

CHAPTER 3

SECURING THE FUTURE OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE – SUPPORTING LIVELI- HOODS AND DEVELOPING AN INTEGRATED SOCIAL POLICY IN TIME OF WAR.

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Introduction

The term ‘internally displaced people’ remains a sterile and rather dismal bureaucratic expression for some of the most acutely disadvantaged people in the world. As a group, internally displaced people (IDPs) do not enjoy the extensive legal rights conferred on refugees. They fall between the cracks of international humanitarian law. Despite the insistence that the state takes the prime responsibility for the protection and care of IDPs, they are often themselves the victims of the state’s military objectives in internal conflicts. Forcible displacement has become an increasingly common strategy in the long- standing civil wars that have affected Sudan, Uganda and Liberia, and was a common occurrence in the latter years of the Angolan conflict.

Although international humanitarian assistance has provided life-saving interventions to many war-affected populations in countries such as Sudan and Uganda, there has been a surprising absence of any systematic attempt to act creatively in developing recovery options for IDPs. Food relief remains the most conventional response in the provision of humanitarian assistance. Communities in the *planalto* area of Angola were the recipients of food aid for more than 20 years.

For post-conflict recovery to succeed for internally displaced populations, it is critical to combine emergency relief with complementary interventions at an early stage in a humanitarian crisis. It is this complementary and developmental assistance in protecting livelihoods and supporting resilience that can sustain the economies of displaced people, maintain cultural and community self-esteem and reduce the dependency on external humanitarian aid, which all too often is manipulated by warring factions. With the numbers of internally displaced amounting to several million people in countries such as Angola and Sudan, the importance of supporting these communities cannot be ignored if a stable and peaceful post-war environment is to be sustained.

A lack of integrated support for the needs of displaced people could easily breed further political and ethnic resentment, which would present a concomitant threat to stability.

Context

In recent humanitarian history, it is the IDPs in countries such as Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) that have been visited by the highest rates of death, disease and malnutrition. In the last decade, the DRC has probably provided the most scandalous case of international neglect in terms of protection. Barely a murmur of disquiet has been heard in response to the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives.

Africa now accounts for 52 percent of the world's displaced people. This amounts to well over 13 million persons. Despite the severity of the displacement problem in Africa, the UN's Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) recognises that

internally displaced people benefit from no such coherent international structure. There is no clear trigger for international engagement comparable to a group of refugees entering the territory of another state. No international organisation has the specific and exclusive responsibility for the internally displaced.¹

The UN Charter also compromises the ability of UN agencies to interfere in matters that are "essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of the state" (Article 2.7). This stress on respecting sovereignty provides the historical reason why many states are deeply suspicious of humanitarian interventions.

Despite these inherent constraints, the international humanitarian system has not entirely abrogated its responsibilities for protecting displaced people. In 1992, the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights appointed Dr Francis Deng as the UN Secretary-General's representative on IDPs. The UN's Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement were promulgated in 1998, and the UN appointed the head of OCHA, the Emergency Relief Co-ordinator, to be the international steward of the response and protection interventions for internally displaced populations. These prominent UN officials now have the more structured support of the Inter Agency Standing Committee to improve their decision-making in the areas of access, protection and assistance. A specialist IDP Unit has also been created in OCHA to provide the necessary policy advice to the UN system.

These important institutional reforms, though necessary, do not always prompt enlightened strategies in dealing with the problems of long-term displacement. More effective interventions have often been developed by non-government organisations (NGOs). Within the war zones of Africa, a range of NGOs and international organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) work courageously to provide life-saving services to large groups of internally displaced communities. Their work is often subject to the vagaries of international humanitarian funding, which does not always permit a long-term view of support and recovery to take hold. At one level this is absurd, as an often ill-founded optimism in both donors and host government may see displacement as a temporary phenomenon. For people in Angola, Uganda and Sudan, displacement has become a way of life over generations. Household strategies are seldom based on some false hope of returning home, but rather on the development of survival mechanisms in an urban slum.

Developing new humanitarian practices in areas of internal displacement

The prosaic debate on the relief-development continuum or the relief-development dichotomy has fortunately ended in a policy cul-de-sac. There is now a much greater recognition of the need for more integrated approaches to protecting war-ravaged societies. Although the UN is not entirely open to the vital policy discussions that have developed over more creative humanitarian interventions, the policies and programmes of the international humanitarian system have changed. Its work in war zones now shows a degree of enlightenment that would not have been apparent even ten years ago. There is a much greater awareness of the livelihoods of war-affected populations, which has led to the more intelligent and rational provision of assistance, and to more rapid improvements of IDPs' lives in time of peace. A greater understanding of the political economy of conflict has also led to a more conscious attempt by humanitarian agencies to "do no harm".

If Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) represents the *esprit de corps* of humanitarianism, it is also important to note the contributions made by other large international NGOs such as CARE, Save the Children (SCF) and OXFAM. They have used their extensive development experience and long-standing presence in African countries to combine humanitarian aid and successful recovery strategies to secure the livelihoods of displaced people and to reduce the dangerous manipulation of food aid in countries such as Sudan.

The early years of the UN's Operation Lifeline in southern Sudan were dominated by crude distributions of food aid on an ad hoc basis. These contributed to the displacement of transhumant populations, were often very effective in feeding the combatants on both sides, and made a minimal contribution to assisting the varied economic strategies which pastoral groups such as the Nuer and the Dinka had developed.

However, a number of more appropriate humanitarian and development approaches were adopted by a small group of NGOs.

- OXFAM introduced a para-vet programme in the South, which protected the animal assets of pastoral communities.
- The SCF brought in fishing nets, which supplied the means necessary for wet season fishing, giving pastoral families an excellent and abundant source of protein.
- The SCF introduced a revolving veterinary drug fund to treat local herds and so protect vital economic assets.

All of these represented innovative strategies in the early 1990s, based on the selective use of excellent anthropological research and close working relationships with traditional structures, which provided pertinent advice on the most appropriate ways of meeting needs in the south. By no means all of the discussions were about the need for food. Much of the humanitarian analysis related to the support of household or kraal economies. Out of this work a more comprehensive analysis of pastoral economies in the south was developed. In consequence, the thrust of one part of the main humanitarian operation concentrated on those commodities that were no longer provided by market systems that had collapsed along with north-south trade. Such items included mosquito cloth, salt, soap and fishing hooks.

The point to stress here is that these approaches provided the necessary economic stability for displaced people despite the proximity of war. They may also allow them, when peace finally comes to Sudan, to adapt rapidly to the opening up of markets and to manage the injections of recovery assistance much more effectively. These approaches built on the strengths of pastoral economies and prevented these communities from becoming dependent on food aid. They were highly participatory exercises that led to an understanding of how particular communities gain access to food.

Out of this corpus of work has developed a sounder analysis of how households obtain food, even in a time of war. The development of household economy analysis, which was a product of the food security crises caused by war and migration in the Horn of Africa, has had a profound impact on donor and UN assessment of humanitarian need. The clumsy strategies of poorly-targeted food aid and hastily-managed nutritional surveys have given way to a more informed recognition of the complexity of household survival interventions and livelihoods in societies facing severe conflict.

This quiet revolution in analyzing the impact of stress and violence on rural communities has at last acknowledged that communities have a wide range of approaches to dealing with emergencies. Moreover, these strategies developed out of the pressures of poverty and generations of indigenous knowledge, which can make a far more important contribution to household survival than humanitarian assistance from international donors. At times, the clan structures of Somalia provided a much more effective welfare system for protecting the lives of their poorest members than external aid could.

The denial of food aid to displaced people has become a sine qua non of counter-insurgency operations in Africa. However, much greater damage is done to the wellbeing of displaced populations by the destruction of services, markets and trade and the deliberate disruption of agriculture and husbandry. For example, for pastoral people the banning of movement is a highly destructive strategy. Humanitarian agencies need to reinforce their humanitarian advocacy, not just on the essentials of food aid, but by placing greater stress on the need for displaced people to have access to markets and trade.

If innovative livelihood support policies can be established in a time of war, social policy can be equally inventive in areas of conflict. Working with structures of sufficient political and moral legitimacy has been one of the greatest challenges for aid agencies in recent African conflicts. Although the development of civil society has become an essential requirement for NGOs working to create a new moral order, there are also more mundane approaches to partnership, service provision and protection that can improve the lives of displaced communities. Many examples of these different approaches can be found in the annals of recent NGO work in Africa.

Save the Children developed their emergency health work in East and West Africa in very interesting ways which eschewed the temptation NGOs normally feel to develop parallel service structures in a time of crisis. These innovative approaches, described in greater detail below, provided a more effective health

delivery service to displaced people, bringing greater consistency to the care of people, and helping to reduce the exceptionally high rates of infant mortality.

