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Spaces of recovery

An Exploration of the Complexities of Post-war /disaster
Recovery in Uganda and Sri Lanka

Thesis for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor

Trondheim, November 2012

Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Faculty of Social Sciences and Technology Management
Department of Geography



NTNU – Trondheim
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Abstract

This thesis explores the challenges of recovery in post-war and disaster situations. It explores the struggles between different actors as they endeavour to redefine the course of development for affected persons and communities. In highlighting actor struggles, it demonstrates how spaces of recovery are constituted through constant negotiation. In using two cases, Uganda and Sri Lanka, it highlights the role of context in determining recovery practices and outcomes. Drawing on the debates of agency and structure, it argues that context matters and that structural mechanism vary which explains the different practices and outcomes. It also argues that the role of resources is important however, the context has an overriding effect. Resources are not sufficient to stir change the context modifies the effect of resources.

Recovery is more complicated in conflict situations and protractedness adds an extra dimension of complexity. In discussing the struggles of post-disaster recovery, the thesis contributes to the debates about understanding processes of development and change. Disaster recovery is often seen as 'ordered, knowable and predictable'. However, as demonstrated redevelopment is a non-linear and structured process but rather a complex endeavor in which conflict of interests are manifest. This thesis highlights the fact that redevelopment is not a technical exercise but one which is negotiated between different actors. There is no recipe for recovery rather each actor contributes to determining and shaping the outcomes.

Besides, redevelopment is more complex because it deals not only with the needs emerging from the conflict or disaster but must give considerable attention to the pre-existent challenges that precipitate and perpetuate the crises. Hence, recovery does not occur in a vacuum. Initiating development and change is a complex process. There are competing interests which means that the outcomes are negotiated rather than predetermined. Therefore, the spaces of

recovery are fluid and dynamic often reconfigured by different actor constellations. The solutions to development still elude us as demonstrated in this thesis. Sometimes even the affected people hardly know the best line of action given the ever changing realities.

The study adopted a qualitative approach which allows for investigation of multiple meanings and interpretations of social phenomenon. The research was designed to solicit information about recovery from different stakeholders including the affected people, the humanitarian officials and local leaders in the study areas. The techniques used for data collection included: in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and observations.

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Komba, Medad and Addah Tweheyo, Phanice Fadum, Rose Kathini Aune, Hawa Mkwela, Daniel Semugenyi, Florence Najjemba, Mr & Mrs. Kasirye. Justus Turamyomwe, Pastors Uduak and Lucia Mme and the Overcomers Chapel family. Chamila and Lalith Attanapola, Fazeeha Azmi I appreciate all the assistance you have always provided and especially making me feel at home during my visit to Sri Lanka.

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Dedication

To the people who have suffered the gruesome effects of war and disaster. I hope someday the world will become a better place for you.

To the great men in my life: My Father, Mr. Patrick Namawar Wanyeraw, My Husband Robert Mwandha and our boys , Shaun Thomas and Daniel for their unwavering support to my work.

Shaun, Thomas and Daniel, never fear to dream big, but remember dreams are only realized through hard work.

Acronyms

ACORD	Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development
CoH	Cessation of Hostilities
CPA	Center for Policy Alternatives
DDP	District Development Plan
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
GoSL	Government of Sri Lanka
GoU	Government of Uganda
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Center
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross
IMU	Information Management Unit
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
LRRD	Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
NOVIB	Netherlands Organization for International Assistance
NURP	Northern Uganda Reconstruction Programme
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
OXFAM	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
PRDP	Peace Recovery and Development Plan
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WFP	World Food Programme
WNBF	West Nile Bank Front

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Chapter One: Introduction

Overview

Disasters and wars reverse development gains whenever and wherever they strike. Today, the rate and frequency at which disasters¹ are happening are increasing and often new places are affected or there is a recurrence in the same place or a new disaster aggravates the effects of the previous. Ever since, I embarked on this project three years after the 26 December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami there have been several major disasters some of which are included in the table 1 below. These disasters are both natural and man-made; they have different causes and diverse effects and sometimes human influence initiates or aggravates the natural disasters. In every case, the impacts are far-reaching for some it is possible to recover from while others it may be difficult or may take a long time to recover. Some disasters leave societies physically scarred while others breakdown the social fabric of societies leaving them deeply fractured and disoriented. Some of the impacts can be quantified in terms of money, the injured and lives lost while others are more indirect and less easily quantifiable such as emotional distress and trauma or community cohesiveness (Peek & Mileti 2002). All these consequences have significant implication for recovery practices.

¹ I use the term disaster to refer to both man-made and natural events that cause massive destruction and human suffering. These include wars, natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods among others.

Introduction and Background

Type of Disaster	Place	Date	Loss of lives	Affected people	Estimated damage
Famine	Horn of Africa ²	July 2011 (on-going)	Unknown	13 million	
Tsunami Earthquake	Japan ³	11 March 2011	10,019 (dead) 17,541 (Missing)	250,000	US\$ 210 billion ⁴
Earthquake	New Zealand	22 February 2011	181		\$ 10 billion
War	Libya	16 February 2011 (on-going)	10,000-15,000	1,169,942	Unknown
Floods	Australia (Queensland)	December 2010 – January 2011	15	200,000	\$10 billion
Floods	Pakistan	July – August 2010	1980	18 million	\$10.85 billion
Volcano Ash ⁵ Cloud	Iceland (regional effect)	14 – 25 April 2010		10 million	\$3.4 billion
Earthquake	Haiti	12 May 2010	230,000	3 Million	\$8.1 –13.9 ⁶ billion
Swine Flu ⁷	Mexico (global impact)	2009	500	94,500	
Earthquake	China (Sichuan)	12 May 2008	69,227 (dead) 17,923 (missing)	4.8 –11 million	
Cyclone Nargis	Myanmar ⁸	2 May 2008	138,000	2,5 million	

Table 1: overview of recent crisis

Statement of the problem

² <http://www.wfp.org/crisis/horn-of-africa>

³ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/japan/8405619/Japan-earthquake-death-toll-passes-10000.html>

⁴ <http://english.cntv.cn/program/newshour/20110624/107971.shtml>

⁵ <http://earthsky.org/earth/new-study-supports-air-traffic-shutdown-from-last-years-volcano-in-iceland>

⁶ <http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=35074108>

⁷ <http://www.disabled-world.com/health/influenza/swine-flu/cases-statistics.php>

⁸ <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/07/090717104618.htm>

Recovery from the different disasters is a very complex in the contemporary world. The advent of advanced media technology influences the way disasters are broadcast and perceived thus shaping the patterns of response and recovery. Besides, the financial crisis is making people more poor and vulnerable to different shocks and stresses especially in developing countries. The effects of the global financial crisis may inevitably reduce the level of resources available to effectively support recovery processes.

There is vast research on post-disaster reconstruction and recovery in regard to preparedness, response and mitigation. However, it is not explicit on recovery processes (Olshansky & Chang 2009; Chang 2010). Recovery is often cited as the least understood phase of the disaster cycle (Haas et al. 1977; Rubin et al. 1985; Anderson & Woodrow 1998;; Mileti 1999;). There is no clear understanding of what recovery entails and how it can be achieved. The concept is often used interchangeably with the terms reconstruction and rehabilitation though all these terms mean different things to different people. This thesis explores the dynamics and complexities of recovery practices. In order to achieve this objective, it explores how different actors perceive recovery and how this informs their practices and realities and the implications for the geographies of recovery across space. In answering these questions, the thesis seeks to highlight the complex dilemmas of practice engaging reality and how these influence recovery outcomes. The thesis draws on findings from post-crisis situations which are often characterized by complex and multiple challenges which present a praxis enigma. The study was conducted in northern Uganda which is a post-war situation while additional insights were drawn from Sri Lanka in which the interface between the war and the tsunami was explored.

The different actors are constrained especially when it comes to when and how to switch priorities especially in situations of protracted crises such as armed conflict (Horst 2006, 2008). The government also faces a similar challenge especially in providing the

confidence that the war is over and normalcy can resume. Often normalcy is presumed as the improved security that comes with the signing of the ceasefire agreement, the capture or death of the tyrant. Nevertheless, different kinds of crisis have far reaching impacts that undermine people's capacities to cope and survive. It is even more challenging for the people directly affected to decide upon the next move due to the enormous uncertainties that prevail in such situations. The humanitarian needs are often enormous and urgent with many actors involved. These influence the way different actors identify problems and seek solutions. The outcome is multiple problems and solutions which result into operational dilemmas as will be explored in the thesis. In the next section, I briefly define some of the key concepts used in the thesis.

Definition of key terms

Recovery is an ambiguous term yet it has gained currency in humanitarian work. According to the Cambridge dictionary (online), recovery is "the process of getting back something lost especially health, ability or possessions..." In a literal sense recovery is about getting something back, improving a situation or return to a normal state. Thus, it can be viewed both as a process or an outcome. With respect to this study, recovery is viewed as a process. It is a set of activities and programmes that seek to enable the affected people to deal with and overcome the effects of disaster. Specifically, recovery is a process that enables people to cope with the changing circumstances caused by the crisis but is mindful of the pre-existent challenges and seeks to meaningfully tap into new opportunities created by the crisis. In my view, it includes all the other concepts often used interchangeably such as relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction or restoration. However, recovery is a continuously negotiated space between the different stakeholders of how to create transformed, better and safer societies.

Spaces of recovery refer to the different actor worlds. These actors include; the affected people [mainly the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and returnees], the

government, humanitarian organizations and Civil society organizations and donors. Different actors have different ways of viewing recovery and how it can be achieved. From a human geography point of view, space is understood as socially produced and consumed. That is social, economic and political phenomena are the product of spatial-temporal locality, and the articulation of interrelations creates and produces space (Hubbard et al. 2011). In this thesis, I use the term space to refer to practices embodied in the different actor worlds. Spaces are not static but dynamic and elastic in nature. They are constantly created and recreated by the different actors using different means even when they have a shared goal. I use the analogy from Flowerdew (2011:201 analysing the works of Hagerstrand):

People's activities can be appreciated for example, by looking at people who meet at a particular time [and place] but who may have very different types of journeys to get there.

This analogy is instructive in relation to actor practices. The different actors are all concerned about recovery but have different approaches and methods to realising the objective. I will return to this debate later.

An actor-world is a notion often used in relation to the actor-network theory. This theory draws on the works of (Callon 1986, 1999; Latour 1987, 1997; Law 1992). Developed as an analytical tool for dealing with environmental questions the theory seeks to accommodate 'incommensurable forms of knowledge' by the different actors. Actor-worlds are characterised by narratives and translations that serve to hold together the different pieces of actor-network. An actor network is built and stabilised through juxtaposition, translations and punctualizations. Besides, every actor has capacity to construct a world, their world, to define its constituent elements though construed within the same problem area (Jørgensen & Sørensen 1999). In relation to this thesis, the concept actor-worlds denote the forms of knowledge amongst the different actors which influence their practices. Thus, every actor has

the capacity to construct their worlds, with its own rules and regulations. In relation to spaces of recovery, actor-worlds are the individual actor spaces while the former relates to interface areas where the actors interact.

Needs is a concept used often to describe 'life-threatening conditions' in disaster situations. However, different actors have different ways of assessing needs and this often governed by their mandates which seek to address different aspects of the same problem. Bradbury et al. (2003) identify two approaches to needs assessment. One focuses on identifying immediate needs of the population and specifically attempts to measure the deficits that people suffer. Meanwhile, the other approach seeks to investigate the risks and vulnerabilities of the population. These different approaches often create a conceptual impasse which affects the prioritization and therefore the interventions. I use the term needs to refer to the impacts and effects created by the disaster or conflict. These are several, including displacement, hunger, ill-health, homelessness among others.

Scope of the study

Post-disaster situations are characterized by urgent and immense needs under complex conditions. However, addressing such needs presents both challenges and opportunities. All actors involved with the initial efforts to design programmes to assess and deal with the impact of the disaster know that their mission requires the ability to work with the unstable conditions as well as the flexibility and capability to design programmes versatile enough to meet the emergency needs, yet visionary enough to form the foundation for further development when the situation stabilizes and normalcy is restored (see Colletta et al. 1998). However, the major challenge is how to effectively provide such solutions in rapidly changing environments. Besides there are many actors involved, each with a unique perspective about the problem and solutions envisaged. These multiple agendas present insurmountable constraints for practice with regard to targeting, coordination and duplication of interventions.

Furthermore, disasters have differential impacts on individuals and groups (Blaikie et al. 1994; Bolin & Stanford 1999; Peacock et.al. 1997) which inevitably demand varied responses to facilitate the recovery process. On this basis, the pace of recovery varies from individual to individual and place to place. Therefore, recoveries are contextually different as they are socially constructed (Mileti 1999).

However, there is scarce knowledge about the geographies of recovery (see Lund & Brun 2007). There is need to understand how and why patterns of recovery vary across space and the implications for humanitarian action and related policies. As mentioned earlier, this thesis seeks to highlight the dilemmas of practice as a contribution to the understanding of broader debates on improving aid effectiveness as well as policy formulation and implementation in post-crisis situations which often elude us. Rieff (2002) emphasizes that the challenges for humanitarian actors stem from the confusion of roles within humanitarian aid, which he argues has become unsustainable and threatening the future of humanitarianism. He proposes the need to rethink and revamp the humanitarian response to global crises and the needs they generate. Meanwhile, the way needs of victims are met has come under immense scrutiny. ‘There is a perception ... that there is a gap between needs and response at least that more could be achieved with the available resources’ (DfID 14 January 2002 cited in Darcy & Hoffman 2003). So far most of the research on recovery has focused on the nature of assistance and operational challenges (Barakat 2005; Berke et al. 1993; Berke & Beatley 1997; Lewis 1999; Quarantelli 1999; Rubin et al. 1985; Telford & Cosgrove 2006). Specifically, this study attempts to explore the dilemmas of recovery practice with an emphasis on actor struggles in redefining development of disaster stricken communities. It draws on findings from northern Uganda complemented with insights from Sri Lanka.

The broader dilemma in recovery involves understanding the nature of challenges that people face and how they can be effectively addressed. For instance, the available literature

on the 2004 tsunami indicates that the immediate relief efforts were largely effective. However, the longer-term social recovery has not been as expected (Shaw 2010). Despite the availability of resources the recovery processes in Sri Lanka have proven difficult. Shaw highlights the major challenges of recovery with respect to rebuilding local communities and households. In this study, I specifically highlight the struggles between the actors in defining solutions for recovery.

