, 2019, loc992) 'Consent of the governed' is a political concept that political
     theorists have been grappling with for hundreds of years; it is referenced in the
     United States Declaration of Independence.
  3 (Gilovich, 1991, p. 12).

4 (Thomas, Otis, Abraham, Markus, & Walton, 2020).
5 (McCullough et al., 2020; McCullough & Papoulidis, 2020, 28 January).
6 (McCullough, 2020).
7 (Valters, 2015).
8 A sentiment beautifully expressed by Daniel Kahnemann and noted down by Grant (Grant, 2021).

Postface

1 The legacy website of the SLRC can be found here: https://securelivelihoods.org/. The structured survey data set can be accessed by future researchers here: https://beta .ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue/studies/study?id=8230&type=Data%20catalogue.
2 SLRC partners over the years included: Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA); Feinstein International Center (FIC, Tufts University); Focus1000; Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU); Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI); Wageningen University (WUR); Nepal Centre for Contemporary Research (NCCR); Busara Center; Nepal Institute for Social and Environmental Research (NISER); Narrate; Social Scientists' Association of Sri Lanka (SSA); Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); Women and Rural Development Network (WORUDET); Claremont Graduate University (CGU); Institute of Development Policy and Management (IOB, University of Antwerp); International Institute of Social Studies (ISS, Erasumus University of Rotterdam).
3 Full bibliographies of the outputs are available, listed by theme, country or other: (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2021d).
4 (Charmaz, 2006).
5 (Hogg, O'Meally, & John, 2017).
6 (Pain & Huot, 2017b).
7 (World Bank, 2015).
8 (World Bank, 2021a).
9 (World Bank, 2018).
10 (Observer Research Foundation, 2019).
11 (Abbott, 2014).
12 (Coghlan et al., 2006).
13 (Reyntjens, 2009) refers to the entire period as the Africa's Great War, König et al. apply the name to the Second Congo War only (König, Rohner, Thoenig, & Zilibotti, 2017).
14 (MONUSCO, 2020).
15 (Ferf et al., 2016).
16 (Englebert et al., 2018).
17 (Jené & Englebert, 2019).
18 (World Bank, 2021b).
19 (FCDO, 2020a).
20 (Upreti et al., 2012).
21 (Cummings & Paudel, 2019).
22 (Tandukar et al., 2015b).
23 (Tandukar et al., 2015b).
24 (Human Rights Watch, 2020).

25 (World Bank, 2021c).
26 (FCDO, 2020b).
27 (European Commission, 2015).
28 (Javed et al., 2019).
29 (Shahbaz et al., 2017).
30 (Suleri et al., 2017).
31 (Suleri et al., 2016).
32 (Shahbaz et al., 2017).
33 (Sturge, Mallett et al., 2017).
34 (Kurosaki & Khan 2011; Shahbaz et al., 2017).
35 (Ali Shah & Shahbaz, 2015).
36 (Shahbaz et al., 2017).
37 (World Bank, 2021d).
38 (DFID, 2012).
39 (UK Parliament, 2021).
40 (Kaldor & Vincent, 2006).
41 (Human Rights Watch, 2011).
42 (Denney, Mallett, & Mazurana, 2015).
43 (World Bank Group, 2019).
44 (World Bank, 2021e).
45 (FCDO, 2020c).
46 (Schomerus & de Vries, 2018).
47 (Maxwell et al., 2016a).
48 (Moro et al., 2017).
49 (Maxwell et al., 2015).
50 (World Bank, 2021f).
51 (FCDO, 2020d).
52 (Center for Strategic International Studies, 2018).
53 (Jayasekara & Najab, 2016).
54 (Department of Census and Statistics, 2017).
55 (Lokuge et al., 2019).
56 (Lall, 2016).
57 (UNDP, 2014).
58 (World Bank, 2021g).
59 (International Alert, 2013).
60 (World Bank, 2021k).
61 (The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, 2018).
62 (Human Rights Watch, 2019).
63 (Ritchie, 2017).
64 (World Bank, 2021h).
65 (USAID, 2021).
66 (Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI), 2018).
67 (Branch, 2011).
68 (Schomerus, 2021).
69 (Tapscott, 2021).
70 (World Bank, 2021i).
71 (FCDO, 2020e).
72 (Mallett & Slater, 2012b).
73 (Maxwell et al., 2012).

74 (Thontwa, De Herdt, Marivoet, & Ulimwengu, 2017).
75 For example, mining, agriculture, health, education, transport, water and sanitation.
76 (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, 2019).
77 (Mallett, Mansour-Ille et al., 2017).
78 https://beta.ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue/studies/study?id=8230&type=Data %20catalogue.
79 (Denney, Jalloh et al., 2014).
80 (Calderón & Englebert, 2019).
81 (Gruda & Hilhorst, 2019).
82 (Lall, 2017).
83 (Ferf et al., 2014).
84 (Saparamadu & Lall, 2014).
85 (Ritchie, 2017).
86 (Gunasekara et al., 2016).
87 (Kyamusugulwa, Hilhorst, & Bergh, 2019b).
88 (Brandt & De Herdt, 2019).
89 (Moshonas, 2019).
90 (Titeca & Nkuku, 2019).
91 (Englebert et al., 2018).
92 (Mwapu et al., 2016).
93 (Holmes et al., 2014).
94 see (Mallett et al., 2014).
95 (Girvan, 2007).

References

Abbott, P. (2014). *Modern African Wars: The Congo 1960–2002*. London: Bloomsbury.

Acemoglu, D., & Robinson, J. (2012). *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*. London: Profile.

Acemoglu, D., & Robinson, J. A. (2019). *The Narrow Corridor – How Nations Struggle for Liberty*. New York: Penguin.

Acharya, G., Upreti, B., Paudel, S. B., Tandukar, A., & Harris, D. (2016). *The Drinking Water and Sanitation Programme of Nepal's Local Governance and Community Development Programme*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Acharya, G., Upreti, B., Paudel, S. B., Tandukar, A., & Harvey, P. (2015). *Thirsty for Change: Water Services in Nepal and Users' Perceptions of the State*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan. (2014). *Final Report of the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan*. Addis Ababa: AU.

Agronin, M. (2020, 19 April). Why it's so Hard to Talk to Your Parents About the Coronavirus (and Vice Versa). *The Wall Street Journal*.

Aid Re-imagined. (2020, 11 December). *Where the aid Sector is Stuck*. Retrieved from https://medium.com/aidreimagined/where-the-aid-sector-is-stuck-483fc4e10120.

Aiken, N. (2008). Post-conflict Peacebuilding and the Politics of Identity: Insights for Restoration and Reconciliation in Transitional Justice. *Peace Research*, *40*(2), 9–38.

Aitken, R. (2008). *Ethnicization in Conflict and Postconflict Situations: The Implications of Peace Processes and International Interventions for Ethnic Identities and Politics*. York: University of York.

Ajakaiye, O., & Ali, A. A. G. (2009). Managing Post-conflict Recovery in Africa: An Overview. *Journal of African Economies*, *18*(1), 3–11.

Alava, H. (2019). The Everyday and Spectacle of Subdued Citizenship in Northern Uganda. In K. Holma & T. Kontinen (Eds.), *Practices of Citizenship in East Africa: Perspectives From Philosophical Pragmatism* (pp. 90–104). London: Routledge.

Alava, H., & Ssentongo, J. S. (2016). Religious (de)politicisation in Uganda's 2016 Elections. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, *10*(4), 677–92. doi:10.1080/17531055.2016.1270043.

Ali Shah, Q., & Shahbaz, B. (2015). *Perceptions of Post-conflict Livelihood Interventions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan: Targeting, Access and Relevance*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Amanela, S., T.F. Ayee, S. Buell, A. Escande, T. Quinlan, A.S. Rigterink, M. Schomerus, S. Sharp, and S. Swanson (2020a). *The Mental Landscape of Post-conflict Life in Northern Uganda: Parts 1-7*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC), ODI.

Amanela, S., T.F. Ayee, S. Buell, A. Escande, T. Quinlan, A.S. Rigterink, M. Schomerus, S. Sharp, and S. Swanson (2020b). *Part 3: The Mental Landscape of Post-conflict Life in Northern Uganda: Defining the Mental Landscape*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC), ODI.

Amanela, S., T.F. Ayee, S. Buell, A. Escande, T. Quinlan, A.S. Rigterink, M. Schomerus, S. Sharp, and S. Swanson (2020c). *Part 5: The Mental Landscape of Post-conflict Life in Northern Uganda: Rethinking Inclusion and Fairness*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC), ODI.

Amanela, S., T.F. Ayee, S. Buell, A. Escande, T. Quinlan, A.S. Rigterink, M. Schomerus, S. Sharp, and S. Swanson (2020d). *Part 6: The Mental Landscape of Post-conflict Life in Northern Uganda: Rethinking Idleness, Risk-taking and Agency*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC), ODI.

Anten, L., Briscoe, I., & Mezzera, M. (2012). *The Political Economy of State-building in Situations of Fragility and Conflict: From Analysis to Strategy: A Synthesis Paper Based on Studies of Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, Kosovo and Pakistan*. The Hague: Conflict Research Unit/Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'.

Anter, A. (2014). *Max Weber's Theory of the Modern State: Origins, Structure and Significance*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Arias, M. A., Ibáñez, A. M., & Zambrano, A. (2019). Agricultural Production Amid Conflict: Separating the Effects of Conflict Into Shocks and Uncertainty. *World Development*, *119*, 165–84.

Aston, T. (2020). *State Legitimacy, Service Delivery, and Accountability*. (unpublished notes).

Atim, T., Mazurana, D., & Marshak, A. (2019). *School's out: Why Northern Uganda's Girls and Boys are not Getting an Education and What to do About it*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Ayliffe, T., Schjødt, R., & Aslam, G. (2018). *Social Accountability in the Delivery of Social Protection: Technical Guidance Note*. Orpington: Development Pathways Limited.

Bacchi, C. L. (1996). *The Politics of Affirmative Action: 'Women', Equality and Category Politics*. New York: Sage.

Bailey, L., & Chandran, R. (2020). Love, Inequity, and Development Policy in a COVID-era? In *Global Dashboard*. https://www.globaldashboard.org/2020/06/25/love-inequity-and-development-policy-in-a-covid-era/.

Barakat, S., & Milton, S. (2020). Localisation Across the Humanitarian-development-peace Nexus. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, *15*(2), 147–63. doi:10.1177/1542316620922805

Barbara, J. (2008). Rethinking Neo-liberal State Building: Building Post-conflict Development States. *Development in Practice*, *18*(3), 307–18.

Barder, O. (2012, 15 May). *Complexity and Innovation in Development*. Bucharest: Kapuscinski Lecture.

Barrat, C. (2012). Netting the Benefits now or Later? Exploring the Relationship Between Risk and Sustainability in Lake Victoria Fisheries, Uganda. In L. Bloemertz, M. Doevenspeck, E. Macamo, & D. Muller-Mahn (Eds.), *Risk and Africa: Multi-disciplinary Empirical Approaches* (pp. 243–64). Berlin: Lit Verlag.

Barth, F. (1959). *Political Leadership Among Swat Pathans*. London: Athlone Press, University of London.

Baser, H. (2011). *Perspectives on Capacity Development in Fragile Situations*. Ottawa: Learning Network on Capacity Development.

Bashwira, M.-R. (2019). *Making Sense of Women's Economic Activity Within DRC's Artisanal Gold Mining Sector*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Bashwira, M.-R., & Hintjens, H. (2019). *Negotiating Freedom? Interpreting Women's Debt Bondage in South Kivu Artisanal Gold Mines*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Bassat, Q., Machevo, S., O'Callaghan-Gordo, C., Sigaúque, B., Morais, L., Díez-Padrisa, N., . . . Alonso, P. L. (2011). Distinguishing Malaria From Severe Pneumonia Among Hospitalized Children who Fulfilled Integrated Management of Childhood Illness Criteria for Both Diseases: A Hospital-based Study in Mozambique. *The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*, *85*(4), 626–34. doi:10.4269/ajtmh.2011.11-0223

Bates, R., Greif, A., & Singh, S. (2002). Organizing Violence. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *46*(5), 599–628. doi:10.1177/002200202236166

Batley, R., McCourt, W., & McLoughlin, C. (2012). Editorial. *Public Management Review*, *14*(2), 131–44.

Bauer, M., Blattman, C., Chytilová, J., Henrich, J., Miguel, E., & Mitts, T. (2016). *The Legacy of war on Social and Political Behaviour*. Vox EU/ CEPR. https://voxeu.org/article/legacy-war-social-and-political-behaviour.

Baum, L. F. (1900). The Wonderful Wizard of Oz. In *Oz: The Collection*. Classic Books.

Beath, A., Fotini, C., & Enikolopov, R. (2013). Empowering Women Through Development Aid: Evidence From a Field Experiment in Afghanistan. *American Political Science Review*, *107*(3), 540–57.

Beehner, L., & Young, J. (2012). *The Failure of the Failed States Index*. https://www.themantle.com/international-affairs/failure-failed-states-index.

Beetham, D. (1991). *The Legitimation of Power*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bellows, J., & Miguel, E. (2009). War and Local Collective Action in Sierra Leone. *Journal of Public Economics*, *93*, 1144–57.

