

# Livelihoods in Conflict

## *The Pursuit of Livelihoods by Refugees and the Impact on the Human Security of Host Communities*

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### ABSTRACT

This paper explores how long-term refugees pursue livelihoods, the impact this pursuit has on the human security of conflict-affected communities, and the ways in which international assistance can help. Refugees' pursuit of livelihoods can increase human security because economic activities help to recreate social and economic interdependence within and between communities, and can restore social networks based on the exchange of labour, assets and food. When refugees are allowed to gain access to resources and freedom of movement, and can work alongside their hosts to pursue productive lives, they would be less dependent on aid and better able to overcome the sources of tension and conflict in their host communities.

The paper identifies how humanitarian programmes working with national governments can increase economic security and shore up the respective rights of both refugees and their host communities. Today, relief interventions are no longer expected solely to save lives in the short term, but also to lay the foundation for future development and to promote conflict resolution.

### INTRODUCTION

In those regions of the world mired in conflict, displaced people face deep and chronic problems of poverty and insecurity. In most cases, the forcibly displaced do not have the resources to move beyond the region, and they remain internally displaced or move across borders to neighbouring countries, many of which are

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facing their own conflicts.<sup>1</sup> In these neighbourhoods, displaced people face challenging environments and often impose economic, environmental, and security burdens on their hosts. But viewing refugees as passive victims, who wait for relief handouts and bring only trouble to host countries, fails to see the multiple ways they pursue livelihoods for themselves, and in so doing can contribute to the economic vitality of host areas.

This paper explores how long-term refugees pursue livelihoods, the impact this pursuit has on the human security of conflict-affected host communities, and the ways in which international assistance can enable a positive impact. “Human security” here refers to economic, civil, and political security – a situation in which people can pursue livelihoods without violent conflict. The paper is premised on the belief that refugees’ pursuit of livelihoods can lead to increased human security in conflict-affected communities. Livelihood activities help recreate and maintain social and economic interdependence within and between communities, and can thus restore functioning social networks, based on mutually beneficial exchange of labour, assets, and food (FIFC, 2002). When refugees are allowed to gain access to resources, have freedom of movement, and can work beside their hosts to pursue productive lives, they will be less dependent on aid and better able to overcome the sources of tension and conflict in their host communities. They will help mend the fraying economic fabric that binds communities and strengthen what Mary Anderson (1999) calls peace economies in contrast to war economies.

A key theme of the paper is to identify how humanitarian assistance can increase economic security in the refugee hosting area (RHA) by supporting livelihoods and shoring up the rights of both refugees and their host communities. Today, relief interventions are expected to save lives in the short term, and to lay the foundation for future development and promote conflict resolution (FIFC, 2002). As the governments of wealthy countries reduce their engagement with the world’s poor and conflict affected, disaster relief has become the predominant mode of crisis response. If relief is the only source of international assistance for conflict-affected areas, it is imperative that relief resources be used both to save lives and to support and enable the livelihoods of those living there.

Crisis situations can lead to the re-making of roles and opportunities for affected communities. For women in particular, their efforts to survive mean they engage in trade and other economic activities that give them more control, autonomy, and status at both the household and community level. Refugees (like locals) also engage in livelihood activities that are illegal, like prostitution or smuggling, and the aid community is faced with the task of finding ways to encourage and enable legitimate activities, while eliminating the need for illicit activities, which can harm both the refugees and their host communities and increase insecurity in the region. Aid agencies must also find ways to enhance and protect the

opportunities and gains brought by conflict situations, particularly for disadvantaged groups amongst refugees.

The exploration of refugee livelihoods and their impact on refugees and host communities is part of a body of research that seeks to understand the consequences of refugee and humanitarian assistance for host countries and for refugees. There are a growing number of studies on such issues as the role of food aid and other forms of refugee assistance in livelihoods, the impact of refugees' activities on host communities, and the circumstances under which repatriation occurs.<sup>2</sup> This paper draws on that body of research and writing, and also uses several examples of case material from the camp notes of Martin Masumbuko, a student and key informant currently at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

The paper also draws on the rich discussion that took place between practitioners, academics, and policy makers during the conference "Promoting Human Security in the Democratic Republic of Congo" held at Tufts University just prior to writing.<sup>3</sup> One of the main recommendations that emerged was the importance of supporting micro-economic activity in conflict-affected areas, as a way both to enable people to survive and to build intercommunal relationships that work toward conflict management and reduction. By supporting livelihoods, humanitarian aid can also increase human security.

In the next section, the paper sets out a conceptual approach for understanding how refugees pursue livelihoods in regions of protracted conflict. Our approach emphasizes the need to focus on the vulnerability of refugees in conflict settings, and explores how refugee livelihoods are different from those of the host community.

Then, we examine the settings where refugees pursue livelihoods, often referred to as the refugee hosting area (RHA). These settings, like the ones displaced people flee, are often afflicted by conflict and instability. We focus on both the host government's refugee policies and the ways refugees are settled as important factors in refugees' abilities to pursue livelihoods.

Next, we examine how refugees pursue livelihoods, and the economic and security impact this pursuit has on host communities. We focus on three types of resources: land and common property resources, transnational resources, and international aid, in particular the role of income-generating programmes and microfinance in conflict settings.

Finally, we discuss the lessons learned from humanitarian interventions that try to support refugee livelihoods, and make recommendations about ways for the donor community to move forward. The paper concludes with some caveats about supporting livelihoods in conflict situations.

## LIVELIHOODS IN CONFLICT: A CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

The study of livelihoods has been widely pursued in the disciplines of both economics and anthropology and in development studies (Ellis, 1998; Olgwig and Sorensen, 1999). “Livelihoods” refer to the means used to maintain and sustain life. “Means” connotes the resources, including household assets, capital, social institutions, and networks (kin, village, authority structures), and the strategies available to people through their local and transnational communities. In the current debate about development and poverty reduction, a key concept is “sustainable livelihoods”. Frameworks have been developed that analyse the household assets, strategies, and institutional factors that influence livelihood outcomes,<sup>4</sup> and these frameworks are used to design and implement appropriate programme interventions (DFID, 2000; Scoones, 1998; Lautze, 1997; Cernea, 1996). The sustainable livelihoods approach is a useful way to think about how to reduce poverty in stable situations, and some writers have sought to apply it to refugee livelihoods (Hansen, 2000; Kibreab, 2001; Lassailly-Jacob, 1996).