The research questions

This study seeks to explore how and why patterns of recovery vary across space and the implications for practice and related policies. Specifically, it examines the dilemmas of practice in different post-crisis situations and the implications for recovery outcomes. Using empirical material primarily from Northern Uganda, and secondarily from a visit to Sri Lanka, I seek to answer these questions:

1. In different disaster situations, how differently do actors perceive recovery and does this facilitate or hinder effective recovery?
2. How are the spaces of recovery constituted and negotiated amongst the different actors?
3. How does protractedness affect the way spaces of recovery are constituted?
4. How can we account for the variations in the spaces of recovery in relation to needs created by the disaster?

With regard to question one that deals with perceptions about recovery I specifically focus on the different interventions and programmes by the government and the humanitarian agencies. These provide insights on how problems are defined and how solutions are sought which have fundamental consequences for practice and the outcomes. Specifically, I look at the different interventions and how they contribute to the recovery. I examine the way people define their needs in relation to the interventions. I ask people about their opinion with regards to the

nature of interventions what was working and what had not and what they thought was the most desired action. The way the different actors perceive the needs and the solutions envisaged largely influence recovery practices and outcomes.

With regard to practitioners, in Uganda, I reviewed the Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) and also asked the local leaders about the community challenges and what solutions they envisioned. For humanitarian actors, I explored the work of selected humanitarian organizations that were involved in recovery programmes. Further, I interviewed donor agency officials at Oxfam Novib in the Netherlands. This was to gain broader insights on how donor agencies perceive recovery with reference to the type of programmes they were financing. Oxfam Novib is one of the 14 national affiliates of Oxfam International Federation. It was established in 1956 as the Netherlands Organization for International Assistance (Novib) and later joined the Oxfam confederation in 1994. Oxfam Novib's vision "is to enable people build independent livelihoods without poverty". This ideology considers injustice as the major cause of poverty and that people themselves are best placed to solve their problems. Thus, Novib supports local organizations/partners with funds, technical advice and establishing networks for further support. Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (ACORD) is one of such partners supported. Oxfam has a long history in humanitarian action and development work. Having both aspects of emergency response and development work offers a vital link that was explored.

In question two, my emphasis was to explore actor interfaces. I specifically examine how the different actors interact and relate within the selected policy frameworks. This is where the data from Sri Lanka were most insightful. I examined the 'build back better' a narrative envisioned to guide the tsunami recovery interventions and whether it actually addresses issues of vulnerability. I discuss how the different actors perceive the 'build back better' in relation to the interventions. This is also examined in relation to the challenges of the affected

people/ programme beneficiaries. This question is explored further in paper II where I examine the articulation and implementation of humanitarian policies in relation to needs. In Sri Lanka, data were mainly obtained through interviews. I interviewed officials from International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) and Oxfam GB (Great Britain) at the country head offices in Colombo as well as the affected people in Ampara and Hambantota districts. I was granted permission to visit the different field programmes and projects which enabled me to observe the different activities and to talk to programme beneficiaries who provided invaluable insights on their experiences. Oxfam GB like NOVIB is part of the Oxfam International Confederation. Oxfam GB's vision is to alleviate poverty and human suffering. Oxfam is guided by the principle that people can take control, solve their own problems and rely on themselves all they need is the right support⁹.

Unlike Oxfam Novib, Oxfam GB is an implementing organization that works more directly with the people. On the other hand, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) were founded in 1919 in Paris in the aftermath of World War I. It started out with a focus on the improving the health of people in countries that had suffered greatly during war. The IFRC carries out relief operations to assist victims of disasters, and combines this with development work to strengthen the capacities of its member National Societies¹⁰. In addition, IFRC seeks to foster peace in the world.

In question three, I explore the effect of protracted conflict and displacement on the recovery process especially in northern Uganda. This is discussed in paper III and IV. Lastly in question four, I argue about how structural mechanisms vary across space and how they ultimately influence recovery practices. I also reflect on the variations of practice across space

⁹ http://www.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam_in_action/what_we_do/index.html

¹⁰ <http://www.ifrc.org/en/who-we-are/vision-and-mission/>

in which I draw on the findings from Uganda and Sri Lanka. I explore how the cases inform each other.

Methods

In Uganda, the fieldwork was conducted in Gulu and Amuru districts. The fieldwork was done in three phases; March-April 2007, January- March 2008 and July -August 2009. In Sri Lanka, fieldwork took place in Ampara and Hambantota districts in August 2007. This study utilizes material obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was solicited through in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and observations. The key sources of secondary data were mainly policy documents, humanitarian agencies reports, evaluations and work plans and local newspapers were regularly searched for updated accounts on the recovery processes in the study areas. I also received updates from my research assistants about the situation on the ground. The key informants included: humanitarian agency officials at the donor, country, and field levels, the affected people and the local leaders.

In Uganda, I was attached to a humanitarian organization ACORD which provided me the opportunity to participate and observe in the different recovery activities. Through the organization I had access to the programme beneficiaries who were in the camps at the time of the research. I conducted in-depth interviews with some of the beneficiaries and I also obtained many useful insights through informal interactions. I also held focus group discussions with selected beneficiaries and the local leaders. Besides, I undertook independent field visits to interview the displaced persons in the camps, the returnees [former IDPs] who had returned to their pre-displacement sites and those at the transit sites. The local leaders were interviewed to gain broader insights about the development challenges. I reviewed the district plans and the policy documents such as the Peace Recovery and Development Plan, (PRDP) for northern Uganda in order to understand some of the proposed interventions. In Sri

Lanka data material was mainly obtained from in-depth interviews with the agency officials and the people affected by tsunami and the conflict. This was largely complemented by secondary information obtained from agency reports and evaluations.

Overview of the papers

Some of the questions raised above have been answered in the listed papers and here I provide a brief overview of the papers.

Paper I: Khasalamwa, S. 2009 Is 'build back better' a response to vulnerability? Analysis of the post-tsunami humanitarian interventions in Sri Lanka. Norwegian Journal of Geography 63, 73–88. This paper was based on findings from an exploratory visit to Sri Lanka. I chose to do some work on Sri Lanka in order to broaden the context from which conclusive insights about recovery practices can be made. The aim was to examine how recovery is operationalized and whether it addresses the vulnerability. Besides, it explores how the interface between the conflict and the tsunami influences recovery practices. It also seeks some insights on how humanitarian practice varies in different contexts. Sri Lanka was considered ideal due the massive post-tsunami recovery interventions and the conflict context. Data for this paper were obtained from agency officials and affected people. The paper examines how the 'build back better' a narrative that was emphasized in the post-tsunami recovery was actualized and operationalized by the different actors. The major findings reveal that there is a shared understanding of 'build back better' but differences emerges from the operationalization. More importantly the strategy did not adequately address issues of vulnerability and pre-existent challenges which have undermined the recovery process.

Paper II: Khasalamwa, S., Lund, R., & Tete, S.Y.A. 2011. Beyond the Knowledge-Action Gap: Challenges of Implementing Humanitarian Policies in Uganda and in Ghana, Norwegian Journal of Geography 65:2, 63-74. This is a co-publication that highlights the

discrepancies between policy articulation and implementation. There are good intentions in the policies intended for recovery. However these get lost through translation and implementation. The policy on needs is very well articulated but there are differences in understanding of needs at the different levels and thus different formulations of how such needs can be met. This paper demonstrates how policies are reworked at different levels by different actors. Different stakeholders have different interests which are propagated through policy and programme design and implementation which ultimately influence the outcomes. The voices or concerns of the affected people are remotely considered. My specific contribution to the article was the case material for Uganda. Nevertheless, we worked jointly on all the sections after the initial draft.

Paper III: Recovery after Protracted Displacement: Insights from Northern Uganda

(Submitted to *Development in Practice* now under review) is a paper which seeks to understand the challenges of recovery practice in situations of protracted displacement. Specifically, I explore the applicability of the Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) in post-conflict setting. This is an approach or operational framework that recognizes the need for relief and recovery activities to reinforce each other. The relationship between relief and development interventions is intricate but is even more dynamic in situations of protracted displacement. This paper attempts to explore the interactions between relief and development in situations where return is involved. The paper highlights that the nature of the crisis and duration influence the applicability of LRRD. There are unforeseen circumstances that keep people operating in the different modes. Thus, LRRD is a useful framework if seen from a perspective that seeks to highlight needs associated with the different phases of recovery. There is need to acknowledge that needs in crisis situations are ever fluctuating and thus LRRD may serve well as a planning rather than an operational framework.

Paper IV: At the door step: managing and negotiating return in northern Uganda

(Submitted to *Geoforum*) Protracted displacement has been a major consequence of the war in northern Uganda. In August 2006, the cessation of hostilities agreement was signed that led to improved security. Thus, return has been emphasized and promoted as a gateway to recovery. This paper highlights the struggles between the different actors regarding return. I discuss the role of government in promoting return on one hand and how the internally displaced people assess their ability or inability to return on the other. This paper highlights the notions of power that influence how spaces are managed and appropriated. It also demonstrates how spaces are socially produced through power relations between the people and the government. The paper draws on Lefebvre's theorization that considers space as 'political and strategic'.

Structure of the thesis

The thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter one provides the background for the study and outlines the problem scope and the research questions and an overview of the papers. It highlights the state of research related to recovery and delineates the dimensions explored by this thesis. Chapter two provides contextual information for the respective cases. It emphasizes the contextual details that influence recovery practices. Chapter three discusses the theoretical positioning and how the debates from development studies and human geography can inform our understanding of practices related to recovery. Chapter four presents the conceptual framework and discusses the different dimensions of recovery. More specifically it discusses the analytical framework, spaces of recovery. Chapter five describes the research design, the field experiences and highlights the challenges that have shaped the inquiry. Chapter six discusses the main findings and draws together the main themes of the papers and provides a summary of the key conclusions.

Chapter Two: Contexts

Two cases were selected for this study. Uganda was the main case while Sri Lanka was chosen to provide complementary insights. Research commenced shortly after the war in northern Uganda had just 'ended' in 2006 and this made it an ideal case for study of post-war recovery. Specifically, it provided a context for understanding recovery practices and challenges in situations of protracted conflict and displacement. Meanwhile, Sri Lanka was in the post-tsunami recovery following the devastating disaster. Sri Lanka provided a context for understanding post-disaster recovery but also the interface between conflict and disaster. Besides, it provided the opportunity for exploring the effect of resources and time [three years after the disaster] on the recovery. In this chapter, I provide some contextual information of the cases and the areas where research was conducted.

Uganda

Uganda is located along the equator line in East Africa. It is a land-locked country bordered by these countries: Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda. It covers an area of 241,550km and has an estimated population of 32,939,800 million (Government of Uganda 2011). Agriculture is a key economic activity supporting over 70 per cent of the population. Uganda is an ethnically diverse nation. It has two major ethnic groups the Bantu and the Nilotic groups, with 30 different tribes and languages. The Bantu constitute over 50 per cent of the total population and occupy the southern part of the country (The *Statistical Abstract* 1960 cited in Nsibambi 1971; Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2006). This kind of dominance has created an ethnic divide between the north (the Nilotics) and the south (the Bantu). This divide is reinforced by the competition for power. In the administrative structure the district is the highest local government unit which is further subdivided into counties, sub counties, villages, wards and parishes. There are currently 112

districts from the initial 16 at the time of independence in 1962¹¹. This has been as a result of the decentralization policy that was initially presumed to facilitate governance and service delivery. However, this system has not lived up to the expectations, the units have become too numerous and each created district requires more resources which are mainly for administrative purposes and less of service delivery. This overburden on resources also affects the recovery efforts for the war affected regions. For example the funds allocated for recovery programmes are used for supporting the newly created structures. So far 55 districts are included in the Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP).

Uganda as a country experienced political turmoil during the post-independence era until 1986 when the current President Yoweri Museveni came into power. Since then there have been tremendous economic and political gains. However, the north has not been part of the new hope. Northern Uganda has experienced two decades of armed rebellion and insecurity from several groups including the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF), the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the sub-regions of Acholi, Lango, and Teso region, and by armed cattle rustlers in the Karamoja region which led to massive displacement. However, the conflict between the Government of Uganda and the LRA has been the most brutal and violent of conflicts since independence. The Acholi sub region comprising of then, Kitgum, Gulu, Pader, Amuru was the most affected. The conflict has its roots from the colonial times associated with; divisive colonial administrative policies, a complex mix of uneven social and economic development and violent regional conflict. Several social and political cleavages have always kept the country divided and contributed to political instability and violence (Lucima 2002). Besides, the conflict is complicated by the regional instability being surrounded by conflict-stricken countries such as Sudan and the DR Congo. According to the International Crisis Group, ICG (2004), the conflict was in part fuelled by the animosity

¹¹ The number of districts has grown sporadically in the recent years (Green 2008) particularly in the run-up period to the 2006 and 2011 presidential elections.

between Uganda and Sudan who were supporting rebels on either side. In addition, the rebels have targeted the Acholi people specifically because they accuse the acholi leadership for failing to bestow their blessing for the war (Finnstrom 2008).

Often, this war is presented as ethnic but such a classification is complex given that Kony the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and his group have been killing his own kinsmen. Besides, the intricate myriad of other associated causes render such a classification almost obsolete. Nevertheless, the rationalist¹² and psychological theories¹³ on ethnic conflict are insightful in this context. Several of the previous attempts to resolve the conflict amicably failed. However in August 2006, the LRA finally agreed to sign a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoH) which holds to date. Nonetheless, the efforts to negotiate a peace deal were futile as the LRA leader failed to sign the peace pact in April 2008 and moved his troops to Congo where they are still terrorizing civilians. However, the CoH resulted in improved security that still prevails though the peace remains fragile with no absolute resolution of the conflict.

