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Conflict, climate change and politics

Why a techno-centric approach fails the resilience challenge

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Abstract

Resilience, the goal of so many concerned about crises, poverty, climate change and conflict, is often presented as a technical challenge – that is, technical interventions, ranging from stronger schools and higher dams to more irrigation and drought-resistant seeds, are often presented as the ‘solution’ to the resilience ‘problem’. The increasing consensus that climate change is a threat to the development of poorer nations and a cause of humanitarian crises has ensured that climate change concerns are at the centre of recent discussions on resilience. This has also contributed to the belief that supporting resilience requires a broad, multi-disciplinary approach, and that resilience may even provide a conceptual umbrella under which experts from different disciplines can find a common language (e.g. Davies et al., 2013).

Much of the focus on multi-*disciplinary* resilience-building has really been about multi-*sectoral* support – i.e. the integration, or at least the combination, of different technical interventions. The challenges of climate change present a problem which is addressed by several different disciplines (e.g. climate change adaptation, climate science, mitigation, disaster risk reduction). These various disciplines or sectors are increasingly seeking to become integrated in the practice of international development, as seen, for example, in the gradual increase in support for ‘climate-resilient growth’ and the reduction in support for separate climate change adaptation interventions in parallel with existing development policies and interventions. However, the attempt to promote the packaging together of different interventions in order to ‘achieve resilience’ remains a predominantly techno-centric enterprise.

The nexus between climate change and conflict is fertile ground for examining these issues for several reasons: there is a widely held belief that climate change will be, or already is, a factor in driving conflict; conflicts are the crises where a purely technical approach intuitively feels inadequate; both research and aid practice are being shaped by thinking on the link between conflicts and climate change; and the most important reason for supporting resilience, indeed arguably the moral driver of the resilience agenda, is the belief that development assistance should be about supporting those most vulnerable to crisis, of whom a great part are those whose lives and opportunities are limited by conflict. Thus, conflict and climate change – and their purported relationship – is used as an illustration of the degree to which inter-disciplinary links advance or undermine positive impacts in supporting resilience.

This paper uses three case studies to look at the role of political analysis in analysis of climate change impacts. The first, on Aceh, shows how inattention to the political legacy of a recent conflict can undermine well-intentioned and technically sound environmental or climate mitigation programmes; the second, on East Africa, explores what might happen when the political sophistication of those writing climate change strategies is not matched by those reading and supporting them; and the third, on Darfur, looks at whether conflicts can be analysed directly through links to climate change and resource scarcity. Together, the three case studies show that, when disciplines are used techno-centrally and in the absence of sophisticated political analysis, there are significant risks that interventions designed to support resilience may in fact do more harm than good.

1 Introduction

Climate change will shape development trajectories for decades to come. It will also influence the nature, frequency and scale of humanitarian crises (IPCC, 2007; Mitchell and Maxwell, 2010). The future world climate will give rise to more and greater hazards (floods, hurricanes, droughts), and crises will be created or averted by the interactions between the impacts of climate change and the many factors that shape people's resilience, including demographic movements and migrations, food security, urbanisation and changing economic conditions at global, national and local levels. There are also those who argue that changes in weather conditions are linked to the prevalence of conflict,¹ the main cause of crisis in the world.²

Despite the cross-sectoral nature of the climate change challenge, the design and delivery of strategies to promote both adaptation and mitigation has traditionally been confined to sectoral activities and actors. This has contributed to the creation of a distinct professional specialism and body of knowledge, with its own established climate-related bureaucracy and funding modality, which is often at odds with the many calls for adaptation to be integrated and mainstreamed throughout development efforts. While notable progress has been made to integrate climate change into related sectors such as disaster risk reduction, governments, donors and aid agencies still largely fail to incorporate climate-related risk systematically into broader decision-making processes.

Close parallels can be drawn with the fragmentation of different areas of the aid sector. Whilst aspects of both humanitarian and development practice are seen as either overlapping or interlinked, key actors often fail

to speak to each other or operate in a coordinated and collaborative way.³ The critique of the humanitarian–development divide is longstanding (e.g. Buchanan-Smith and Maxwell, 1994), but has gained new impetus more recently, and much of the discussion arising from this dissatisfaction with the status quo has coalesced around the concept of resilience. In part this focus on resilience – making sure over the long term that people will be able to cope with short-term problems – stems from the repetition of humanitarian crises in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. In both cases, these crises were predominantly an outcome of chronic ('developmental') problems, rather than acute, discrete shocks.

The need for different disciplines to communicate with each other is not controversial. However, despite easy rhetoric on the need to see everything holistically, there is little consensus in practice about why disciplines remain separate or how, and to what degree, this separation can be broken down. It is obviously impossible for every problem to be analysed from every angle, so some guiding principles are needed in any field of enquiry as to which perspectives or questions are essential in any individual study. This should be the job of a conceptual framework. For example, the livelihoods framework, discussed below, indicates how technical considerations of assets and economic strategies should be combined with political economy analysis of institutions, politics and power in order to understand why different people have the strategies and outcomes they do – and what might need to be done to change this. The forces of analytical integration have not yet succeeded in the area of climate change and conflict, and there is as yet no agreed framework for guiding thinking on how to approach the links between them. There is a body of literature which suggests that climate change may play a role in exacerbating conflicts and humanitarian crises, and another warning against making too many assumptions about any purported causal links between weather or climate and conflict (see Harris

1 Statistical correlations between conflict and weather changes are analysed, for example, by Hsiang et al., 2011; Tol and Wagner, 2010; Hendrix and Salehyan, 2012; and Zhang et al., 2011.

2 In at least 13 of the top 20 recipient countries of humanitarian aid in the decade from 2002–11 conflict played a significant role in precipitating crises. In a further four (Kenya, Zimbabwe, Indonesia and Pakistan) conflict was a contributing factor (GHA, 2013).

3 See Kellett and Peters, 2014, as an example in the context of emergency preparedness.

et al., 2013).⁴ But as yet the limited number of studies that have emerged on the subject have not created any clear policy solutions – or even generally accepted policy questions.

Much of what has been published within the policy sphere about the climate change–conflict link has focused on finding or disproving a causal relationship, based ‘objectively’ on statistical correlations between climate/weather and conflict, while largely ignoring political considerations. Very little, with the exception of the work of Tanner and Allouche (2011), explores the political economy of climate change. Yet the study of climate change goes beyond understanding the physical properties of the Earth’s climate to include the interactions of climate change with non-physical factors (cultural, socio-economic and political). As such, it is not obvious that an analysis of the impact of climate change on conflict can adopt an apolitical perspective.

There are many reasons why the various fields of practice around climate change often strive to be technical and scientific and thus apolitical. Climate change debates take place in a politically charged atmosphere.⁵ For example, with regard to climate science, much attention is given to the uncertainties inherent within climate models and projections. This is of particular relevance to policymakers tasked with making long-term decisions and investments. In this context, projections which guide policies on climate change must be grounded in the most objective evidence possible, using the best possible climate science: in other words, there is a strong political

4 See Lind, Ibrahim and Harris, 2010, for a summary of the different ‘camps’.

5 See Hulme, 2009.

case to ensure that projections are clearly based on objectivity and not on politics.