For refugees and refugee-hosting communities in conflict situations, however, the sustainable livelihoods approach needs to be adapted to emphasize the vulnerability of people exposed to constant threats of violence and displacement. Refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in conflict areas are subject to new forms of risk that burden the pursuit of livelihoods. Displacement tends to aggravate existing vulnerabilities and create new forms. Social groups that are politically or economically marginalized, like pastoralists in the Horn of Africa, or ethnic groups like the Twa in Rwanda, find themselves at double risk when they are displaced and have even more difficulty pursuing livelihoods.

Displacement can result in new forms of gender and age vulnerability. For women, the loss of a husband and children can result in the loss of identity and social marginalization, as well as increased economic burden.<sup>5</sup> In some societies, the loss of cultural adornments, clothes, head coverings, and other forms of traditional dress can affect women’s identity and restrict their mobility and ability to take part in relief programmes like food distributions (IASC, 2000). Women on their own can experience discrimination in the allocation of economic and social resources such as credit, relief commodities, seeds, tools, or access to productive land. For men, displacement and the resulting loss of livelihoods place them at increased risk for military recruitment, either forced or voluntary. Children must deal with the loss of parents and caregivers, and must often manage as heads of household, while being at risk for forced labour, sexual abuse, and abduction.

Taking into account the increased risk of the entire community, a “livelihoods in conflict” approach de-emphasizes the sustainability part of the livelihoods framework and emphasizes the need to reduce the vulnerability and risk that are a result of conflict. Such a definition might be as follows:<sup>6</sup>

In communities facing conflict and displacement, livelihoods comprise how people access and mobilize resources enabling them to increase their economic security, thereby reducing the vulnerability created and exacerbated by conflict, and how they pursue goals necessary for survival and possible return.

The pursuit of livelihoods in conflict thus refers to the availability, extent, and mix of *resources*, the *strategies* used to access and mobilize these resources, and the *goals* and changing priorities of refugees.

What makes the pursuit of livelihoods by refugees different from that of host communities in conflict environments? All communities living in conflict environments struggle to pursue livelihoods in ways that differ from those living in more stable and peaceful environments. Refugees and other displaced people, while part of these communities, are more vulnerable than their hosts, as discussed above, and they differ from their hosts in terms of the resources available to them, their livelihood goals, and the strategies for achieving them. In putting together livelihoods in RHAs, refugees are able to rely on new forms of social organization and networks that form as a result of having to cope with the loss of their property, traumatic flight, social dislocation, and the antagonism of local authorities and the host population. As Kibreab (2001a: 7) argues, overcoming these hardships, and learning to deal with aid agencies, necessitates collective and cooperative effort.

### **Refugee goals**

Refugees' immediate livelihood goals are likely to include: physical safety from violence, the threat of violence, or intimidation; reducing economic vulnerability and food insecurity; finding a place to settle; and locating lost family members.

If these goals are achieved, but refugees remain in protracted situations, new goals will become priorities. As refugees are exposed to new experiences and new cultures, including that of the humanitarian community, they learn about their rights, including those pertaining to refugees and women, and they acquire new skills. They may even increase their resources, all of which will change their goals.

### **Refugee resources**

Like all economic actors, refugees have access to economic, social, and cultural resources, including household assets, capital, social institutions, and networks (kin, village, authority structures), available through both their local and transnational communities. Refugees often are blocked from or otherwise unable to access the set of resources available to the local community, such as land, (legal) employment, housing, and so on. Refugees may, however, have their own resources that are not as available to host communities, including:

transnational resources provided by other refugees and co-nationals living abroad, consisting of financial resources, as well as the social capital from refugee networks that increase information flows and enable trade and relocation; human capital, in the form of education or skills not present in the host community, which can enable refugees to gain economic advantage; humanitarian aid and assistance in kind, which are often translated into commodities for trade; and getting their own land back, which they are sometimes able to access through semi-illicit movement across the border and back.

Many of these resources are traded or exchanged in the local community as a way to gain access to local resources.

### **Refugee strategies**

Strategies refer to the range of activities undertaken by refugees to access and mobilize needed resources. In the RHA, displaced men, women, and even children<sup>7</sup> have developed coping mechanisms and strategies that take advantage of resources and opportunities. Such activities include those permitted and supported by host governments and aid agencies, and those that are unofficial or illegal, like prostitution or smuggling. The aid community must find ways to encourage and enable legitimate activities, and discourage or reduce the need for illicit activities, which can harm both the refugees and their host communities, and can increase insecurity in the region.

Refugees pursue livelihoods in two domains. One is the official space permitted for refugees – usually camps or organized settlements, where refugees can engage in programmes created for them by relief agencies, or in agricultural (or development) activities condoned by the government. The other domain is the informal sector, outside of camps, where self-settled refugees (and sometimes also those from camps) pursue livelihoods under conditions of double insecurity – from both the conflict environment and their own illegal status. In this domain, many of their activities are illegal or illicit. Refugees move between these two domains, using resources in both, and mixing their strategies accordingly. The consequences for both the refugees and their hosts are mixed, as we discuss in the following section.

## **THE LIVELIHOOD SETTING: THE REFUGEE HOSTING AREA**

In many regions of the developing world today, RHAs are parts of so-called “fragile states”,<sup>8</sup> where armed conflict, organized violence, and other forms of disorder and physical threat present significant and chronic difficulties in pursuing livelihoods. An increasing cause of displacement in Africa is the

destruction of communities from inter-communal violence fomented by the regime (often to disguise its failure as a state) or other powerful actors who benefit from conflict and disorder. Violence is often used to deliberately destroy the social and economic fabric of communities or to displace people as a means to achieving war- or profit-related goals, as in the oil fields of southern Sudan or the resource-rich areas of Sierra Leone, Angola, and the Congo. As communities descend into insecurity, people flee both the violence and the destruction of local microeconomic systems between communities – the “economic lifeblood” of fragile societies. The classic case is Zaire/DRC, where beginning in the late 1980s, intercommunal (or “ethnic”) tensions were manipulated “until they exploded into repeated localized, but deadly conflicts that further ripped apart a social fabric already under stress from the structural crisis in the country” (Bourque and Sampson, 2001). This pattern occurs in many other African countries, including Sierra Leone and Liberia, Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, Somalia, and more recently, Zimbabwe.

What is notable about many of these situations is that while there is an outflow of people fleeing conflict-affected communities, there are also refugee flows into, and localized displacement of, IDPs *within* these communities. When refugees or IDPs arrive in host communities, whether across borders or in the same country, they often bring new problems that lead to conflict and further displacement. Entire regions can thus be destabilized by cycles of displacement and conflict, often made worse by deliberate political manipulation.

The linked problem of forced displacement and the destruction of communities is particularly critical in Africa. Most of the refugee situations in Africa are an outcome of protracted conflict, and consequently refugees have been in host communities for long periods of time, averaging 20 years or more (see Table 1). As shown in Table 2, of the 50 states in Africa, 40 have hosted large numbers of refugees over the past decade, and of these, 25 countries have themselves experienced significant degrees of conflict, enough to have produced more than 20,000 of their own refugees or IDPs.