Berdal, M. R., & Malone, D. (2000). *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil War*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Riener.

Berzonsky, M. D. (2011). A Social-cognitive Perspective on Identity Construction. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 55–76). New York: Springer.

Black, E., Worth, H., Clarke, S., Obol, J. H., Akera, P., Awor, A., . . . Richmond, R. (2019). Prevalence and Correlates of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in Conflict Affected Northern Uganda: A Cross-sectional Study. *Conflict and Health*, *13*(1), 35. doi:10.1186/s13031-019-0219-8

Blattman, C. (2022). *Why We Fight: The Roots of War and the Paths to Peace*. New York: Viking.

Bloemertz, L., Doevenspeck, M., Macamo, E., & Muller-Mahn, D. (2012). Introduction. In L. Bloemertz, M. Doevenspeck, E. Macamo, & D. Muller-Mahn (Eds.), *Risk and Africa: Multi-disciplinary Empirical Approaches* (pp. 1–34). Berlin: Lit Verlag.

Blum, J., & Rogger, D. (2016). *Public Service Reform in Post-conflict Societies*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Boas, M., & Dunn, K. (2013). *Politics of Origin in Africa: Autochthony, Citizenship and Conflict*. London: Zed Books.

Bode, S. (2009). *Kriegsenkel: Die Erben der vergessenen Generation*. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta.

Boege, V., Brown, A., Clements, K., & Nolan, A. (2008). *On Hybrid Political Orders and Emerging States: State Formation in the Context of 'Fragility'*. Berlin: Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management.

Boex, J., & Yilmaz, S. (2010). *An Analytical Framework for Assessing Decentralized Local Governance and the Local Public Sector*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Center on International Development and Governance.

Bojicic-Dzelilovic, V., Kostovicova, D., & Rampton, D. (2014). State-building, Nation-building and Reconstruction. In Mary Kaldor and Iavor Rangelov (Eds.), *The Handbook of Global Security Policy* (pp. 265–81). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Bojicic-Dzelilovic, V., & Martin, M. (2016). *Local Ownership Challenges in Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention*. London: London School of Economics and Political Science.

Bonanno, G., Galea, S., Bucciarelli, A., & Vlahov, D. (2007). What Predicts Psychological Resilience After Disaster? The Role of Demographics, Resources, and Life Stress. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *75*(5), 671–82.

Booth, D., & Cammack, D. (2013). *Governance for Development in Africa: Solving Collective Action Problems*. London: Zed Books.

Booth, D., & Unsworth, S. (2014). *Politically Smart, Locally Led Development*. London: Overseas Development Institute.

Branch, A. (2011). *Displacing Human Rights: War and Intervention in Northern Uganda*. New York: Oxford University Press USA.

Branch, A., & Mampilly, Z. C. (2005). Winning the war, but Losing the Peace? The Dilemma of SPLM/A Civil Administration and the Tasks Ahead. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, *43*(1), 1–20.

Brandon, J. (2018). *Challenges to Economic Growth in Post-conflict Environments: New Trends in Human Capital Loss, aid Effectiveness, and Trade Liberalization*. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona.

Brandt, C. O., & De Herdt, T. (2019). *On the Political Economy of Data Collection: Lessons From the Unaccomplished Population Census (Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2006–2018)*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Bressan, S. (2020). *What's Left of the Failed States Debate? Putting Five Hypotheses to the Test*. https://www.gppi.net/2020/05/13/whats-left-of-the-failed-states-debate.

Brinkerhoff, D., Wetterberg, A., & Dunn, S. (2012). Service Delivery and Legitimacy in Fragile and Conflict-affected States: Evidence From Water Services in Iraq. *Public Management Review*, *14*(2), 273–93.

British Council (2019). *The art of Peace: The Value of Culture in Post-conflict Recovery*. London: British Council.

Brück, T., Naudé, W., & Verwimp, P. (2013). *Entrepreneurship and Violent Conflict in Developing Countries*. Helsinki: United Nations University, Word Institute for Development Economics Research.

Buell, S. (2021). *Participation and Engagement: A Discussion About Power (SLRC Policy Brief)*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium/ ODI.

Calderón, A. B., & Englebert, P. (2019). *Where Does State Capacity Come From? Conjectures From DRC's new Provinces*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Campbell, J. (1973, first published in 1949). *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Caplan, R., Hoeffler, A., & Brinkman, H.-J. (2015). *An Analysis of Post Conflict Stabilization*. London: Department for International Development.

Cardozo, B., Bilukha, O., Crawford, C., Shaikh, I., Wolfe, M., Gerber, M., & Anderson, M. (2004). Mental Health, Social Functioning, and Disability in Postwar Afghanistan. *American Medical Association,* *292*(5), 575–84.

CARE. (2015). *Citizen Monitoring to Defend Maternal Health Rights in Peru* (Briefing Paper 06).

Carling, J. (2002). Migration in the Age of Involuntary Immobility: Theoretical Reflections and Cape Verdean Experiences. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *28*(1), 5–42.

Carothers, T., & de Gramont, D. (2013). *Development Aid Confronts Politics: The Almost Revolution*. New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Cecchi, F., Leuveld, K., & Voors, M. (2016). Conflict Exposure and Competitiveness: Experimental Evidence From the Football Field in Sierra Leone. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, *64*(3), 405–35.

Centre for Poverty Analysis. (2018a). *Caste Identity and Access to Services: Findings From a Study Conducted in Jaffna*. Colombo: Centre for Poverty Analysis.

Centre for Poverty Analysis. (2018b). *Women's Economic Relations in Post-war Sri Lanka: The Case of Beedi Rollers in Vettikadu*. Colombo: Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA).

Center for Strategic International Studies. (2018). *Accessing South Sudan: Humanitarian Aid in a Time of Crisis*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Chabris, C., & Simons, D. (2010). *The Invisible Gorilla: How Our Intuitions Deceive Us*. New York: Harper Collins.

Chalmers, D. J. (2022). *Reality+: Virtual Worlds and the Problems of Philosophy*. New York: Allen and Lane.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*. London: Sage Publications.

Cherewick, M., Kohli, A., Remy, M. M., Murhula, C. M., Kurhorhwa, A. K. B., Mirindi, A. B., . . . Glass, N. (2015). Coping Among Trauma-affected Youth: A Qualitative Study. *Conflict and Health,* 9(35).

Chimni, B. S. (2010). Refugees, Return and Reconstruction of 'Post-conflict' Societies: A Critical Perspective. *International Peacekeeping*, *9*(2), 163–80.

Chowdhury, J. (2009). *Microcredit, Micro-enterprises, and Self-employment of Women: Experience From the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh*. Rome: International Labour Organisation-International Fund for Agricultural Development-food and Agriculture Organisation.

CIC/DAC. (2008). *Concepts and Dilemmas of State Building in Fragile Situations: From Fragility to Resilience*. Paris: OECD Publishing.

Ciorciari, J., & Krasner, S. (2018). Contracting Out, Legitimacy, and State Building. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *12*(4), 484–505.

Clements, K. P. (2008). Political Hybridity and Human Security in Post-colonial and Post-conflict State Building / Rebuilding. In Alexander Lautensach and Sabina Lautensach (Eds.), *Human Security in World Affairs: Problems and Opportunities* (2nd ed.). Victoria: BC Campus.

Coghlan, B., Brennan, R., Ngoy, P., Dofara, D., Otto, B., Clements, M., & Stewart, T. (2006). Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: A Nationwide Survey. *Lancet*, *367*, 44–51.

Coicaud, J.-M. (2002). *Legitimacy and Politics: A Contribution to the Study of Political Right and Political Responsibility*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Collier, P., & Hoeffler, A. (2004). Greed and Grievance in Civil War. *Oxford Economic Papers*, *56*, 563–95.

Commission on State Fragility, Growth and Development (2018). *Escaping the Fragility Trap*. London and Oxford: LSE/ Blavatnik School of Government/University of Oxford/International Growth Centre.

Cooper, F. (1997). Modernizing Bureaucrats, Backward Africans, and the Development Concept. In F. Cooper & R. M. Packard (Eds.), *International Development and the*

Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge (pp. 64–92). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Corlet Walker, C., Mair, S., & Druckman, A. (2018). *A Theory of Change Approach for Measuring Economic Welfare Beyond GDP* (CUSP Working Paper No 10). Guildford: University of Surrey.

Cramer, C. (2002). Homo Economicus Goes to War: Methodological Individualism, Rational Choice and the Political Economy of War. *World Development*, *30*(11), 1845–64.

Cramer, C., Sender, J., & Oqubay, A. (2020). *African Economic Development: Evidence, Theory, Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Craven-Matthews, C., & Englebert, P. (2018). A Potemkin State in the Sahel? The Empirical and the Fictional in Malian State Reconstruction. *African Security*, *11*(1), 1–31. doi:10.1080/19392206.2017.1419634

Craze, J. (2020). *The Politics of Numbers: On Security Sector Reform in South Sudan, 2005–2020*. London: CPAID/ GCRF/ ESRC.

Criado Perez, C. (2019). *Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men*. London: Vintage/Penguin.

Cummings, C., & Paudel, S. B. (2019). *Services and Legitimacy: Exploring Everyday Experiences of the State in Nepal's Terai Region*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Cynefin Co. (not dated). *The Cynefin Co: Making Sense of Complexity*. https://thecynefin.co.

Czudnowski, M. M. (1968). A Salience Dimension of Politics for the Study of Political Culture. *American Political Science Review*, *62*(3), 878–88. doi:10.2307/1953437

D'Anieri, P. (2017). *Ukraine and Russia: From Civilized Divorce to Uncivil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

D'Ariano, G. M. (2018). Causality Re-established. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society Mathematical, Physical and Engineering Sciences*, *376*(20170313). doi:10.1098/ rsta.2017.0313

d'Errico, M., Kozlowska, K., & Maxwell, D. (2014). *Surveying Livelihoods, Service Delivery and Governance: Baseline Evidence From South Sudan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Datta, S., Jagati, A., Vijaykumar, S., O'Donnell, C., & Basnyat, B. (2019, 18 December). *Nepal's Transition to Federalism: A Behavioral Approach*. https://asiafoundation.org /2019/12/18/nepals-transition-to-federalism-a-behavioral-approach/.

Davenport, C., Melander, E., & Regan, P. M. (2018). *The Peace Continuum: What It Is and How to Study It*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

David, A., Bastos, F. R., & Mills, M. (2011). *Post-conflict Recovery: Institutions, Aid, or Luck?* Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund.

De Alwis, R. (2020). Federalism or Devolution of Power? Sri Lanka's Perspectives. *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies*, *7*(1), 124–30. doi:10.1002/app5.289

de Coning, C. (2010). Mediation and Peacebuilding: SRSGs and DSRSGs in Integrated Missions. *Global Governance*, *16*(2), 281–99.

de Jong, J. (Ed.). (2002). *Trauma, War, and Violence: Public Mental Health in Socio-cultural Context*. New York: Springer Nature.

De Soto, H. (2000). *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*. London: Civitas.

De Vries, L. (2012). *Facing Frontiers: Everyday Practice of State-building in South Sudan*. Wageningen: Wageningen University.

De Vries, L., & Glawion, T. (2021). Studying Insecurity From Relative Safety – Dealing With Methodological Blind Spots. *Qualitative Research*, 14687941211061061. doi:10.1177/14687941211061061

De Vries, L., & Schomerus, M. (2017). South Sudan's Civil war Will not end With a Peace Deal. *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice, 29*(3), 1–8.

del Castillo, G. (2015). *Economic Reconstruction and Reforms in Post-conflict Countries*. Leuven: Centre for Research on Peace and Development.

Denney, L., & Gordon, R. (2016). *How to Reduce Teenage Pregnancy in Sierra Leone*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Denney, L., Gordon, R., & Ibrahim, A. (2015). *Teenage Pregnancy After Ebola in Sierra Leone: Mapping Responses, Gaps and Ongoing Challenges*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Denney, L., Gordon, R., Kamara, A., & Lebby, P. (2016). *Change the Context not the Girls: Improving Efforts to Reduce Teenage Pregnancy in Sierra Leone*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Denney, L., Jalloh, M., Mallett, R., & Tucker, M. (2014). *Developing State Capacity to Prevent Malnutrition in Sierra Leone: An Analysis of Development Partner Support*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Denney, L., & Mallett, R. (2014). *Mapping Sierra Leone's Plural Health System and how People Navigate it*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Denney, L., & Mallett, R. (2017). *Service Delivery and State Capacity: Findings From the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Denney, L., Mallett, R., & Jalloh, R. (2014). *Understanding Malnutrition and Health Choices at the Community Level in Sierra Leone*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Denney, L., Mallett, R., & Jalloh, R. (2015). *After Ebola: Why and How Capacity Support to Sierra Leone's Health Sector Needs to Change*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Denney, L., Mallett, R., & Mazurana, D. (2015). *Peacebuilding and Service Delivery*. New York: United Nations University, Centre for Policy Research.

Department for International Development (DfID) (2010). *Building Peaceful States and Societies: A DFID Practice Paper*. London: UK Government.

Department for International Development (DfID) (2012). *Operational Plan 2011–2015: DFID Pakistan*. London: DFID.

