



Poverty Perspectives

Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund

Research Brief

Issue- 5 (Part 1)

Restoring hope, Securing the future, Ending poverty

This is the fifth in a series of Poverty Briefs by PPAF that pull together current data and evidence on poverty and related issues from across the globe to provide a snapshot of current thinking on poverty. This is the first of a two part series that examines the complex relationship between poverty and violence. For your views, suggestions and comments please email us at mer@ppaf.org.pk and we will publish your comments in the following issues.

Violence and Development

The development sector has largely treated chronic poverty and violent conflict as separate spheres of academic inquiry and policy. During the last twenty years, one half of the poorest countries in the world have been seriously affected by civil strife or war. In 2000, the UN's Millennium Development Goals were created as a blueprint to direct the global fight against poverty for the next fifteen years. However, violence against the poor and the development of functioning justice systems were never highlighted.¹

In the developing world, the 3.5 billion poorest people name violence as their "greatest fear" or "main problem." For them, vulnerability to violence is just as much a part of being poor as illness, malnutrition, dirty drinking water or inadequate education.² Gary Haugen in "The Locust Effect: Why the End of Poverty Requires the End of Violence," argues that violence is a fundamental obstacle to alleviating poverty. He argues that the benefits of traditional poverty alleviation efforts of education, hunger programs, clean water and shelter are ineffective to the poor. Increasingly the economically poor are finding their income, mobility, opportunities, and physical and mental health stolen by violence. The problem, he argues, is that traditional efforts to help the poor are never designed to counter violence.

In the UN's MDG Report 2014, it was underscored that the number of displaced persons had tripled since 2010. The report claimed that the year 2013 was marked by a continuation of multiple refugee crises, resulting in numbers that have not been seen since 1994. Moreover, the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) reported on 20 June 2014 that the number of refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced people worldwide has, for the first time in the post-World War II era, exceeded 50 million people. Armed conflict and high numbers of displaced persons negatively impact the achievement of the development goals. For example, the MDG 2014 UN report cited that an estimated 50 per cent of out-of-school children of primary school age live in conflict-affected areas, even though these areas are home to only 22 per cent of the world's primary-school-age population. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 44 per cent of these children (the ones that are out of school and living in conflict-affected regions), Southern Asia about 19 per cent, and Western Asia together with Northern Africa, 14 per cent.³ In 2014-15 the extent of violent conflict across the globe has sustained, with violent conflict in the Middle East and Ukraine continuing, and unless the problem of endemic instability is not tackled, governments' and donors' poverty-focused goals will be undermined.

¹ Haugen, Gary. "Why the End of Poverty Requires the End of Violence." The Huffington Post. TheHuffingtonPost.com, 28 Jan. 2014. Web

² Ibid

³ The Millennium Development Goals Report 2014. (n.d.): n. pag. Web.

Increasingly evidence suggests that at a macro and micro level of analysis a poverty-violence nexus exists. Collier and Hoeffler, in a cross-section of countries around the world, observed a strong negative correlation between national income levels and economic growth rates on one hand and the occurrence of civil conflict on the other. They make the theoretical point that joining an armed group becomes more attractive, especially for unemployed young men, when legitimate income-earning options are scarce. There are often numerous lucrative looting, mining, and smuggling opportunities open to armed groups in many developing societies.⁴

The direct humanitarian consequences of war for survivors are enormous in physical insecurity, loss of property, and psychological trauma. There may also be lasting economic development costs for societies that experience violent civil conflicts. And the international “spillover” effects of conflicts can be large for neighboring countries faced with refugee flows, lawlessness on their borders, and the illicit trades in drugs, arms, and minerals that proliferate in conflict zones.

Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls, in their 1997 study of neighborhoods and violent crime, examined race and class segregation in poor Chicago neighborhoods and its impact on “collective efficacy,” or social cohesion among neighbors. They found that “alienation, exploitation, and dependency wrought by resource deprivation acts as a centrifugal force that stymies collective efficacy.” The greater the effect of this resource deprivation — a phenomenon the authors called the “concentrated disadvantage” factor — the stronger the correlation to the level of violence. But “alienation, exploitation, and dependency” are highly relevant factors there as well. They cause social and political stress both within poor nations and between poor and rich regions, especially in an information age when social and economic discrepancies are more obvious. The condition of poverty may not be sufficient in itself to cause widespread conflict, but these studies clearly show that poverty, more than any other factor, contributes to feelings of “alienation, exploitation, and dependency” and these feelings in turn contribute to a breakdown of social cohesion and to violent conflict.