The effects of the conflict have been immense and gruesome. Thousands, many of them children, were abducted and abused or killed in battle. Many civilians were mutilated, maimed, raped and disabled in many ways (International Crisis Group 2007). Nearly two million people were displaced into camps living in conditions of extreme deprivation, dependent upon relief, and with limited access to incomes and livelihoods. In 1996 at the peak of the conflict, the government enforced a "protected villages" policy which was meant to provide better security as well as tactical advantage for the army. Most of the people moved to formerly large towns, trading centers usually within a radius of 5-20km from their original

¹² Rationalist theories view ethnic groups as coalitions formed to extract material benefits from others such as state patronage, control of specific labour markets or to defend possessions (see Fearon and Laitin, 1996). This may apply in relation to the ethnic divide that is characterized by power dominance

¹³ Psychological theories consider ethnic groups as satisfying an inherent need to belong to a group and as allowing group members to maintain or enhance self-esteem. Conflict results in event that the psychological satisfactions are somehow threatened by another group or by members of one's own group (Horowitz 1985, chapter 3; Fearon & Laitin, 1996). This could apply for the case of the LRA who feels betrayed by his people.

homes. But the decision to move people to camps created a 'humanitarian catastrophe of dreadful proportions' (CSOPNU 2006) as it caused immense human suffering.

On the whole, the consequences of the war and effects of moving people to the camps have been far-reaching on the people, culture and the economy as a whole (Finnstrom 2008). Restriction of movement meant lack or limited access to the fields yet, agriculture is a key economic activity. It also led to the disruption of markets, created a dependency on aid and disrupted the economic infrastructure affecting both the production and distribution systems. The social services were damaged and the ones left were under enormous strain. Forced encampment has been largely criticised and the provision of humanitarian assistance accentuated the resultant humanitarian crisis (Branch 2008b; Dolan 2009). Indeed, Dolan refers to encampment as a form of "social torture" characterised by extensive destruction, terror, disorientation, dependency and degradation enacted against the Acholi people by the warring factions. Besides, this strategy [encampment] did not provide any security guarantees as people were repeatedly and furiously attacked by the LRA¹⁴.

In spite of these grievances, Uganda as a nation has experienced apparent stability in many parts of the country since 1986 although there are still zones of insecurity especially at the border areas. Cattle-rustling in north-eastern and eastern Uganda has been greatly curbed through the on-going disarmament programme. There is also the occasional post-election violence. Otherwise, the country has been largely peaceful though still grappling with challenges of consolidating democracy and the rule of law. Officially, northern Uganda is now widely considered peaceful (Government of Uganda 2007). However, institutions remain fragile, trust in government is still low as reflected in the February 2011 election outcomes, and social cleavages still prevail. Unemployment especially among the youth and ex-combatants combined with the presence of small weapons continues to feed local violence

¹⁴ The most notable was The Atiak Massacre of April 20, 1995 in Northern Uganda in which close to 300 people were killed in a single morning. <http://www.allvoices.com/contributed-news/8851855-the-atiak-massacre-of-april-20-1995-in-northern-uganda>

and insecurity. Regardless, the people in northern Uganda are starting to get back on their feet after two decades of the most brutal conflict.

The post-conflict situation and return

The improved security compelled government to declare safety to return and enforced quick resettlement of IDPs. In October 2010, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) statistics indicated about 11,790 IDPs remained in four camps and an additional 135,515 IDPs in seven transit sites in Acholi sub-region (UN 2011).¹⁵ According to the UN Humanitarian Profile 2011 over 90 percent of the original camps have been disbanded and most of the IDPs have returned to their homes or to transit sites closer to their areas of origin. They have embarked on rebuilding their houses and cultivating their fields and restarting their livelihoods. However, some of the IDPs are unable to return for a number of reasons and the lack of land has been a prime concern (Oxfam 2008; World Bank 2008). There is disputed ownership or land is occupied by the government (previous military detachments) and some of the land is yet to be demined. There are also rumours of land grabbing by government to give it to investors especially with the discovery of oil in Amuru district. The process of reintegration has been slow especially for the ex-combatants who are reluctantly accepted in the communities (Akello et al.2006; Amone-P'Olak 2007; McKay et al.2006) but also there are many people who are still seeking justice and accountability from perpetrators of war crimes.

The Policy Framework for Recovery

The government of Uganda has demonstrated its commitment to the recovery process through development of a policy framework the Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP). The PRDP was initially a three-year plan launched in October 2007. The document identifies the needs and the proposed budgetary requirements. It seeks to address the socio-economic

¹⁵ Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS), *Assessment of Durable Solutions in Northern Uganda, September – December 2010*

distress caused by or related to the conflict covering over 40 districts. It is also attempts to address the real and perceived neglect and marginalisation that lie at the root of the conflict in northern Uganda. The proposed budget over the three-year period (2007-2010) was US\$ 606 million of which the government and donors were committed to contribute 30 and 70 per cent respectively. The development partners are complementing government efforts through the PRDP framework as well as individually funded projects. The major focus of the humanitarian interventions include, emergency food distributions to the most vulnerable populations, livelihoods support, increasing accessibility to basic services, psychosocial support and facilitating return or resettlement of vulnerable individuals.

The PRDP is still being implemented. Some successes have been registered but there are still a series of constraints that have affected the programme which also have consequences for practice. A mid-term review of the PRDP was conducted and also revealed a number of challenges.¹⁶ Some of these challenges are imminent in the design while others are operational. According to the available literature and my own analysis of the PRDP, some of the challenges include:

The nature of the programme-The PRDP was designed as a framework to guide interventions and draws on existing resources rather than new additional resources. Resources are reallocated from and within different sectors to make for provision of the PRDP. There are specifically no additional resources reflected in the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) (see Claussen et al. 2008) which also indicates the level of commitment. It did not attract the funds as was anticipated (see Beyond Juba 2008). This has contributed to the lack of adequate funds to address the enormous needs. Moreover, the programme has been affected by the failure of some key stakeholders to honour their financial commitments.

¹⁶PRDP Mid-Term Review Dissemination Workshop on 10 June 2011, <http://www.prdp.org.ug/news.php>

Stakeholder involvement -The programme did not effectively engage all the key stakeholders at the time of design and later in the implementation. Interviews with the local leaders revealed they were not aware of what the PRDP exactly entails. They often confused the PRDP with the resettlement assistance to be provided to returning populations which is just one of the components. In an interview with the district planning officer, she affirmed that she was unaware of the plan as well as the modalities embodied. The inability for key stakeholders to understand and articulate the plan undermines the possible achievements. There was need for full consultation with all the key stakeholders which would facilitate planning and implementation at the local level. Notwithstanding, the PRDP to a large extent identifies the key needs of the people however the points of departure are on where, how and exactly what should be done to effectively address these concerns.

Scope of coverage-The scope of coverage is too stretched that is spreading too wide and too thin (see Beyond Juba, 2008). The 55 districts covered by the plan have very diverse and complex situations because they have experienced different forms and effects of the conflict. Some of the districts especially in the northern were directly affected by the LRA war while the others have experienced the indirect effects especially the eastern districts (Government of Uganda 2007). The plan does not deal with these differences adequately. In terms of resources, the programme is financially constrained to cover such a wide area effectively. The proposed budget of the PRDP was equivalent to just a single programme for example Northern Uganda Rehabilitation Programme (NURP) (see Kreimer et al. 2000; Government of Uganda 2003) one of the initial interventions for northern Uganda. All the regions covered need targeted plans to address specific needs arising from the LRA war, the cattle rustling and the natural disasters in the eastern region (landslides and floods).

In addition, the PRDP has been criticised for lack of a proper justification for the extended coverage. Thus, the expansion of the PRDP is mostly viewed as a politically

motivated endeavour which also undermines its objectives. The Beyond Juba project (2008) also points to the personal interests of political elites in implementation of the PRDP. This affects the implementation in a way that politics is prioritised over needs of the people.

Given the scope of coverage, there are scattered interventions that the difference is hardly felt in the communities as reported by the respondents. There is lack of coherence and proper coordination in the implementation process which has also been besieged by financial mismanagement. Apparently there are reports about procurement of low quality farm implements and seeds as well as failure to distribute resettlement kits (Izama & Egadu 2007; Mugerwa 2010). Furthermore, there are several parallel programmes (funded by individual donors) to the PRDP which if not properly managed may undermine the recovery prospects.

Prioritization-The priorities and sequencing of interventions also seems a key challenge. Revival of communities has been fronted as a major activity as reflected in the funding priorities. However, there is limited attention to the peace-building processes which are fundamental in the post-war period. There is need for establishment of reconciliation and accountability mechanisms. Many of the people as expressed in the interviews have not forgotten the losses they have incurred. They are seeking compensation and accountability for war crimes and human rights violations; compensation of their land, cattle or other valuable property they have lost; honouring of the dead through proper burials and memorials; performing cleansing and healing rituals for the ex-combatants and for the land where massive killings were conducted. These are all hardly emphasised but do have fundamental consequences for the recovery processes.

There is also the need for national reconciliation addressing the historical grievances that have propagated and sustained the conflict. These are not explicit in the PRDP which is more focused on addressing socio-economic dimensions of the conflict as opposed to the

political factors. Reconciliation is mostly presented in terms of demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants which address the local issues. However, there is need for national dialogue in bridging the differences between the north and south. Still, there is need to strengthen the linkages between the different objectives that apparently are treated independently. For effective recovery to happen all the objectives have to be handled integratively in a sense that the macro as well as the micro-issues are addressed. Overall, a glance at Gulu town paints a picture of a thriving and booming economy but this is not exactly reflected beyond the urban settings. The situation of the people is still far from desired as demonstrated throughout the thesis. The PRDP has focused on delivering the infrastructure in some areas however little has been done to address the micro-needs of the affected people.

Description of the study sites

The research was carried out in two districts of northern Uganda namely Gulu and Amuru as shown in map 1. These districts were selected because they were heavily affected by the war and suffered massive displacement.

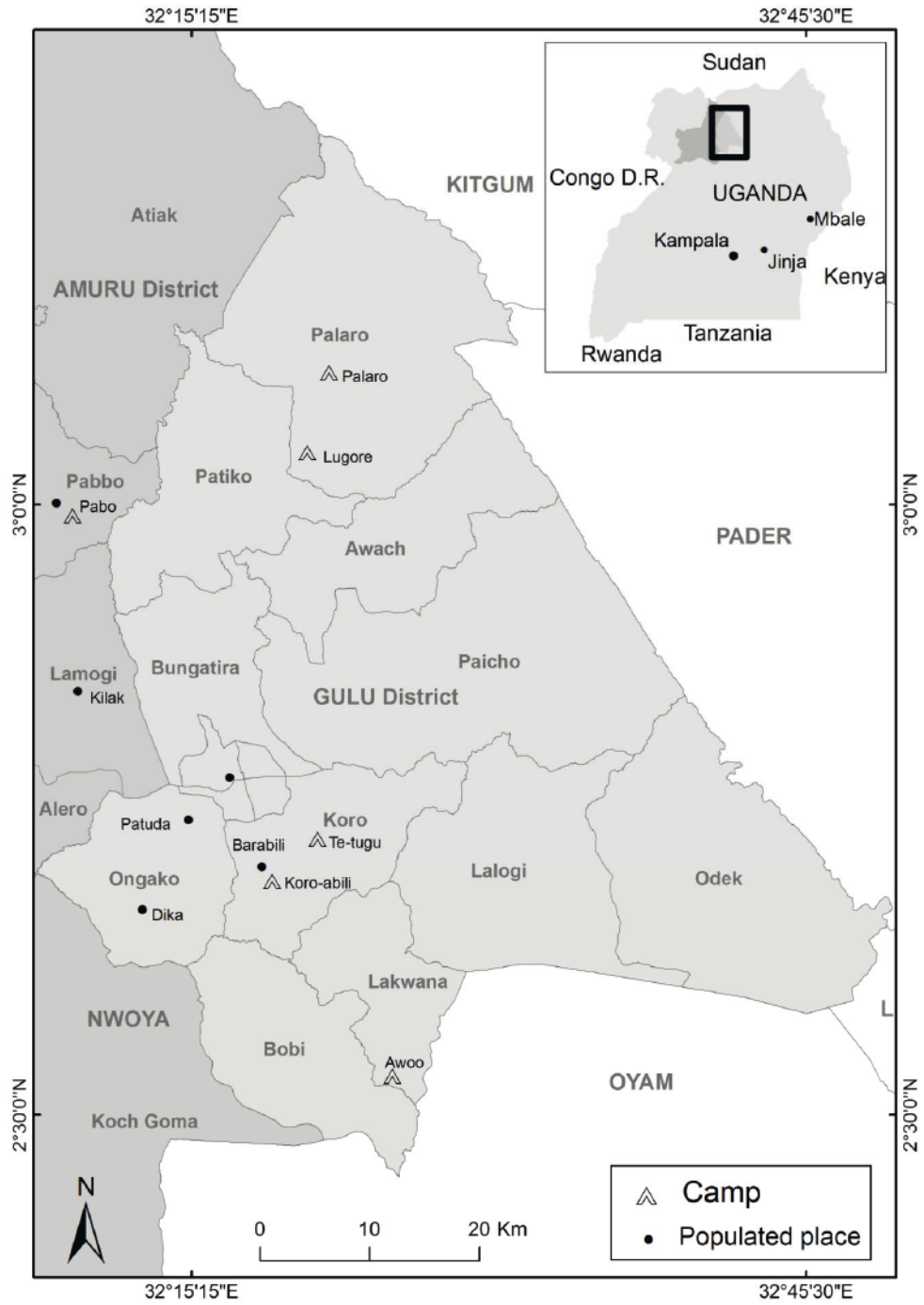


Figure 1: Study areas in Uganda

Gulu district

Gulu District is located about 332 kilometers from Kampala city and is a regional centre for northern Uganda. It is bordered by Amuru, Pader, Kitgum, Lira and Apac districts (see figure 1). The district covers an area of 3,449.08 square kilometers with an estimated population of 374,700 people. The district is inhabited by the Acholi people who speak Luo. Approximately 76 per cent of the population lives in rural areas (Gulu district Planning Unit 2011). The settlement patterns have been largely determined by security with most of the population living in camps that were usually established along main roads, town centers and its suburbs. Agriculture is the major economic activity employing over 95 per cent of the population. Among the crops grown include: rice, groundnuts, sesame, millet, sorghum, sweet potatoes and cassava. Livestock was previously ranked as a key asset and economic base but this was greatly affected by cattle rustling.