Department of Census and Statistics. (2017). *Poverty Indicators: Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2016*. Colombo: Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs Sri Lanka.

Desai, S., Acs, Z., & Weitzel, U. (2015). A Model of Destructive Entrepreneurship: Insight for Conflict and Postconflict Recovery. In Zoltan Acs (Ed.), *Global Entrepreneurship, Institutions and Incentives* (pp. 3–23). Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc.

Dewey, J., & Bentley, A. (1949). *Knowing and the Known*. Boston: Beacon Press.

DiAngelo, R. (2018). *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

di John, J. (2008). *Conceptualising the Causes and Consequences of Failed States: A Critical Review of the Literature*. Crisis States Research Centre: LSE.

Donais, T. (2012). *Peacebuilding and Local Ownership: Post-conflict Consensus Building*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Donini, A. (2011). Local Perceptions of Assistance to Afghanistan. *International Peacekeeping*, *14*(1), 158–72.

Douma, N., Hilhorst, D., & Matabaro, J. (2016). *Getting the Balance Right? Sexual Violence Response in the Democratic Republic of Congo: A Comparison Between 2011 and 2014*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium / Justice and Security Research Programme.

Easterly, W. (2003). IMF and World Bank Structural Adjustment Programs and Poverty. In M. P. Dooley & J. A. Frankel (Eds.), *Managing Currency Crises in Emerging Markets* (pp. 361–91). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Easterly, W., & Levine, R. (1997). Africa's Growth Tragedy: Policies and Ethnic Divisions. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *112*(4), 1203–50.

Edmunds, T., Juncos, A., & Algar-Faria, G. (2018). EU Local Capacity Building: Ownership, Complexity and Agency. *Global Affairs*, *4*(2–3), 227–39.

Edwards, B., & Yilmaz, S. (2016). Decentralization as a Post-conflict Stabilization Tool: The Case of Sierra Leone. *Public Administration and Development*, *36*(5), 347–58.

Eisenberger, N. & Lieberman, N. (2009). The Pains and Pleasures of Social Life. *Science*, *323*(5916), 890–1.

Ejdus, F., & Juncos, A. (2018). Reclaiming the Local in EU Peacebuilding: Effectiveness, Ownership, and Resistance. *Contemporary Security Policy*, *39*(1), 4–27.

Ekström, M. (1992). Causal Explanation of Social Action: The Contribution of Max Weber and of Critical Realism to a Generative View of Causal Explanation in Social Science. *Acta Sociologica*, *35*(2), 107–22. doi:10.1177/000169939203500203

Elworthy, S. (2017). *The Business Plan for Peace: Building a World Without War*. London: Peace Direct.

Englebert, P. (2000). *State Legitimacy and Development in Africa*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Riener.

Englebert, P., Calderón, A. B., & Jené, L. (2018). *Provincial Tribalisation: The Transformation of Ethnic Representativeness Under Decentralisation in the DR Congo*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Englebert, P., & Dunn, K. C. (2013). *Inside African Politics*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Riener.

Englebert, P., & Tull, D. (2008). Postconflict Reconstruction in Africa: Flawed Ideas About Failed States. *International Security*, *32*(4), 106–39.

Eriksen, S. S. (2017). State Effects and the Effects of State Building: Institution Building and the Formation of State-centred Societies. *Third World Quarterly*, *38*(4), 771–86. doi:10.1080/01436597.2016.1176854

Errington-Barnes, L. (2021). *'What's the Password?' Language and Exclusion in Global Peacebuilding*. Uppsala: Life & Peace Institute.

Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering Development*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

European Commission. (2015). *EU Development Cooperation With Nepal*. Brussels: European Commission.

European Report on Development. (2009). *European Report on Development 2009: Overcoming Fragility in Africa*. Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, San Domenico di Fiesole.

Evans, P., Marquette, H., Patel, A., & Pedley, D. (2019, 12 February). *The Machinery of Government and the Mechanics of Governance: Findings From the Uganda Governance Evidence Week*. https://medium.com/@DFID_Research/the-machinery-of-government-and-the-mechanics-of-governance-findings-from-the-uganda-governance-e218f2248d39.

Fagen, P. W. (2011). *Refugees and IDPs After Conflict*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace.

Fassin, D. (2009). Les Économies Morales Revisitées. *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, *64*(6), 1237–66.

FCDO. (2020a). *DFID Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Profile*. London: FCDO.

FCDO. (2020b). *DFID Nepal Profile*. London: FCDO.

FCDO. (2020c). *DFID Sierra Leone Profile*. London: FCDO.

FCDO. (2020d). *DFID South Sudan Profile*. London: FCDO.

FCDO. (2020e). *DFID Uganda Profile*. London: FCDO.

Ferf, A. J. E., Thieme Groen, E. E., Mashanda, M., & Milabyo, P. (2016). *Basic Service Delivery and Governance Processes in South Kivu*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Ferf, A. J. E., Thieme Groen, E. E., Mashanda, M., Milabyo, P., & Sturge, G. (2016a). *How do Conflict, Violence and Livelihood Trajectories Affect the Legitimacy of the State in South Kivu (DRC)?* London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Ferf, A. J. E., Thieme Groen, E. E., Mashanda, M., Milabyo, P., & Sturge, G. (2016b). *Tracking Change in Livelihoods, Service Delivery and Governance: Evidence From a 2012–2015 Panel Survey in South Kivu, DRC*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Ferf, D., Hilhorst, D., & Mashanda, M. (2014). *Rural Road (re)construction: Transport and Rural Livelihoods in the Conflict-affected and Fragile State Environment of South Kivu*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Ferguson, J. (1990). *The Anti-politics Machine*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ferguson, J. (2009). The Uses of Neoliberalism. *Antipode*, *41*, 166–84. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8330.2009.00721.x

Fernando, P., & Moonesinghe, S. (2012). *Livelihoods, Basic Services and Social Protection in Sri Lanka*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Fisk, K., & Cherney, A. (2016). Pathways to Institutional Legitimacy in Postconflict Societies: Perceptions of Process and Performance in Nepal. *Governance*, *30*(2), 2017.

Friedman, J. (2012). *Psychological Recovery After Disaster – Resilience is the Norm*. https://blogs.worldbank.org/impactevaluations/psychological-recovery-after-disaster-resilience-is-the-norm.

Fromm, E. (1982). *The Fear of Freedom*. London: Ark Paperbacks.

Garvey Berger, J., & Johnston, K. (2015). *Simple Habits for Complex Times: Powerful Practices for Leaders*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Business Books.

Geda, A. (2011). Capacity Building in Fragile and Post-conflict States in Africa. *World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development*, *7*(2/3/4), 217–66.

Gelb, S. (2008). Behind Xenophobia in South Africa – Poverty or Inequality? In S. Hassim, T. Kupe, & E. Worby (Eds.), *To Go Home or Die Here: Violence, Xenophobia and the Reinvention of Difference in South Africa* (pp. 79–92). Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Gelb, S., Kalantaryan, S., Mcmahon, S., & Perez Fernandez, M. (2021). *Diaspora Finance for Development: From Remittances to Investment, EUR 30742 EN*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

Gelsdorf, K., Maxwell, D., & Mazurana, D. (2012). *Livelihoods, Basic Services and Social Protection in Northern Uganda and Karamoja*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Ghani, A., & Lockhart, C. (2009). *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ghimire, A., Hagen-Zanker, J., & Bhujel, S. (2019). *Migration and Work: Are Women's Work Patterns Changing in Bardiya, Nepal?* London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Gibson, P. G., & Simpson, J. L. (2009). The Overlap Syndrome of Asthma and COPD: What are its Features and how Important is it? *Thorax*, *64*(8), 728. doi:10.1136/thx.2008.108027

Giddens, A. (1972). The Political Context of Weber's Sociology. In A. Giddens (Ed.), *Politics and Sociology in the Thought of Max Weber* (pp. 28–39). London: Macmillan Education UK.

Giddens, A. (1984). *The Constitution of Society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Gilley, B. (2009). *The Right to Rule: How States Win and Lose Legitimacy*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Gilovich, T. (1991). *How We Know What Isn't So: The Fallibility of Human Reason in Everyday Life*. New York: The Free Press.

Gippert, B. (2017). Legitimacy and Coercion in Peacebuilding: A Balancing Act. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *11*(3), 321–38.

Girvan, N. (2007). *Power Imbalances and Development Knowledge*. Ottawa, ON: The North-South Institute.

Glennie, J. (2021). *The Future of Aid: Global Public Investment*. London and New York: Routledge.

Godamunne, N. (2015). *The Role of Social Protection in State Legitimacy in the Former Conflict Areas of Sri Lanka*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Godamunne, N. (2016). Can Social Protection Build State Legitimacy? Perspectives From Post War Sri Lanka. *International Relations and Diplomacy*, *4*(11), 703–17.

Godamunne, N. (2017). *Delivering Services During Crisis: Social Protection Provision and State Legitimacy in Post-war Sri Lanka*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Godamunne, N. (2019). *How Did Social Welfare Provision (De-)legitimise the Post-colonial State in Sri Lanka?* London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Goddard, D. (2002 [1929]). *The Buddha's Golden Path: The Classic Introduction to Zen Buddhism*. New York: Square One.

Goetze, C. (2019). Learning in Peacebuilding – Mission Impossible? *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *13*(3), 430–56.

Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press.

Goh, P. C. H. (2017). Systemic Practice and Workplace as Community: Alternatives to Managerialism. *Voluntary Sector Review*, *8*(1), 107–18. doi:10.1332/2040805 17X14882017380371

Goh, P. C. H. (forthcoming). *Looking at, Rather Than Through Neoliberal Managerialism: Positing a Systemic Approach to Organising for Faith-based NGOs*. (PhD Thesis) University of Bedfordshire.

Goodhand, J. (2005). Frontiers and Wars: The Opium Economy in Afghanistan. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, *5*(2), 191–216. doi:10.1111/j.1471-0366.2005.00099.x

Goodhand, J., & Walton, O. (2009). The Limits of Liberal Peacebuilding? International Engagement in the Sri Lankan Peace Process. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *3*(3), 303–23. doi:10.1080/17502970903086693

Gordon, R. (2014). *In the eye of the Storm: An Analysis of Internal Conflict in South Sudan's Jonglei State*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Government of the Republic of South Sudan. (2012). *Fragility Assessment Republic of South Sudan 2012: Draft Summary Results*. Government of the Republic of South Sudan/ Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning Aid Coordination Directorate.

Graeber, D., & Wengrow, D. (2021). *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity*. London: Penguin.

Graff, C. (Ed.). (2020). *Addressing Fragility in a Global Pandemic: Elements of a Successful U.S Strategy*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace.

Granovetter, M. (1985). Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness. *American Journal of Sociology*, *9*(3), 481–510.

Grant, A. M. (2021). *Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know*. New York: Penguin Random House.

Grävingholt, J., Leininger, J., & von Haldenwang, C. (2012). *Effective Statebuilding? A Review of Evaluations of International Statebuilding Support in Fragile Contexts (Evaluation Study 2012/13)*. Copenhagen: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark/ DANIDA International Development Cooperation.

Green, D. (2015, 28 August). *Development 2.0, the Gift of Doubt and the Mapping of Difference: Welcome to the Future*. Retrieved from https://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/ development-2-0-the-gift-of-doubt-and-the-mapping-of-difference-welcome-to-the -future/

Green, E. (2008). Decentralization and Conflict in Uganda. *Conflict, Security and Development*, *8*(4), 427–50.

Green, E. (2011). Decentralization and Political Opposition in Contemporary Africa: Evidence From Sudan and Ethiopia. *Democratization*, *18*(5), 1087–105.

Grimm, S., Lemay-Hébert, N., & Nay, O. (2014). 'Fragile States': Introducing a Political Concept. *Third World Quarterly*, *35*(2), 197–209. doi:10.1080/01436597.2013.878127

Gruda, A., & Hilhorst, D. (2019). *Everyday Politics and Practices of Family Planning in Eastern DRC: The Case of the South Kivu Province*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Gümüsay, K. (2020). *Sprache und Sein*. Munich: Carl Hanser.

Gunasekara, V. (2020). *Paradoxes in Livelihood Interventions: A Synthesis of Evidence From Selected War-affected Areas in Africa and Asia*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium/ ODI.

Gunasekara, V., Philips, M., & Nagraj, V. (2016). *Hospitality and Exclusion: A Study About Post-war Tourism in Passikudah*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Gunasekara, V., Surenthiraraj, R., & Tilakaratne, P. (2019). *Services and Legitimacy: Exploring the Everyday Experiences of the State in Sri Lanka*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Gunasinghe, N. (1984). Open Economy and Its Impact on Ethnic Relations in Sri Lanka. In S. L. Committee for Rational Development (ed), the Ethnic Conflict: Myths, Realities and Perspectives (Ed.), *Sri Lanka, the Ethnic Conflict: Myths, Realities and Perspectives*. New Delhi: Navrang.