### **Refugee policy**

The refugee policies of the host government – or in cases where the central government’s remit is weak, the local authorities – is a key determinant of refugees’ vulnerability and their ability to pursue livelihoods. In many host countries, refugees suffer from the absence of civil, social, and economic rights including freedom of movement and residence; freedom of speech and assembly; fair trial; property rights, the right to engage in wage labour, self-employment, and the conclusion of valid contracts; access to school education, access to credit; and protection against physical and sexual abuse, harassment, unlawful detention, and deportation (Kibreab, 2001: 9).

TABLE 1  
PROTRACTED REFUGEE SITUATIONS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA,  
1980-2001

Country of origin	Main host countries in sub-Saharan Africa	Beginning year (total years)	Number of refugees at the end of 2000
Angola	Zambia, Namibia, DRC, S. Africa, Congo-Brazzaville	1980-2001 (20)	400,000
Burundi	Tanzania, DRC, S. Africa	1980-2001 (20)	420,000
Chad	Sudan, Central African Republic (CAR)	1980-2001 (20)	53,000
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	Congo, CAR, Zambia, Tanzania, Rwanda, S. Africa	1980-2001 (20)	350,000
Eritrea	Sudan	1970s-2001 (+30)	350,000
Ethiopia	Sudan, Kenya, Somalia	1970s-1994 (+25)	40,000
Liberia	Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone	1989-2001 (12)	200,000
Rwanda	Burundi, Tanzania, DRC, Uganda	1970s-1996 (+25)	55,000
Sierra Leone	Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia	1991-2001 (10)	400,000
Somalia	Ethiopia, Kenya	1988-2001 (13)	370,000
Sudan	Uganda, Ethiopia, Chad, CAR	1984-2001 (17)	460,000
Uganda	Sudan, Kenya	1980-2001 (21)	20,000
West Sahara	Mauritania, Algeria	1981-2001 (20)	110,000

Note: The table indicates continuous refugee presence of more than 20,000 in neighbouring host countries for more than 8 years; N=13.

Source: *State of the World's Refugees*, 2001: tables 1 and 2.



TABLE 2  
HOST STATES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, 1997-2001\*

States that hosted >20,000 refugees (N=27)		States that hosted <20,000, but >1,000 (N=13)		
Conflict-affected (N=18)		Peaceful (N=9)	Conflict-affected (N=7)	Peaceful (N=6)
Burundi	Rwanda	Cameroon	Angola	Benin
Chad	Guinea	Côte d'Ivoire	Chad	Burkina Faso
Congo-Brazzaville	Mauritania	Djibouti	Eritrea	Gabon
Zambia	Sudan	Malawi	Guinea-Bissau	Gambia
Congo (DRC)	Somalia	Mozambique	Nigeria	Mali
Ethiopia	Kenya	Namibia	Niger	Swaziland
Uganda	Senegal	South Africa	Zimbabwe	
Ghana	Sierra Leone	Tanzania		
Liberia		Togo		

Note: Of the 50 states in Africa, 40 have hosted large numbers of refugees over the past decade, and of these, 25 countries have themselves experienced significant degrees of conflict, enough to have produced more than 20,000 of their own refugees or IDPs. In the table, the host states are divided into those defined as "conflict-affected", that is, they have experienced enough conflict to produce at least 10,000 of their own refugees or IDPs; and as "peaceful", that is, they did not produce 10,000 refugees or IDPs. Obviously, these are simplistic categories, used only for the purpose of illustration.

Source: *State of the World's Refugees*, 1998-2001.

The main policy factors preventing refugees' pursuit of livelihoods are:

- host governments' desire that refugees be allowed only as temporary guests (no permanent residence);
- poor standards of protection and physical security for refugees;
- restrictions on freedom of movement and settlement; and
- restrictions on property rights and employment.

These constraints have been well documented in countries like Sudan (Bascom, 1998; Kibreab, 1996; Kuhlman, 1990), Tanzania (Rutinwa, 1999), Kenya (Crisp, 2001; Hyndman and Nylund, 1998), Lebanon (Arzt, 1997), Mexico (Ferris, 1984), Costa Rica (Basok, 1990; Ferris, 1987; Larson, 1992), Thailand (Pongsapit and Chongwatana, 1988) and Hong Kong (Davis, 1988).

In many host countries, refugees are widely treated as illegal migrants, with few rights and little protection from the government. Most refugees living in border zones are *prima facie* refugees, that is, they have not undergone formal determination procedures and do not qualify as legal refugees (Hyndman and

Nylund, 1998). Whereas UNHCR refers to them as refugees, host governments do not think of them that way, and their legal status is precarious, making them potential victims of forcible relocation or even forced repatriation. It is remarkable then that refugees are able to pursue any sort of livelihood, but many do, usually because local communities see the value of their activities and benefit from them, and authorities turn a blind eye, or are encouraged to do so with bribes. Like other marginalized groups, refugees are experts in the art of survival. A key aspect of refugees being able to work the system in this way is their location and form of settlement in the RHA.

### **Refugees' location and form of settlement**

A key set of host government restrictions concerns where refugees settle and their freedom of movement. At the official policy level, most host governments require that refugees remain in camps or planned agricultural settlements, or in some cases (like Côte d'Ivoire), restricted zones. In camps and official settlements, refugees' basic needs are (mostly) provided for by aid agencies, they have little or no freedom of movement, and they have reduced opportunities to pursue livelihoods. Where there are security problems, as there increasingly are in most border zones of host countries, host governments are more likely to restrict movement and residence outside of camps.

For example, the Sudanese border region of north-western Kenya is characterized by banditry, a longstanding tradition of cattle rustling, and the cross-border movement of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) from Sudan. The region is volatile and conflict ridden, and the Kenyan Government does its best to keep refugees in Kakuma camp (Crisp, 2000). Similarly, the Governments of Thailand, Tanzania, Mexico, Pakistan, and others have restricted the movements and settlement of refugees from neighbouring countries.

In most RHAs, refugees make their own choices about where they will settle, and do not always heed official policy. Although accurate figures are difficult to establish, it is widely recognized that relatively small proportions of refugees live in camps and settlements. The majority is self-settled, that is, they find ways to settle themselves among the host community. While they are then at risk for government round-ups and relocation, many prefer to take their chances. It has also been documented, although not yet well researched, that refugee households strategize their settlement to diversify their resources. They will place some members in camps to access resources there, and place others outside in the host community where a different set of resources can be targeted.