The movement to establish principles of international action to deal with climate change (including both limiting the magnitude of climate change, e.g. reducing emissions, and supporting adaptation, e.g. helping vulnerable communities to prepare for future change) is, on the other hand, a clearly political agenda. Nevertheless, support to adaptation has been implemented as if it were a technical and apolitical challenge. To date, the main focus of internationally supported climate change adaptation initiatives has been the provision of technological and infrastructural packages. Indeed, of the 4,104 adaptation initiatives officially declared to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change, the largest number of activities falls under the category of infrastructure, technology and innovation. Even more notable is the lack of reporting on the inclusion of vulnerable groups across all of the recorded initiatives.⁶ The human challenges presented by climate change are global and their universality means that they need to be addressed independently of political, religious or cultural orientation. This universality has perhaps driven a desire to remain apolitical, and to think in terms of generic responses. The need for objectivity, though, does not imply a need to eschew politics.⁷

6 See Lesnikowski et al, 2013. Recorded initiatives relate to National Communications submitted under the UNFCCC. Many of the climate change adaptation activities conducted by non-state actors are not included in these listings, which typically tend to emphasise non-technical elements of climate change adaptation.

7 While climate change is used here as the illustration, the argument for being more politically aware is relevant across development approaches.

2 Exploring the links between climate, conflict and politics

This paper examines the general adherence to techno-centric approaches in the resilience world, but most particularly in climate-related strategies (both adaptation and mitigation), by taking debates on the relationship between climate change and conflict (or conditions of fragility) as a form of case study. Although there have been studies looking at the links between climate change and conflict which include an analysis of vulnerability and state capacity (e.g. Barnett and Adger, 2007), there is nonetheless a tendency to conclude that we do not yet understand the links between the two well enough, with the implication that, with enough case studies, a link would in principle emerge. This paper does not assume any generic link between climate change and conflict, but rather expects links, influences and interactions to emerge in very many ways – by affecting resource availability, by affecting the ways in which people access resources, by affecting population movements and economies and by potentially affecting power relations and the institutions which shape political, social and economic interactions.

The three case studies chosen for this paper thus are not intended to illustrate a common pattern in how conflict and climate change interact with each other. On the contrary, the analytical starting point of the paper is that cases are specific, and that, although lessons may be learned from one example that may be useful more widely, it is only by looking closely at each individual context that supportive interventions can be found. Each of the case studies has a conflict dimension, but of very different kinds. The first case study takes a post-conflict setting (Aceh, Indonesia), and shows how a failure to understand post-conflict political dynamics undermined a climate-related initiative and may have inadvertently exacerbated underlying political tensions. The second case study (dryland areas in Uganda and Ethiopia) looks at how national climate change adaptation policies can be presented in ways which ignore the low-level conflict in these areas, where political marginalisation has led to longstanding tension and widespread insecurity. The study examines how broader political interests can drive particular adaptation policies, how

a ‘climate change agenda’ can be a useful vehicle for mobilising international support that can strengthen or undermine local resilience and how the risk that this agenda may undermine resilience or increase conflict can increase if political interests are not placed at the centre of analysis. The final case study, Darfur, Sudan, serves as an example of the kinds of conflict which many believe will become more common as climate change intensifies resource scarcity.⁸ The case study uses published research undertaken over the course of the conflict to assess the usefulness of a technical approach to understanding the conflict.

2.1 Politics and climate change mitigation in Aceh

The separatist conflict in Aceh had little to do with climate change or mitigation, but the interplay between longstanding political and nationalist grievances and international support for a climate change mitigation model is relevant therefore for international support for climate change in politically charged environments today.⁹

Indonesia is one of the world’s leading countries in efforts to design and implement Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) pilots. This is significant because it is allegedly the world’s third-largest emitter of carbon dioxide, for 85% of which the loss of forests is responsible (Ibarra Gené and Aliadi, 2010). In the run-up to the United Nations Framework Conference on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP 13 in Bali in 2007, REDD attracted significant interest in Indonesia, partly because of the large potential revenues available from international funds for carbon absorption. The government

8 The conflict in Syria is also being attributed to climate change – see Polk, 2013.

9 Although the focus of climate action has moved away from REDD, the subject of this case study, the lessons remain instructive.

estimated that a decrease in deforestation by 50% could generate REDD revenues of up to \$4.5 billion a year (Government of Indonesia, Ministry of Forestry, 2008). The province of Aceh, on the northern tip of Sumatra, harbours a forest expanse of approximately 3.3 million hectares. One of Indonesia's first REDD demonstration activities, Ulu Masen, was sited in an area of 750,000 ha in this forest, a watershed for two million people (half the population of the province). It was calculated that it could absorb up to 100m tonnes of carbon over 30 years. The project was developed by the government of Aceh, in partnership with Fauna and Flora International, and it enjoyed private sector backing, with a pledge by Merrill Lynch to invest \$9m over four years under a Verified Emissions Reduction Purchase Agreement (VERPA).

The Ulu Masen project was part of a green development strategy developed by the Aceh government following the election in December 2006 of former separatist fighter Irwandi Yusuf as governor. A long-time environmentalist, Irwandi saw Aceh's natural resources as key to post-conflict recovery and sustainable economic development. In June 2007 he declared a moratorium on all logging pending a review of the status of Aceh's forests and the establishment of a forest development and management strategy and enforcement systems. The plan, the Green Economic Development and Investment Strategy for Aceh, or 'Aceh Green', was wide-ranging, including forest protection and management, smallholder plantations, fisheries, renewable energy and infrastructure development (Government of Aceh, 2007). The central government provided strong political backing through a National REDD Task Force directly under the president's office.

Here, then, was a territory with a hugely valuable environment worth saving, genuine political commitment both to a green agenda and to sustainable people-centred development, international private sector backing and investment, massive funds from the newly installed international carbon system and a central government committed to REDD – all the elements for success had fortuitously come together. It may then be surprising that Ulu Masen has not been endorsed as a national pilot project, even though Indonesia has received a pledge of \$1bn from Norway for REDD; both donors and investors have been reluctant to fund projects under Aceh Green; the Merrill Lynch–government of Aceh VERPA has been cancelled; and the 'green governor' granted a

concession permit to an oil palm company in the Tripa peat swamp area.¹⁰ How did it go wrong so quickly?

The above presentation of green politics, global climate funds and the REDD project omitted mention of the most important dimension of climate change politics in Aceh, namely the fact that the province only emerged from nearly three decades of civil war in 2005. The election in 2006 was the culmination of a process that brought an end to armed conflict and produced a peace agreement based on the creation of a new 'self-government' arrangement for Aceh within the Republic of Indonesia. The election of a former rebel as the first governor of post-conflict Aceh must also be understood as a step within the broader political reconstruction of Aceh, a process in which the Indian Ocean tsunami recovery played a significant role.