Habyarimana, J., Humphreys, M., Posner, D. N., & Weinstein, J. M. (2007). Why Does Ethnic Diversity Undermine Public Goods Provision? *American Political Science Review*, *101*(4), 709–25. doi:10.1017.S0003055407070499

Hagen-Zanker, J., & Mallett, R. (2014). *Gambling on a Better Future: Is International Labour Migration Worth it?* London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Hagen-Zanker, J., Mallett, R., Ghimire, A., Ali Shah, Q., Upreti, B., & Abbas, H. (2014). *Migration From the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-western Nepal and North-western Pakistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Hagmann, T., & Péclard, D. (2010). Negotiating Statehood: Dynamics of Power and Domination in Africa. *Development and Change*, *41*(4), 539–62.

Haider, H. (2009). *Community-based Approaches to Peacebuilding in Conflict-affected and Fragile Contexts*. Birmingham: GSDRC: University of Birmingham.

Hall, S. (1992). The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power. In D. Morley (Ed.), *Essential Essays, Volume 2: Identity and Diaspora* (pp. 141–84). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Handrahan, L. (2004). Conflict, Gender, Ethnicity and Post-conflict Reconstruction. *Security Dialogue*, *35*(4), 429–45.

Haque, T. (2018). *A 'Good Governance' Paradox? Reexamining Reform of Economic Institutions in Post-conflict Contexts*. Canberra: Development Policy Centre, Australian National University.

Hari, J. (2022). *Stolen Focus: Why You Can't Pay Attention*. London: Bloomsbury.

Hassan, G., Ventevogel, P., Jefee-Bahloul, H., Barkil-Oteo, A., & Kirmayer, L. (2016). Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing of Syrians Affected by Armed Conflict. *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences*, *25*(2), 129–41.

Haushofer, J., & Fehr, E. (2014). On the Psychology of Poverty. *Science*, *344*, 862–7.

Hayes, S., Lundy, B., & Hallward, M. C. (2016). Conflict-induced Migration and the Refugee Crisis: Global and Local Perspectives From Peacebuilding and Development. *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, *11*(3), 1–7.

Heimans, J., & Timms, H. (2018). *New Power: Why Outsiders are Winning, Institutions are Failing, and how the Rest of us can Keep up in the age of Mass Participation* London: Macmillan.

Henrich, J. (2020). *The Weirdest People in the World: How the West Became Psychologically Peculiar and Particularly Prosperous*. New York: Penguin (Farrar, Straus and Giroux).

Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). The Weirdest People in the World? *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *33*(2/3), 61–83.

Hickel, J. (2014). The 'girl Effect': Liberalism, Empowerment and the Contradictions of Development. *Third World Quarterly*, *35* (8), 1355–73. doi:10.1080/01436597.2014.946250

Hickel, J. (2015). *Democracy as Death: The Moral Order of Anti-liberal Politics in South Africa*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Hickel, J. (2020). *Less is More: How Degrowth Will Save the World*. London: Penguin Random House.

Hilhorst, D., & Douma, N. (2018). Beyond the Hype? The Response to Sexual Violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2011 and 2014. *Disasters*, *42*(S1), S79–S98.

Hilhorst, D., Porter, H., & Gordon, R. (2018). Gender, Sexuality, and Violence in Humanitarian Crises. *Disasters*, *42*(S1), S3–S16.

Hintjens, H. (2008). Post-genocide Identity Politics in Rwanda. *Ethnicities*, *8*(1), 5–41.

Hirschman, A. O. (1970). *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hochschild, A. R. (2016). *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right*. New York: New Press.

Hoeffler, A. (2019). Post-conflict Stabilization in Africa. *Review of Development Economics*, *23*(3), 1238–59.

Hoge, R., & De Zulueta, E. (1985). Salience as a Condition for Various Social Consequences of Religious Commitment. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *24*(1), 21–38. doi:10.2307/1386273

Hogg, C. (2009). Women's Political Representation in Post-conflict Rwanda: A Politics of Inclusion or Exclusion? *Journal of International Women's Studies*, *11*(3), 34–55.

Hogg, R., O'Meally, S., & di John, J. (2017). *Social Service Delivery in Violent Contexts Achieving Results Against the Odds A Report From Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Nepal*. Washington, DC: The World Bank Group.

Holmes, R., Slater, R., Acker, A., & Berezovskaja, A. (2014). *Gender-responsive Budgeting in Fragile and Conflict-affected States: A Review*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Howden, D. (2013, 23 December). South Sudan: The State That Fell Apart in a Week. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/23/south-sudan-state-that-fell-apart-in-a-week

Huang, R., & Harris, J. (2006). The Nuts and Bolts of Post-conflict Capacity Building: Practicable Lessons From East Timor. *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, *2*(3), 78–92.

Hudson, D., & Leftwich, A. (2014). *From Political Economy to Political Analysis (Research Paper 25)*. Birmingham: The Developmental Leadership Program (DLP), University of Birmingham.

Hughes, C., Öjendal, J., & Schierenbeck, I. (2015). The Struggle Versus the Song - the Local Turn in Peacebuilding: An Introduction. *Third World Quarterly*, *36*(5), 817–24.

Human Rights Watch. (2011). *World Report 2011*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch. (2019). *World Report 2019: Syria*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch. (2020). *World Report 2020*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Huot, D., & Pain, A. (2017). *Afghanistan Livelihood Trajectories: Life on the Margins in Sar-i-Pul Province*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Hurrell, A. (2007). *On Global Order: Power, Values, and the Constitution of International Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ibáñez, A. M. (2016). *Understanding the Effect of Conflict on People and Households*. The Impact Initiative for International Development Research.

ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross). (2016). *Protracted Conflict and Humanitarian Action: Some Recent ICRC Experiences*. Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross.

Illouz, E. (2007). *Cold Intimacies: The Making of Emotional Capitalism*. Malden, MA: Polity.

IMF and World Bank. (2001). *Assistance to Post-conflict Countries and the HIPC Framework*. Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund / World Bank.

Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI). (2015). *DFID's Approach to Delivering Impact*. London: ICAI.

Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI). (2018). *DFID's Approach to Managing Fiduciary Risk in Conflict-affected Environments*. London: ICAI.

Ingram, G., & Papoulidis, J. (2018, 8 November). *Fragile States and the Search for 'what Works'*. Brookings Institution Retrieved from https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2018/11/08/fragile-states-and-the-search-for-what-works/

International Alert. (2013). *Dynamics and Trends of Foreign aid in Sri Lanka: Exploring Space for Context-sensitive aid Delivery*. London: International Alert.

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. (2017). *Inclusive Peacebuilding in Conflict-affected States: Designing for Democracy's Resilience*. Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

International Peace Institute. (2017). *Entrepreneurship for Sustaining Peace*. New York: International Peace Institute.

Isser, D. (2013). Remarks by Deborah Isser. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting (American Society of International Law)*, *107*, 86–90. doi:10.5305/procannmeetasil.107.0086

Iwerks, R., & Toroskainen, K. (2017, April). *Subnational Revenue Sharing in the DRC After Découpage: Four Recommendations for Better Governance*. London and New York: Natural Resource Governance Institute.

Jackson, A. (2014). *Politics and Governance in Afghanistan: The Case of Nangarhar Province*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Jackson, A. (2015). *Politics and Governance in Afghanistan: The Case of Kandahar*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Jackson, A. (2016). *Seeing Like the Networked State: Subnational Governance in Afghanistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Jackson, A., & Minoia, G. (2016). *The Rules of the Game: Towards a Theory of Networks of Access*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Jackson, A., & Nemat, O. (2018). *Politics Over Evidence: Questioning the Link Between Service Delivery and State Legitimacy in Afghanistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Jan, M. A., & Harriss-White, B. (2012). The Three Roles of Agricultural Markets: A Review of Ideas About Agricultural Commodity Markets in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *47*(52), 39–52. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/41720550

Javed, S. A., Ali, W., & Baig, I. (2019). *Household Debt in Pakistan: Conflict, Borrowing and Structural Indebtedness*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Jayasekara, P., & Najab, N. (2016). *The Political Economy of Violence: Women's Economic Relations in Post-war Sri Lanka*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Jené, L., & Englebert, P. (2019). *Tangled! Congolese Provincial Elites in a web of Patronage*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Jensen, P., & Shaw, J. (1993). Children as Victims of war: Current Knowledge and Future Research Needs. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, *32*(4), 697–708.

Jerven, M. (2013). *Poor Numbers: How We Are Misled by African Development Statistics and What to Do About It*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Jerven, M., & Johnston, D. (2015). Statistical Tragedy in Africa? Evaluating the Data Base for African Economic Development. *The Journal of Development Studies*, *51*(2), 111–15. doi:papers3://publication/doi/10.1080/00220388.2014.968141

Juncos, A., & Blockmans, S. (2018). The EU's Role in Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: Four key Challenges. *Global Affairs*, *4*(2–3), 131–40.

Justino, P. (2009). *Poverty and Violent Conflict: A Micro-level Perspective on the Causes and Duration of Warfare*. Brighton: MICROCON.

Justino, P., & Stojetz, W. (2018). *On the Legacies of Wartime Governance*. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex.

Kabwama, S. N., Ndyanabangi, S., Mutungi, G., Wesonga, R., Bahendeka, S. K., & Guwatudde, D. (2016). Alcohol use Among Adults in Uganda: Findings From the Countrywide Non-communicable Diseases Risk Factor Cross-sectional Survey. *Global Health Action*, *9*, 31302. doi:10.3402/gha.v9.31302

Kahan, D. M. (2017). Misconceptions, Misinformation, and the Logic of Identity-protective Cognition Cultural Cognition Project Working Paper Series No. 164, Yale Law School, Public Law Research Paper No. 605, Yale Law & Economics Research

Paper No. 575. Retrieved from https://ssrn.com/abstract=2973067 or doi:10.2139/ssrn.2973067

Kahan, D. M., Braman, D., Gastil, J., & Slovic, P. (2007). Culture and Identity-Protective Cognition: Explaining the White-Male Effect in Risk Perception. *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies*, *4*(3), 465–505. doi:10.1111/j.1740-1461.2007.00097.x

Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking Fast and Slow*. New York: Penguin.

Kaldor, M. (2009). The Reconstruction of Political Authority in a Global Era. In D Kostovicova and V Bojicic-Dzelilovic (Eds.), *Persistent State Weakness in the Global Age*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Kaldor, M., & Vincent, J. (2006). *Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-affected Countries: Case Study - Sierra Leone*. New York: UNDP.

Kang, S., & Meernik, J. (2005). Civil War Destruction and the Prospects for Economic Growth. *Journal of Politics*, *67*(1), 88–109.

Karim, S. (2020). Relational State Building in Areas of Limited Statehood: Experimental Evidence on the Attitudes of the Police. *American Political Science Review*, *114*(2), 536–51.

Katz, R., Ogilvie, S., Shaw, J., & Woodhead, L. (2021). *Gen Z, Explained: The Art of Living in a Digital Age*. Chicago, IL and London: The University of Chicago Press.

KC, S., Upreti, B., Paudel, S. B., Acharya, G., Tandukar, A., & Babajanian, B. (2014a). *The Old Age Allowance and Perceptions of the State in Rolpa District, Nepal*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

KC, S., Upreti, B., Paudel, S. B., Acharya, G., Tandukar, A., & Babajanian, B. (2014b). *What Does Nepal's Old Age Allowance Mean for the Elderly? Evidence From Rolpa*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Keen, D. (2012). Greed and Grievance. *African Affairs*, *88*(4), 757–77.

Kelsall, T. (2018). Towards a Universal Political Settlement Concept: A Response to Mushtaq Khan. *African Affairs*, *117*(469), 656–69. doi:10.1093/afraf/ady018

Kelton, S. (2020). *The Deficit Myth: Modern Monetary Theory and How to Build a Better Economy*. London: John Murray.

Khan, K. (2018). Analysing Local Perceptions of Post-conflict and Post-floods Livelihood Interventions in Swat, Pakistan. *Development Policy Review*, *37*(1), 274–92.

Khan, M. (2018). Introduction: Political Settlements and the Analysis of Institutions. *African Affairs, Virtual Issue: Political Settlements Research in Africa*, *117*(469), 636–55.

Khan, R. (2015, 13 May). In International Aid, People Should Be Seen as Consumers Not 'Beneficiaries'. *The Guardian*.

Khwaja, A. I. (2004). Is Increasing Community Participation Always a Good Thing? *Journal of the European Economic Association*, *2*(2–3), 427–36.

Kitara, D. L., Odongkara, B. M., Anywar, D. A., Atim, P., Amone, C., & Komakech, D. (2012). Domestic Violence in Gulu, Northern Uganda. *East and Central African Journal of Surgery*, *17*(1), 29–36.

König, M. D., Rohner, D., Thoenig, M., & Zilibotti, F. (2017). Networks in Conflict: Theory and Evidence From the Great War of Africa. *Econometrica*, *85*(4), 1093–132. doi:10.3982/ECTA13117

Kothari, A., Salleh, A., Escobar, A., Demaria, F., & Acosta, A. (2019). *Pluriverse: A Post-development Dictionary*. New Delhi: Tulika Books.

Krieger, H. (2018). International Law and Governance by Armed Groups: Caught in the Legitimacy Trap? *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *12*(4), 563–83.

Kugler, T., Kang, K. K., Kugler, J., Arbetman-Rabinowitz, M., & Thomas, J. (2013). Demographic and Economic Consequences of Conflict. *International Studies Quarterly*, *57*(1), 1–12.