Most of the land is arable and very fertile. However, until recently, the land was underutilized due to the insecurity and resultant displacement. Together, Gulu and Amuru districts had an estimated 650,000 IDPs about 40 per cent of all IDPs in Uganda and up to 80 per cent of the population was displaced (World Food Programme 2006). Gulu and the neighboring districts of Amuru, Pader and Kitgum suffered the worst impact of the conflict. Besides, Gulu town served a base for government counter insurgency and a center for the humanitarian industry (Branch 2008a), at the peak of the conflict, and shortly after Gulu was flooded with humanitarian agencies. Going through the streets of Gulu there are hundreds of signposts for several humanitarian agencies everywhere you turn as well as in the camps signposts were a landmark feature. As of October 2009, 107 agencies were in operation in Gulu (UN OCHA/IMU 2009) but most of them have scaled down their activities while some have left (*The Guardian* 2012).

Amuru District

Amuru district is located 377 kilometers from Kampala via Gulu town. Amuru district was carved out of Gulu district in July 2006. It shares a border with Sudan to the north and is also bordered by Gulu, Kitgum, Masindi, Oyam, Adjumani, Nebbi and Arua districts (Muyomba et al. 2010). Its location affords an enormous potential for cross border trade with the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan besides the recently discovered oil¹⁷. Subsistence agriculture is the backbone of the district economy, employing 98 per cent the population. About 90 per cent of the total land area in the district is arable and very fertile. However, during the conflict much of it has been idle on account of insecurity. The improved security has enabled over 80 per cent of the displaced to return to their original homes and have embarked on reestablishing their livelihoods and settlements. In Amuru, the statistics an estimated 78 humanitarian agencies were in operation (IMU UNOCHA 2009).

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is an island located in the Indian Ocean, south of India. It has an estimated population of 21 million of which the Sinhalese are the dominant ethnic group representing 82 per cent followed by Indian Tamils 5.1 per cent, Sri Lanka Tamils, 4.3, Moors 7.9 and 1 per cent others¹⁸. Sri Lanka is composed of 9 provinces, 25 districts, 256 divisional Secretariats, and 160 electorates. About 38 per cent of the land in Sri Lanka is arable¹⁹ and the principle agricultural produce is paddy rice, followed by tea, rubber and coconut.²⁰

The conflict and the tsunami

Sri Lanka has experienced numerous disasters and crises, both manmade and natural. The country suffered over two decades of a protracted and bloodied ethnic war (Ruwanpura 2009). The causes of the conflict are complex. However, Korf argues that:

¹⁷ The New Vision Online (22 December 2008) -Huge Oil well discovered in Amuru district available at: <http://newvision.co.ug/D/8/220/665849/amuru%20oil>

¹⁸ Department of Census and Statistics, 2001 Census provisional data

¹⁹ <http://data.worldbank.org/topic/agriculture-and-rural-development>

²⁰ Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka 2011, Central Bank Annual of Sri Lanka

The civil war in Sri Lanka is embedded in and is an expression of existing social, political, economic and cultural structures. It is thus not a temporary crisis, but a long-enduring feature. (2003:130)

Korf adds that the war is about competition of the largely ethnicised resources and should be understood as a multidimensional phenomenon. The fundamental grievance emanates from the Tamil minority and Sinhalese-Buddhist majority which have accentuated the social, political and ethnic cleavages. The civil war between the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had been on-going for over two decades punctuated by a ceasefire agreement signed in 2002, which was revoked in 2006 resulting in a full-fledged war, which ended in May 2009 with the GoSL declaring victory over the LTTE (DeVotta 2009). The impacts of the conflict have been immense with the most notable loss of lives and the resultant protracted displacement. It is estimated that over 80,000 people were killed during the course of the conflict and many thousands were particularly killed in the final months of the civil war in 2009 (International Crisis Group 2010). Besides, the effects of the conflict were aggravated by the deadly 26 December 2004 tsunami. The Joint Report of the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and Development Partners indicates that 35,322 people were killed, 1,000,000 people were displaced and over two thirds of the island's coastline was affected by the tsunami (GoSL 2005). A massive rehabilitation and reconstruction effort followed the tsunami with an estimated 500 international aid agencies involved in the post tsunami relief and recovery work (Silva 2009). However, seven years on the interest in the relief and recovery operation has faded (Mulligan & Nadarajah 2011) yet the quality of life is still poor for many of the affected. It is reported that international donors are unable and not willing to continue providing funds for all aspects of resettlement. This shortage of funds has meant the old IDPs²¹ especially those from the tsunami and earlier phases of the conflict are

²¹ Raheem (2010) provides two categories of IDPs i.e. Old and forgotten IDPs resulting from the previous conflict and tsunami while the new ones are those displaced towards the end of the conflict.

not prioritized for assistance particularly with regard to permanent housing. Many of the former IDPs still live in transitional shelters and have not been resettled or compensated (Perera 2009; Raheem 2009; 2010).

The issue of IDPs in Sri Lanka is complex and multi-layered. Protracted and multiple displacements make return and recovery complicated. However, the effects of the early phases of the conflict, the tsunami and the final battle cannot be viewed in isolation although the official position²² states that tsunami recovery is over. There are complex interactions between the effects of the war and the tsunami that cannot be ignored (Blaikie & Lund 2010). The government's declaration of victory over the LTTE offered the hope of reconciliation and the opportunity to deal with the long-standing grievances. However, according to the International Crisis Group (ICG) report 2011, three years after the conflict there is only a hard, unhappy peace in Sri Lanka and the social and political cleavages still prevail.

Government has embarked on postwar reconstruction, resettlement and reconciliation plans through for example the *Nagenahira Navodaya* (Eastern Revival) programme.²³ Generally, the economy has expanded with the key focus on reconstruction of big infrastructure projects such as roads, rails, ports and power plants though the most urgent needs are still unattended. The progress is easily overstated and evidence is uneven. The conditions are far worse away from the highways (Bhavani 2010). The recovery has been overcast by several challenges. The much needed aid is not available and where available it is strictly controlled by the military. In the east, central government exercises control whereby they screen and approve beneficiaries and closely monitor all activities of humanitarian organizations. Hence, there is limited flexibility for aid agencies to operate due to the

²² Raheem 2010

²³ Nagenahira Navodaya in full swing

http://www.priu.gov.lk/news_update/Current_Affairs/ca200803/20080313nagenahira_navodaya.htm

bureaucratic procedures and the selection procedure of beneficiaries tends to reinforce differential treatment.

Today, many of the displaced have returned home though they lack basic amenities at the return sites. Many still live in temporary shelters, unemployed with limited access to livelihood opportunities or access to basic infrastructures. Meanwhile, those who have suffered multiple displacements prefer to stay in their current areas of displacement whereas other people are unable to return to their pre-displacement areas. Return has also been very complicated (The Sunday Times 2009; IRIN 2010) due to the protracted displacement. Besides, the land is currently occupied by the military or is part of designated areas like the High Security Zones-(HSZ) and the Special Economic Zones –(SEZ) or has not been demined (ICG 2008). The search for the missing relatives is still on in the east and north and disappearances have not been fully investigated and no compensation has been received (Bhavani 2010; ICG 2011).

Land conflicts have been exacerbated by the war and tsunami in all communities. There is contestation of ownership resulting from the long-term displacement. Besides, many lack documentation to verify ownership and there are struggles on demarcating boundaries. There are also reports of land grabbing by politicians as well as encroachment (see Bhavani & Raheem 2010). Overall, the effects of the war and the tsunami have been far-reaching and still resonate even in the post-crisis period.

These challenges apply for the east and other war affected areas. However, in the south the situation is different. In Hambantota, poverty was a major constraint pre-tsunami. Hambantota was ranked as the third poorest district in the country and poorest coastal district. It is estimated that at least 32 per cent of the population lived below the poverty line (Department of Census and Statistics Sri Lanka 2005)

Description of the study areas

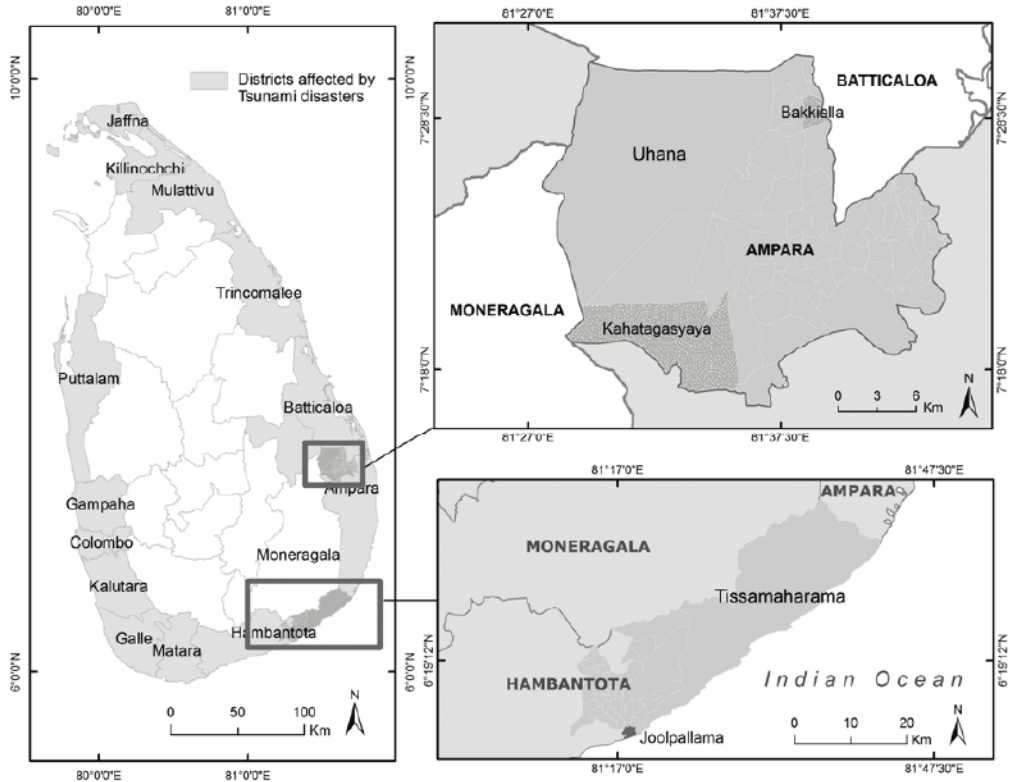


Figure 2: The Study Areas in Sri Lanka

The districts in which I conducted research were Ampara and Hambantota shown on Figure 2.

Ampara is located in the eastern province has a mixed ethnic balance and was one of the most affected districts by the 2004 tsunami and the conflict. The estimated numbers of people affected by the tsunami were 193,000 and 10,436 people were killed²⁴. Agriculture is a key economic activity dominated by paddy cultivation. Most of the households practice shifting cultivation. For my research I visited Bakkella and Kahatagasyaya which are mainly agricultural areas. Meanwhile, Hambantota is a coastal district in southern Sri Lanka and the dominant ethnic group is Sinhalese (97 per cent). It is a dry and arid zone dependent on

²⁴ <http://www.erd.gov.lk/devforum/Ampara%20District.htm>

irrigation for agricultural production. Hambantota did not suffer the direct effects of the war but was affected by the tsunami. However, compared to Ampara, the impact was less severe. It is estimated 78,698 people were affected, 3067 killed and over 4000 housing units destroyed (District Disaster Management Committee DDMC 2005). Nonetheless, Hambantota has made a significant recovery. According to the *Daily News* (23 August 2011), the poverty level has dropped due to the significant infrastructure development in the district following the post-tsunami recovery. The areas visited include Tisamaharama and Julpallama which are also rural and agricultural areas.

In sum, the causes of the disaster and conflicts in the two countries vary but the effects are similar and the challenges that people face in the recovery are related. The major differences stem from the ethnic divisions prominent in Sri Lanka which is also manifest in the political patronage that has largely influenced the recovery efforts. In Uganda, the major concern has been the enforced return of the internally displaced persons without full recognition of the challenges they face.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Positioning

This study has been informed by theoretical perspectives from development studies and human geography. These theories draw from an ontological and epistemological stance that acknowledges the independent human consciousness and ascribes causal powers to human reason and social structures (Bhaskar 1993; 1997; Collier 1994; Yeung 1997). I believe recovery can be best understood by exploring the interplay between human agency and structure. These two provide an understanding about why disasters occur in the first place and how people can recover. The findings reveal various ways through which structural properties (which include the political, ethnic and socio-economic) of the context influence how the spaces of recovery are constituted. Furthermore, the debates about place and space emphasize the iterative relationship between structure, mechanisms and agency. I also draw some insights from the actor-oriented approach which underscores the fact that actors use their knowledge and capabilities to interpret and to respond to their environment (Long & Long 1992; Long & Villareal 1994; Long 2001). The key argument is that structures influence human behavior and humans are capable of changing the social structures they inhabit (Bourdieu 1977, 1990, 1999; Giddens 1984; Bryant & Jary 1991). These research traditions share the notion of agency and the fact that social phenomena are social constructions constantly made and remade through active agencies. I draw on these theories to unpack the practices of recovery and how these are constituted across space. Available literature in geography indicates that the structure and agency debate has mainly been used in the explanation of health inequalities (Kearns 1993; Curtis & Jones 1998; Williams 2003). There is limited literature with regard to explaining disaster causes, consequences and response (Wisner 1993; McLaughlin & Dietz 2008). The structure and agency debate highlight the contextual effects and contingency of human action in constituting social phenomenon which

are of particular interest in this thesis. Besides, Giddens' articulation on the role of power is critical in explaining how spaces of recovery emerge through the asymmetrical relationships of the different actors. According to Giddens, power concerns 'the capability of actors to secure outcomes where the realization of these outcomes depends upon the agency of others' (1986:93). Indeed, spaces of recovery are largely determined by the agencies of the different actors involved. But what does agency and structure entail?