- In Somalia, the SCF's health staff worked with the medical structures of both 'Mogadishu presidents' – Aideed and Ali Mahdi – to develop common protocols for the management of communicable diseases. The Somali doctors on both sides of the 'Green Line' knew each other well, and felt no great personal enmity towards their medical brethren. They were divided by clan ancestry, but they were working towards a future in which they could be colleagues again. Their dialogue on health policy could have provided an excellent foundation for the rebuilding of Somali health systems in a time of peace. Sadly, that peace has not yet been secured.
- As a complementary aspect to its work on communicable diseases, the SCF invested considerable resources and technical training in developing the nascent health structures of the Somaliland government.
- SCF supported a similar approach during the Liberian civil war. Doctors working for the Interim Government and for Charles Taylor's rebel government in Gbarnga were willing to collaborate on joint policies for TB management and maternal and child care. These doctors had trained together and worked under a unified health system before the war, and were very willing to develop policies which would benefit the war-affected populations in both political zones.
- During the mid-1990s ceasefire in Angola, SCF worked with the Ministry of Health and União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) medical staff on joint training workshops to improve primary health care management.

In all of these examples, the main strategy was one of working with structures that exhibited professional and technical competence. Long-term relationships were secured through extensive development programmes. However, when these development concepts are not even contemplated, let alone honoured, then humanitarian assistance can go awry, compromising the stability needed for effective recovery operations for displaced people.

Unfortunately, there are still humanitarian practices that disable displaced people and place them at a great disadvantage when the opportunity to restore their livelihoods opens up during a time of peace. It is still apparent that in major emergencies, a horde of disparate NGOs tends to descend on a country and

population in a state of shock after mass killings and displacement. In Rwanda in 1994, nearly 150 NGOs arrived within a short period, competing with each other for prime humanitarian space, and often failing to negotiate with recognised structures. The losers in this humanitarian scramble were the Rwandans themselves: they were provided with shoddy services and excluded from any decision-making, even in matters affecting their lives quite profoundly.

The failure of the early interventions in Rwanda was an extreme example of *laissez-faire* actions by NGOs. Some of their work threatened the tenuous stability in the region, alienated the embryonic government in Kigali and hampered recovery. These great human tragedies often bring in new agencies that lack any historical understanding of the lives of the people. They are unaware of the capacities in communities to adjust to massive shocks, and fail to consider participatory approaches that might improve the possibilities of recovery in the aftermath of the conflict.

After the Rwanda debacle, a considerable amount of soul-searching was undertaken, by the NGOs in particular. Perhaps the philosophy of humanitarianism has been so much debated in the last decade that the vibrancy of the dialogue itself may have overshadowed the idea of working with IDPs to tailor development support to their particular needs. The Great Lakes crisis of the mid-1990s was a watershed for humanitarianism. Agencies were doing harm by vitiating the ability of local structures to revive. Out of this uncoordinated mess came the need for new humanitarian standards such as the SPHERE initiative and the Codes of Conduct adopted by the Red Cross Movement and a large number of NGOs.

Recovery strategies and the displaced

In its extensive work examining successful post-conflict interventions, the Brookings Institute has suggested a number “of elements which are indicative of the range of needs that must be addressed early in societies emerging from conflict, if the ground is to be secured for sustainable peace and economic development”.²

These elements include:

- repatriation, reintegration and reconciliation;
- restoration of human rights, including property and identity;

- re-establishing public safety and security, including demobilisation and policing;
- infrastructure recovery, including water, sanitation, shelter and transportation;
- ensuring food security and agricultural rehabilitation, including land tenure designation and registration;
- meeting urgent health, education and basic social welfare requirements, including employment and income generation;
- restoring operative government structures, including the rule of law and other civil society institutions; and
- holding elections that are preceded by voter education.

This list of essential functions calls for a powerful strategic framework that will help develop a consensus on the necessary priorities, policies and interventions. A comprehensive recovery strategy will also require a well-considered division of labour, which will strengthen the partnership between government structures, the UN system, donors and the NGO community.

These approaches and attitudes have become more widespread in the last few years. A plethora of larger international agencies such as the UNDP, the World Bank, the OECD and donors such as the Department for International Development (DFID) have given substantial consideration and funding to post-conflict operations that involve more innovative and integrated methods of engagement and investment. This style of assistance has sometimes been labelled a transitional approach.