Refugees are well aware that economic opportunities differ depending on whether they are settled in camps and organized settlements, in rural villages amongst the host community, in urban areas, or in encampments abutting towns.

Camps and organized settlements present particular environments that enable, as well as obstruct, the pursuit of livelihoods. For example, refugees in organized settlements might have location advantages with respect to land or natural resources, or better access to infrastructure such as urban markets, roads, and extension services (Hansen, 2001). Refugees in camps might be prohibited from travelling to engage in economic activities, but they have easier access to aid commodities for trade and to camp markets. A number of studies have sought to compare the economic activities of refugees who are self-settled with those living in camps and settlements (Hansen, 2001; Jacobsen, 2001; Kibreab, 2001a; Bakewell, 2000).

### REFUGEES' PURSUIT OF LIVELIHOODS AND THE IMPACT ON HOST COMMUNITIES

Protracted refugee situations give rise to problems for the host community and refugees alike. The most significant are security problems, which can include military incursions from the sending country, increased local crime and violence, predation on refugees and the local community by warlords and bandits, and often an increase in organized crime including gun running, drug smuggling, and human trafficking (Crisp, 2000; Jacobsen, 2000; Rutinwa, 1999).

A related set of problems is the economic impact. The nature of this impact varies and it is often difficult to determine what can be specifically attributed to the refugees. In conflict-affected RHAs, local microeconomic systems are often already destroyed or badly frayed by insecurity or prior economic problems. Refugees bring new problems including pressure on scarce economic resources, but this effect is often mixed because refugees can also bring resources with them (Bakewell, 2000; Bascom, 1998; Jacobsen, 2001; Kibreab, 1996; Kok, 1989; Kuhlman, 1990).

In the following section, we discuss how refugees pursue the resources required for their livelihoods, the environmental and security consequences for host communities, and how humanitarian assistance can support positive outcomes.

Three sets of livelihood resources are important for refugees: (1) arable land, local resources, and assets, for the purposes of rural livelihoods such as agriculture and/or pastoralism; (2) transnational resources, including capital (cash) and information, usually transferred through networks; it's needed to secure access to housing, employment, and other needs; and (3) resources from international assistance that can provide basic needs as well as opportunities for livelihoods such as direct employment, income-generating activities, or microcredit.

### **Arable land and local (common property) resources**

In rural areas, land is the basis of livelihoods and identity and the most valuable economic resource lost when rural people are forcibly displaced. Cernea (1996) argues that landlessness is the major cause of impoverishment among displaced rural populations. Prior to their flight, agriculture and/or pastoralism is the basis of rural people's subsistence and income-earning opportunities. Displacement often forces refugees to diversify their livelihoods – pastoralists and agro-pastoralists take up more sedentary occupations, including cultivation and microenterprises – but most rural refugees still need access to some combination of arable land, common resources, or livestock to pursue livelihoods.

Refugees rely on access to common natural resources like water (for fishing and livestock), forests (for firewood, construction materials, wild foods), and rangeland (for grazing of livestock) to support themselves and eventually to earn income. Wild products are either used for subsistence (especially in the initial stages of arrival), or for trade. When refugees have the required skills, they add value by processing. Sawyers who turn timber into planks for construction, charcoal makers, beer brewers, and restaurateurs are all examples. Access to land and common resources is thus a key component of refugee livelihoods, and of their economic productivity (Hansen, 2001).

Strategies for mobilizing these resources are constrained by relations with the host community, the security situation, and government policies which restrict refugees' settlement and mobility. Access to land is constrained by the traditional land tenure system, and laws concerning land ownership and rights of usufruct. In many host countries, such as Eritrea, all land is owned by the government (Kibreab, 2001a). Refugees are dependent on their relations with their hosts and local authorities to bypass these laws and traditions when they are not in their favour.

#### *Agriculture*

In some cases, refugees have taken over arable land when farmers abandon their fields as a result of insecurity, causing resentment when owners return. In host countries where there are tensions over land or resources, such as the Chiapas region of Mexico, refugees' need for land can aggravate tensions and even cause conflict. Host communities will be less willing to allow refugees to use those resources, and host governments will be more likely to restrict refugees' freedom of movement and settlement. The situation is further complicated when refugees turn out to be more productive farmers than locals, able to put the land to better use, and profiting from their labour. Ensuing resentment can mean that local authorities are notified and called in to remove or restrict refugee activities.

By contrast, when production is constrained by available labour and/or access to markets, rather than land, refugees are welcomed because they make the land more productive. In his study of Kanongesha, western Zambia, and its abundant land, Bakewell (2000: 362) quotes *Zambian villagers* that the arrival of refugees was welcome as they “turned the bush into villages”. The refugees were the largest land users and they could use as much land as they could cultivate. Agricultural expansion or intensification as a result of refugee labour also occurred in Sudan (Kok, 1989), in western Tanzania (Armstrong, 1998; Daley, 1993), and in the Forest Region of Guinea where Liberian refugees helped rice production by increasing the cultivation of the lower swamp areas; a common practice in Liberia but hardly known in Guinea (Black and Milimouno, 1996).

In host countries where governments have policies of settling refugees in agricultural settlements, refugees are utilized directly for development. In Belize, Uganda, and Tanzania, the governments saw refugees as a means to develop under-utilized land, and pursued this by allocating land to the refugees.<sup>9</sup>

### *Pastoralism*

When pastoralists become displaced the loss of livestock is a serious blow. In the Horn of Africa, livestock, primarily cattle, is the mainstay of many people’s livelihoods, culture, and identity. Restocking cattle is often their first priority, but keeping livestock while living as refugees is a difficult task. Refugees struggle with locals over access to water and rangeland, and cattle can seldom be kept in refugee camps. But many refugees develop strategies to keep livestock, striking deals with locals, hiring children to do cattle herding, and so forth. Livestock continues to be a key livelihood asset, either through the sale of products like meat, hides, milk, and blood (there are large livestock markets in refugee camps in the Horn of Africa), or for added food security in the household (meat, milk, or blood supplement food rations). Employment as cattle herders by both children and adults can supplement incomes.

### *Environmental and security impact on the RHA*

Livelihood activities of refugees that depend on access to land and common resources take a toll on the RHA environment, and can create security problems. The following kinds of problems are widespread:

- refugees destroy fields and orchards; for example, in the Forest Region of Guinea, wild palm groves were destroyed and exploited by refugees, leading to a decline in palm oil production and an increase in the retail price;
- deforestation and destruction of plant cover, when refugees clear forest for farming, or to obtain wood for construction or charcoal making
- water pollution, loss of watercourses, and overburdened water supplies
- uncontrolled fishing; and
- the overuse and destruction of rangeland when refugees bring their livestock.