The 2004 tsunami was, even in a world of superlatives, truly a disaster of unparalleled proportion, occasioning an international response that was unprecedented both in scale and in ambition. Aceh alone received \$6.7bn in 'tsunami aid' over the subsequent three years (BRR, 2009). The tsunami had an even more profound indirect impact on Aceh. Although the new president of Indonesia, who had come to power in October 2004, had started an initiative to renew peace talks between the central government in Jakarta and the separatist Free Aceh Movement (GAM) just days before the tsunami, the disaster is widely believed to have played a major part in bringing these peace talks to fruition.

Although the impact of the conflict was less deadly than that of the tsunami, which killed over 125,000 people in Aceh compared to the 15,000–25,000 lives lost in the conflict, in many ways it was much deeper, destroying the productive sector, decimating basic services in many areas, weakening institutions and eroding the social fabric. It left a legacy of widespread and deep poverty (Aceh's poverty rate in 2002 was nearly 30%, twice the national rate for Indonesia), deep political fault lines and mutual mistrust between Aceh and Jakarta and longstanding political and economic isolation.

In this context the post-tsunami recovery in Aceh became infused with the idea that there was a historic opportunity for reconstruction to 'build back better' and improve on what had existed before. This optimism was made possible by the

10 Following elections, this was later revoked by the new Aceh government.

combination of several forces, each of which alone would constitute a change of major significance. The war in Aceh had ended; a new, autonomous Aceh had been created; Indonesia had a new president willing to grant significant autonomy to Aceh in order to make peace; Aceh had suffered an acute catastrophe and there were urgent needs for immediate relief and reconstruction, providing an apolitical and unifying face of tragedy behind which post-conflict reconstruction could also proceed; and an unprecedented level of funding was suddenly available, including over \$1bn of international aid per year. There was a shared commitment by Aceh and Jakarta to take advantage of these forces to create a new beginning for the province.

The post-tsunami recovery, then, was also about post-war reconstruction. A comparison of needs and revenue flows is illustrative here. Economic losses as a result of the conflict were estimated at \$10.7bn, twice the cost of damage and losses from the tsunami, but they only attracted one-seventh of the funds provided for the reconstruction effort (Multi-Stakeholder Review, 2009). The strict separation of funds for a 'natural disaster' meant that international aid money donated towards tsunami relief could often only be used in communities directly affected by the tsunami, creating a large disparity between those living close to the coast and their immediate neighbours, just a few metres inland. Indonesians, by contrast, did not approach reconstruction with the same divisions: they tried to conduct tsunami recovery and post-conflict reconstruction in a more unified way.

To coordinate the reconstruction effort, the president created a special agency, the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency for Aceh and Nias (BRR), and chose as its executive director a former minister with a high reputation for accountability, Kuntoro Mangkusubroto. The process of setting up the BRR and defining its mandate and powers was never seen as a technical task, but was highly political, in part because Kuntoro insisted on a high degree of decision-making autonomy. As he put it:

The President wanted everything done according to law. I wanted a blank cheque ... In the end, after three months of negotiation, we got something close to the ideal ... I needed to know that I had the freedom to do things the way I felt we needed to, I needed to feel I could shape the organisation according to my vision (Fan, 2013).

The creation of the BRR was political because the key people concerned all shared the belief that its role was political. One of its core tasks was to bring Aceh out of isolation and poverty and back into the national fold, rehabilitating not only physically, socially and economically, but also at the psychosocial and cultural level.

Both the central government and the president recognised the need for flexibility and autonomy, and gave the BRR licence occasionally to run roughshod even over their own authority.¹¹ Physical reconstruction and economic and livelihood reconstruction were in harmony with institutional development and very explicitly and deliberately based upon deep social understanding. This approach was in contrast to the international perspective, which focused more on physical recovery from the tsunami, with the conflict seen as merely its historical context. This focus on physically putting right the devastation caused by the tsunami permeated decisions about targeting, the kind of aid delivered and the timeframe, where pressure to disburse 'emergency funds' was not always in line with the need to slowly recreate social, political and economic relations.

Aceh's reconstruction has since been depicted as a model for how natural disasters can be used as an opportunity for strengthening resilience and 'building back better'. But because resilience is so often seen in international circles from a techno-centric perspective, the lessons of Aceh have sometimes been distorted, and the centrality of the political and institutional context has not always been adequately appreciated. In Haiti, for instance, the earthquake in 2010 did not bring a new start because there was no seismic shift in political relations or the creation of a genuine unity of national interest; rather, the destruction was seen by some in the economic elite as an economic opportunity to be exploited. It is difficult for international actors to work with the lessons of Aceh because the very conditions which made the BRR successful – a high degree of personal autonomy in decision-making, the ability to create and break rules, the acceptance of funds with no clear advance blueprint on how they should be used – are the very conditions which have undermined reconstruction and development in so many countries. Because 'flexibility' is such a close cousin of personal

¹¹ Most famously when the BRR urged aid agencies to 'follow the communities' even if doing so meant going against zoning restrictions stipulated by the Indonesian government.

corruption, and because politicisation more often has a negative than a positive face, donors and aid agencies have often fought to oppose it.

The political context of post-conflict and post-tsunami Aceh turns the faltering progress of Aceh Green, described above, from a surprising disappointment into a predictable, if unfortunate, political story. The initiatives of the governor were part of an ongoing process by which Aceh and Jakarta were manoeuvring to guarantee their interests and define their relationship and respective spheres of authority. The governor's declarations on the status of Aceh's forests were not simply about the environment or forestry, but were also an assertion of Aceh's autonomy and its rights to determine the future of – and receive the revenues from – forests in the province. The government in Jakarta had permitted significant autonomy in Aceh's constitutional status, and had allowed a degree of personal autonomy to the head of the BRR. Kuntoro's autonomy, though, did not pose the same political challenge to the central government, as he was the personal appointee of the president and had a specific job description with a short-term mandate.

The Ulu Masen project challenged the central government in a quite different way. It was chosen as a REDD demonstration activity by the provincial authorities before the central government had established the endorsement procedures for its national REDD project; and when the selection of national demonstration projects was made the Ministry of Forestry did not endorse Ulu Masen among them. Disputes persist between Aceh and Jakarta over where the legal authority to take charge of REDD activities, and control of millions of dollars in revenue, lies. There was parallel disagreement about the right to make international financial agreements, which the central government argued needed the sanction of the Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs, a claim disputed by the Aceh government on the basis of the Law on Governing Aceh (Law 11/2006). As a result of this lack of clarity in the regulatory framework, and the power struggle that ensued, foreign investors pulled out. The failure to sell carbon credits and generate investment for Aceh Green resulted in the cancellation of the VERPA between the government of Aceh and Merrill Lynch. This cancellation, and the failure to implement Aceh Green became an issue in the 2011 provincial elections, which the governor, Irwandi, lost.