Agency

Giddens describes agency as the "capacity to make a difference" which he also calls the "transformative capacity" (Giddens 1984:14). According to Giddens human agents always 'have the possibility of doing otherwise' (1989: 258) and that the 'seed of change is there in every act which contributes towards the reproduction of any 'ordered' form of social life" (Giddens 1993:108). The agency has the potential to consciously alter his or her place in the social structure. Hence, structures are enacted by what Giddens calls "knowledgeable" human agents. However, I believe the possibility to do otherwise does not necessarily equate to the ability to do so. In his conceptualization, Giddens offers a voluntaristic and highly autonomous state to the agents (see Jones & Karsten 2008). The choices people make are influenced by the alternatives available. Thus, agency is dynamic and responsive to the enabling or constraining effects of social structure. There is limited freedom when it comes to choices that people make and structures have a restraining but not necessarily a dominating effect. For example marriage is an established structure and there are rules that define and govern what marriage should be. However, individuals depending on their context i.e. the laws of their state, religious affiliation and individual preferences influence and define what the union between individuals should be. I use this to illustrate how social structures shape action and how people's actions can perpetuate or challenge established structures.

Structure

Giddens defines structures as “rules and resources, organized as properties of social systems” that are manifested as structural properties (1984:25). He identifies two primary sources of power. The allocative resources which involve the “transformative capacity generating command over objects, goods or material phenomena” while the authoritative resources deals with the “transformative capacity generating commands over persons or actors” (Giddens 1984:33). Thus, structures exist as both tangible and non-tangible entities for example, gender, culture, ethnicity, socio-economic status, physical resources among others. The relationship between structure and agency can be viewed either as reproductive or transformative. This can either maintain a status quo or facilitate change. The structures are almost fixed but the rules keep changing. For instance gender is an embedded structure that defines the roles and responsibilities of men and women. However, the rules have changed and the roles are no longer specific but gender as a structure still exists and has implications and consequences for human action.

Structure, agency and implications for recovery

Recovery practices draw on both structure and agency. In order to assist people effectively, there is need to understand why they are vulnerable to disasters in the first place. For example people are pushed to stay on marginal lands like the coastal area which makes them vulnerable to tsunami. However, for some living at the coastline ensures easy accessibility to their livelihood choice. Thus, the structure relates to the livelihood options available that are often controlled by socio-economic systems that have been propagated through generations. Besides, they have limited capacity to change circumstances that make them vulnerable such as gender and ethnicity (see Peacock et al. 1997), which are embedded structures. Thus, when looking for solutions, it may not be adequate to take people away from the sites of disaster but also address structural concerns that drive people to vulnerable options.

Agency is always exercised as people seek to deal with the structural constraints imposed by the disaster. In Sri Lanka the buffer zone was established in an attempt to keep people away from the coastline however it was subsequently revoked by the people. In this way, the buffer zone established as a physical structure to restrict settlement along the coastline was made and remade through active agencies of the people and the practitioners. This emphasizes the fact that people are able to act otherwise when encountered with constraining situations. Likewise in the case of Uganda, the inability to return to pre-displacement areas resulted in the creation of transit sites. Thus, in encountering structures, the spaces of recovery are created.

In highlighting the role of power, Giddens demonstrates how rules are generated, expressed and maybe used and the outcomes. According to Giddens, rules are written by different people, implemented by different people, which often causes confusion in the way they are translated and interpreted. He emphasizes the need to apply the rules [formula] in the right context (Giddens 1984:20). This relates to issues of policies and ideologies that shape the recovery practices. The person who designs the policy or programme is not necessarily one who implements it and given that so many actors are involved at different levels this leads to various interpretations and transformations through which spaces of recovery emerge. The power is often expressed in form of technical expertise, local knowledge and resources. For instance, emphasizing technical knowledge often conflicts with agency that is displayed in local knowledge. This struggle means that rules often stated in form of policy documents are constantly negotiated and redefined at the point of implementation thus creating diverse spaces of recovery. The different actors have a choice over their interpretations of the rule and actions can be made to fit their interpretations. For example, I show in paper II how the policy on needs is reworked at different levels and by different actors because of the differences in interpretations.

Actor-oriented approach

In this approach, Long elucidates the struggles between actors pertaining to resources, meanings, institutional legitimacy and control (Long 2001). He attributes social phenomena to the “complex interplay of specific actor’s strategies, ‘projects’, resource endowments (material/technical and social/institutional), discourses and meanings (Long 2004:15). Long stresses the agency of actors as opposed to the structural determinants of social change. He is concerned about how different actors negotiate meanings within existing structures. In my case, I examine how agency interacts with structures to constitute spaces of recovery. The spatiality of actor interfaces are explored. There are several actor constellations which play out in defining the practices and outcomes thus my argument that recovery occurs at different levels.

Social interfaces

For this thesis, I draw insights from the concept of social interface. According to Long the social interface is a “device for identifying and analyzing the critical points of intersection between different fields or levels of social organization” (Long 2004:16). He argues that it is at these interfaces that discrepancies and discontinuities of value, interest, knowledge and power are clearly revealed. These intersections, I am referring to as the spaces of recovery. It is at the interfaces that spaces of negotiation, bargain and contestation are vivid. Here, knowledge and information are transformed through modification that often occurs in form leakages and loss of interpretations through translation. In the process, spaces of recovery are created and recreated. Furthermore, in exercising agency, there emerges room for asserting autonomy by the different actors. The pursuit for autonomy creates subtle forms of resistances which contribute to shaping spaces of recovery. Therefore, recovery is conceived at different levels drawing on different knowledge and resources. Ultimately, recovery occurs at different levels which I call spaces. The different actors seek to solve similar challenges but the points

of divergence emerge from the ways of conceptualization and implementation in which knowledge is transformed and negotiated.

In relation to policy, there is a tendency of isolating policy making and its implementation which makes policies non-responsive to the grounded reality. Policies are transformed by different socio-economic and political circumstances. For instance the 'build back better' mantra in Sri Lanka was not fully realized because of the ignored contextual factors. Besides, in post-disaster situations the context is ever changing which may render some propositions stale at the time of implementation. Thus, policies can be best seen as guidelines for action rather than 'blueprints'. Thus, interventions are socially constructed and negotiated processes and not simply execution of an already planned/specified plan and framework for action with expected outcomes (Long 2004:27). In his conclusion, Long recommends the need to examine the 'struggles at the interface' which he believes will make the actor-oriented framework practice oriented. My contribution has been on highlighting these struggles by the different actors and how spaces of recovery are created in the process.

Chapter Four: Conceptual and Analytical Framework

Disaster, recovery and actors

Disasters are natural or man-made events which in the event of their occurrence leave a trail of destruction and massive suffering for example earthquakes, tsunami or wars as discussed here. This call for interventions aimed at alleviating the suffering in which several actors such as government, donors, humanitarian agencies, philanthropists and private individuals are involved. This is governed by the humanitarian imperative which stipulates the 'right to assistance' for the affected victims and the 'duty and responsibility to assist'. Different actors seek to assist through different interventions which are aimed at facilitating the affected people to rebuild their lives through a process I refer to as recovery. Thus, the disaster provides the context for action. However, in trying to assist there is often a clash of ideology, knowledge and mandates that result in struggles between the different actors which in-turn influence the practices and outcomes.

Theorizing recovery

In this section, I consider the key concepts for analyzing and understanding recovery processes. Recovery has several dimensions which different actors seek to tap into. The way recovery is conceived has fundamental implications for the practice.

Coping and resilience

Adaptation refers to how well people are prepared to cope and manage or adjust to shocks and stresses and changing circumstances arising from the crisis. According to Brooks (2003:8) adaptation refers to "adjustments in a system's behavior and characteristics that enhance its ability to cope with external stress". Resilience and adaptive/coping capacity are used synonymously but are quite varied. Adger (2000) defines social resilience as the ability of groups or communities to cope with external stresses and disturbances resulting from social, political, and environmental change. Meanwhile, coping strategies refer to the 'short-term

responses to unusual food stress and adaptation as ‘coping strategies which have become incorporated into the normal cycle of activities’ (Davies 1996:35). Therefore, coping strategies are usually the immediate responses to adverse events or shocks, while adaptive strategies are long-term adjustments to adverse trends or processes that occur with a certain frequency.

The ability of individuals or households to adapt is shaped by social, political and economic processes operating at different levels. These include factors such as managerial ability, access to financial, technological and information resources, infrastructure, the institutional environment within which adaptations occur, political influence, kinship networks, etc. (Smit & Wandel 2006; Watts & Bohle 1993; Adger 1999; Kelly & Adger 2000; Smit & Pilifosova 2003; Wisner et al. 2004; Adger et al. 2001; Blaikie & Brookfield 1987). Thus, recovery can be seen as an attempt to enhance the coping and adaptive strategies of people given the fact that disasters are part and parcel of the development process.

Resources, rights and assets

The ownership of assets does significantly influence the level of vulnerability as well as the ability to recover from impacts of disaster. Moser identifies the important assets as labour, housing, social and economic infrastructure, household relations and social [and political] capital. However, people do not simply draw on their assets but possess sophisticated skills in managing them to cope with adversity and take advantage of opportunities (Moser 1997; 1998). It is argued that assets mediate the ability of households to pursue livelihood strategies designed to cope with ‘shock’ events such as flooding, famine (Swift 1989). Thus, a crisis that erodes or leads to loss of assets and seizes entitlements grossly undermines the capacity to cope, which in turn complicates the recovery process. Hence, asset replacement is often considered one of the key interventions in post-disaster recovery.

The level of resistance and resilience are largely determined by the assets and entitlements that individuals, households or communities can mobilize and manage during adversity and its aftermath. The more and wider the range of assets people have the less vulnerable they are, and the greater the erosion of such assets the greater the insecurity (Moser 1998:3). However, I add that the type of resource or asset, its availability, accessibility and usability are crucial. Sometimes people have the assets but are unable to access and utilize them, which undermine their recovery. In conflict situations for example, social and political assets are instrumental in enabling individuals, households, or economic actors to stabilize or even expand their livelihood options and opportunities (Korf 2004).

People based or disaster based approaches

According to Pelling (2003), there are two theoretical approaches to disaster response and development. The neo-Marxists emphasize understanding the ways in which groups and individuals respond to disaster events (Quarantelli 1987) but acknowledge the key role of social structures in shaping vulnerability. Meanwhile, the behaviouralists argue that the people only influence disaster in a limited way and thus, policy recommendations must focus on mitigation and preparedness. This implies that the response or recovery can be either disaster -based or people-based.

The disaster based-approach seeks to foster mitigation and protection through prediction or minimizing the impact of the disaster. These interventions seek to improve building technology and communication such as establishing warning systems. Meanwhile, the people-based approach focuses on addressing fundamental challenges that make people susceptible and sensitive to impacts of disaster. According to Hewitt (1983) the neo-Marxist perspective views disasters as deeply embedded within the social structures and are shaped through everyday development experiences. These structures include the socio-economic status of people, which largely determines where they live, the level of assets, social capital,

and political affiliations among others. These different approaches to recovery seek to emphasize the human or the physical dimensions of recovery. However, Blaikie et al. (1994) stress the interdependence of human and physical systems which demands an integrated approach to disaster response. Thus, recovery has to address both the social and physical structures that make people vulnerable in the first place. The major weakness with recovery is that it is often focused delivery of logistics but does not adequately address the systemic issues from which vulnerability is produced and perpetuated. The provision of logistics is much faster and easier to implement compared to initiating processes of change, which are more complex and time-consuming.

Defining the start or end points

Post-disaster is a complex period and often it is difficult to draw clear cut boundaries between the onset, in crisis and endpoint especially with regard to armed conflict where there are usually peaks and lows in levels of violence. Natural disasters have relatively visible endpoints but it also depends on the type of disaster. For instance earthquakes usually have aftershocks that continue for weeks after the initial tremor and flooding is even more complicated due to the secondary impacts. Besides, in situations of recurrent and multiple crises it is difficult to delineate a post-crisis period. For instance in Sri Lanka the tsunami overlapped with the conflict in the east.

The way the endpoints are defined greatly influence the nature of interventions and the level of resources required. This could imply that interventions are limited to relief efforts or there is a shift towards long-term recovery as discussed in paper III. The recovery is contingent on the duration of the conflict and the dynamics involved. Protracted conflict and displacement creates a myriad of complex challenges as discussed in paper III and IV. These effects prevail even long after the war has ended and significantly impact on how people think

about recovery especially return. Hence, tagging return and recovery to security is an oversimplification of a very complex reality.

In addition, Dahlman (2009) describes 'post-conflict' as a period that commences with the end of war. Ideally, it denotes cessation of armed violence and usually the start of a reconstruction and recovery period. However, this definition is deficient when viewed in the light of 'new wars'²⁵, which are more intricate without clearly defined beginnings and endings. Profoundly, the term post-conflict underestimates structural problems such as extreme poverty or historic grievances which must be addressed to create sustainable peace (Macrae & Bradbury 1998) and recovery. Thus, in situations of protracted conflict, it is difficult to postulate a linear progression from war to peace. For people affected, post-conflict is a fuzzy period marred with a mix of uncertainty, fear and glimpses of hope. Hence, the vagueness of the concept means that different stakeholders have different signifiers of post-conflict, which in turn influence decision-making about recovery interventions. Events such as signing of cessation of hostilities, peace negotiations or demise of the warlords are critical in shaping peace, but may not necessarily diminish the grievances which caused the war in the first place and the consequences emanating from it.

Levels of resources

The levels of resources available influence the ways the different actors think about recovery and affect the defining of priorities and ultimate implementation. Often recovery strategies are overwhelmed with poorly [and hurriedly] conceived priorities that are scarcely funded and hardly implemented (Addison & McGillivray 2004; UNDP 2008). Furthermore, the balancing of short-term goals of relief while supporting long-term development (Weiss 2004; Gerbick et al. 2007) is problematic. Mobilising funds is a key challenge because the funds are either

²⁵ Kaldor M 1999.

never disbursed or they are spent on short-term humanitarian needs (Robson 2006; Naraghi & El-bushra 2004).

This is further complicated by the limited international media-driven attention which peaks in the immediate aftermath of the crisis and fades shortly after when the gravity of the situation is only starting to emerge (Brown & Minty 2006; Olsen et al. 2002; Salama et al. 2001; Minear et al. 1996). This implies that pledges meant for longer-term aid are hardly realised. Thus, interventions focus on relief needs while the long-term needs remain unattended. As Robson rightly puts it, 'humanitarian agencies and government often focus on displacement and as a result, they make unrealistic assumptions about [return and] reintegration' (2006:83). They often underestimate the complexity, time and resources required to invest in post-crisis recovery. Nevertheless, the Sri Lanka case casts a shadow of the role of resources. The recovery has been retarded by contextual factors despite the availability of financial resources.