Using these problems as justification, host governments require that refugees stay in camps where their activities are restricted. But the environmental impact of self-settled refugees is not necessarily worse than that of camp refugees. Empirical findings indicate that when compared to refugees in camps, self-settled refugees “exercise far greater flexibility...in selecting environmentally sustainable locations...or in adopting more sustainable settlement practices” (Zetter, 1995: 74). The worst environmental impact occurs soon after a mass influx (or after a mass return, Kibreab, 2001a). As refugees become integrated into the host community, their harmful practices will be reduced because they become socialized to adopt sustainable community environmental practices, and the pressure on common resources associated with the initial influx is reduced (Jacobsen, 1997).

The refugees need for access to land and common resources can create or aggravate security problems in the RHA. For example, in the Sudan-Uganda-Kenya border region, where pastoralism is the main form of livelihood, cattle rustling is a long-standing tradition, and refugees with cattle face a constant struggle. The infiltration of small arms into the region has increased the dangers associated with cattle rustling, and has heightened insecurity. In their efforts to restock and to hold onto their cattle, refugees have engaged in their own cattle rustling and use of threats and small arms. Efforts to access or protect access to common resources can result in the formation of criminal gangs (or bandits) and increased security problems in the RHA, as described below.

### **The firewood business in Dadaab, north-eastern Kenya**

In both Kakuma and Dadaab camps, wood fuel or firewood is supplied to refugees in the amount of 10 kilograms per person per month – never enough. Many families supplement the official supply by purchasing extra firewood or charcoal from local people. Some have taken up the role of middlemen, either to buy from locals or, in the case of Dadaab, to harvest firewood themselves. Firewood has become a Somali clan-controlled enterprise, and clan rivalry has made it a risky business. The refugees have refused suppliers from outside the camp and all wood is provided through supply tenders based on clan affiliation. The more powerful the clan, the larger the wood fuel zone they control. Donkey cart owners pay taxes to the clan gangs in order to be allowed to harvest firewood. Nobody else is allowed to go into the bush. The gangs turn into “bandits” and terrorize the refugees in the camps. If found in the forest, women are raped if they do not belong to the rapist’s clan. This is done to discourage women from interfering in the firewood business. If men are found, they are shot dead, so they opt to send women and risk rape as the lesser evil. The deep rooted clan hatred that several Somali clans hold for one another is manifest in the fact that the rapists always ask for the victim’s clan before the assault.

## **Transnational resources**

Refugees in camps and urban areas have access to remittances and social capital through transnational communities, that is, through co-nationals resettled in third countries who send money, contacts, and information to friends or relatives. While there is extensive research on the contribution of migrant remittances to development in sending countries, there is much less research on refugee remittances. More understanding and data about refugee remittances flows and their impact on host communities would help explain their role in refugees' livelihoods and the contribution they make toward underpinning human security in host areas. Anecdotal evidence suggests that in some conflict areas remittances and parcels of household items from the diaspora are the only source of cash, educational materials, or clothing for many people (OCHA DRC, 2001).

In most RHAs, the infrastructure for refugee remittance transfer is in place both in camps and in urban areas. In the Kenyan refugee camps, Somali and Sudanese refugees have established unofficial banking and money transfer systems using satellite dishes or radio call transmitters connected to telephones. Western Union is also used.

### **Remittance transfers to refugees in Kenya**

Money transfers are usually based on mutual trust, established ground rules, and the word of recognized dealers. A client gives money to the dealer at point A (say, in Boston), who calls his counterpart at point B (e.g., in Kakuma camp) who then gives the required amount of money to the client's beneficiary. The client pays a fee plus telephone charges, and ends up paying much less for the transaction than she would have had she used formal banking institutions (assuming they were even available). This system is said to work faster than Western Union as there is no delaying paperwork, and have a surprisingly solid reputation for reliability (perhaps because transgressors reputedly face serious sanctions).

Special remittance banks have opened in the Eastleigh section of Nairobi (populated by Somali refugees) for refugee banking, mostly in US dollars. Such a bank was closed in downtown Boston on suspicion that it was linked to Al-Qaeda operatives in Kenya. The bank undertook transfers of millions of dollars from around the world to relatives and friends in Kenya and Somalia. Such banks charge minimal interest and even give soft loans for various types of business, including drugs.

Cash remittances are often kept in local banks until they can be used to buy passage for onward journeys, either to more economically favourable host countries or areas in the region, to developed countries in the North, or to facilitate return to countries of origin. Remittances are also used to gain access to local resources like housing, land, or capital equipment.

## **Resources from international humanitarian assistance**

The arrival of humanitarian assistance following a refugee influx creates a new set of livelihood resources in the RHA. These resources appear in two forms. The first is formal livelihood support programmes, such as income-generating activities that are directly implemented by aid agencies in camps, official settlements, and sometimes in the host community itself. The paper focuses below on income-generating programmes, but relief interventions target many parts of the livelihood system, ranging from food security, water safety, and environment protection, to disease control and management of community resources.

The second way that livelihoods are supported by humanitarian assistance is through indirect economic stimuli to the RHA economy. Relief agencies create new economic inputs and demands that spread beyond the camps, creating livelihood opportunities for both locals and refugees. New demands include the need for services like trucking and delivery, construction, administration, or translation. New inputs take the form of relief commodities that are traded throughout the RHA, often creating entirely new regional economies. For example, the trading of food aid and merchandise from refugee camps within RHAs and across borders has evolved into a complex and multifaceted system, supporting the livelihoods of different social groups, including unaccompanied youths. It is common for some part of the UNHCR/WFP food package to be bartered in exchange for missing or desired items of food available locally in the host community.

Where humanitarian inputs occur in conflict-affected areas, the consequences can be negative when warlords and other forms of organized crime target resources, or when competition for them leads to violence and further conflict.

### *Trade in food aid in Kakuma camp*

In Kakuma camp on food distribution days, many refugees sell their food rations and buy sugar and salt to send across the border into Sudan where these commodities bring higher prices than the food itself. At the retail level, food shop owners stock food rations sold or exchanged to them for resale when the WFP food pipeline breaks down. Both fellow refugees and locals are also employed to buy food at distribution centres. When food stores become large enough, and depending on market demand for particular foods, business extends outside the camp, where the food entrepreneurs engage with either the Kenyan security or self-proclaimed middlemen to negotiate access to markets in nearby (and even quite distant) towns.