Irwandi's interest in protecting the environment of his homeland cannot be seen in isolation from the political context. Irwandi had a vision for the development of the province as a whole, born from long involvement in a nationalist-separatist struggle; an agenda for increased autonomy for Aceh (and the national heritage of forests can be a powerful symbol and rallying point for feelings of identity); and an understandable desire to control as much as possible of the revenues generated by the forest. These are all legitimate goals, but they can be mirrored by equal and opposite political goals on the part of the Jakarta government. Had the rules been clearly established, Aceh, its forests and the world climate could all have benefited. But establishing ground rules is not the same as writing down an agreement: they are the result of the bedding down of accepted roles over a period of time, which, in a post-conflict setting, is a process that can only begin after a long period of political manoeuvring. Those who rushed in to sign agreements with the provincial government may have been well-meaning, and may have developed excellent technical and economic plans, but without a strong political economy analysis their endeavours were ultimately doomed.

Placing the Ulu Masen project in its wider context, incorporating both post-conflict and post-tsunami narratives, reveals important lessons for the delivery of climate-related activities. On a simple and direct level, the success or failure of reconstruction, which included climate change mitigation measures that were supposed to deliver both development benefits and the revenue which Aceh needed to support reconstruction, were determined by political considerations, and not solely by the technical quality of planning. The separation of aid funds for natural disasters from those dedicated to post-conflict recovery, broad economic development or institution-building created resentment and hindered institution-building: where it was possible to blur the distinction, as the BRR did, greater success was achieved across all objectives. Although there are rational arguments for maintaining the distinction between 'normal' development aid funds and international funds for climate change, Aceh illustrates why separate disbursement mechanisms and parallel projects are not appropriate vehicles for supporting climate change (e.g. Stern, 2009; Levine et al., 2011).

The most important consequence of supporting mitigation and/or adaptation without trying to understand the political context goes far beyond the success or failure of any particular forestry project.

The way in which external actors did or did not support a REDD project, and the partners that they chose to work with (in this case the provincial government) had a material influence on the politics and power relations of Aceh and Indonesia. This is not a criticism: whatever choices were made would have affected the political situation and relations of power. It is not wrong to act in a political world, nor is it possible to foresee all the consequences of any particular course of action. However, in fragile political situations, and in post-conflict situations, it is dangerous to be blind to their possible consequences, and neither good intentions nor ignorance can remove the responsibility of individuals and organisations if their failure to use a political lens in planning REDD led to negative and foreseeable consequences.

2.2 Pastoralism and climate change adaptation in East Africa

Several countries have taken the opportunity of international support for climate change to develop their own strategies for green growth and climate change adaptation policies. This case study looks at two, Uganda, with its National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA), and Ethiopia, with its Green Strategy.¹² This case study does not make any analysis of either country's actual strategies, plans or actions on climate change. The general lessons set out relate to how political objectives and climate change strategies can be intertwined: the actual motivations of these particular documents or the policy of these particular countries is not discussed. Similarly, no analysis is attempted of the quality or appropriateness of the plans described in the documents. (It should also be noted that Ethiopia's main strategy document on climate change will be the Growth and Transformation Plan, which is not the subject of this case study.)

Both documents present a way forward for the drylands. Uganda's focuses on helping people in the drylands adapt to climate change; Ethiopia's focuses

more on adapting the economy of the ASALs to meet future impacts, and reducing emissions. The NAPA states explicitly that its objectives include addressing issues of poverty and resilience,¹³ but there is no discussion of the economic impact of any changes proposed, let alone to the robustness or resilience of livelihoods in the ASALs. (People's economic resilience in the face of climate change could broadly be seen as the likelihood that people will be able to maintain a given level of wellbeing in the face of expected changes, from climate change and other causes.) Given the overall contribution of Ethiopia to greenhouse gas emissions compared to its overall world contribution to poverty, it should perhaps be surprising that consideration of emission reductions was elaborated in isolation from its impacts on poverty and resilience.

Both documents are predominately technical. They both make reference only generically to areas where the plans would be implemented, and specific contextual features of the drylands are ignored. As a result, there is no discussion of where specifically such plans might be more or less appropriate. Given the vast differences across the ASALs in both countries, this too is surprising. In Uganda, there are at least three completely different livelihood economies in different parts of the semi-arid north-east, with a multitude of local differences. In Ethiopia the heterogeneity is even more striking. Apart from differences in infrastructure, agro-ecology, land availability and other economic factors, there are ethnic, cultural and political differences. There is also a separatist conflict in some parts of the drylands.

Although Uganda's NAPA takes a project approach and Ethiopia's Green Strategy takes a national aggregate approach, the technical perspectives that the two adopt have much in common. They include support to arable agriculture (i.e. crop production) and to technical aspects of natural resource management: tree planting and rangeland reseeding. Both countries have plans for more intensive production of livestock, including the use of 'improved' breeds. Ethiopia places the most stress on reducing the number of livestock, as calculated through Tropical Livestock Units (TLUs), with a massive shift from cattle and camels to poultry.

¹² Ethiopia's strategies on climate change adaptation were developed at the time of writing. This case study looks at *Ethiopia's Climate-Resilient Green Economy, Green Economy Strategy*, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, September 2011, <http://www.epa.gov.et/Download/Climate/Ethiopia's%20Climate-Resilient%20Green%20economy%20strategy.pdf>. Any critique should be understood as of a specific policy *document* at a specific point in time, not necessarily of any actual policies.

¹³ 'Of particular concern were commitments addressing the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, ensuring environmental sustainability and gender equity and combating major diseases' (p. 1) and 'Enhancing resilience to impacts of climate change' is the first priority listed at community/sectoral level (p. 19).

This is justified technically on the basis of carbon emissions per kilo of meat produced. Neither address what could be called the institutional aspects of natural resource management, i.e. the social, political and legal frameworks by which natural resource plans can be developed, and which determine who has access to which resources and who is responsible for enforcing rules, implementing plans and resolving disputes and conflicts. This institutional context is often taken for granted, but in countries where these institutions are weak, and particularly in drylands, where decisions about natural resource management have to be taken collectively, it has been argued that supporting the necessary institutions, and their social, political and legal frameworks, represents the key both to successful natural resource management and to avoiding conflicts (e.g. Pavanello and Levine, 2011).

The science behind climate change is, of course, complex, but from a natural science perspective these documents are relatively uncontroversial: they are presented as if they could (in theory at least) be implemented without anyone losing out in any way. Both documents are obviously political, in the sense that they are designed by, and are to be delivered by, national governments. However, they both *appear* apolitical. They have a 'template' nature, and emanate from a political culture of top-down governance where political opposition lacks any opportunity to offer an alternative. This makes them apolitical in the sense that they lack any discussion of their political implications or options. Neither document mentions conflict, and neither gives much information about how the management of change would take place. The Ethiopia strategy presents itself as a demand management strategy – by increasing consumption of poultry rather than beef, production will have to change to fit demand, leading to poultry production substituting for the nomadic production of cattle and camels.