Kurosaki, T., & Khan, H. (2011). Floods, Relief Aid and Household Resilience in Rural Pakistan: Findings From a Pilot Survey in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *The Review of Agrarian Studies*, *1*(2), 79–107.

Kyamusugulwa, P. M., Hilhorst, D., & Bergh, S. I. (2019a). *The Importance of Gender Norms in Promoting Social Accountability for Women in DRC: Lessons for Policy-makers*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Kyamusugulwa, P. M., Hilhorst, D., & Bergh, S. I. (2019b). *Pathways to Women's Empowerment: Navigating the Hybrid Social Order in Eastern DRC*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Lacher, W. (2012). *South Sudan: International State-building and its Limits*. Berlin: SWP.

Laitin, D., & Posner, D. (2001). The Implications of Constructivism for Constructing Ethnic Fractionalization Indices. *APSA-CP: Newsletter of the Organized Section in Comparative Politics of the American Political Science Association*, *12*(1), 13–17.

Lakoff, G. (1987). *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal About the Mind*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lakoff, G. (1990). *Don't Think of an Elephant! Know Your Values and Frame the Debate – The Essential Guide for Progressives*. White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing.

Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago. IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lall, A. (2016). *'Don't Tell Them Where we Live' – Caste and Access to Education in Northern Sri Lanka*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Lall, A. (2017). *Access to Water and Sanitation in Jaffna, Sri Lanka: Perceptions of Caste*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Lang, A. (2012). Weak Institutions—Robust Societies: Constructing Disasters and Coping With Risks in Africa. In L. Bloemertz, M. Doevenspeck, E. Macamo, & D. Muller-Mahn (Eds.), *Risk and Africa: Multi-disciplinary Empirical Approaches* (pp. 197–212). Berlin: Lit Verlag.

Lazarus, R., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, Appraisal, and Coping*. New York: Springer Publishing Company.

Leftwich, A. (2000). *States of Development: On the Primacy of Politics in Development*. London: Polity Press.

Lemoigne, N. (2012). From One Risk to Another: International Projects and Food Risks In Cameroon: A Corrupted Approach? In L. Bloemertz, M. Doevenspeck, E. Macamo, & D. Muller-Mahn (Eds.), *Risk and Africa: Multi-disciplinary Empirical Approaches* (pp. 213–28). Berlin: Lit Verlag.

Lenzen, M. (2016). *Building Stability Framework*. London: Department for International Development.

Leonardi, C. (2007). Violence, Sacrifice and Chiefship in Central Equatoria, Southern Sudan. *Africa*, *77*(4), 535–58.

Leonardsson, H., & Rudd, G. (2015). The 'Local Turn' in Peacebuilding: A Literature Review of Effective and Emancipatory Local Peacebuilding. *Third World Quarterly*, *36*(5), 825–39.

Lepore, J. (2014, 23 June). The Disruption Machine: What the Gospel of Innovation Gets Wrong. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/06/23/the-disruption-machine

Lepore, J. (2019). *This America: The Case for the Nation*. London: John Murray.

Leturcq, J.-G. (2009). Heritage-making and Policies of Identity in the 'Post-conflict Reconstruction' of Sudan. *Égypte/Monde Arabe*, 5–6, 295–327.

Levi, M. (2018). The Who, What, and Why of Performance-based Legitimacy. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *12*(4), 603–10. doi:10.1080/17502977.2018.1520955

Levine, S. (2014). *How to Study Livelihoods: Bringing a Sustainable Livelihoods Framework to Life*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Levine, S. (2016). *Livelihood Recovery in Post-conflict Northern Uganda*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Levy, B., & Kelsall, T. (2016). *Working Contextually: What Works in Different Types of Political Settlements*. Manchester: Effective States and Inclusive Development Research Centre, The University of Manchester (Mimeo).

Levy, B., & Kpundeh, S. (2004). *Building State Capacity in Africa : New Approaches, Emerging Lessons*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Lewis, J. I. (2020). *How Insurgency Begins: Rebel Group Formation in Uganda and Beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lindner, J. (2003). Institutional Stability and Change: Two Sides of the Same Coin[1]. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *10*(6), 912–35. doi:10.1080/1350176032000148360

Liu, E., & Hanauer, N. (2011). *The Gardens of Democracy: A new American Story of Citizenship, the Economy, and the Role of Government*. Seattle: Sasquatch Books/Penguin Random House.

Loewenstein, G. F., Weber, E. U., Hsee, C. K., & Welch, N. (2001). Risk as Feelings. *Psychological Bulletin*, *127*(2), 267–86. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.127.2.267

Lokuge, G., Senn, A., & Ranawana, A. (2019). *Policy Dissonance in Enterprise Development Programming in Sri Lanka*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Lottholz, P., & Lemay-Hébert, N. (2016). Re-reading Weber, Re-conceptualizing State-building: From Neo-weberian to Post-weberian Approaches to State, Legitimacy and State-building. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, *29*(4), 1467–85. doi:10.1080/09557571.2016.1230588

Lucas, B. (2014). *Capacity Development at the National Level in Fragile and Conflict-affected States*. Birmingham: GSDRC.

Luhmann, N. (1996). *Social Systems*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Lund, C. (2006). Twilight Institutions: Public Authority and Local Politics in Africa. *Development and Change*, *37*(4), 685–705.

Lyall, J. (2020). *Divided Armies: Inequality and Battlefield Performance in Modern War*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Mac Ginty, R. (2008). Indigenous Peacemaking Versus the Liberal Peace. *Cooperation and Conflict: Journal of the Nordic International Studies Association 43*(2), 139–63.

Mac Ginty, R. (2014). Everyday Peace: Bottom-up and Local Agency in Conflict-affected Societies. *Security Dialogue*, *45*(6), 548–64.

Mac Ginty, R., & Richmond, O. P. (2013). The Local Turn in Peace Building: A Critical Agenda for Peace. *Third World Quarterly*, *34*(5), 763–83. doi:10.1080/01436597.2013.800750

Macamo, E. (2012). Conclusion. In L. Bloemertz, M. Doevenspeck, E. Macamo, & D. Muller-Mahn (Eds.), *Risk and Africa: Multi-disciplinary Empirical Approaches* (pp. 265–72). Berlin: Lit Verlag.

Malejacq, R. (2020). *Warlord Survival: The Delusion of State Building in Afghanistan*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Mallett, R. (2015). *Taking Village Context Into Account in Afghanistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mallett, R., Acharya, G., Mashanda, M., Sturge, G., & Uprety, P. (2016). *Taxation, Livelihoods, Governance: Evidence From Nepal*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mallett, R., & Atim, T. (2014). *Gender, Youth and Urban Labour Market Participation: Evidence From the Catering Sector in Lira, Northern Uganda*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mallett, R., Atim, T., & Opio, J. (2016). *Youth on the Margins: In Search of Decent Work in Northern Uganda*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mallett, R., Atim, T., & Opio, J. (2017). *'Bad Work' and the Challenges of Creating Decent Work for Youth in Northern Uganda*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mallett, R., & Denney, L. (2015). *After Ebola: Towards a Smarter Model of Capacity Building*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mallett, R., Hagen-Zanker, J., Slater, R., & Sturge, G. (2015). *Surveying Livelihoods, Service Delivery and Governance: Baseline Evidence From the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Uganda*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mallett, R., Harvey, P., & Slater, R. (2014). *How to Study Capacity Support to States in Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations: An Analytical Framework*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mallett, R., Mansour-Ille, D., & Morris, C. (2017). *Rethinking State-building, Fragility and Conflict*. West Sussex: Wilton Park.

Mallett, R., Opio, J., & Atim, T. (2016). *Trading, Power and Politics in a Northern Ugandan Marketplace*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mallett, R., & Pain, A. (2015). *Labour Markets, Social Inequality and the Tailors of Kabul*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mallett, R., & Pain, A. (2017). *Markets, Conflict and Recovery: Findings From the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mallett, R., & Slater, R. (2012a). *Growth and Livelihoods in Conflict- Affected Situations: What do we Know?* London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mallett, R., & Slater, R. (2012b). *Growth and Livelihoods in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mallett, R., & Slater, R. (2017). *Tracking Change in Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations: Lessons From the SLRC Panel Survey* (Synthesis Briefing 1). London.

Malual, J., & Mazur, R. (2017). Social Capital and Access to Credit in Post-conflict Lira, Northern Uganda. *Community Development*, *48*(4), 566–81.

Mamdani, M. (2020). *Neither Settler nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Marino, P. (2005). *Beyond Economic Benefits: The Contribution of Microfinance to Postconflict Recovery in Asia and the Pacific*. Brisbane: Foundation for Development Cooperation.

Marivoet, W., De Herdt, T., & Ulimwengu, J. (2018). *Navigating Around the DRC's Statistical Potholes: New Estimates on Welfare and Poverty Trends (2005–2012) Following a Spatially Disaggregated Approach*. Antwerp: Institute of Development Policy, University of Antwerp.

Marivoet, W., De Herdt, T., & Ulimwengu, J. (2019). *Reviewing DRC's Poverty Estimates, 2005–2012: Unprecedented GDP Growth Without Trickle Down*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Marquette, H., & Beswick, D. (2011). State Building, Security and Development: State Building as a new Development Paradigm? *Third World Quarterly*, *32*, 1703–14. doi:10.1080/01436597.2011.610565

Marriage, Z. (2006). *Not Breaking the Rules. Not Playing the Game. International Assistance to Countries at War*. London: Hurst & Company.

Marshak, A., Mazurana, D., Opio, J. H., Gordon, R., & Atim, T. (2017). *Tracking Change in Livelihoods, Service Delivery and Governance: Evidence From a 2013–2015 Panel Survey in Uganda*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Martin-Kessler, F., & Poiret, A. (Writers). (2013). State Builders. *Quark Productions*. ARTE France.

Maslow, A. (1943). A Theory of Human Motivation. *Psychological Review*, *50*(4), 370–96. doi:10.1037/h0054346

Maté, G. (2008). *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters With Addiction*. Mississauga, ON: Knopf Canada.

Matsumoto, M. (2011). Expectations and Realities of Education in Post-conflict Sierra Leone: A Reflection of Society or a Driver for Peacebuilding? In Paulson, Julia (Ed.) *Education, Conflict and Development* Paulson, Julia (pp. 119–44). Oxford: Symposium Books.

Maxwell, D., Gelsdorf, K., & Santschi, M. (2012). *Livelihoods, Basic Services and Social Protection in South Sudan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Maxwell, D., Gordon, R., Moro, L., Santschi, M., & Dau, P. (2016a). *Complexities of Service Delivery and State-building*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Maxwell, D., Gordon, R., Moro, L., Santschi, M., & Dau, P. (2016b). *Livelihoods and Conflict in South Sudan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Maxwell, D., Mazurana, D., Wagner, M., & Slater, R. (2017). *Livelihoods, Conflict and Recovery: Findings From the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Maxwell, D., Santschi, M., Gordon, R., Dau, P., & Moro, L. (2014). *Livelihoods, Access to Services and Perceptions of Governance: An Analysis of Uror and Nyirol Counties, South Sudan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Maxwell, D., Santschi, M., Moro, L., Gordon, R., & Dau, P. (2015). *Questions and Challenges Raised by a Large-scale Humanitarian Operation in South Sudan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Maxwell, J. A. (2019). The Value of Qualitative Inquiry for Public Policy. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *26*(2), 177–86. doi:10.1177/1077800419857093

Mayadunne, G., Mallett, R., & Hagen-Zanker, J. (2014). *Surveying Livelihoods, Service Delivery and Governance: Baseline Evidence From Sri Lanka*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mazurana, D., & Atim, T. (2014a). *The Impact of Serious Crimes During the war on Households Today in Northern Uganda*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mazurana, D., & Atim, T. (2014b). *The war-wounded and Recovery in Northern Uganda*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mazurana, D., Marshak, A., & Atim, T. (2019). *The State of the war-wounded in Northern Uganda: Data From 2013–2018 on Their Lives and Access to Healthcare*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mazurana, D., Marshak, A., Gordon, R., Opio, J. H., Atim, T., & McEvoy, B. (2016). Disability and Recovery From war in Northern Uganda. *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal*, *1*(3), 353–69.

Mazzucato, M. (2021). *Mission Economy: A Moonshot Guide to Changing Capitalism*. London: Penguin.

McCullough, A. (2020). *Five Common Assumptions Aid Programmes Make in Supporting State Legitimacy*. https://securelivelihoods.org/5-common-assumptions/.

McCullough, A., Lacroix, A., & Hennessey, G. (2020). *Reconstructing our Understanding of the Link Between Services and State Legitimacy* (Working Paper 87). London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium/ ODI.

McCullough, A., & Papoulidis, J. (2020, 28 January). *Why We Need to Rethink Our Understanding of State Legitimacy to Address Fragility*. Washington, DC. https://blogs .worldbank.org/dev4peace/why-we-need-rethink-our-understanding-state-legitimacy -address-fragility.