### *Income-generating programmes*

Income-generating programmes (IGPs) are intended to enable refugees to attain “self-sufficiency” by providing economic inputs and training for livelihood



activities like agriculture, service provision (e.g., food vending, charcoal making), or trade. The idea behind self-sufficiency or self-reliance is that most refugees are able to support themselves and should not be forced to depend on food assistance while awaiting their return. Some host governments therefore allow refugees to farm or pursue income-generating activities. In a few cases, IGPs are linked to a policy of local integration, where refugees are helped to pursue their livelihoods as part of the host community.<sup>10</sup>

IGPs comprise a relatively small proportion of refugee assistance, however, in part because they often encounter political resistance.<sup>11</sup> Host governments usually prefer refugees to go home after a short period of time, and resist programmes that might encourage them to stay. They fear that since refugees would not receive this kind of support in their homelands, they are unlikely to return. The problem with this reasoning is that refugees stay in host countries for a variety of reasons, not simply economic ones. For some, return is not a feasible prospect, and the protracted presence of refugees is a fact of life in many host countries. Short-term, traditional forms of assistance (such as food aid or other handouts) are expensive, encourage dependency, and simply waste the potential contribution refugees could make to their host communities.

IGPs use two approaches. Most common are grant-based, which provide cash, capital equipment, and raw materials free. A less widely used approach, sometimes combined with grants, is based on microfinance. A line of credit or a loan is provided for beneficiaries to start small businesses. Advocates argue that loans are “better” forms of aid than grants for various reasons. They break the “dependency cycle” associated with humanitarian aid by encouraging fiscally responsible use of resources and viable enterprises, and through loan repayments they increase the number of future loan recipients (Doyle, 1998; Larson, 2001).

Microfinance approaches have been more widely attempted in post-conflict or reconstruction situations than in conflict-affected communities.<sup>12</sup> Refugees are seen as “unsuitable” candidates for microfinance – they are a transient population and thus less likely to repay loans; they tend not to distinguish between hand-outs and loans; and loans to refugees would create resentment by the host community. Many microfinance-based IGPs have been curtailed in recent years, judged as failures. Their critics argue that the funds would be better used in grant form. But, as recognized by the same critics, these judgements and arguments are often based on the financial success of the programme (e.g., repayment rates), rather than on how they affect the economic security of the community. The human security consequences of deliberately injecting cash, credit, or other livelihood resources into a refugee community have not been independently evaluated. NGOs rarely find funding for (expensive) independent evaluations, and it is not a funding priority for larger international organizations.

*The effect of IGPs on the economic security of refugees and the host community*

The lack of a general evaluation of IGPs means that we do not have a clear picture of their effects, positive or negative, on the economic security of refugees and their host communities. It is likely that the availability of capital equipment such as sewing machines, fishing boats, and ovens for food preparation, or loan capital for small businesses, improves the ability of refugees to pursue livelihoods, and that the benefits trickle out to the host community or even to aid agencies themselves.

An example of the impact of a refugee microcredit programme is the soap-manufacturing venture in Kakuma camp, on the Kenya's Sudan border. A group of five refugees formed a soap-manufacturing business, but soon realized their soap products had a limited market in the camp because there was a general UNHCR soap distribution to all refugees in the camp every month. In order to sustain the business, they approached an NGO, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) for support through its microcredit programme. This helped them increase output and improve the quality of soap, which soon met the requirements of the Kenya Bureau of Standards. UNHCR began to buy the refugee produced soap instead of transporting it from Nairobi for the general monthly distribution. They began training other interested refugees and locals, and were soon employing more than 40 men and women in production, training, and management. IRC helps them in preparing their financial reports and general book keeping. UNHCR supports their logistics in terms of transporting chemicals from Nairobi and carrying the soap to distribution centres for free. The soap is well packaged. Monitoring covers personnel to ensure that the employees are not exploited in terms of working hours and wages. UNHCR benefited too, as it was able to reduce transportation costs of more than 30 tons of soap every month from Nairobi to Kakuma.

But the unintended consequences of injecting capital and credit into a conflict-affected community have not yet been well identified. For example, by increasing economic security for refugees, microcredit programmes may reduce dependency on illicit livelihood activities, or such programmes may simply act as screens for their continuation. There is some anecdotal evidence of refugees engaging in microcredit programmes in camps while at the same time maintaining shadow business to help them pay back interest on the loans.<sup>13</sup> It is possible that the increased availability of resources from IGPs could attract the attention of bandits and warlords to the RHA.

There are mixed findings about whether increased economic security encourages refugees to repatriate or to stay in the community (Bakewell, 2000). The effect of refugees' increased economic resources on relations with the host community is also mixed; in some case it leads to increased resentment by the host community, in others increased willingness to socialize with them.

In general, IGPs can have a multiplier effect, by expanding the capacity and productivity of the RHA economy as a result of refugees' labour and skills, coupled with training and inputs from international assistance. This will especially be the case in RHAs that are under-developed and under-populated. This economic boost occurs for the following reasons: increased availability of new goods and services in the community; market growth and new trading opportunities as a result of new inputs; and development of under-utilized land and resources.

On the other hand, it is conceivable that IGPs can increase insecurity in the RHAs when refugees develop strategies of combining international assistance with illicit means. Or, when the resources associated with IGPs become targeted by actors in the war economy, such as bandits and warlords, and thereby increase the potential for violence in the area. Most relief agencies are well aware of this problem and seek to address it when implementing IGPs.

### LESSONS LEARNED: WHAT CAN DONORS DO TO SUPPORT REFUGEE LIVELIHOODS?

This paper has focused on the resources available to refugees and IDPs. We can use these as a guide to derive lessons about how to support their livelihoods. This section begins with some general lessons learned, and then focuses on specific recommendations about ways forward for donors and the humanitarian community.

General lessons about supporting livelihoods in conflict-affected area:

- In conflict-affected areas, humanitarian assistance for displaced people can and should include both emergency relief inputs and longer-term livelihood support. The latter is most efficacious when it is aimed at both displaced people and the host community.
- In conflict-affected areas, every humanitarian input, from food aid to new roads to loan capital, becomes a contested resource, which can contribute to the war economy or to the conflict itself. For example, a new road will benefit traders and link communities, but it will also facilitate the movement of militias and warlords – and often becomes controlled by them. As Mary Anderson (1999) notes, donors and humanitarian agencies must analyse the conflict context before implementing programmes. In these contexts, it is difficult to think of humanitarian assistance as neutral.
- Given the previous two, it is important that donors and humanitarian agencies identify local organizations and individuals that are familiar with the political and security context, and can provide guidance about how to

distribute resources or implement programmes. Local organizations that seek to include all “sides” and stakeholders often have legitimacy and respect within the community and make good candidates for donor support.