It is fairly obvious that this is unlikely to happen, or that any serious attempt at implementation will be made. However, the ways in which a government can use policy documents, for example to win favour with international donors for taking climate change seriously, may not always be determined by the feasibility or seriousness of what is proposed in such documents. For example, taking a document such as the Green Economy Strategy seriously would entail accepting the clearly false assumption that there is only a domestic market for Ethiopia's livestock, where demand can be manipulated, since this is the only

mechanism for changing the economic incentives for the production of cattle or poultry. (Uganda's document makes no reference to markets at all, and as mentioned neither document discusses the economic impact on the people concerned.)

There is, of course, a political context behind this. The ASALs in Ethiopia and, to a lesser extent, Uganda are currently inhabited by people who practice extensive rangeland management, moving with their livestock to different degrees for two reasons: to manage the rangeland (e.g. by alternating periods of intensive grazing with regrowth); and to cope with highly variable climatic conditions. Even if an overall green strategy cannot be implemented, it can provide justification for individual policy choices which would result in a significant change in the production system of the ASALs. This would have significant consequences for people's ability (or right) to continue current rangeland management strategies, with further implications for land rights, cultural identity and relations between citizens and the state. The policies of the governments of Uganda and Ethiopia towards pastoralism are both well known. The minister for the ASALs in Uganda refers to pastoralism as 'a social evil ... to be eradicated',¹⁴ and a former prime minister of Ethiopia has openly expressed a similar attitude.¹⁵ Whether or not they are correct to see pastoralism as an outdated production system, it is important to note how a climate change policy presented in purely technical and uncontroversial terms may in fact be a highly political document, reliant on support for a policy that is at the very least highly controversial. It is the right, and sometimes perhaps the duty, of governments to write policies which are political and even controversial. Development partners of those governments, including those supporting climate change adaptation (and mitigation) activities, have a corresponding duty to read their documents with an equally sharp political understanding of what they actually entail. Such highly developed political antennae have not always been evident in climate change writing.

Although neither document mentions conflict, both could have serious repercussions. Conflict has been

14 In a letter to the Delegation of the European Union in Kampala.

15 For example, presenting irrigation as the solution to the 'backwardness' of pastoralism, in his speech at the 13th Annual Pastoralists' Day celebrations, Jinka, South Omo, on 25 January 2011: <http://www.mursi.org/pdf/Meles%20Jinka%20speech.pdf>.

common in the ASALs in both countries – usually between pastoral communities, but in Uganda also with neighbouring ethnic groups, and in Ethiopia also against the state. Both countries propose significant impositions on rangeland management techniques (e.g. bush clearing and reseeded), but neither discusses the local institutional framework for regulating land management, or the land rights of the people in the areas concerned. (Both countries give few, if any, land rights to pastoralists.) Again, sovereign states have the right to determine their own land law, but no observer or development partner can pretend that this is not highly political, and inevitably creates winners and losers. It may be that ending nomadic pastoralism would, in the long run, decrease levels of conflict in the ASALs, rather than increasing hostility against the state and exacerbating communal conflict. However, this needs political assessment.

It is difficult to manage the risks or mitigate the negative impacts that implementation of the two documents discussed here would create, since these are quite deliberately excluded from a purely technical presentation. It is hard to believe that their authors were not aware of the political implications of these documents, leaving the conclusion that their presentation is strictly technical because they are designed to attract support from institutions and communities of practice which are known to be techno-centric and play an apolitical game.

Two important lessons stand out. Firstly, governments can use a professed desire to promote climate change adaptation (or mitigation) as a Trojan Horse to advance a certain vision of development. Such a vision could, without adequate awareness, result in climate change adaptation funds being used to advance controversial political objectives. It should be noted that this is not just a warning levied on developing country governments, but can equally be applied to the (often well-intentioned) actions of the international community and its own vision of ‘appropriate’ development trajectories. Secondly, those studying the link between climate change and conflict cannot restrict their analysis to the direct or indirect impacts of climate change on conflict. Climate change adaptation policies may also be a vehicle for advancing or restraining conflicts. Political legitimacy can be won or lost; political power can be won or lost through the disbursement of billions of dollars; and political struggles may be fought in order to gain greater control over these funds. These three factors

together may be greater determinants of conflict or peace than any changes in temperature or rainfall.

2.3 Climate change and conflict in Darfur

Darfur has been very well researched, and there are several excellent studies, freely available, which analyse in detail the links between livelihoods, conflict and resources. The simple (and obvious) conclusion – that climate change impacts, conflicts and livelihoods can only be understood if power, institutions and politics are a part of the analysis – has been made before.¹⁶ Nonetheless, much conventional wisdom continues to advance arguments which, though they may have been refuted academically many times, continue to set the agenda for the practice of aid assistance.

Whether or not it is correct to describe the current conflict in Darfur as ‘a climate change war’,¹⁷ Darfur remains a good example of the way in which debates about the relationship between climate change and conflict are being framed because there is a wealth of good-quality research examining many dimensions of the conflict (e.g. ICG, 2004; HPG, 2004; Young et al., 2005; Jaspars and O’Callaghan, 2008; Young et al., 2009; Buchanan-Smith and Fadul, 2008; Buchanan-Smith and Fadul, 2012). This literature enables a politically informed analysis of the conflict – and of apolitical pronouncements on it.

The link between climate change, food security and conflict is oft repeated, and presented as if it were intuitive and simple to understand even when it relies on quite complex, long-chain causal interactions. Thus:

If temperature rises, crop yields decline and rural incomes fall, and the disadvantaged rural population becomes more likely to take up arms ... Fighting for something to eat beats starving in their fields (Biello, 2009).

¹⁶ See, for example, the references below to Evans, 2010, Collinson et al., 2003, Kallis and Zografos, 2013, Kloos et al., 2013, Barnett and Adger, 2007, Nordas and Gleditsch, 2009 and Tubi and Feitelson, 2012.

¹⁷ Those who have called the conflict a climate change war include Ban, 2007, Chavunduka and Bromley, 2011 and Sachs, 2011. Those who have argued that the meteorological evidence does not support this description include Raleigh and Urdal, 2007 and Fjelde and von Uexkull, 2012.

Declining rainfall contributed directly or indirectly to crop failures, the encroachment of the desert into pasturelands, the decline of water and grassland for livestock, and massive deforestation. The result has been increasing conflict between pastoralists and farmers (Sachs, 2007).