McCullough, A., Toru, S., Syed, R., & Ahmed, S. (2019). *Why Services won't Always Buy Legitimacy: Everyday Experiences of the State in Swat, Pakistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

McGilchrist, I. (2009). *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

McLoughlin, C. (2015a). *Researching State Legitimacy: A Political Approach to a Political Problem* (Research Paper 36). Birmingham: Developmental Leadership Programme.

McLoughlin, C. (2015b). When Does Service Delivery Improve the Legitimacy of a Fragile or Conflict-affected State? *Governance*, *28*(3), 341–56. doi:10.1111/ gove.12091

McLoughlin, C. (2017). *When Does Service Provision Support or Undermine State Legitimacy? Higher Education and Processes of State (de-)Legitimation in Sri Lanka*. Birmingham: University of Birmingham.

McLoughlin, C. (2018). When the Virtuous Circle Unravels: Unfair Service Provision and State De-legitimation in Divided Societies. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *12*(4), 527–44.

Meagher, K. (2010). *Identity Economics: Social Networks & the Informal Economy in Nigeria*. Woodbridge: James Currey.

Migdal, J. S. (2012). *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Miklian, J., Lidén, K., & Kolås, Å. (2011). The Perils of 'going Local': Liberal Peace-building Agendas in Nepal. *Conflict, Security & Development*, *11*(3), 285–308.

Miliband, R. (1969). *The State in Capitalist Society*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Minoia, G., Mumatz, W., & Pain, A. (2014). *The Social Life of the Onion: The Informal Regulation of the Onion Market in Nangarhar, Afghanistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Minoia, G., Mumatz, W., & Pain, A. (2015). *The Informal Regulation of the Onion Market in Nangarhar, Afghanistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Minoia, G., & Pain, A. (2015). *'90% Real'– The Rise and Fall of a Rentier Economy: Stories From Kandahar, Afghanistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Minoia, G., & Pain, A. (2016). *Saffron: The Social Relations of Production*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Minoia, G., & Pain, A. (2017a). *Understanding Rural Markets in Afghanistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Minoia, G., & Pain, A. (2017b). *Understanding Rural Markets in Afghanistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Minoia, G., & Schrade, U. (2018). *No More Standard Programming: Economic Development in Fragile Settings - Lessons From Afghanistan: Research and Development Praxis*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mitchell, A. (2021). *Beyond a Fringe: Tales From a Reformed Establishment Lackey*. London: Biteback Publishing.

Mitchell, J., & Coles, C. (Eds.). (2011). *Markets and Rural Poverty: Upgrading in Value Chains*. Abingdon and Ottawa: Earthscan/ International Development Research Centre.

Mitchell, S. A. (1988). *Relational Concepts in Psychoanalysis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Mitchell, T. (1991). The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics. *The American Political Science Review*, *85*(1), 77–96. doi:10.2307/1962879

Mlambo, K., Kamara, A., & Nyenda, M. (2009). Financing Post-conflict Recovery in Africa: The Role of International Development Assistance. *Journal of African Economies*, *18*(1), 53–76.

Mohsin, M. (2020, 10 December). *Taking British Politics, Jargon and Colonialism out of our Language*. Retrieved from https://www.bond.org.uk/news/2020/12/taking-british -politics-jargon-and-colonialism-out-of-our-language

MONUSCO. (2020). *Main Trends in Human Rights Violations - January to June 2020*. Kinshasa: United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in DR Congo.

Moore, S. F. (1978). *Law as Social Process*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Morgan, P. (2006). *The Concept of Capacity*. Maastricht: European Centre for Development Policy Management.

Moro, L., Santschi, M., Gordon, R., Dau, P., & Maxwell, D. (2017). *Statebuilding and Legitimacy: Experiences of South Sudan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Moshonas, S. (2019). *The Political Economy of Human Resource and Payroll Management in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Mosse, D. (2004). Is Good Policy Unimplementable? Reflections on the Ethnography of Aid Policy and Practice. *Development and Change*, *35*, 639–71.

Mulligan, R. (2006). Transactional Economics: John Dewey's Ways of Knowing and the Radical Subjectivism of the Austrian School. *Education and Culture 22*(2), 61–82

Musa, A., & Horst, C. (2019). State Formation and Economic Development in Post-war Somaliland: The Impact of the Private Sector in an Unrecognised State. *Conflict, Security & Development*, *19*(1), 35–53.

Mwapu, I., Hilhorst, D., Mashanda, M., Bahananga, M., & Mugenzi, R. (2016). *Women Engaging in Transactional sex and Working in Prostitution: Practices and Underlying Factors of the sex Trade in South Kivu, the Democratic Republic of Congo*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Nakagawa, Y. (2018). Theorizing Postcolonial Deliberation and Deliberative Peacebuilding. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *12*(2), 253–75.

Namakula, J., & Witter, S. (2014). Living Through Conflict and Post-conflict: Experiences of Health Workers in Northern Uganda and Lessons for People-centred Health Systems. *Health Policy and Planning*, *29*(Supplement 2), ii6–ii14.

Nay, O. (2014). International Organisations and the Production of Hegemonic Knowledge: How the World Bank and the OECD Helped Invent the Fragile State Concept. *Third World Quarterly*, *35*(2), 210–31. doi:10.1080/01436597.2014.878128

Nayeri, D. (2019). *The Ungrateful Refugee: What Immigrants Never Tell You*. Edinburgh: Canongate.

Nenova, T. (2004). *Private Sector Response to the Absence of Government Institutions in Somalia*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Newson, M. (2017). Football, fan Violence, and Identity Fusion. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, *54*(4), 431–44. doi:10.1177/1012690217731293

Nguya, G. (2016). *Bringing Internally Displaced Persons Back Into Sight in the Democratic Republic of Congo*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Nguya, G. (2019a). *Defining and Identifying IDPs Outside of Camps in South Kivu: Challenges, Contradictions and Consequence*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Nguya, G. (2019b). *'We are all IDPs': Vulnerability and Livelihoods in Mugunga 3 Camp, Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Nilsson, M., & Marín, L. G. (2020). Violent Peace: Local Perceptions of Threat and Insecurity in Post-conflict Colombia. *International Peacekeeping*, *27*(2), 238–62.

Nixon, H., & Mallett, R. (2017). *Service Delivery, Public Perceptions and State Legitimacy: Findings From the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Nixon, H., Mallett, R., & McCullough, A. (2017). *Are Public Services the Building Blocks of State Legitimacy? Input to the World Bank's 2017 World Development Report*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Nkuku, A. M., & Titeca, K. (2018). *Market Governance in Kinshasa: The Competition for Informal Revenue Through 'connections' (branchement)*. Antwerp: Institute of Development Policy, University of Antwerp.

Nkurunziza, J. (2018). Growth in Fragile States in Africa: Conflict and Post-conflict Capital Accumulation. *Review of Development Economics*, *23*(3), 1202–19.

Noggle, R. (2018). Manipulation, Salience, and Nudges. *Bioethics*, *32*(3), 164–70. doi:10.1111/bioe.12421

North, D. (1990). *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Norton, M. I., Mochon, D., & Ariely, D. (2011). *The 'IKEA Effect': When Labor Leads to Love*. Harvard Business School (Working Paper 11-091).

O'Malley, P. (2018). Migration and Conflict. *New England Journal of Public Policy*, *30*(2), Article 14.

Observer Research Foundation. (2019). *The Politics of Aid in Afghanistan*. https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/the-politics-of-aid-in-afghanistan-52668/.

OECD (not dated). Behavioural Insights. Retrieved from https://www.oecd.org/gov/regulatory-policy/behavioural-insights.htm.

OECD. (2010a). *The State's Legitimacy in Fragile Situations Unpacking Complexity*. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

OECD. (2010b). *Supporting State-building in Situations of Conflict and Fragility: Policy Guidance*. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

OECD. (2020). *Beyond Growth: Towards a New Economic Approach, New Approaches to Economic Challenges*. Paris: OECD Publishing.

Olson, M. (1993). Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development. *The American Political Science Review*, *87*(3), 567–76.

Opitz-Stapleton, S., Nadin, R., Kellett, J., Calderone, M., Quevedo, A., Peters, K., & Mayhew, L. (2019). *Risk-informed Development: From Crisis to Resilience*. London: ODI.

Otim, O., Juma, T., & Otunnu, O. (2019). Assessing the Health Risks of Consuming 'Sachet' Alcohol in Acoli, Uganda. *PLoS ONE*. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0212938

Paffenholz, T. (2021). Perpetual Peacebuilding: A New Paradigm to Move Beyond the Linearity of Liberal Peacebuilding. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding, 15*(3), 367–85. doi:10.1080/17502977.2021.1925423

Pain, A. (2012). *Livelihoods, Basic Services and Social Protection in Afghanistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Pain, A. (2016). *Using Village Context Analysis in Afghanistan: Methods and Wider Implications*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Pain, A., & Huot, D. (2017a). *Afghanistan's 'surplus' Rural Population*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Pain, A., & Huot, D. (2017b). *Life in the Times of 'late Development': Livelihood Trajectories in Afghanistan, 2002–2016*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Pain, A., Huot, D., & Ghafoori, I. (2016a). *Livelihood Trajectories in Afghanistan: Evidence From Three Villages in Herat Province*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Pain, A., Huot, D., & Ghafoori, I. (2016b). *Livelihood Trajectories in Afghanistan: Silent Violence in Kandahar Province*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Pain, A., Jackson, A., Huot, D., & Minoia, G. (2017). *Transforming Afghanistan? Seeking Coherence Between Technical Solutions and Political Processes: Lessons From the Field*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Pain, A., & Mallett, R. (2014). *Gender, Youth and Urban Labour Market Participation: Evidence From the Tailoring Sector in Kabul, Afghanistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Pain, A., & Sturge, G. (2015). *Mapping Village Variability in Afghanistan: The use of Cluster Analysis to Construct Village Typologies*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Papoulidis, J. (2019). *Presentation on Country Platforms for the Annual Conference of the Global Delivery Initiative*. Retrieved from http://www.globaldeliveryinitiative.org/blogs/country-platforms-fragile-states-new-path-development-cooperation.

Parker, P. (2018). *The Art of Gathering: How We Meet and Why It Matters*. New York: Riverhead Books/ Penguin.

Paudel, S. B., Upreti, B., Acharya, G., Tandukar, A., & Harvey, P. (2015a). *Health Services and Users' Perceptions of the State in Rolpa, Nepal*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Paudel, S. B., Upreti, B., Acharya, G., Tandukar, A., & Harvey, P. (2015b). *Taking the Temperature: Health Services in Nepal and Users' Perceptions of the State*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Peace Direct. (2021). *Time to Decolonise Aid Insights and Lessons From a Global Consultation*. London: Peace Direct.

Penrose, L. S., & Penrose, R. (1958). Impossible Objects: A Special Type of Visual Illusion. *British Journal of Psychology*, *49*(1), 31–3. doi:10.1111/j.2044-8295.1958.tb00634.x

Perera, S. (2017). Bermuda Triangulation: Embracing the Messiness of Researching in Conflict. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*. doi:10.1080/17502977.2016.1269528

Perrinet, T., Grossenbacher, A., & Goetschel, L. (2018). *Desk Study: Peace-migration Nexus*. Bern: Swisspeace.

Peters, E., & Slovic, P. (1996). The Role of Affect and Worldviews as Orienting Dispositions in the Perception and Acceptance of Nuclear Power. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *26*(16), 1427–53. doi:10.1111/j.1559-1816.1996.tb00079.x

Petersen, B., & Engberg-Pedersen, L. (2013). *Capacity Development of Central State Institutions in Fragile Situations*. Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies.

Petersen, B., & Pedersen-Engberg, L. (2013). *Capacity Development of Central State Institutions in Fragile Situations*. Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies.

Philipps, S. (2013). *Political Settlements and State Formation: The Case of Somaliland* (Research Paper 23). Birmingham: DLP.

Philipps, S. (2020). *When There Was No Aid: War and Peace in Somaliland*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Philips, M., & Mayadunne, G. (2016). *Perceptions of Livelihood Services Delivery: A Study of Fisher Communities in Post-war North and East of Sri Lanka*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Philipsen, D. (2015). *The Little Big Number - How GDP Came to Rule the World and What To Do About It*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Piketty, T. (2013). *Capital in the Twenty-first Century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Polanyi, K. (1944). *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. New York: Farrar and Rinehart.

Popova, M. (not dated). *Rebecca Solnit on Growing Up, Growing Whole, and How We Compose Ourselves*. https://www.themarginalian.org/2020/03/20/rebecca-solnit -recollections-of-my-nonexistence/.

Porteous, O. (not dated). Research Deserts and Oases: Evidence From 27 Thousand Economics. *Journal Articles on Africa*. Retrieved from https://drive.google.com/file/d /1vGpzi_yV-H78VtibvxrFS1ZScLjmvtWw/view.

Pritchett, L. (2013). *The Rebirth of Education: Schooling Ain't Learning*. Washington, DC: Center for Global Development Books.

Raihani, N. (2021). *The Social Instinct: How Cooperation Shaped the World*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Rampton, D., & Nadarajah, S. (2017). A Long View of Liberal Peace and its Crisis. *European Journal of International Relations*, *23*(2), 441–65.

Ranawana, A., & Senn, A. (2019). '*We do What we Have to do': Cultures of Indebtedness Among Women Entrepreneurs in the East of Sri Lanka*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Rathi, A. (2018). *Psychological Impact of Victims of War and Conflict*. New York: Columbia University.