In summary, this section sought to highlight the various ways and factors which influence how recovery is conceived. This draws from the impacts of the disaster and how the different actors seek to foster change. Coping and resilience mainly draw upon how people deal with the effects of disasters and this greatly taps into their agency. Meanwhile, actors also struggle to balance meeting needs created by the disaster as well as the systemic challenges. Notwithstanding, the way endpoints of disasters are defined impact on the recovery process especially in conflict situations. This especially for the affected people who seek assurance about the durability of peace which in turn affects the way they plan and strategize. Besides, resources do matter in the way recovery is conceived because they influence the nature of interventions possible. Overall, the different ways in which recovery is conceived provides insights about how spaces of recovery emerge.

Towards an analytical approach -Spaces of recovery?

This thesis argues that the way recovery is defined shapes the interventions and thus the outcomes. There is a conceptual and analytical divide eminent in the way different actors explore similar issues about recovery, using different terminology and approaches. For effective recovery to occur there is need for a shared meaning and consensual approach if possible on how it can be achieved. Each actor (including the affected people, the donors, humanitarian agencies and the government) plays a role and there are several overlaps and interactions that ultimately define the recovery process. As shown in the *figure 3* below the three circles represent the actor-worlds for the selected different actors. The different actor worlds are constituted and governed by different sets of ideology and interests which often influence their practices. It shows the interfaces between the different actors which constitute the spaces of recovery. These overlap areas are of particular interest because they open up spaces of contestation as well as negotiation and consensus. It is in these areas that different meanings of recovery emerge through translation and implementation of programmes and policies. I now turn to describe the roles of the different actors and how these may influence their perception of recovery.

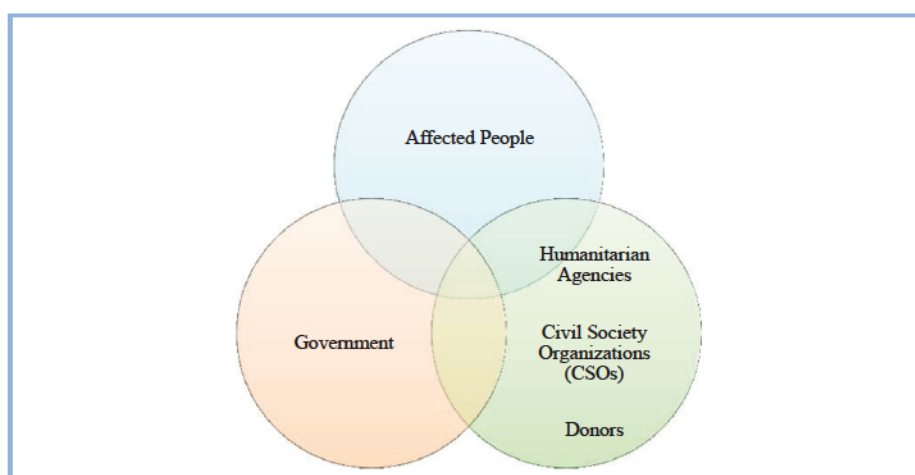


Figure 3: Spaces of recovery

The government

Government is largely concerned with policy and establishing operational frameworks. For instance the Government of Uganda (GoU) played a major role in ensuring improved security which facilitated return to the pre-displacement areas. This was through the signing and enforcing the cessation of hostilities agreement with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). With regard to policy, government developed an elaborate plan aimed at fostering development and peace building for the war affected region. Through the Peace Recovery and Development Plan 2007 (PRDP), the government, the development partners and humanitarian agencies are implementing recovery programmes. The government has been largely concerned with the macro issues such as: consolidation of state authority; rebuilding and empowering communities; revitalization of the northern economy; and peace building and reconciliation. These are highlighted as the core objectives of the recovery plan. In Sri Lanka, the government and the donors were engaged with the recovery through policies like the 'build back better', setting the buffer zone and controlling humanitarian access.

The humanitarian agencies

These are organizations that operate on a humanitarian mandate but cognizant of the wider moral mandate around poverty eradication, development and a range of human rights (see Slim 2004). Specifically, these organizations seek to save lives, alleviate human suffering and promote human dignity in the midst of disasters [natural, technological or environmental], armed conflict and other complex emergencies. They provide assistance to address the short-term, immediate actions that save lives as well as long-term activities that tackle underlying socio-economic constraints and foster development. Humanitarian agencies broadly include traditional organizations such as the Red Cross and United Nations Agencies but also the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) particularly the international NGOs which in the recent years are operating at almost the same scale as the traditional agencies.

Every humanitarian agency has a vision and mandate that guide its actions. For instance Agency for Cooperation and Research (ACORD)²⁶ specifically targets conflict affected districts that are in transition and recovering from conflict. Their mission is to strengthen the livelihoods of the displaced people, their capacities to advocate for their rights and achieve food security through encouraging food production and agricultural productivity. ACORD was established in 1976 as a consortium of Northern [European] agencies to address poverty issues resulting from drought in sub-Saharan Africa. Its mission has evolved ever since to encompass social justice and equality. ACORD commenced its Uganda activities in 1979 after the fall of Idi Amin to facilitate post war rehabilitation and reconstruction. In 2002, the programme was reoriented to focus on conflict reduction with a goal of minimizing conditions for conflicts and promoting an environment conducive for peace but is still actively engaged in the on-going recovery.

Different humanitarian agencies as already described have specific mandates though they all endeavor to alleviate human suffering. They have different and diverse ways of achieving this goal. Many of the organizations have specialized functions for example some address issues of food security, health, water and sanitation, conflict resolution and peace-building among other activities. They have specific ways of defining problems and finding solutions and thus the differences on how they conceptualize recovery. Most of the organizations have specialized functions and specific mandates. This implies that often they are limited to how much they can do. For instance, as was in Sri Lanka, one organization may be engaged in providing housing which is a critical intervention but maybe unable to support livelihoods which is a complementary intervention. This creates an intervention gap that may undermine the benefits of a house. Meanwhile, most of these organizations have geographical scopes within which they operate. For example donor money is ear-marked i.e it has to be

²⁶ The Organization I visited in Gulu

spent for the specific activities and areas for which it was requested. This explains why some communities did not benefit from the tsunami funds despite the levels of need in such areas. Thus, getting the right balance of actions and accountability is an uphill task which many agencies often grapple with.

The affected people

This is a broad category of people including all those who have suffered the direct effects and consequences of the disaster or war. They fully understand the magnitude and scope of their problems and they know better the required actions but often lack the resources and capacities to implement. However, this space is characterized by difference and diversity. There are millions of people affected each individual or household may have unique needs and also have diverse ways of thinking about the solutions. This creates multiple problems and multiple solutions with significant implications for practice. For instance, government aims at addressing the macro needs but the people are more focused on the micro needs which for them constitute the priority list. However, this does not mean that they do not favour macro interventions rather the micro needs are more pertinent and if not addressed then they [people] may not appreciate the essence of macro interventions. For instance, as reported by some respondents being given seeds to plant or farm implements with the aim of ensuring food security is good but when there is no food at that moment then the seeds will meet the immediate need for food.

As highlighted, different actors think about recovery in different ways and this causes struggles that are highlighted throughout this thesis. Thus, recovery is not a standard process but rather constantly negotiated within different actor worlds which ultimately define the spaces of recovery. The interface areas represent a commonality of the problem definition rather than an agreed solution. There is always contestation about what should be done, how

and by whom. Therefore, spaces of recovery highlight the fact that recovery happens at different levels.

Chapter Five: Methodology

In this chapter, I provide an account of the methodology and field experiences. I discuss some of the complex decisions that shaped the nature and course of inquiry. The methodology was rather complex because it involved researching communities on the move especially in northern Uganda. I try to highlight some of the challenges of doing research in a rapidly changing context and its implications for the nature of data obtained.

The Interpretative research

This study employs a qualitative inquiry that involves describing and examining the nature of subjects' perceptions of the world and how their views are constructed, rather than establishing whether or not their views are a true reflection of reality (Heaton 2004). These views are extremely nuanced and they would be difficult to obtain through other means. The methodology tends to emphasize multiple meanings and interpretations rather than seeking to impose any one 'dominant' or 'correct' interpretation. The interpretative approach was used because it provides deeper insights into "the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (Schwandt 1994:118). In interpretive research, the ontological assumption is that social reality is locally and specifically constructed "by humans through their action and interaction" (Orlikowski & Baroudi 1991:14 cited in Andrade 2009). This approach draws on a hermeneutic phenomenology proposed by Heidegger, which acknowledges that human beings are hermeneutic (interpretive) beings capable of finding significance and meaning in their own lives (Cohen & Omery 1994; Draucker 1999). This form of inquiry focuses on understanding what the individual stories imply about their everyday experiences (Lopez & Willis 2004). Hence, Van Manen (1990:25) argues that interpretive research is a form of phenomenology 'which is on the one hand a description of the lived-through quality of lived experience and, on the other hand, the description of meaning of the expressions of lived experience'.

Heidegger emphasizes the role of context in understanding individuals. He uses the concept of *dasein* (the way of being in the world) to emphasize that individuals are not independent of their contexts which influence their choices and give meaning to lived experience (Heidegger 1962). Thus, interpretive phenomenology seeks to interpret and understand contextualized human experiences particularly how context influences, structures and sustains experiences (Draucker 1999; Parse 1999). Therefore, this methodology seeks to describe the meanings that individuals make of their situations and experiences and how these meanings influence the choices they make. The basic tenet of interpretive research is that experience is best understood from the social world of the individual. Interpretive inquiry does not necessarily offer one true meaning. Nonetheless, the meanings stated in the findings must be logical and plausible within the study framework and they must reflect the realities of the study participants (Annells 1996). My thesis sought to explore how different actors make meaning of recovery and how these influence the way spaces of recovery are created and thus this approach was found most relevant.

Heidegger (1962) also stresses that bracketing of researcher knowledge and presuppositions is impossible because it guides and frames the nature of inquiry. These presuppositions inform the research process and influence the interpretations generated. Thus in hermeneutic inquiry, personal knowledge is both useful and necessary (Geanellos 2000). The socially constructed nature of reality is influenced by the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied and the situational constraints (Denzin & Lincoln 1998). Hence, the meanings are co-created by the researcher and the participant and that the meanings derived are a blend of meanings articulated by both parties (Koch 1995). The researcher is a concretely situated individual whose subjective experience and social engagement with the subjects of study inevitably affects what we come to understand. Inevitably, research is value-laden and we bring these values when we go into the field. We

have our own ideas about the situation and these we often impose on the subjects unintentionally.

This was really important in my case where being a practitioner and now a researcher in the field of inquiry to some extent became influential. My previous work with NGOs and donor agencies meant I was treading familiar ground in a sense of having an understanding of how they operate though the thematic area (post-war recovery) was quite new. This kind of position influenced the way I gathered and analyzed the data because I was viewing issues using both academic and praxis lenses. For example, in listening to the people's experiences, I was also aware of the obligations and mandates of practitioners and the practicality of the proposed solutions or interventions. From this position, I have been able to highlight the ambiguities of practice and also reflect upon the complex realities that we deal with. From an epistemological stance, qualitative inquiry challenges the idea that there can be any form of "objective knowledge" that can be specified and transmitted in a tangible form, because the knowledge thus created is often no more than an expression of the manner in which the scientist as a human being arbitrarily imposed a personal frame of reference on the world, which is mistakenly perceived as lying in an external and separate realm (Heidegger 1962). Hence, much as we want to be objective about reporting the experiences of the individual it becomes difficult to distinguish the individual's experiences and our own perception of those experiences. In the next section, I try to discuss the research strategy employed, the selection of cases and the field experiences that greatly shaped the research process.

Why the Case studies

Case studies have a distinct merit when the investigator seeks to establish operational links especially the why and how questions (Yin 2009). With regard to this study, the case study approach was considered appropriate because the intent was to uncover contextual conditions which are highly pertinent to understanding of recovery practices (see Yin 2003). From the

interpretive perspective; cases provide sufficient material required for subsequent analysis (Miles & Huberman 1994). It also allows for close interaction with actors (Guba & Lincoln 1994) which enables the researcher to gain deeper insights about the problem being investigated. Andrade (2009) argues that the interpretive case studies provide room for creating an 'integral and persuasive' piece of research which includes the diverse perspectives of different actors in relation the phenomenon being investigated. Indeed, this study draws on experiences of diverse actors.

There are different classifications of case studies based on aims of the investigation (Stake 2003; Yin 2009). For this study, the cases used were instrumental in that they provide insight into an issue (Stake 2003). The cases of Uganda and Sri Lanka were chosen to provide insights in understanding post-crisis recovery challenges within conflict and disaster settings. However, the selection of a case is justified in terms of its explanatory power rather than its typicality (Mitchell 1983:203). Besides, comparison was not the key objective because it has its own weaknesses of glossing over the uniqueness and complexities of each case. Regardless, the epistemology involved does not demand that findings thus obtained would be universally generalizable, but it does regard them as nonetheless insightful knowledge.

Case selection

From a theoretical perspective, the cases were selected because they represent post-crisis (disaster and war) situations. Both Uganda and Sri Lanka have been affected by humanitarian crises caused by armed conflict and/or natural disaster. Sri Lanka was affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami that has come to be seen as an extra-ordinary disaster due to the magnitude, scale and the impact. This occasioned a massive humanitarian response seldom seen in modern times which brings into question the role of abundant resources in the recovery. Besides, Sri Lanka like Uganda has been affected by decades of armed conflict. Sri Lanka also demonstrates how natural disaster intersects with conflict and how this impacts on

recovery practices and creation of spaces of recovery. The Uganda case was selected to provide a different perspective about recovery practices in a purely post-conflict setting. Described as one of the ‘world’s most forgotten crisis’²⁷ it provides complementary insights about the role of resources but also on issues of return which have dominated the recovery agenda in Uganda. Uganda was also considered the main case because it is more familiar in that I have good knowledge of the setting and the conflict situation. Nevertheless, much as these cases may appear divergent, the most important aspect is that they both provide complementary insights about recovery practices. The challenges of people affected by conflict or natural disaster are similar in many ways. However, conflict adds extra dimensions of violence, mistrust and tensions as well as the breakdown of socio-economic systems that ultimately impact upon recovery practices. The selection of Sri Lanka was facilitated by my supervisor Professor Lund who has established contacts there.