The implicit or explicit paradigm, sometimes called a ‘neo-Malthusian’ paradigm, sees climate change degrading the resource base, making resources scarcer and leading with some degree of inevitability to conflicts – sometimes specifically called ‘resource conflicts’. There is an established literature discussing how conflicts can escalate as economic opportunities decline, and can even be an accelerating factor in natural resource degradation (Janus, 2012; Raleigh and Urdal, 2007). Such degradation can occur for many reasons: poverty in general may lead to more extractive exploitation of forests or minerals, and the breakdown of social order and the rule of law during conflict may allow more predatory forms of exploitation (e.g. Mutaizibwa, 2012). Conflict can also degrade people’s access to natural resources, making them effectively no longer an economic resource.

The neo-Malthusian paradigm has played a role in shaping what research has been undertaken and how. Large-scale statistical surveys have been carried out attempting to prove or disprove the hypothesis that climatic changes or other shocks were correlated with conflict (e.g. Burke et al., 2009; Hsiang et al., 2011; Miguel et al., 2004). The concern with this paradigm is that any extrapolation of ‘trends’ to the future and, more importantly, to contexts other than those actually studied does not allow for the kind of context-specific analysis that is needed in order to understand conflict, or indeed the impacts of climate change, on an area or society. There is a growing body of literature (referenced below) which has taken such context-free analysis to task, such that in academic circles this may now largely be seen as an argument that has safely been put to bed. Sadly, this is not the case in the wider world, and the paradigm continues to guide policy and interventions in conflict and post-conflict areas.

There is a parallel with the influence of the paradigm on international responses to climate change and conflict. The focus on resource scarcity as the problem leads to aid expenditure on assets and on skills transfer, in order to mitigate scarcity and reduce reliance on limited

resources by encouraging livelihood diversification. Reducing economic vulnerability is expected to then reduce or prevent conflict. Thus, even if the theory is put in question in academic circles, it remains prevalent as a linking thread running through public statements used to justify policy (‘[o]nly with improved access to food, water, health care, schools, and income-generating livelihoods can peace be achieved ... The way to sustainable peace is through sustainable development’ (Sachs, 2007)) and actual interventions in conflict and post-conflict settings. In the 2013 Humanitarian Action Plan for Sudan (UNOCHA, 2012), the main document of proposed aid interventions for conflict-affected areas of the country, interventions aimed at supporting livelihoods in Darfur focus almost exclusively on asset provision – food distributions, agricultural inputs and small-scale irrigation facilities, the rehabilitation of water points for livestock, planting of tree seedlings, livestock restocking and livelihoods diversification through technology transfers (in particular agro-processing of cheese/yoghurt and oil extraction) – exactly the interventions that would be prescribed by the neo-Malthusian paradigm.

The paradigm can also be reversed to create the theory that a peace dividend brings livelihood benefits that in turn support peace. The link is equally intuitive in this positive direction, and it is pervasive in aid strategies in conflict and post-conflict contexts (e.g. in ‘stabilisation’ in Afghanistan, or in ‘early recovery’ in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)). It suffers, though, from the drawback of not being supported by evidence (e.g. Fishstein and Wilder, 2011; Bradbury and Kleinman, 2010). Closer analysis of the conflict in Darfur suggests that the paradigm of the vicious and virtuous circles has two further drawbacks: it diverts attention away from what may help; and it diverts attention into what is unlikely to help.

The study of livelihoods and conflict in Darfur clearly shows that livelihood vulnerability is not the simple outcome of climate or the lack of abundance of natural resources. Vulnerability has been created by politics. Young et al. (2005) identifies the forces which undermined livelihood resilience in Darfur prior to the start of the current conflict in 2003, including local governance and the politicisation of the tribal administration. The administration became aligned with group interests and with the interests of particular livelihood types – and the distinction between groups based on economic strategies or ethnic identity has often been blurred. Land administration,

for example, favoured crop farmers over herders: since these different livelihoods are often practised by distinct ethnic groups, ‘technical’ differences in how to support livelihoods or manage resources have significant implications for the politics of ethnicity and identity. Marginalisation was created in many dimensions: Darfur was marginalised by the central government authorities (socially, economically and politically), and within Darfur there were inequalities in access to services and development.

Similarly, conflict was not a simple outcome of grievances or a fight for scarce resources. Vulnerability and the lack of alternative livelihood opportunities created powerful economic forces that pushed people into livelihood options that were themselves drivers of conflict. The conflict has constrained previous livelihoods, for instance by limiting mobility, closing trade routes and restricting access to land. However, conflicts are created and maintained because there are winners as well as losers. Whilst conflicts shut off some livelihood options, they also create new opportunities, some of which will fuel the conflict. Young (2008) argues that, ‘while conflict and insecurity have destroyed livelihoods, the livelihood adaptations that people are making now are themselves fuelling further conflict’. However, this is not inevitable (or technologically determined). Some ethnic groups have not followed these livelihood paths, instead striving to use the strength of their local institutions of governance and security to survive.

These arguments have been made before, and it is worrying that they still need making now – though it should be stressed that there are many, both in the aid world and in academia, who are bringing a political analysis to an understanding of conflicts such as the one in Darfur. However, international aid to mitigate climate change is still far from taking on board the lessons of Evans (2010), who draws on older work (Gleditsch, 1998, and Levy, 1995) to argue ‘the need to see environmental scarcity not as a stand-alone issue, but rather as an integral part of the overall political economy landscape of a country or region’. This paper goes one step further, arguing that this same ‘integral’ political analysis must be applied equally to proposed solutions or mitigation measures, as well as to the problems these measures are seeking to address. A mass injection of resources into Darfur prior to 2003 would have been unlikely to prevent conflict; rather, these resources would have been fought over and potentially monopolised by the

very political forces which drove marginalisation. Such elite capture could in turn have further fuelled resentment and inequality, especially given the relationship between ethnic identity and elite status. Proposed solutions may thus exacerbate conflict if resources are analysed only in terms of their *availability* (i.e. what is there) without considering issues of *access*¹⁸ (i.e. who enjoys these resources and how). Availability is partly influenced by natural forces including climate change, but people’s access to resources is the outcome of processes linked to politics, institutions and power.

The simple provision of resources in the current situation may be even less likely to reduce conflict because everyone in Darfur now lives in a war economy, in the sense that everyone’s livelihood opportunities and constraints exist in an economy shaped by conflict. Any resources provided now are thus more obviously resources to be fought over and used to advance political positions and power. This is of course not an argument against supporting livelihoods in Darfur, or even that such livelihood support may be a necessary ingredient in creating the conditions for future peace. The case study illustrates something much simpler: the provision of livelihood support must be based on a sophisticated understanding of livelihoods, and this includes a detailed understanding of the politics, power and institutional factors that shape the livelihoods of different groups within Darfur:

marginalization and livelihood ‘maladaptations’ lie at the heart of the Darfur crisis. The impoverishment and marginalization of pastoralist groups, within the broader context of the marginalization of Darfur, is an outcome of combined socioeconomic, political, and ecological processes ... This has exacerbated tensions between pastoralist groups and settled farming groups, and between pastoralists and regional and national authorities (Young, 2009).