Raworth, K. (2018). *Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st-century Economist*. London: Random House Business.

Reinikka, R., & Svensson, J. (2011). The Power of Information in Public Services: Evidence From Education in Uganda. *Journal of Public Economics*, *95*(7), 956–66. doi:10.1016/j. jpubeco.2011.02.006

Reyntjens, F. (2009). *The Great African War: Congo and Regional Geopolitics, 1996–2006*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ribeiro, G. (2005). Power, Networks and Ideology in the Field of Development. *Série Antropologia*, *378*, 1–16.

Richmond, O. (2011). *A Post-liberal Peace*. London: Routledge.

Richmond, O., & Mac Ginty, R. (2014). Where now for the Critique of Liberal Peace? *Cooperation and Conflict*, *50*(2), 171–89.

Riebeek, H. (2013, 18 November). *How to Interpret a Satellite Image: Five Tips and Strategies*. Retrieved from https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/features/ColorImage

Rigterink, A. S., & Schomerus, M. (2016). Probing for Proof, Plausibility, Principle and Possibility: What Systematic Evidence Reviews Taught Us About Framing 'Evidence' for Policy-making. *Development Policy Review*, *34*(1), 5–27.

Rima, I. (2010). *Post-conflict Reconstruction and Participation in Indonesia: Required Conditions for Empowerment and Security*. The Hague: International Institute of Social Studies.

Ringer, F. (2002). Max Weber on Causal Analysis, Interpretation, and Comparison. *History and Theory*, *41*(2), 163–78. doi:10.1111/0018-2656.00197

Rist, G. (2006). *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*. London: Zed Books.

Ritchie, H. A. (2017). *Uncertain Livelihoods in Refugee Environments: Between Risk and Tradition for Syrian Refugee Women in Jordan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Rocha Menocal, A. (2011). State Building for Peace: A new Paradigm for International Engagement in Post-conflict Fragile States? *Third World Quarterly*, *32*(10), 1715–36.

Rock, D. (2009, August). Managing With the Brain in Mind. *Strategy and Business*, *56*. https://www.strategy-business.com/article/09306.

Roggeband, C., & van der Haar, M. (2017). 'Moroccan Youngsters': Category Politics in the Netherlands. *International Migration*, *56*(4), 79–95. doi:10.1111/imig.12419

Rothstein, B. (2009). Creating Political Legitimacy: Electoral Democracy Versus Quality of Government. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *53*(3), 311–30. doi:10.1177/0002764209338795

Said, E. W. (1978, reprinted 2003). *Orientalism*. New York: Penguin.

Sanguhan, Y., & Gunasekara, V. (2017). *Tracking Change in Livelihoods, Service Delivery and Governance: Evidence From a 2012–2015 Panel Survey in Sri Lanka*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Santschi, M. (2016). *Encountering and 'Capturing' Hakuma: Negotiating Statehood and Authority in Northern Bahr el-Ghazal State, South Sudan*. Bern: University of Bern.

Santschi, M., Moro, L., Dau, P., Gordon, R., & Maxwell, D. (2014). *Livelihoods, Access to Services and Perceptions of Governance: An Analysis of Pibor County, South Sudan From the Perspective of Displaced People*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Saparamadu, C., & Lall, A. (2014). *Resettlement of Conflict-induced IDPs in Northern Sri Lanka: Political Economy of State Policy and Practice*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Schatzberg, M. (2001). *Political Legitimacy in Middle Africa: Father, Family, Food*. Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Schmelzle, C., & Stollenwerk, E. (2018). Virtuous or Vicious Circle? Governance Effectiveness and Legitimacy in Areas of Limited Statehood. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *12*(4), 449–67.

Schmidt, V. (2008). Discursive Institutionalism: The Explanatory Power of Ideas and Discourse. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *11*. doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.11.060606.135342

Schomerus, M. (2021). *The Lord's Resistance Army: Violence and Peacemaking in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schomerus, M., & Aalen, L. (Eds.). (2016). *Considering the State: Perspectives on South Sudan's Subdivision and Federalism Debate*. London and Bergen: ODI/ CMI.

Schomerus, M., & Allen, T. (2010). *Southern Sudan at Odds With Itself: Dynamics of Conflict and Predicaments of Peace*. London: LSE/ DESTIN/ Pact Sudan/ DfID.

Schomerus, M., & De Vries, L. (2014). Improvising Border Security: 'A Situation of Security Pluralism' Along South Sudan's Borders With the Democratic Republic of Congo. *Security Dialogue*, *45*(3 (Special Issue *Governance of Border Security in Practice*)), 279–94.

Schomerus, M., & De Vries, L. (2018). A State of Contradiction: Sudan's Unity Goes South. In L. de Vries, P. Englebert, & M. Schomerus (Eds.), *Secessionism in African Politics: Aspiration, Grievance, Performance, Disenchantment* (pp. 423–55). New York: Palgrave.

Scott, J. (1976). *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia*. London: Yale University Press.

Scott, K. (2020). *Advice for Talking to Your Chill Parents About Coronavirus*. ABC Life. Retrieved from https://www.abc.net.au/life/advice-for-talking-to-your-chill-parents-about-coronavirus/12081428

Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium. (2013). *Taxation and Livelihoods: Evidence From Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium. (2017a). *How to Support State-building, Service Delivery and Recovery in Fragile and Conflict- Affected Situations: Lessons From six Years of SLRC Research*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium. (2017b). *Tracking Change in Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations: Lessons From the SLRC Panel Survey*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium. (2019). *What Matters to People When Recovering From Conflict*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium. (2021a). *Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium Bibliography: Listed by Author*. London: SLRC/ ODI.

Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium. (2021b). *Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium Bibliography: Listed by Country*. London: SLRC/ ODI.

Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium. (2021c). *Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium Bibliography: Listed by Theme*. London: SLRC/ ODI.

Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium. (2021d). *Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium Summary of key Findings From Phase II (2017–2020)*. London: SLRC/ ODI.

Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*. New York: Knopf.

Shahbaz, B., Suleri, A., Ali, M., Khan, H., Sturge, G., Mallett, R., & Hagen-Zanker, J. (2017). *Tracking Change in Livelihoods, Service Delivery and Governance: Evidence From a 2012–2015 Panel Survey in Pakistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Shaw, T., & Ghafoori, I. (2019). *On Borrowed Time: The Limits of Informal Credit for Livelihood Security in Herat, Afghanistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Shitemi, N. L. (2012). Coping With Socio-environmental Challenges in Kenya's North Rift: Grassroots Welfare Initiatives. In L. Bloemertz, M. Doevenspeck, E. Macamo, & D. Muller-Mahn (Eds.), *Risk and Africa: Multi-disciplinary Empirical Approaches* (pp. 229–42). Berlin: Lit Verlag.

SIDA. (2017). *Conflict Prevention: Opportunities and Challenges in Implementing key Policy Commitments and Priorities*. Stockholm: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Siméant, J. (2011). *The Concept of Moral Economy Applied to Riots and Protest in Poor Countries: How it Helps and why it Should be Used With Caution - The Example of Mali*. Paris: Université de Paris.

Sjöberg, F. (2014). *The Fly Trap*. New York: Penguin.

Slater, R., Mallett, R., & Carpenter, S. (2012). *Social Protection and Basic Services in Conflict-affected Situations: What do we Know?* London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples.* . London: Zed Books.

Somasundaram, D., & Jamunanatha, C. S. (2002). Psychosocial Consequences of war: Northern Sri Lankan Experience. In Joop de Jong (Ed.), *Trauma, War and Violence: Public Mental Health in Socio-cultural Context* (pp. 205–58). New York: Plenum.

Sserwanga, A., Kicono, R., Nystrand, M., & Mindra, R. (2014). Social Entrepreneurship and Post Conflict Recovery in Uganda. *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*, *8*(4), 300–17.

Stabilisation Unit. (2014). *Analysis for Conflict and Stabilisation Interventions*. London: Stabilisation Unit.

Standing, G. (2011). *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Steflja, I. (2010). Identity Crisis in Post-conflict Societies: The ICTY's Role in Defensive Nationalism Among the Serbs. *Global Change, Peace & Security*, *22*(2), 231–48.

Stern, N. (2003). Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy, Policy Research Report, World Bank/Oxford University Press.

Stewart, F. (1995). *Adjustment and Poverty: Options and Choices*. London: Routledge.

Stieg, C. How to Talk with Your Older Parents about the COVID-19 Pandemic – And Have Them Actually Listen. (2020, 13 March). In C. Stieg (Ed.). CNBC. Retrieved from https://www.cnbc.com/2020/03/13/how-to-talk-to-older-adults-who-arent-taking -coronavirus-seriously.html

Stites, E., Atim, T., & Tracy, A. F. (2018). *'She Told me That Life Here is so Easy': Urban Migration of Acholi Youth, Uganda*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Stites, E., & Bushby, K. (2017). *Livelihood Strategies and Interventions in Fragile and Conflict-affected Areas: Assessing Trends and Changes From 2012 to 2016*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Stollenwerk, E. (2018). Securing Legitimacy? *Perceptions of Security and ISAF's Legitimacy in Northeast Afghanistan*, *12*(4), 506–28.

Stone, D., Patton, B., & Heen, S. (1999). *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most*. New York: Viking Penguin.

Sturge, G., Hagen-Zanker, J., Acharya, G., Paudel, S. B., Tandukar, A., Upreti, B., & Mallett, R. (2017). *Tracking Change in Livelihoods, Service Delivery and Governance: Evidence From a 2012–2015 Panel Survey in Nepal*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Sturge, G., Mallett, R., Hagen-Zanker, J., & Slater, R. (2017). *Tracking Livelihoods, Service Delivery and Governance: Panel Survey Findings From the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Suleri, A., Shahbaz, B., & Ali Shah, Q. (2016). *Recovering From War and Living in Hope: Fruit and Vegetable Markets in Pakistan's Swat Valley*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Suleri, A., Shahbaz, B., Commins, S., & Mosel, I. (2017). *The Role of Local Institutions in Conflict-affected Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Summerfield, D. (1998). The Social Experience of war and Some Issues for the Humanitarian Field. In P. Bracken & C. Petty (Eds.), *Rethinking the Trauma of War* (pp. 9–37). London: Free Association Books.

Summerfield, D. (1999). A Critique of Seven Assumptions Behind Psychological Trauma Programmes in War-affected Areas. *Social Science and Medicine*, *48*(10), 1449–62.

Summerfield, D. (2001). The Invention of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and the Social Usefulness of a Psychiatric Category. *BMJ*, *322*(7278): 95–8.

Sunshine, J., & Tyler, T. (2003). The Role of Procedural Justice and Legitimacy in Shaping Public Support for Policing. *Law & Society Review*, *37*(3), 513–48.

Sutherland, C., Scott, D., Brooks, S., & Guy, H. (2012). Lay Knowledge of Risk: Exploring the 'Riskscapes' of South Durban Communities. In L. Bloemertz, M. Doevenspeck, E. Macamo, & D. Muller-Mahn (Eds.), *Risk and Africa: Multi-disciplinary Empirical Approaches* (pp. 47–86). Berlin: Lit Verlag.

Svarverud, E., Gilson, S., & Glennerster, A. (2012). A Demonstration of 'Broken' Visual Space. *PLoS ONE*, *7*(3), e33782. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0033782

Tandukar, A., KC, S., Upreti, B., Paudel, S. B., Acharya, G., & Harvey, P. (2015a). *Could do Better: Education in Nepal and Users' Perceptions of the State*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Tandukar, A., KC, S., Upreti, B., Paudel, S. B., Acharya, G., & Harvey, P. (2015b). *Education Services and Users' Perceptions of the State in Rolpa, Nepal*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Tandukar, A., Upreti, B., Paudel, S. B., Acharya, G., & Harris, D. (2016). *The Effectiveness of Local Peace Committees in Nepal: A Study From Bardiya District*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Tapscott, R. (2021). *Arbitrary States: Social Control and Modern Authoritarianism in Museveni's Uganda*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tartir, A., & Ejdus, F. (2017). Effective? Locally Owned? Beyond the Technocratic Perspective on the European Union Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories. *Contemporary Security Policy*, *39*(1), 142–65.

Teskey, G., Schnell, S., & Poole, A. (2012). *Beyond Capacity – Addressing Authority and Legitimacy in Fragile States*. Draft May 2012. World Bank.

Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. R. (2008). *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth and Happiness*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

The SEEP Network. (2017). *Minimum Economic Recovery Standards* (3rd ed.). Burton on Dunsmore: Practical Action Publishing.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. (2018). Syria: 560,000 Killed in Seven yrs of war, SOHR. *ANSAmed*.

Thibodeau, P. H., & Boroditsky, L. (2011). Metaphors We Think With: The Role of Metaphor in Reasoning. *PLoS ONE 6*(2), e16782. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0016782

Thing, N. E. (1983). *Magic Eye: A New Way of Looking at the World*. Kansas City, MS: Andrews & McMeel.