Specific approaches that could be undertaken by donors:

### *Advocacy*

Donors can encourage host governments and local authorities to see the value to their own people in supporting and allowing livelihood activities for displaced people. This advocacy should include: reducing restrictions on the movement of refugees; ensuring existing property rights are available to refugees; helping negotiate access to land and common resources for refugees; abiding by international principles of refugee protection that require host governments to ensure the physical safety of refugees; and encouraging local integration as a durable solution that potentially benefits host communities and countries, as well as refugees.

### *Better understanding of income-generating programmes*

Although income-generating programmes have not received extensive support, especially in Africa, they are a possible entry point for donors wishing to pursue forms of assistance that go beyond traditional relief handouts. IGPs, in conjunction with microfinance programmes, represent important modalities for livelihood support. Our understanding of how microfinance works in conflict or refugee situations is still in its infancy, but there is substantial anecdotal evidence from Sudan, the Congo, Kenya, and elsewhere that microcredit support can make a positive difference to livelihoods in conflict. It is important that evaluations of microcredit programmes be done in a way that goes beyond evaluating their financial outcomes, and seeks to understand their wider impact on the economic security of affected communities.

Other approaches to livelihood support must be attempted – and properly evaluated. These include:

- Direct cash distribution in lieu of food aid or other rations. Cash is sometimes a better option than in-kind relief inputs in conflict situations because it allows beneficiaries more flexibility, and is easier to transport and conceal from bandits. Cash injections can also take the form of salaries for government officials or functional legitimate authorities who, in many conflict-affected situations, have not been paid for lengthy periods.
- Vocational training and access to educational institutions is an important complement to direct forms of support. Opportunities need to be provided

in refugee camps and other emergency settlements for equitable access to training.

- The existing skills of refugees and IDPs, as craftsmen, artisans, entrepreneurs, managers, administrators, and so on, can be used to set up training and skill enhancement opportunities.<sup>15</sup>

### *Help with Access to Land and Local Resources*

Given the importance of land, common resources, and livestock for refugees in RHAs, aid agencies can do the following to support refugee livelihoods and reduce the associated environmental and security consequences: negotiate with locals for access to farmland, rangeland, and water; support livestock health and agricultural extension services, both for locals and the displaced; encourage reduction of local land tensions and cattle rustling through border harmonization programmes; promote the use of non-biomass sources of energy and building materials; support livelihood activities that use land and common resources in an environmentally sustainable way; and support livelihood activities that can replace or supplement traditional agriculture and pastoralism, microenterprise activities might be a realistic alternative.

### *Help access transnational resources*

In many host areas, refugees derive substantial livelihood support from remittances and other transnational resources. Although informal banking entities that facilitate these transfers are sometimes seen as security threats, and even closed down, as occurred with some Islamic banks after 11 September, it is clear that many refugees, and the nondisplaced in conflict situations depend on them economically. The informal and unregulated nature of refugee remittance facilities makes them difficult to study and fully comprehend, but more information about them would be helpful in furthering our understanding of how refugees cope.

## CONCLUSION

Programmes like IGPs that support refugee livelihoods have great potential for off-setting some of the economic burdens on communities imposed by refugees. In some cases, they also represent a more fiscally sound approach to refugee assistance by utilizing the economic skills and motivation of refugees to off-set costs. Perhaps even more significantly, support for refugee livelihoods has the potential to contribute to conflict reduction and to mend the economic fabric holding together conflict-affected communities.

Some caveats need to be made however. Care must be taken to ensure that security problems are addressed when resources for livelihoods are provided.

One approach that might work is to ensure that programmes and interventions address the needs of the affected host community as well as the refugees. Programmes that take a more inclusive approach are more likely to be embraced by everyone in the RHA, and are thus more likely to succeed.

In conflict situations, many people, both displaced and local, rely on illicit activities of varying degrees of seriousness to support their livelihoods. Humanitarian agencies must recognize this, and seek to address the problems that arise from illicit activities in a productive way. We need to develop our understanding of how the informal sector and so-called shadow economies work in parallel with humanitarian programmes. We need further understanding of how warlords shape economies and control resources, and how displaced people and locals incorporate these illegitimate structures into their livelihoods.

Finally, we pointed out early in the paper that refugee livelihoods are spread across two domains – the camps or official settlements where they are usually required to live, and the host community itself where many refugees are self-settled. Support for local host communities means that refugee livelihoods can be supported in both domains. This means that donors must advocate with host governments to allow refugees to pursue livelihoods outside of camps.

The problem of how long-term refugees should be assisted in host countries is one of the challenges facing the international refugee regime. The question is not simply how best to help refugees, but, given the climate of restrictive and temporary asylum, how to find solutions that are acceptable to host countries. Without the host country's acquiescence and active involvement, it will be much more difficult to help refugees. Many host countries are facing the problems of conflict and violence that refugees flee, and it is important to focus on the needs and constraints of host communities as much as on those of refugees.

Better understanding of how refugees pursue livelihoods, and the consequences of assistance programmes that support livelihoods in conflict, will help the international community shape its aid policy toward both refugees and the fragile states that host them. From a humanitarian point of view, in an increasingly restrictive asylum climate, it is important that we address the concerns that host states have about the negative impact of refugees by promoting programmes that benefit both refugees and nationals. Donors, host governments, and UNHCR have been unimaginative in their response to refugees in protracted situations. There is no vision that refugees and assistance programmes could be an asset to countries of first asylum, or that they could promote development and human security there. The tendency to warehouse refugees in camps and the failure to look for more creative and positive approaches to protracted refugee situations represents an extraordinary waste of resources, and fails to see the multiple ways in which by pursuing livelihoods refugees can contribute to the economic vitality, and ultimately to the human security of host areas.