Source:

Atwood, J. B. *The Link Between Poverty and Violent Conflict*.
N.p.: New England Journal of Public Policy

Poverty and Terrorism

The relationship between poverty and terrorism is more difficult to ascertain than the connection between poverty and conflict. “Common sense would dictate that there is a direct correlation between poverty and terrorism; yet the evidence gathered thus far does not lend credence to this proposition, and if anything, supports the opposite.”⁵ This is due to the fact that alleged terrorist networks that have operated around the globe, especially in the past two decades, have been commanded by relatively educated and resourceful individuals. Groups such as the Irish Republican Army, the Basque group ETA, and Al Qaeda, have been motivated by serious political grievances or extreme religious beliefs, or some combination of both.⁶ However, academics who have researched the modus operandi of these terrorist groups have noted that they invariably have exploited the conditions of poverty to expand the political appeal of their cause and recruit their foot soldiers. In addition, it is speculated that poor nations have been unable or unwilling to reject these well-endowed organizations and thus have become safe harbors for them.⁷ Nevertheless, this finding does not imply that poor people or nations are more susceptible to becoming terrorists. What is implied is that poverty, weak institutions, and corruption can make weak states vulnerable to terrorist networks and drug cartels within their borders. Therefore, efforts to counter terrorism cannot succeed with only isolated military operations. The effort to defeat or marginalize terrorist organizations must integrate all of the elements of a country’s national security establishment.

⁴ Poverty and Violence: An Overview of Recent Research and Implications for Foreign Aid (n.d.): n. pag. Web.

⁵ Von Hippel. *The Roots of Terrorism: Probing the Myths* (n.d.): pag 26 .[Http://www.werzit.com/](http://www.werzit.com/). Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

⁶ Atwood, J. B. *The Link Between Poverty and Violent Conflict*. N.p.: New England Journal of Public Policy

⁷ Ibid

A report by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD entitled "A Development Co-Operation Lens on Terrorism Prevention" offers several possibilities. The premise of the DAC report is that "terrorism is a form of violent conflict and conflict prevention is an integral part of the quest to reduce poverty." The report points out that development cooperation cannot directly address "all the 'root causes' of terrorism," but it does have an important role to play. "Many conditions that allow terrorists to be politically successful, build and expand constituencies, find recruits, establish and finance terrorist organizations, and secure safe-havens fall within the realm and primary concerns of development co-operation," according to the DAC report. Some of the specific interventions recommended by the DAC report are:

- Support community-driven development to build the capacity of communities to resist extreme religious and political ideologies based on violence.
- Give greater attention in donor programming to young people's job opportunities and education to prevent the emergence of fragile, disenfranchised youth.
- Support democratization and modernization from within local value systems to reconfirm and build the beliefs of societies.
- Strive to make globalization an inclusive process, which will help reduce support for terrorism. This requires an increased aid effort as well as greater policy coherence.