Thomas, C. C., Otis, N. G., Abraham, J. R., Markus, H. R., & Walton, G. M. (2020). Toward a Science of Delivering aid With Dignity: Experimental Evidence and Local Forecasts

From Kenya. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 201917046. doi:10.1073/pnas.1917046117

Thomas, E. (2015). *South Sudan: A Slow Liberation*. London: Zed Books.

Thomas, E. (2019). *Moving Towards Markets: Cash, Commodification and Conflict in South Sudan*. Nairobi: Rift Valley Institute.

Thontwa, S. K., De Herdt, T., Marivoet, W., & Ulimwengu, J. (2017). *National Datasets on Livelihoods in the DRC: Precisely Wrong or Vaguely Right?* Antwerp: Institute of Development Policy, University of Antwerp.

Timilsina, A. (2007). *Getting the Policies Right: The Prioritization and Sequencing of Policies in Post-conflict Countries*. Santa Monica: Pardee RAND Graduate School.

Titeca, K., & Nkuku, A. M. (2019). *Urban Governance Through Personal Connections: Kinshasa and its Unlawful Constructions*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Tobias, J., & Boudreaux, K. (2011). Entrepreneurship and Conflict Reduction in the Post-genocide Rwandan Coffee Industry. *Journal of Small Business & Entrepreneurship*, *24*(2), 217–42.

Travouillon, K. (2017). Moderator or Manipulator? How International – Local Relations Emerged as a Function of UN Authority-building in Cambodia. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *11*(4), 447–67.

TRT World. (2019, 12 December). Sri Lanka Makes Strong Gains in the Human Development Index. *TRT World*.

True, J., & River-Morales, Y. (2018). Towards Inclusive Peace: Analysing Gender-sensitive Peace Agreements 2000–2016. *International Political Science Review*, *40*(1), 23–40.

Turner, S. P., & Factor, R. A. (1981). Objective Possibility and Adequate Causation in Weber's Methodological Writings. *The Sociological Review*, *29*(1), 5–28. doi:10.1111/j.1467-954X.1981.tb03019.x

Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1973). Availability: A Heuristic for Judging Frequency and Probability. *Cognitive Psychology*, *5*, 207–323.

Tyler, T. (2006). Restorative Justice and Procedural Justice: Dealing With Rule Breaking. *Journal of Social Issues*, *62*(2), 307–26.

Tzifakis, N., & Huliaras, A. (2013). Hegemonic Relationships: Donor Countries and NGOs in Western Balkan Post-conflict Reconstruction. *Southeastern Europe*, *37*(3), 312–29.

UK Government. (2013). *David Cameron's Speech to the UN: Prime Minister's Speech on Development and Poverty*. London: Her Majesty's Government.

UK Parliament (2021). *Committee to Scrutinise UK Aid Programme in Pakistan*. London.

UN. (2013). *United Nations Guidance Note for Effective Use and Development of National Capacity in Post-conflict Contexts*. New York: United Nations.

UNDP. (2008). *Post-conflict Economic Recovery: Enabling Local Ingenuity*. New York: United Nations Development Programme.

UNDP. (2014). *Youth and Development: Sri Lanka National Human Development Report*. Washington, DC: United Nations Development Programme.

UNDP (United Nations Development Program). (not dated). *Supporting Capacity Development: The UNDP Approach*. New York: UNDP.

United Nations General Assembly Security Council. (2015, 30 June). *Challenge of Sustaining Peace: Report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture; A/69/968 S/2015/490*. New York: UNSC.

Unsworth, S. (2009). What's Politics got to do With it?: Why Donors Find it so Hard to Come to Terms With Politics, and why This Matters. *Journal of International Development*, *21*(6), 883–94. doi:10.1002/jid.1625

Upreti, B., KC, S., Mallett, R., Babajanian, B., Pyakuryal, K., Ghimire, S., . . . Sharma, S. R. (2012). *Livelihoods, Basic Services and Social Protection in Nepal*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Upreti, B. R., Uprety, P., Hagen-Zanker, J., KC, S., & Mallett, R. (2014). *Surveying Livelihoods, Service Delivery and Governance: Baseline Evidence From Nepal*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

USAID. (2009). *A Guide to Economic Growth in Post-conflict Countries*. Washington, DC: U.S. Agency for International Development.

USAID. (2021). *Crisis in Syria*. Washington, DC: USAID.

Valters, C. (2015a). *Theories of Change: Time for a Radical Approach to Learning in Development*. London: ODI.

Valters, C. (2015b, 26 June). *3 big Problems With How We Think About Results and Development*. https://www.devex.com/news/3-big-problems-with-how-we-think-about -results-and-development-86419.

Valters, C., & Whitty, B. (2017). *The Politics of the Results Agenda in DFID: 1997–2017*. London: ODI.

Van de Walle, S., & Scott, Z. (2009). *The Role of Public Services in State- and Nation-building: Exploring Lessons From European History for Fragile States*. GSDRC Research Paper. Birmingham: Governance and Social Development Resource Centre.

Veenhoven, R., Ehrhardt, J., Ho, M. S. D., & de Vries, A. (1993). *Happiness in Nations: Subjective Appreciation of Life in 56 Nations 1946–1992*. Rotterdam: Erasmus University Rotterdam.

Venner, M. (2015). The Concept of 'capacity' in Development Assistance: New Paradigm or More of the Same? *Global Change, Peace and Security*, *27*(1), 85–96.

Verwimp, P., Justino, P., & Brück, T. (2019). The Microeconomics of Violent Conflict. *Journal of Development Economics*, *141*, 1–6.

Vogler, C. (2020, 25th anniversary edition). *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers*. San Francisco, CA: Michael Wiese Productions.

von Billerbeck, S. (2017). UN Peace Operations and Conflicting Legitimacies. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *11*(3), 286–305.

von Billerbeck, S., & Gippert, B. (2017). Legitimacy in Conflict: Concepts, Practices, Challenges. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *11*(3), 273–85.

Voss, C., & Raz, T. (2016). *Never Split the Difference: Negotiating as if Your Life Depended on It*. New York: Random House Business Books.

Wakenge, C. I. (2018). *Mining Minerals or Mining the State? The Practical Norms Governing Mineral Extraction in Former Katanga, Democratic Republic of Congo*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Walker, S. (2020). *Five Rules for Rebellion: Let's Change the World Ourselves*. London: Icon Books.

Walter, B. (2014). Why Bad Governance Leads to Repeat Civil War. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *59*(7), 1–31.

Weber, M. (1922). *Grundriss der Sozialökonomik (3. Abteilung): Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck).

Weber, M. (1978). The Nature of Social Action. In W. G. Runciman (Ed.), *Max Weber: Selections in Translation* (pp. 7–32). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Weick, K., Sutcliffe, K. M., & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the Process of Sensemaking. *Organization Science*, *16*(4), 409–21.

Weigand, F. (2017). Afghanistan's Taliban – Legitimate Jihadists or Coercive Extremists? *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *11*(3), 359–81.

Weijs, B., Hilhorst, D., & Ferf, A. J. E. (2012). *Livelihoods, Basic Services and Social Protection in Democratic Republic of the Congo*. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Wein, T. (2021). *The Dignity Report: Three Years of Research on Dignity & International Development* London: The Dignity Project.

West, R., & Michie, S. (2019). *UBC Briefing 9: A Brief Description of the PRIME Theory of Human Motivation*. London: Unlocking Behaviour Change.

Weyland, K. (2005). The Diffusion of Innovations: How Cognitive Heuristics Shaped Bolivia's Pension Reform. *Comparative Politics*, *38*(1), 21–42. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.com/stable/20072911

Weyland, K. (2006). *Bounded Rationality and Policy Diffusion: Social Sector Reform in Latin America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Whaites, A. (2008). *States in Development: Understanding State-building* (A DFID Working Paper). London: Department for International Development (DFID).

Whalan, J. (2017). The Local Legitimacy of Peacekeepers. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *11*(3), 306–20.

Whitener, E., Brodt, S., Korsgaard, M., & Werner, J. (2013). Managers as Initiators of Trust: An Exchange Relationship Framework for Understanding Managerial Trustworthy Behavior. *The Academy of Management Review*. 10.2307/259292.

Wiegratz, J., Martiniello, G., & Greco, E. (Eds.). (2018). *Uganda: The Dynamics of Neoliberal Transformation*. London: Zed Books.

Wiley, C. (2019). *Mindf*ck: Inside Cambridge Analytica's Plot to Break the World*. London: Profile Books.

Williams, N., & Efendic, A. (2019). Internal Displacement and External Migration in a Post-conflict Economy: Perceptions of Institutions Among Migrant Entrepreneurs. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *17*, 558–85.

Wilson, R. K. (2011). The Contribution of Behavioral Economics to Political Science. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *14*(1), 201–23. doi:10.1146/annurev-polisci-041309-114513

Wilson, T. D., Lisle, D. J., Schooler, J. W., Hodges, S. D., Klaaren, K. J., & LaFleur, S. J. (1993). Introspecting about Reasons can Reduce Postchoice Satisfaction. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *19*, 331–9.

Wilson, T. D., & Schooler, J. W. (1991). Thinking too Much: Introspection Can Reduce the Quality of Preferences and Decisions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *60*, 181–92.

Winters, M., Dietrich, S., & Mahmud, M. (2018). Aiding the Virtuous Circle? International Development Assistance and Citizen Confidence in Government in Bangladesh. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *12*(4), 468–83.

Wong, P.-H. (2016). How can Political Trust be Built After Civil Wars? Evidence From Post-conflict Sierra Leone. *Journal of Peace Research*, *53*(6), 772–85.

Woolcock, M. (2013). *Using Case Studies to Explore the External Validity of 'complex' Development Interventions* (WIDER Working Paper No. 2013/096). Helsinki: UNU-WIDER.

World Bank. (2010). *Democratic Republic of Congo: The Impact of the Decoupage, March 2010. Joint Study by the European Commission, the Belgian Development Cooperation and the United Nations Development Programme. Public Sector Reform & Capacity Building (AFTPR) Africa Region*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

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

World Bank. (2013). *Inclusion Matters: New Frontiers of Social Policy*. Washington, DC: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/World Bank.

World, Bank (2015). *Afghanistan: Poverty Status Update: An Analysis Based on National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) 2007/08 and 2011/12*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank. (2015). *World Development Report 2015: Mind, Society, and Behavior*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank. (2018). *Afghanistan Development Update*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank. (2020). *GDP per Capita Growth (annual %) Congo, Dem. Rep*. Retrieved from https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.KD.ZG?end=2020&locations=CD &start=1961&view=chart

World Bank. (2021a). *Net Official Development Assistance and Official aid Received (current US$) - Afghanistan*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank. (2021b). *Net Official Development Assistance Received (current US$) - Democratic Republic of Congo*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank. (2021c). *Net Official Development Assistance Received (current US$) - Nepal*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank. (2021d). *Net Official Development Assistance Received (current US$) - Pakistan*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank. (2021e). *Net Official Development Assistance Received (current US$) - Sierra Leone*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank. (2021f). *Net Official Development Assistance Received (current US$) - South Sudan*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank. (2021g). *Net Official Development Assistance Received (current US$) - Sri Lanka*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank. (2021h). *Net Official Development Assistance Received (current US$) - Syrian Arab Republic*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank. (2021i). *Net Official Development Assistance Received (current US$) - Uganda*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank. (2021j). *World Bank Engagement in Situations of Conflict An Evaluation of FY10–20 Experience*. Independent Evaluation Group. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank. (2021k). *The World Bank In Sri Lanka*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank Group. (2003). *World Development Report 2004: Making Services Work for Poor People*. Washington, DC: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.

World Bank Group. (2016). *Overview: Fragility, Conflict and Violence*.

World Bank Group. (2017). *World Development Report 2017: Governance and the Law*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank Group. (2019). *World Bank Group Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence (FCV) 2020–2025*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank Group, U. (2018). *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*. Washington, DC and New York: World Bank / United Nations.

Wray, L. R. (2018). *Functional Finance: A Comparison of the Evolution of the Positions of Hyman Minsky and Abba Lerner*. Levy Economics Institute of Bard College (Working Paper No.900).

Yanguas, P. (2018). *Why We Lie About Aid: Development and the Messy Politics of Change*. London: Zed.

Yeganehlayegh, J. L. G. (1981). On the Relational Perspective. *Central Issues in Anthropology*, *3*(2), 55–69. doi:10.1525/cia.1981.3.2.55

Yogendrarajah, R., & Semasinghe, D. (2013). Women Empowerment Through Micro-credit – A Special Reference to Jaffna District. *Journal of US-China Public Administration*, *10*(3), 338–44.

Young, J. (2005). Sudan: A Flawed Peace Process Leading to a Flawed Peace. *Review of African Political Economy*, *32*(103), 99–113.

Young, J. (2012). *The Fate of Sudan: The Origins and Consequences of a Flawed Peace Process*. London: Zed Books.

Yunkaporta, T. (2019). *Sand Talk: How Indigenous Thinking Can Save the World*. London: The Text Publishing Company.

Yunus, M. (1999). The Grameen Bank. *Scientific American*, *281*(5), 114–19.

Zaum, D. (2013). *Legitimating International Organizations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zaum, D. (2017). International Transitional Administrations and the Politics of Authority Building. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *11*(4), 409–28.

Index