My unit of analysis was the individual accounts of both the affected people and the practitioners. I used both individual and collective accounts of different actors. The organizations selected have a long history in disaster response and long-term development programmes. The organizations selected were Oxfam GB (Great Britain), Oxfam NOVIB (Netherlands) and the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) as explained in the introduction. I conducted in-depth interviews with aid officials at different levels i.e at the headquarter level (donor agencies), country level (recipient) and field officers (local) were interviewed. At the headquarters I was inclined to understanding issues pertaining to resource mobilization and allocation.

Initially, it was thought wise to focus on one organization working in both countries as this would help tease out the contextual influences. However, upon implementation it was

²⁷ As described by Jan Egeland the former UN Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs when he visited Northern Uganda in 2003

problematic to get one such organization. Humanitarian agencies have different modes of operation though the underpinning philosophy may be the same. For example Oxfam International (OI) is a confederation with 14 like-minded organizations but with different *modus operandi*. Some of the member organizations directly implement programmes, meanwhile others work through partners and some only provide funding for sister organizations within the confederation to do the work. This presented a challenge in the sense that it was difficult to get the same organization (same mode of operation) working in the two study areas. Thus, I decided to select different partners but within the same confederation. For example the organization selected in northern Uganda, ACORD is a partner organization of Oxfam Novib but is funded by several other donors outside the OI network.

In Sri Lanka, I got access to Oxfam GB which was only operating in the southern part of the country (tsunami affected area). In eastern Sri Lanka it was impossible to gain access to the same organization as most of the activities had been suspended because of the conflict. Thus, I decided to look at the work of Red Cross which was operational at the time of the visit. Given to these complexities I ceased focusing on particular organizations but instead on the work that the different agencies were doing in the selected study areas. Through, these organizations I was able to access the relevant informants (i.e. the beneficiaries of the aid interventions). Hence, the organizations served both as study objects and gatekeepers. Overall, my selection of the cases was determined by their relevancy to the conceptual framework and the research questions as well as the ability to generate rich information that can contribute understanding recovery practices and examining spaces of recovery.

Respondent selection

Morse (1991) recommends choosing interview informants who have a broad and general knowledge of the topic or those who have undergone the experience and whose experience is considered typical. It is assumed that such respondents would articulate their story in a way

that is illustrative of their experience and appear trustworthy and balanced (Plummer 1983). These respondents were selected through the organizations. My role was to provide information about the nature of data I needed then the organizations identified the relevant officials that I interviewed. However, when it came to project beneficiaries/ affected populations there was limited flexibility in the selection process. In both my study areas, I was assigned to field staff who already had planned work schedules in specific places. So in order, not to disrupt their activities, I had to fit within their planned schedules. Nevertheless, all the respondents provided useful insights. In all 68 respondents were interviewed including affected people, local leaders, humanitarian agencies workers and donor officials. In addition, I had several informal discussions with different categories of people including non-project beneficiaries within the study areas.

Data collection and management

I used a range of qualitative techniques such as face to face in-depth interviews; key informant interviews; Focus Group discussions and observations to ensure findings were accurate as possible. I used an interview guide (see appendices I-III) to keep the discussions focused but there was flexibility whenever respondents wanted to explore other related issues which often turned out relevant. However, it was difficult to isolate the different methods in the field. For instance some of the key informant interviews became group discussions because there were other people within the vicinity who were eager to contribute or were invited by the key informant. The interviews were conducted in the homes, camps, fields of the affected people. I used a voice-recorder when permitted and also made field notes and took some photographs (see appendices) when possible. The lengths of the interviews varied depending on the respondents. They ranged from 25 minutes to those as long as two hours. Translation was needed for many of the interviews with the affected people but there were a handful of respondents who could express themselves in English. However, the key constraint

pertaining to translation is it entails construction of meaning by the translator, thus the information obtained is often filtered which can compromise the quality. With regard to the organization officials, the interviews were carried out in their offices and for the field staff I interacted with them in field and later their offices. Furthermore, with the field officials we would reflect on the responses at the end of day then we could also identify other issues that would be probed farther. This process enabled me to verify and clarify some of the information that was missing or not clear. The fieldwork findings were supplemented with extensive review of secondary data sources including academic articles, reports from humanitarian agencies, government documents and newspaper articles.

In conducting the analysis, the interviews were transcribed and analysis began with a review of the verbatim transcripts. I read the interviews in order to gain an overview about the nature of issues that the different individuals were raising. This was the initial step in identifying meanings by the different actors. I then wrote interpretive summaries and did the coding on the basis of emerging themes. The analysis was based both on the collective and individual accounts. Some of the descriptive texts were returned to the participants to clarify if their experiences were 'rightly' captured and represented. This was mostly possible for the practitioners and not for the affected people. This process was interesting in itself because some of the responses were edited which highlights a methodological dilemma about contingency of responses. In this case, I compared the edited text with the 'original' transcripts to identify the divergences. Some of the responses were significantly different yet I transcribed the verbatim accounts as initially reported by the respondents. This merits further discussion in a future paper. Anyhow, from these texts, I developed themes which have been published as papers and some are incorporated in this compilation. Emphases was placed on identifying categories within each case and then looking for common categories that transcend the cases (Yin 2003). Through this process, I was able to identify how spaces of

recovery are constituted. I will now turn to the field experiences where I discuss some of the challenges that affected the way the research was conducted.

Field experiences

Attachment to the organization

I was privileged to join the field staff of the selected organizations. They were very helpful in identifying the relevant projects and gaining access to the beneficiaries although it presented a methodological dilemma. The presence of the field officers when interviewing project beneficiaries caused a methodological crux. For instance, one of the field officers offered to do the translation which was a welcomed gesture. However, balancing the role as translator and the duty as field staff was problematic. For example, during the interviews, certain issues of interest to the organization emerged which he wanted to address there and then. I also sensed that the project beneficiaries perceived this as an opportunity to express their grievances. The other key challenge of having both the officials and the beneficiaries is a tendency of exaggeration or understating of some information in anticipation of assistance. In such cases, observation and cross-checking the different accounts was an important strategy.

Furthermore, some of the projects visited were still in the infancy stage and therefore the field officers were eager to hear about the challenges and how they can be resolved. I made the interviews flexible to allow the officials to pursue arising matters and in such cases I was responsible for facilitating the discussion. This kind of arrangement reveals the value of the collaborative effort between researchers and practitioners which is often unexplored. Even though they operate within different worlds, have different agendas and mandates and different ways of problem solving (Lund 2012) the synergies can be transformative. My intermediate position enabled me to approach issues from a balanced point of view which facilitated dialogue between the different parties. Often, academic research is blind to the realities that impinge upon the actualization of theoretical propositions into policy and

practice. As researchers, we need to be aware of the enormous ambiguities that characterise the world of practice.

In addition, the question of power relations is often eminent when attached to the organization. For instance at one point the organization requested to borrow the car I had hired and they offered to contribute to fuel costs which was not a problem but such exchanges inevitably transform the power balance. You may be considered as the powerful researcher or the dependent researcher. Of course there are asymmetrical power relations manifested in either party that may lead to patronizing because of a high level of dependence (Cormode & Hughes 1999). Overall, the researcher is often vulnerable to dependence on the organization for their insights as well as access to their beneficiaries.

Emotional Baggage

I recall one of the respondents was struggling to share his experience of staying in the camp. Later, he tearfully, narrated the ordeal of the restricted movement and torture of people who did not abide with the schedule which he concluded was a deprivation of freedom. While, another woman also struggled to report about the rape ordeal of her daughter by the authorities and she had nowhere to report the case and that even if she did no meaningful action would be guaranteed. While elsewhere, I would meet mothers with hungry or sick children feeling very helpless. Every narration was heart wrenching unravelling unique and very painful experiences. My experience of seeing and talking to people affected by the conflict was very emotionally stressful and transformed the way I was thinking and writing about their situation. Although rarely acknowledged, emotions greatly impact our analytical and theoretical lenses. However, this is more in a positive way in that it enhances our analysis and thus provides better insights and *grounded* knowledge (see Hubbard et al. 2001; Lund 2012) that can inform policy.

Nevertheless, emotions put the researchers in a vulnerable position when the best you can do is to empathize. For instance, many of my respondents were trapped in very helpless situations that I was moved to provide some money but this was only after the interviews. This is an ethical dilemma but most times I was overwhelmed by their situations. This raises the question of researching people in distress where you are almost compelled to intervene. What moral obligations do we invoke when we ask people to tell us their problems but then we are unable to help? For instance, because the camps were quite inaccessible I hired a vehicle and whenever we would return to where we had parked we would find somebody waiting to be offered a lift and most times it was a sick person going to hospital. Lund (2012) suggests we must do what we can at the moment, for example sharing solidarity and compassion through listening to their stories. It helps but as a researcher these scenes and memories haunt me and I keep wondering what happened afterwards.

Sometimes, the situations are even more complicated, particularly when the researcher is engaged with a respondent for a long period (Marvasti 2004) we enter a relationship that bears responsibilities and obligations. In this way, research should be a mutually rewarding experience in a sense that it should contribute to changing the situations of people. This implies that research should be directly targeted to make it policy relevant and findings should be presented in ways that are understandable to policy makers and other concerned actors.

Feasibility

Feasibility was a key concern in terms of the funding available, time and accessibility given the security at the time of the research. For instance in Uganda, the transition from war to peace influenced my research focus. In April 2007, people were still in the camps, the interviews focused on the situational challenges and the hopes for return. When I returned in January-March 2008, many people were still living in the camps visited but they would access their farmlands so I dealt with issues of return. While in July-August 2009 an attempt was

made to find out how people were coping with the return and also to identify the challenges they were facing. It was considered useful to identify if there was a new set of challenges that people face as they return home and hence identifying factors influencing recovery. Visits were made to the transit sites as well as to the homes of people who had returned. The entire research covers the period when people were still in the original camps as well as when they started moving to transit sites or areas of origin. This approach was to allow for understanding the challenges of recovery processes. However, it must be noted that it is not the same individuals that were followed to the different sites because there was no way of ensuring systematic tracking. Rather, selection was made to ensure representation from the different sites (original camps, transit sites and areas of origin). The transient nature of communities made my data collection difficult and it meant redefining the problem to capture the relevant aspects.

Researching unfamiliar fields – Sri Lanka

The opportunity to carry out research in a country other than my own with quite unique cultures was rewarding but also very complex. Every step of the visit to Sri Lanka was learning and enriching experience both academically and personally. From the city to the deepest villages, there were lots of things to see and ask about this beautiful island. I witnessed the *Kandy Esala Perahera*²⁸ watched weddings and the funeral drummers. There were moments of joy, wonder as well as sadness looking at the effects of war and tsunami which were so vivid. I enjoyed the warm hospitality of my hosts and the respondents.

In the field, many of my respondents thought I was from southern India because of my darker complexion. I had to speak about myself, the study and purpose of the visit in order to build the trust and confidence of my respondents. Through this kind of dialogue we established rapport which facilitated further discussions. Most of them called me *nanngi*

²⁸ Elephant Parade also known as the Buddhist tooth festival

meaning sister. I endeavoured to make the interviews more of an interactive process from which both the interviewer and interviewee could learn from each other.

Security concerns

About the security, in the south, I travelled easily because there were not many military checkpoints but when it came to the east we passed through several checkpoints. I visited Sri Lanka shortly after the eastern province was declared liberated by government forces in July 2007²⁹. Indeed, the security situation was still tense and this generated some fear and anxiety. Given the political tensions, I realised there was a degree of difference when reporting about the conflict. My respondents were very reluctant to talk about the war which was different in Uganda where the people shared their experiences openly and what they thought had to be done to resolve the conflict. However, I believe this was closely related to the different stages of the conflict and the dynamics of who is involved.

In Ampara, the area I visited was a recently cleared border zone but I could still hear artillery exchange in the neighbouring district. This was a militarised zone and people were selective on the type of information they wanted to share. There were still high levels of uncertainty among the people. Given these circumstances, I had to redesign my interview guide spontaneously. These experiences reflect the need for ‘contextually appropriate filters’ that may assist in knowing what to ask and what not to. In designing, my interview guide I underestimated the impact of the geo-political setting. In Uganda, asking people about how the people felt about the rebels was not a very sensitive matter but in Sri Lanka not everyone was comfortable sharing their opinions especially to strangers and more so because of the political tensions during this period.

Access

²⁹ “The Battle of Baron’s cap” http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20070712_06

My access was enabled through organizational structures this meant I had to be attached to the organization which had its own advantages and disadvantages as explained earlier. In most cases transport to the field was provided by the organization. This kind of presentation influences the way the respondents relate with you and may influence the kind of information you obtain. Nonetheless, I had the opportunity to ask the questions as planned. With regard to the organizations, the recommendation from the headquarters also influences the way you are received, the kind of information you are given and also the kind of activities you are allowed to see. There are power reconfigurations and the selectivity may generate some bias in the selection of respondents on project activities.

Use of the recorder and camera

These are very useful gadgets tools especially in providing tangible evidence on some issues which may be inconceivable under normal circumstances. However, like Leslie and Storey (2003) rightly point out, there is need to be aware of the cultural ramifications before using these gadgets. In my case, it was more about understanding the political and social ramifications. I endeavoured to seek the consent of my respondents before using the camera or recorder to which many agreed. However, when I visited the militarized zone it was clear that no cameras were allowed as I was reliably informed by my guide. Nonetheless, he had offered to take some photos but I could not allow him for security purposes given that we had to go through a security checkpoint on our way back. In such cases, I relied on observation and written description of what I saw. This also points to the difficulty of collecting data in militarized situations.

However, one of the most unforgettable and regrettable experiences was when I visited a newly inhabited housing estate in Hambantota. It was one late evening after sunset when my host offered to take me on ride to see some tsunami projects. As we entered the estate, my host was encouraging me to take some photos but I had reservations because I had not

obtained the consent of the people. But he still insisted saying that we are free to take photographs and people always do without prior permission. Being the native, I let him have the camera and he took a picture of a nearby house where occupants were seated on the porch. As soon as the flash went off, a man came from the house and approached us ranting. He spoke angrily, saying:

We are tired of tourists who thrive on our misery. We are not tourist objects we are people and deserve to be treated with respect and dignity’.