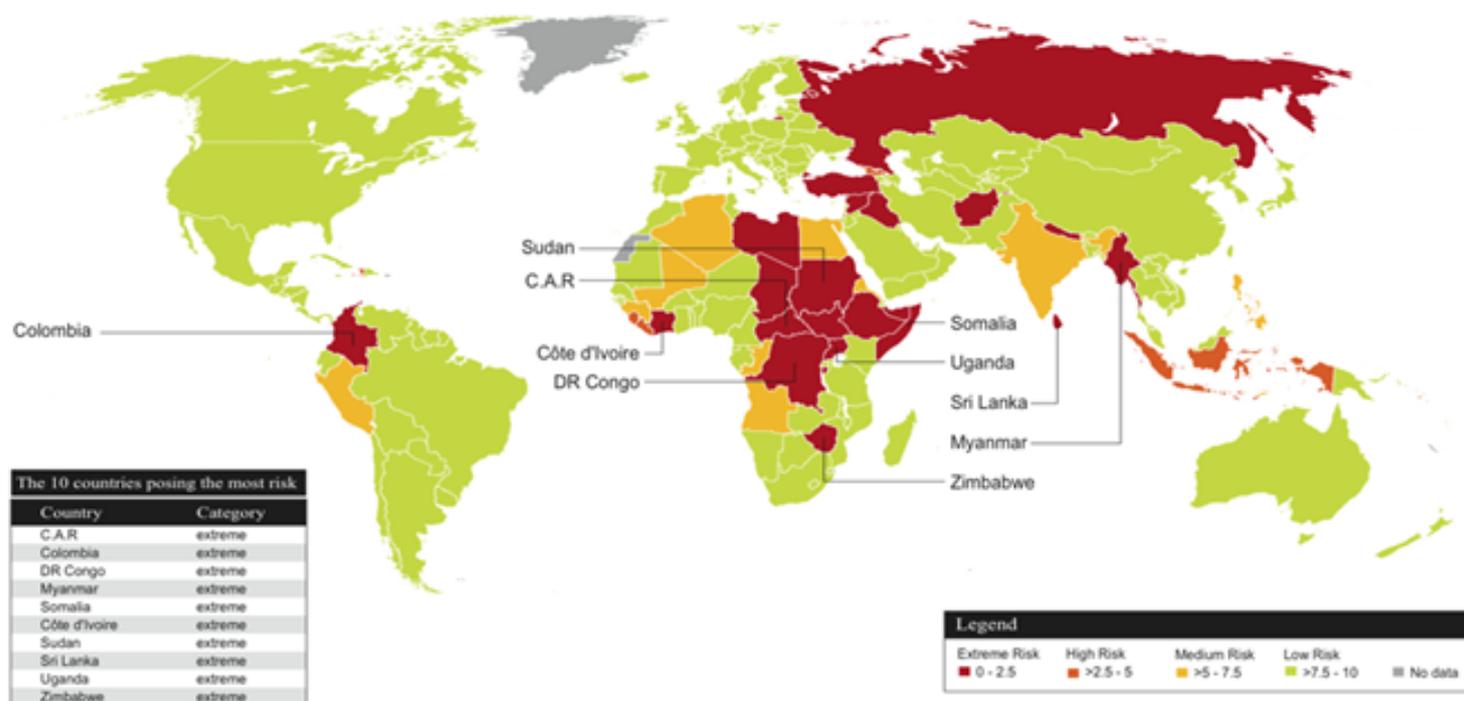
Intersection of Feminization of Poverty and Conflict

As mentioned in the third issue of these poverty perspectives, global poverty is increasingly adapting a feminine form. The brief explicated that globally women are bearing a higher and growing burden of poverty; similarly in areas immersed in conflict women are unduly negatively affected. Women living in conflict-affected areas, or those displaced by conflict are at an increased risk of gender based violence and are at risk in the following ways:

- They can find their access to health services affected by prevailing insecurity. Displaced women can experience particular difficulty in accessing safe delivery and emergency obstetric care.
- Women and girls from communities that are displaced by conflict are particularly vulnerable to poor reproductive health. Lack of quality reproductive health services can lead to high mortality rates, an increase in unsafe abortions, and increased morbidity related to high fertility rates, poor birth spacing, and post abortion complications.
- There are increased chances of sexual exploitation of young girls and women. The lack of community support can make them vulnerable to sexual violence. Evidence suggests that displaced women probably experience rape and other forms of sexual violence more often than women in settled populations.
- Lack of employment opportunities for conflict-displaced young men can lead to conflict and violence within the home.
- The disruption of family and social support mechanisms and lack of access to livelihoods further handicap women into poverty.

In 2014, Maplecroft, a risk analytics company, launched a report that analysed the risk of sexual violence in conflict across 15 years using indicators such as the "systematic use of sexual violence as a weapon of war". The map below depicts their index regarding sexual violence in conflict areas.

Sexual Violence in Conflict Index 2013



© Maplecroft 2013 | The Towers, St Stephen's Road, Bath BA1 5JZ, United Kingdom | t: +44 (0) 1225 420 000 | www.maplecroft.com | info@maplecroft.com

The stress of living in overcrowded conditions, the trauma of violence and loss compounded by the lack of employment can also contribute to domestic violence. In a study of gender based violence (GBV) amongst Afghan refugees in Pakistan, 50 per cent of women reported experiencing physical or emotional violence. Sixty per cent of husbands admitted to abusing their wives and 30 per cent stated that they had resorted to extreme abusive practices, such as punching or causing serious physical harm.⁸

A study by Bernard Wood for the Emergency Response Division (ERD) of the UN Development Programme advocated improved analyses of the areas of underdevelopment in nations vulnerable to crises. The problem is that areas that are most likely to create social tension and conflict are largely ignored. Development experts should consider these issues carefully and separately from traditional intelligence analysts and develop mechanisms that will help build resilient communities that are able to protect and include vulnerable groups, minorities and women.

This brief on poverty and violence will be continued in the next issue Poverty Perspective V- Part 2

⁸"POVERTY, GENDER INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND THEIR IMPACT ON MATERNAL AND NEWBORN HEALTH IN PAKISTAN" (2012): A Briefing Paper, RAF Pakistan. Web