## NOTES

1. Eighty-eight per cent of the world's 14.5 million refugees in 2000 were in the developing countries of Africa, the Middle East, and Asia (USCR, 2000).
2. Recent studies include: Bakewell, 2000; Black and Koser, 1999; Landau, 2001; Crisp, 2000; Kibreab, 2001a; and Sperl, 2000.
3. The Conference was jointly sponsored by UNDP (Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery), the Institute for Human Security, and Feinstein International Famine Center both of Tufts University, and took place from 27 February-1 March, 2002 at the Human Nutrition Research Center, School of Nutrition and Science Policy, Tufts University. The Conference proceedings will be available from the author or the Feinstein Famine Center ([www.famine.tufts.edu](http://www.famine.tufts.edu)).
4. One example is the DFID-ESCOR funded Sustainable Livelihoods Programme coordinated by the Institute of Development Studies. See IDS working paper series.
5. Conflict increases women's vulnerability to sexual violence and rape, and exacerbates levels of domestic violence and sexual harassment. Rape and sexual harassment increase the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and unwanted pregnancies. The fear of harassment and rape in turn forces women into forming alliances with soldiers and other men in power as a means of safety and escape. This causes other problems such as exposure to HIV/AIDS, more abuse and eventual abandonment, and potential expulsion from their own communities. Rape often carries stigma resulting in marginalization or expulsion from the community.
6. This definition is currently being developed by colleagues at the Feinstein International Famine Center at Tufts University (<http://famine.tufts.edu>).
7. For example, in the Kakuma camp, the unaccompanied Sudanese ("lost") boys give their rations to food shop owners in exchange for cooked meals or even meal plans because they have difficulty in combining cooking for themselves and going to school.
8. "Fragile states" are those facing latent or protracted conflicts, emerging from conflict, or indirectly affected by regional conflicts. These countries are caught in situations of chronic instability, insecurity, violation of human rights, economic and social collapse, high levels of aid dependency, and rising levels of absolute poverty. They often have weak or failed states characterized by lack of legitimacy, partial control of national territory, and ineffective delivery of services (Bourque and Sampson, 2001).
9. In Belize, in the early 1980s, each refugee family was allocated 50-acre holdings. In Tanzania in the 1970s, each family was given a minimum of ten acres of land for farming (Gasarasi, 1990, 1987). More recently in Uganda, the government allocated approximately 1,333 square kilometres of land for the development of settlements with the aim of allowing agricultural self-sufficiency, and to encourage local integration (UNHCR Uganda, 1996, 1999).
10. In DRC, UNHCR and its partner NGOs (CRS, IRC, Oxfam) are working to help Angolan refugees create "integration villages". The refugees are supported with food and non-food items and access to free health care, then after a year they are expected to function on their own. Many of the Angolans are traders or small business people (such as tailors), and UNHCR's income-generating project helps them purchase the materials, like cloth and needles, they need to restart their

- businesses. Other inputs might include bicycles – so traders can get to markets, seeds for vegetable gardens, and so on (see Jacobsen, 2001 for a review of literature and findings on local integration).
11. There is relatively little support for refugee IGPs in African host countries. In 2000, of the almost US\$12 million in UNHCR programmes for IGPs worldwide, just 3 per cent (US\$417,800) went to African countries (ILO/UNHCR Income-Generating Projects by Country, UNHCR, 2000).
  12. Rwanda, Cambodia, Mozambique, and Bosnia are the most noted examples of countries that were provided large amounts of aid to run post-conflict development or reconstruction programmes. Many of these programmes contained a microcredit component. These programmes, in general, had two primary objectives: to help rebuild their war-torn economies and to begin healing divided communities through projects that encouraged collaborative work.
  13. According to one informant in Kakuma camp, “The refugees prefer to maintain the two forms of business by fronting the formal one which is officially known and recognized by IRC for the purposes of bookkeeping. Such businesses thrive very quickly and the returns are very high since the population is concentrated at one particular place with an additional large local clientele from the host community and the service providers.”
  14. See D. Peppiatt, J. Mitchell, and P. Holzmann, “Cash transfers in emergencies: evaluating benefits and assessing risks”, HPN paper no. 35, ODI, June, 2001.
  15. ILO, WFP, and IOM have specific guidelines on gender and development of employment opportunities. ILO has also focused on gender and post-conflict issues and examined practices in a number of countries. WFP has a commitment to expend at least 25 per cent of its food-for-work and food-for-training resources on women and to ensure that women also benefit from long-term asset creation from these programmes. WFP also has a commitment to spend 50 per cent of its education resources on girls, which often means taking proactive steps to enable parents to send their girls to school. UNIFEM and the African Women in Crisis Programme also have guidelines, lessons learnt, and case histories of successful strategies and initiatives in this sector.

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CONTINUER DE SUBSISTER DURANT UN CONFLIT :  
AUTOSUBSISTANCE DES REFUGIES ET CONSEQUENCES POUR  
LA SECURITE DES COMMUNAUTES HOTES

Cet article explique comment les réfugiés assurent leur subsistance quand leur déplacement se prolonge, quelles conséquences ça implique pour la sécurité des personnes au sein des communautés touchées par un conflit, et de quelles façons l'aide internationale peut être utile. Le fait que des réfugiés assurent leur subsistance peut amener une amélioration de la sécurité des personnes, parce que l'activité économique contribue au rétablissement de liens économiques et sociaux intra et intercommunautaires. Il permet de même la reconstitution de réseaux sociaux fondés sur l'échange de travail, de biens et de nourriture. Si les réfugiés sont autorisés à faire usage des ressources, qu'ils sont libres de leurs mouvements, qu'ils peuvent s'employer aux côtés de leurs hôtes à mener des vies productives, ils sont moins dépendants de l'aide et mieux à même d'éviter les tensions et conflits avec les communautés qui les accueillent.

L'auteur, enfin, montre comment les programmes humanitaires, de concert avec les gouvernements des pays, peuvent accroître la sécurité économique tout en confortant les droits des réfugiés et de leurs hôtes. Ce qu'on attend aujourd'hui des interventions d'urgence, ce n'est pas seulement qu'elles sauvent des vies dans un premier temps, mais encore qu'elles jettent les bases d'un futur développement et qu'elles favorisent la résolution des conflits.

LA VIDA DURANTE EL CONFLICTO: CÓMO TRATAN DE  
GANARSE LA VIDA LOS REFUGIADOS Y EL IMPACTO SOBRE LA  
SEGURIDAD HUMANA DE LAS COMUNIDADES DE ACOGIDA

Este artículo estudia la forma como los refugiados a largo plazo tratan de ganarse la vida, los efectos que esta búsqueda tiene sobre la seguridad humana de las comunidades afectadas por el conflicto y las posibilidades de ayuda mediante la asistencia internacional. El hecho de que los refugiados traten de ganarse la vida puede ser favorable a la seguridad humana ya que sus actividades económicas contribuyen a recrear una interdependencia social y económica en el interior de las distintas comunidades y entre unas y otras, y puede restaurar las redes sociales basadas en el intercambio de trabajo, bienes y alimentos. Cuando se permite que los refugiados tengan acceso a los recursos y libertad de movimientos, y éstos pueden trabajar junto con los nacionales del país de acogida para alcanzar vidas productivas serán menos dependientes de la ayuda y más capaces de superar las fuentes de tensiones y conflictos en las comunidades de acogida.

El artículo expone cómo los programas humanitarios que trabajan con los gobiernos nacionales pueden incrementar la seguridad económica y conseguir

que se respeten los derechos tanto de los refugiados como de las comunidades de acogida. Hoy en día ya no se espera que las intervenciones de socorro se limiten a salvar vidas a corto plazo sino que además han de asentar las bases para el desarrollo futuro y promover la resolución de los conflictos.