Given all that has been learned and written about the complexity of conflict and of livelihoods in conflict, why do we see a marked step backwards in the framing and analysis of the complicating factor of climate change? It seems to be that each new

¹⁸ An appreciation of the distinction between availability and access was central to the revolution in thinking about famine and food security that took place some 30 years ago.

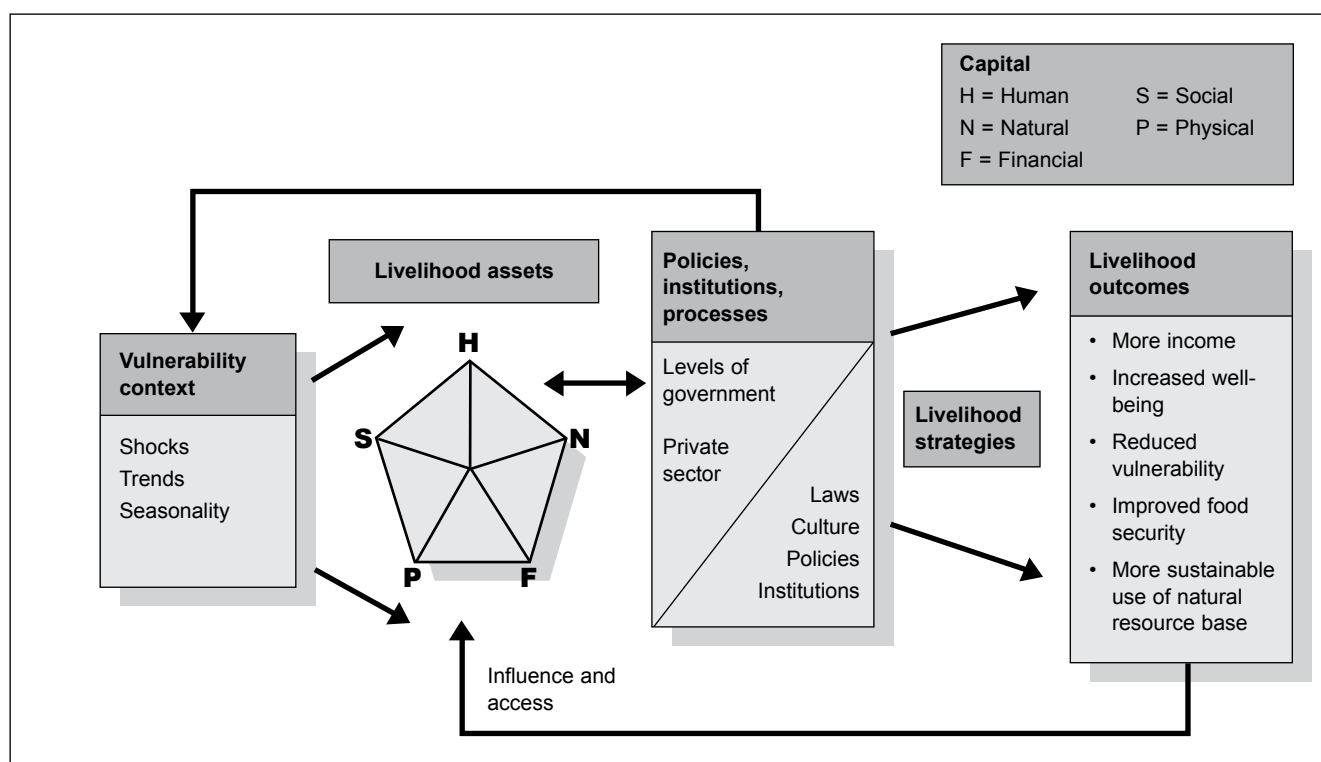
discipline or community of practice develops its own frameworks and creates for itself the terms of reference to guide its work. This is unfortunate, since in doing so both practical lessons and theoretical insights and frameworks from other disciplines and from the past are lost. Climate change is perhaps not alone in this. Despite longstanding and well-accepted theoretical critiques of ‘solutions’ which depend on the technical assessment of which resources to provide, these solutions are gaining new momentum under the new label of ‘resilience building’, often in the same arid and semi-arid lands as those where conflict is most troubling. (See for example the Regional Roadmap of the Global Alliance for Resilience, March 2013; IASC, 2011.) Resilience-building is most frequently spoken of as a community-level enterprise – as if ‘communities’ were always homogenous collections of like-minded people and not sites of inequality, exploitation, marginalisation or vulnerability. The activities most often associated with resilience-building are similar to those proposed for supporting climate change adaptation or addressing resource scarcity in conflict – asset transfers, new technologies and skills transfers. This makes sense only on the simple

assumption that the sources of vulnerability lie always with the individuals whose resilience is to be built. This is to forget everything that has been learned in the 20 years since sustainable livelihoods frameworks were first developed.¹⁹ (See Figure 1, which depicts the most commonly used framework.)

Livelihoods frameworks are essential for understanding livelihoods, conflicts and resilience, and the impacts of climate change on all three. They move beyond the idea that resources determine how people live by placing them within a wider structure of politics, power and institutions, and insisting that external processes also affect people’s lives by influencing all of these other factors. This is longstanding wisdom within the field of livelihoods, but as new fields of study arise, it seems to be necessary to repeat it.

Darfur has shown why the analytical epicentre of vulnerability in conflict does not lie in the box labelled ‘livelihood assets’ (or resources), but in the box labelled ‘policies, institutions and processes’ (‘PIPs’). Although asset rebuilding may be an essential element

FIGURE 1: SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS FRAMEWORK



Source: DFID, 1999.

19 Variants of the basic framework, particularly for analysing conflict situations, include Collinson et al., 2003 and Lautze and Raven-Roberts, 2006. Their apparent differences are attempts to present

the analytical challenges in a different way, rather than signalling any significant disagreement over substance. The original and most common framework is used here.

in reducing vulnerability, assets cannot be understood without understanding the institutional dimensions of livelihoods and conflict. Different types of investment will inevitably lead to different winners and losers, which will feed dynamics of peace and conflict. For example, the development of water resources for livestock in arid areas may be needed, but the location of any development is critical. Both local factors (such as claims to land) and wider issues, such as the influence on migration and trade routes, are in play. Promoting one trade route over another will influence the competitive advantage of different markets and livelihood options, favouring those of different identities and allegiances.

The complexities quickly add to one another. For example, reopening international livestock trade routes, and specifically the route north into Libya, has been identified as essential for reconstructing livelihoods (Young et al., 2005). However, in a context of livestock theft and deliberate plundering of assets by conflicting groups, this may make things worse if it is not situated as part of a much larger process which provides restitution for past livestock losses, ensures security of ownership and guarantees that markets only accept trade within the agreed system for secure livestock ownership. Furthermore, livestock trade is a primary form of taxation and revenue generation for the states of Darfur. How that revenue is used, or seen to be used,²⁰ by different actors will be a central factor in influencing the various institutions established for overseeing issues such as livestock ownership, restitution, trade, migratory routes and local security.