In countries such as Sierra Leone and Sudan, the UN agencies appear to have been willing to look at new approaches to building more participatory and developmentally-oriented programmes for post-conflict recovery. The UNDP in Sudan decided to opt for the Millennium Development Goals as the foundation for its Consolidated Appeal in late 2003. The goals represent a key development vision, because they stress the need for the integration – not just co-ordination – of interventions assisting post-war recovery. To enhance integration in Sudan, the UN system will have to agree to a joint assessment model such as the Common Country Assessment, which the UNDP uses for its development framework planning. In recognising the value of the Millennium Development Goals as the main strategy for recovery and reconciliation, the UN has shown it accepts the need for a highly synchronised response to the task of supporting the lives of over 4 million displaced people in Sudan.

The use of a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) might be another development planning option that could be used to encourage the ownership of the task of nation building and recovery by displaced people. The PRSP is an ideal approach to examining the factors of poverty in peace/conflict tensions because it stresses the importance for a country of developing its own poverty reduction plan. It would also provide a good vehicle for improving the involvement of displaced people in the revival of local economies. Again, a PRSP could include a specific conflict analysis both to take into account the effects of war on affected communities and to discover whether the corrupt use of resources or the long-term results of under-development were themselves causes of the conflict.

Whatever the reasons for the outbreak of war in African countries, IDPs are often the first casualties of chronic imbalances in wealth and development. Redressing severe development inequities must be a priority in planning the re-integration of IDPs. The continuing security problems in northern Uganda are not wholly attributable to the millennial ambitions of Acholi leaders, but are partly based on grievances caused by decades of inadequate development assistance in the north. The same uneasy situation must be recognised in any political settlement that aims to create stability in southern Sudan.

In the rather arcane world of peace building, the Brahimi Report on the future of UN peacekeeping also stresses the need for greater integration. A team approach is recommended “to uphold the rule of law and respect for human rights and help...communities coming out of a conflict to achieve national reconciliation; [and assist with the] consolidation of disarmament, demobilisation and re-integration programmes”.³ The report recommends the creation of Integrated Mission Task Forces in which each team would consist of personnel taken from a wide range of disciplines across the UN system. Teams would manage a range of activities covering political analysis, military operations, the civilian police, electoral assistance, human rights, development, humanitarian assistance, programmes for refugees and IDPs, public information and peace building advocacy.

This approach certainly goes beyond mere co-ordination. It is prepared to offer a wide portfolio of responses to enhance peace and sustain recovery. IDPs would welcome a more integrated approach that gives them a stronger voice in matters such as:

- human rights;
- health;

- education;
- production systems;
- physical infrastructure;
- environmental rehabilitation; and
- de-mining.

To complement this range of investments in peace building, there is an equal need for comprehensive area rehabilitation schemes. These would not only support demobilisation and the re-integration of former combatants, but also follow an equitable approach to supporting the host communities on one hand, and combatants returning home on the other.

The scale of personnel required for successful recovery interventions cannot be underestimated. In Mozambique, 7 000 UN peacekeepers and police were needed to complement the staff of UN agencies and 150 NGOs in managing a range of recovery and rehabilitation interventions for refugees and IDPs. However, the spontaneous return of hundreds of thousands of refugees from Malawi outpaced the de-mining efforts of the various agencies, leading to 40 deaths a month from landmine-related incidents during the early days of the resettlement.

The early investment in support of IDPs in Mozambique was made using 'Quick impact programmes' (QUIPS), an intervention preferred by the UN when it is supporting hundreds of thousands of people returning home. However, the emphasis on QUIPS cannot adequately meet the profound need for long-term investment in rehabilitating livelihoods. The UN saw its recovery work in Mozambique as an unqualified success in terms of demobilisation, peace building and re-integration: but the war has left a damning legacy of chronic under-development and poor infrastructure investment in northern Mozambique.

Equally, if peace comes to Sudan, the greatest challenge to rebuilding political and economic stability will be the damage done by decades of under-development. The restoration of pastoral economies and markets in the south will not be entirely amenable to QUIPS. A much greater long-term effort will be required, which will involve the country's using the oil resources of the south more equitably. Like Iraq and Afghanistan, Sudan has a strategic importance to donors, which may result in significant external investment in the country's recovery. However, the voices of the displaced will need to be brought

into the debate over recovery policy. Otherwise the military/political elites of north and south will carve up the largesse provided by international aid to the detriment of some of the poorest communities in Africa. If that happens, they will sow the seeds of inequity and discontent once again.

Capacity building

During their own liberation wars, rebel movements such as Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO), Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo-Verde (PAIGC) and South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) ensured that they established alternative government structures in the areas that they controlled. These included the provision of health and education services. During the long wars in Ethiopia, the Eritrean and Tigrayan armies emulated these models of liberation governance by creating their own relief agencies, the Eritrean Relief and Rehabilitation Association (ERRA) and the Relief Society of Tigre (REST). These agencies took over the responsibility for all food aid logistics, education and health services and agricultural support. The Eritreans went one step further by establishing their own drug-manufacturing centres and soap-making industries in caves. The personnel managing these rebel relief structures took over key government institutions when the Mengistu regime was overthrown.

The work of ERRA and REST provided examples of unusual practice in which humanitarian structures were integrated into the recovery development of the Ethiopian and Eritrean governments after peace had been secured. Sadly, they have remained the best historical models so far of rebel relief structures being developed during a time of war to provide strong capacity-building support to post-war dispensations. In contrast, the more common tendency is, as the British anthropologist Mark Duffield has stated, for rebel insurgencies in many African conflicts to represent little more than predatory social movements, plundering and enslaving the very people on whose behalf they are ostensibly fighting. (His observation is particularly true of the Lords Resistance Army in northern Uganda.)

Certainly, most NGOs have had frustrating experiences in working with the South Sudan Relief Agency (SRRA) in southern Sudan. Again, when UNITA took over many towns in the *planalto* in Angola in the mid-1990s, their hostile attitude towards NGOs took various forms, including the widespread theft of relief agency assets. The (Sudanese People's Liberation Movement) SPLM and UNITA were predominantly military movements with token administrative

structures. It would have been patently absurd for any relief agency to establish a working partnership with such movements, like the Lords Resistance Army in Uganda, except on matters of access. However, it is equally frustrating to humanitarian organisations that the governments in Uganda and Angola have failed to provide adequate protection and resources to their large populations of displaced persons.

What options do relief agencies have when they are working in an environment of government indifference, or facing the humanitarian after-effects of the rapacious depredations of warlords? One solution may lie in a greater engagement with local organisations, which can be relatively free of bias in a polarised political environment. Certainly empowerment work with women's organizations and with children's groups that include former child combatants can be a significant investment towards adopting appropriate strategies during an emergency period. It could also strengthen the voices of two critical constituencies (women and children) in a time of peace and revival.

This is not merely excessively optimistic development ideology: these approaches can actually work.

In 1994, women in Sierra Leone began defining their agenda for the Beijing Conference. It was during this process that they identified the need to organise in support of the peace process, and take an active role in Sierra Leone's transition to democracy.

Women's groups in Freetown began mobilising support and demanding peace. They saw democratic elections as a vehicle for resolving drawn-out conflict in their country. They worked to bring the rebels to the negotiating table and to establish dialogue. Village women went into rural areas singing songs and calling on rebels to down their arms. In one instance a planned meeting was discovered by the military, and the women who had gone to meet the rebels were massacred in the cross fire.

However, women's groups all over the country persevered, mobilising substantial support among labour unions, teachers, and civic organisations, and traditional structures for democratic elections. Despite attempts by both the military and rebels, including atrocities and severe human rights violations, to derail the process, elections were held and the military government was replaced by a civilian one.

Ironically, while working for peace these women's groups failed to ensure their own inclusion on electoral lists.⁴

Children can also provide an important focus for both national and local reconciliation. One of the most impressive aspects of the reintegration of Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) combatants into rural life was the widespread use of healing ceremonies to allow combatants, often children guilty of atrocities, to be accepted back into communal society. This work was complemented by a very creative partnership between the SCF and the Ministry of Education, who supported the psychological rehabilitation of children attending school through pastoral work done by school teachers. Structures such as schools also brought a more familiar environment back into children's lives.

The work carried out with children in Mozambique provided an excellent case study to illustrate ways of dealing with psycho-social concerns relating to children who have been caught up in a civil war. The rehabilitation strategy was also supported by the SCF's family tracing programme, which reunited 10 000 displaced and unaccompanied children with their families. The development of this work in a time of war created an excellent foundation for a strong partnership between the SCF and the government of Mozambique in the post-war period. A technical support programme was introduced to improve the ability of the government's social workers to manage rehabilitation programmes, and helped those involved to create more viable policies for helping children affected by war after the conflict has ended. The family-tracing programme also inaugurated a process of policy reform that dissuaded the government from establishing institutional homes for children orphaned by the war. Even today, it is likely that Mozambique has maintained the lowest rates of children in institutions in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, in contrast with Angola, which probably has the highest rates in the region of children living in institutions.