This is a good illustration of the more general point that individual initiatives which may be integral to a peace process (e.g. opening up a trade route) should not be seen as *independent steps* towards peace. Ad

²⁰ There is evidence that conflicts are driven partly by *perceived* economic inequalities between ethnic or other identity-based groups ('horizontal inequality'), which in turn depend as much on perceived *political* inequalities as on real economic inequality (Mine et al., 2013).

hoc and fragmentary interventions by governments and international aid actors often fail to treat the interdependence of different problems and their solutions.

The propositions which come out of this example of a conflict in an area of contested resources are not themselves contentious: the conflict in Darfur cannot be understood without understanding livelihoods; livelihoods cannot be understood without understanding the conflict; both livelihoods and conflict can only be understood if the institutional and political context is considered; and the likely future impacts of climate change can therefore only be understood within an analysis of conflict, livelihoods, institutions and politics. Although these propositions are neither new nor controversial, their implications are significant. If the 'technical' (including resource availability, climate change, resource management and economics) is intimately bound up with power and politics, then it seems doubtful that a useful contribution can be offered by any analysis of Darfur that remains technical, and which eschews an analysis of power, or what is often today called a 'political economy' approach.

Climate research has a role to play in advancing understanding of how and where future conflicts may develop, but this case study suggests that wide-reaching analytical collaboration is needed. Any consideration of climate change and climate-related activities needs to include a significant political dimension. However, the importance of politics to climate change is reciprocal: climate change will not simply determine conflicts through its impacts on natural resources, but it may also be a powerful force affecting institutions and power relations. Different academic disciplines need to share analytical space: all approaches may have a contribution to make, as long as none claims intellectual sovereignty over the analytical space. This is not an idle academic critique, but has real-world consequences: addressing conflict or climate change from a purely technical, ecological perspective risks making matters worse, rather than better.

3 Conclusions for climate change and resilience

From different perspectives this paper has considered the way parties choose to frame the conflict–climate change relationship, and the place of politics in that relationship. It reveals how different framings influence both conflict and climate change agendas (both mitigation and adaptation), and how a failure to consider conflict can nevertheless affect underlying conflict dynamics, livelihood resilience and resilience to climate change.

Although there are understandable reasons why some climate change experts prefer to keep their analysis to apolitical, technical considerations, this paper argues that this can be problematic, and even self-defeating. Political agendas have always been played out under the guise of non-political labels. Parties have many reasons to use ‘climate change’ as a vehicle for advancing political or private interests: to pursue funds, to gain political support, to distract attention from underlying political objectives, among many others. This is normal politics everywhere in the world. It becomes critical where this is not appreciated by all the players in the game.

The case studies should not, of course, be interpreted as showing that climate change action is currently having a negative impact. They simply highlight challenges which are not currently receiving the attention they require. These challenges can be addressed if it is appreciated that limited contextual analysis leads to partial understanding, which can lead to conclusions or decisions which appear sensible, but which in fact could have serious negative impacts, potentially exacerbating conflicts and increasing the vulnerability of marginalised populations, rather than building their resilience. Imperfect analysis is always excusable; however, taking decisions with far-reaching political consequences based solely on a technical analysis can never be acceptable.

Measures to adapt to or mitigate climate change may have as great an influence on conflict (positive and negative) as climate change itself. The implementation process and impacts of policies and projects cannot

be presumed to be predetermined (in line with log frames or anticipated or desired change), because they and the resources they bring are contested and will be exploited unequally. Conflicts of interest are inevitable everywhere. A strong political economy analysis is needed of the solution, as well as the problem.

The corollary of these conclusions is just as important. The need to integrate political understanding into an analysis of climate change impacts runs both ways. Future-looking livelihood and political analysis should include an analysis of the magnitude of possible change (and its uncertainty). Climate change is expected to bring significant changes in many of the key factors influencing how people live. Similarly, conflict and post-conflict processes need to incorporate an understanding of the possible implications of climate change especially where resolution or peacebuilding are based on a presumed availability of natural resources (Harris et al., 2013). To be useful, analysis of climate change impacts cannot stay in its technical box: it must share its domain with other perspectives, and must at the same time look to be incorporated into those other perspectives.

The concept of resilience is worth returning to in this context. The key to understanding how to support resilience does not lie in a set of conceptual or technical questions. If one asks why national development policies and international development aid have failed to make the poorest people safe from crises (i.e. resilient), the answer in part lies in the fact that they have not been designed to do so. Development planning has not routinely been conducted together with an analysis of risk, crisis or conflict, and has more often been designed to contribute to economic growth, rather than preventing marginalisation or potential conflict. Despite the desire of many to work within a multi-disciplinary framework, there are grounds for remaining cautious about the ability of a conceptual framework such as resilience to contribute meaningfully to this. Merely adopting the same language or addressing the same problems as others

will not in itself ensure that analysis and action on climate change is a genuinely collaborative element in addressing conflicts and resilience.

Conflicts do, though, offer an opportunity to do things differently. Situations of conflict and threats of climatic change are exactly the conditions under which people's resilience is so critical, both to avoid their worst consequences and to avoid being subsumed into unequal and unsustainable livelihood strategies. The fact that the term maladaptation, so often the preserve of the climate change adaptation narrative, is equally applicable to adaptation to conflicts illustrates the possibility and need for these two perspectives to be integrated. Some steps are being taken to bring together the goals of different communities of practice. The European Union (EU)'s policy on resilience (EC, 2012) includes a call for 'joint programming of the resilience-related actions in its humanitarian and development assistance so as to ensure maximum complementarity', and there are several references to joint (humanitarian and development) programming frameworks in recurrent and protracted crises (including conflicts). There is some evidence that this is happening on the ground, though it is too early to see what benefits this brings in practice. Bureaucratic barriers can only be broken down through bureaucratic processes, such as establishing collaborative forums for analysing problems and solutions. A similar process could bring together climate change science and climate change adaptation

with development planning, conflict analysis and humanitarian practice. Complete harmonisation will never be achieved (even if it were desirable), but actions taken by each community could be more fully informed by a collaborative analysis.

Climate change science, adaptation and mitigation initiatives may perhaps be able to look forward to a comfortable future in terms of the funding they command and the political attention they receive. However, if climate change and climate change adaptation perspectives are applied in isolation, their ability to contribute to helping people to cope with the uncertainties of a world in which the climate is changing risks being greatly reduced. In some cases conflict and other harm may even be made worse.

Politics cannot be avoided in supporting development, adaptation and mitigation, or in working to support people's resilience. There will be political ramifications of any action taken – just as there are for inaction. It is not wrong to intervene in ways which have political consequences. However, if the support that is given fails to consider power and politics, the risk is not only that objectives will not be met, but also that there could be consequences that are not desired by those giving that support. No one can be held responsible for consequences which were unforeseeable, but moral responsibility cannot be avoided for the consequence of actions taken without even considering what the consequences might be.

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