The SCF's work with children in Uganda was equally effective. During the Luwero Triangle war in the early 1980s, the SCF removed displaced and unaccompanied children to places of safety outside the war zone, and then used these bases to trace surviving family members. All of this work was done in collaboration with the government's social workers. In the post-war era, the partnership continued. Uganda, too, became reluctant to institutionalise its war orphans, preferring to continue with family tracing work. In cases where long-term tracing could find no living relatives of war-displaced children, the SCF and the government's social workers introduced a scheme to establish

older teenage children in small businesses. They were set up with small grants that established a degree of self-sufficiency; and their progress was supported by frequent visits from social workers.

In the aftermath of its civil war, Uganda became the most progressive country in Africa in formally recognising children's rights within its national legal framework. All of this was erected on the foundation of the capacity-building work originally done by an NGO and a government in a conflict zone. Many NGOs have established productive partnerships with government institutions in Mozambique and Uganda, which started during the war and have flourished in the post-war period through the radical reform of social policy. However, the fruition of this enlightened trend requires not only long-term funding but a greater degree of flexibility from governments and donors, particularly in allowing displaced people to settle permanently where they can best pursue their livelihoods. That can mean IDPs remaining in the urban areas to which they fled. A group of international NGOs in Luanda including CARE, Development Workshop and the SCF manage an urban fund provided by the DFID to support long-term displaced people with community financing, community-managed water schemes and public health provision.

Conclusions

Post-conflict recovery requires an integrated response on a large scale, where macro-economic, governance, security, reconciliation and national infrastructure needs are recognised and supported. Equally important is a complementary approach offering small-scale support that will revive the livelihoods of the internally displaced, secure their settlement and, if necessary, develop their places of temporary residence into long-term, stable homes.

IDPs face the greatest economic and societal shocks in a time of war. Their future is inextricably linked to that of a country. A successful transition to peace can be achieved only when the internally displaced are effectively re-integrated into normal livelihoods. UN OCHA have made it clear that:

internal displacement cannot truly be said to be resolved until the people affected have secured a source of livelihood. Without it, they may be forced to move again in order to survive. In the aftermath of conflict that has caused displacement, particularly if the conflict has been protracted, people who are returning or settling in new communities find themselves thrust from one artificial economy into another:

from a war economy dominated by extortion and the illicit trade in guns and natural resources, to an emergency relief economy dominated by unproductive, externally supplied goods intended for immediate consumption. The displaced person's plight is not resolved until the transition has been made into a normal economy of productive assets. Only then can a development process get under way.⁵

Breaking this cycle could make an important contribution to sustaining peace and recovery in the aftermath of a protracted civil war. Laying a foundation during a time of conflict that supports the livelihoods of displaced people and secures their protection could represent the best foundation for the future. It would reduce the risk that natural resources will be plundered; prevent the wholesale forcing of young people into military service; and allow displaced people some economic space and the confidence that they can contribute their experience to a reconciliation process.

Some of the lessons to be emphasised concern developing relationships with legitimate and professional structures; understanding household economies; supporting the interests of children; and establishing a range of interventions that allow IDPs to survive, sustain their economies and preserve their communities. By acting in solidarity with displaced people during a period of war and working in a range of partnerships to develop livelihoods support, service provision and protection, aid agencies can strengthen their voices at the 'round tables' on post-conflict recovery. The evidence in Uganda and Angola already suggests that aid agencies' contributions are being heard. This allows them the opportunity to boost their advocacy on behalf of IDPs.

Sudan, which has the largest internally displaced population in the world, is on the verge of a new era of peace. Four million displaced people will have a crucial role to play in the success of the peace process in Sudan, and their recovery and development needs must be paramount in securing that outcome. Hopefully, the lessons, which have already been learnt about the economies and survival strategies of the southern peoples, will lay the foundation for effective and practical recovery interventions that will create a state of stability in which IDPs can believe.

Author Note:

Andrew Timpson worked for Save the Children UK for over 20 years, mainly in East and Southern Africa. He currently works for OCHA in northern Uganda. The article reflects his personal views.

Endnotes

- 1 *No Refuge: The challenge of internal displacement*, UN OCHA, Geneva, 2003.
- 2 S Holtzman, *Rethinking relief and development in transitions from conflict*, Brookings Institution Project on Internal Displacement, 1999.
- 3 Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, New York, 2003.
- 4 *The DAC Guidelines. Helping prevent violent conflict*, OECD, Paris, 2001.
- 5 *No Refuge*, op cit.