The driver, tried to calm him down speaking in the native language but the exchange continued. I offered the man an apology which was accepted but with a warning and we drove off and this marked the end of my visit. This was a lesson I continue to reflect upon to date and has greatly informed the way I deal with people in distress. The camera is a very useful gadget but we need to be very sensitive on how and where we use it. In this case, consent was lacking but the expression of the man shows a deeper discontent with people coming to glare at their suffering. How do the people we research perceive us and how does this bear on our findings? This question is out of scope for this thesis but offers food for thought.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability refers to the degree to which findings of a study are independent of accidental circumstances of their production (Kirk & Miller 1986:20). Ensuring dependability is critical but due to the dynamic nature of the social world it is quite complex to attain. To improve reliability, a researcher must account for the ever-changing context within which the research occurs and describe the changes that occur and how these changes affect the way the researcher approached the study as described above.

I will consider an issue of reliability of interview guides which I have encountered in my study. The case studies used for this project exhibit varying socio-economic and political backgrounds. I discovered that the interview guide that I used for Uganda could not be used

without adaption to the Sri Lanka context. The level of cultural and political sensitivities influenced the type of questions which could be asked. Some of the questions were revised and modified to suit the context. This is also observed by Marvasti though in relation to informed consent:

The problem is that in qualitative research sometimes the interview questions and the focus of the project itself change in the course of the study. Depending on the circumstances, one interview may be very different from another... Since one cannot anticipate the exact direction the interview will take, it is impossible to fully inform the respondent about the focus of the study in advance. (2004:141)

Thus, the methods used must be flexible and pragmatic in order to capture the reality of place and the people of the study site in the most accurate manner (Smith 1991). It demands flexibility on part of the researcher to adjust the perspective and approach in order to generate the most relevant information. However, this does not necessarily affect reliability of the instrument. Instead it improves the quality of data obtained by asking the relevant questions. Moreover, in my case, it also had a lot to do with ethics.

Confirmability (objectivity) refers to the degree to which the results could be corroborated or confirmed by others. However, we need to recognize that every researcher brings a unique perspective to the study. Our training, social skills and emotional response influence the nature of data we obtain (Moser 2008). In my case, as a foreigner under the auspices of the humanitarian agency and my personality had so much to do with the information I obtained. Some of my respondents were at first apprehensive about sharing their experiences. However, the ability to listen and empathize and the confidence that the information was secure made a difference. Every researcher has different skills, expertise and personality that influence the data, and therefore corroboration may not always yield exact findings. Hence, the results are usually contingent but still provide valuable insights and

explanations. Nevertheless, the researcher must actively identify and describe negative instances that influence the outcomes of the data.

Reflecting on the cases

Overall, it is complex to conduct research in two different contexts but from a theoretical perspective it is very enriching. Using the case approach extended my scope of analysis and the basis on which conclusions could be drawn. The two case studies are quite unique but they do complement each other. For example Uganda was useful on providing insights about recovery in a protracted displacement setting. It mainly highlighted the disjuncture between actor perceptions on when, where and how to embark on recovery. Meanwhile in, Sri-Lanka, the overlap between effects of the conflict and the tsunami and geo-politics of aid distribution complicated the recovery process. The key question was one of who gets what type of aid was important. For instance assistance, for housing prioritised the tsunami-affected people and yet the conflict affected people were in an equally or even worse situation due to the protracted nature of the conflict. This highlights the fact that the nature of crisis influences recovery practices.

George and Bennet (2004) argue that in explaining social processes, causal mechanisms are considered context specific. In this argument, it is assumed that causal mechanisms are context bound and that explanations only hold for a specific context. Recovery is context-based because different places are affected differently by crises. Thus, the way the challenges and interventions are conceptualized varies. However, social life is very complex and different causal mechanisms may account for the outcomes in social life. For instance, my findings reveal some of the major factors that influence recovery practices include: the nature of disaster, its impact and effects and the response. The dynamics and mechanisms and how these influence practice are largely contextual.

In sum, case studies offer explanatory richness and using them can enable us to identify conditions under which specified outcomes occur. Through cases studies we obtain a blend of causal mechanisms that contribute to understanding recovery practices in the different contexts. Case studies may provide the opportunity to test theories about causal relationships across a range of conditions. However, they are much stronger at identifying the conditions of theories and assessing arguments about the causal necessity or sufficiency in particular cases than they are at estimating the generalized casual effects or causal magnitude of factors across a range of cases. Nevertheless, cases are more useful in assessing whether and how a factor influenced the outcome than at measuring how much it mattered. Explaining social reality is very complex and many times we deal with many contributing causes other than the causal mechanisms. The major challenge for the social scientists is to offer a convincing argument that one condition or another was necessary for the outcome.

Chapter Six

The Papers

Paper I

Khasalamwa, S. 2009 Is 'build back better' a response to vulnerability? Analysis of the post-tsunami humanitarian intervention in Sri Lanka. *Norwegian Journal of Geography* 63, 73–88.

Also published as a book chapter under the same title in:

Blaikie, P.M. & Lund, R. (eds) 2010. *The Tsunami of 2004 in Sri Lanka. Impacts and Policy in the shadow of Civil War*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, London & New York.

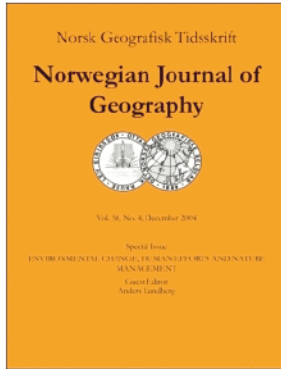
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Is 'build back better' a response to vulnerability? Analysis of the post-tsunami humanitarian interventions in Sri Lanka

Sarah Khasalamwa

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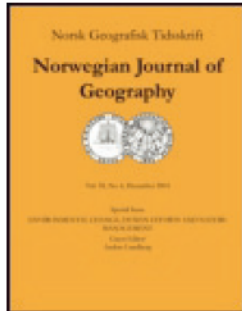
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Paper II

Khasalamwa, S., Lund, R. & Tete, S.Y.A .2011. Beyond the Knowledge-Action Gap: Challenges of Implementing Humanitarian Policies in Uganda and in Ghana, *Norwegian Journal of Geography* 65:2, 63-74.

This is an equally authored paper. All authors contributed to the writing of the paper. However, the empirical material draws from data collected from northern Uganda by Khasalamwa and from Ghana by Tete.

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Beyond the knowledge-action gap: Challenges of implementing humanitarian policies in Ghana and Uganda

Ragnhild Lund, Sarah Khasalamwa & Suzanne Y.A. Tete

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Paper III

Recovery after Protracted Displacement: Insights from Northern Uganda-Submitted to
Development in Practice (now under review)

Recovery after Protracted Displacement: Insights from Northern Uganda

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ABSTRACT

Transition from protracted war to peace requires understanding of the contextual dynamics and challenges involved. Protracted displacement profoundly alters the physical and socio-economic aspects of those affected. Some of the changes may be revocable but often many are irreversible and people have to learn to cope with the new circumstances. This article highlights the key challenges of recovery. It argues that recovery entails managing the fragile balance between relief and recovery needs to enable people to redefine their lives. Duration of displacement significantly impinges on return and complicates recovery processes. The key question is how recovery can be effectively facilitated.

KEY WORDS: relief and recovery; protracted displacement and return; Northern Uganda

Introduction

Recovery after protracted conflict and displacement is very complicated. The improved security after the guns fall silent provides a silver lining beneath the myriad of post war challenges. People are expected to return immediately in spite of being in displacement for over a decade as demonstrated by the northern Uganda case. Displacement has far-reaching consequences on all aspects of life which are rarely understood yet are critical in shaping the recovery. Return is an initial step towards recovery but not necessarily a prerequisite. This is because return is a very complex process and sometimes it may not be possible for people to return for various reasons. Recovery is a process that seeks to address challenges emanating from the conflict and displacement of which return is embedded.

This article seeks to highlight some of the key constraints of recovery in situations of protracted displacement with specific reference to northern Uganda. Broadly, it contributes to the literature on Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD). This is an approach that emphasises the structuring of relief and development assistance in a humanitarian setting in a way that provides the affected people with secure livelihoods and efficient safety nets to mitigate the impact and frequency of shock in order to ease rehabilitation (see Buchanan-Smith and Maxwell 1994). Extensive research has been done with regard to application of LRRD in complex political emergencies (Macrae *et al.* 1997; Duffield 1994; White and Cliffe 2000). I focus on applicability of LRRD in a post-protracted displacement situation.

The context

During the last two decades, northern Uganda has experienced different bouts of armed rebellion and insecurity from groups such as the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF) and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the sub-regions of Acholi, Lango, and Teso. Cattle rustling was also a major source of insecurity in Karamoja. Nonetheless, the conflict between the government of Uganda (GoU) and the LRA has been the most brutal and violent of conflicts since independence. The conflict has its roots from the colonial times associated with; divisive colonial administrative policies, a complex mix of uneven social and economic development and violent regional conflict. Several social and political cleavages have always kept the country divided and contributed to political instability and violence (Ogenga 2002). Besides, the conflict is complicated by the regional instability being surrounded by conflict-ridden countries such as Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) which ease the transition of rebels between borders.

The LRA is characterized by spiritualism and divination ideology (Behrend 1999). They have a doctrine that believes in restoration of the Ten Commandments. However, the methods they deploy remain a mystery. The brutality has grossly undermined their popularity and caused dissent among the Acholi people who were specifically targeted. The effects of the conflict have been immense and gruesome. Thousands, many of them children, were abducted and abused or killed in battle. Many civilians were mutilated, maimed, raped and disabled in many ways. Nearly two million people were displaced into camps living in conditions of extreme deprivation, dependent upon relief, and with limited access to incomes and livelihoods. In 1996 at the peak of the conflict, the government enforced a “protected villages” policy which was meant to provide better security and tactical advantage for the army. People moved to formerly large towns, trading centers usually within a radius of 5-20km from their original homes. Nevertheless, the decision to move people to camps created a “humanitarian catastrophe of dreadful proportions” (HRW 2005:10). The consequences of the war and effects of moving people to the camps have immensely affected the people, culture and the economy as a whole (Finnstrom 2008). Besides, this strategy did not provide any security guarantees as people were repeatedly and furiously attacked by the LRA.

The humanitarian situation remained grim until 2003 when the UN under secretary for humanitarian affairs, Jan Egeland visited the region. This visit apparently rejuvenated international interest in the conflict and revamped the humanitarian response with a general increase in the humanitarian assistance. This was accompanied by systematic political action that led to signing of a formal cessation of hostilities (CoH) in August 2006 after several failed attempts. However, the signing of the final Comprehensive Peace Agreement never happened, which eventually led to the breakdown of the peace talks and later the renewed military offensive against the LRA rebels who moved to central Africa where they are still terrorizing civilians.

Nevertheless, the CoH created relative security which enabled the government to lift all restrictions on the freedom of movement for IDPs which facilitated massive movements from the original IDP camps towards the pre-displacement homes since November 2006. Statistics from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR Gulu) indicate ca.80 per cent of the IDPs have moved out of the original camps and returned to their home areas. Most of the camps have been officially decommissioned but according to UNOCHA reports, there are an estimated 73, 239 IDPs in Northern Uganda now (April 2011). Northern Uganda is unique in a sense that the active conflict period was almost distinct with over 90 per cent of

the population confined to the camps for several years. Indeed some of the children born in the camps had become adults. Thus, post-conflict involved disbanding the camps and returning to or closer to pre-displacement areas which has been a very intricate process.

After the conflict, GoU embarked on a recovery programme in which it has played a lead coordination role. Funds are availed through the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP). This is a comprehensive development framework aimed at bringing socio-economic indicators in the areas affected by conflict covering over 55 districts. The major objectives of the plan include: consolidation of state authority; rebuilding and empowering communities; revitalization of the economy; and peace-building and reconciliation. The PRDP attempts to address the real and perceived neglect and marginalisation that lie at the root of the conflict. The proposed budget over the three-year period (2007-2010) was US\$ 606 million of which the government and donors were committed to contribute 30 and 70 per cent respectively. However, the commitments from the donors have been slow (Mao 2009). Besides, the recovery has been slow due to the complexities and challenges associated with protracted displacement and return. Thus, in situations of protracted conflict, it is difficult to postulate a linear progression from war to peace.

The realities of working in conflict and post-conflict situations manifest a set of quite different and distinct challenges that must be understood for effective interventions. Protracted displacement greatly affects every aspect of life which includes: loss of and inaccessibility to productive assets and resources, loss of freedom, increased burden of disease, resource depletion, and family separation, high levels of exploitation, discrimination, dependence on aid and massive poverty as will be explained. There is limited research on how to effectively assist people in situations of protracted displacement an ever growing challenge. This article attempts to provide some insights using findings from Gulu and Amuru districts in Northern Uganda.

The fieldwork

The research was carried out in two districts of Gulu and Amuru in Northern Uganda during March 2007, February-March 2008 and August 2009. It was informed by the changing security situation and movements of the people. The camps visited included: Tetugu, Awoo, Pabbo and Lugore, while the return sites/villages included Koro-Abili, Ban-dage, Tyana Kaya, Palemu, Patuda, Koch Kwayo and Dika. In-depth and semi-structured interviews were conducted with people in multiple settings [original camps, transit sites and return areas].

People selected were those willing to participate and were household owners. The interviews were supplemented through informal discussions with people in the areas visited. It was especially difficult to find people in their homes during the daytime because they were working their fields and in the evenings it was mostly women available. For some with their permission we would follow them to the fields so as not to disrupt their activities and through such interactions we obtained detailed accounts pertaining to their experiences in the camps and at the return sites.

In 2009 an attempt was made to find out how people were coping with the return and also to identify the challenges. It was considered useful to identify if there was a set of emergent challenges. The entire research covers the period when people were still in the original camps as well as when they started moving to transit sites and areas of origin. This approach was to allow for understanding the challenges of shifting from camps to the pre-displacement areas and the implications for recovery. Selection was made to ensure representation from the different sites and the primary data were supplemented with extensive document reviews.

Analytical concepts

Humanitarian interventions are largely classified into three distinct phases: relief, reconstruction/rehabilitation and development based on traditional response to natural disasters and later adopted for armed conflict and other complex political emergencies. This classification reflects the Rostovian thinking in which development is considered a stage by stage process. It also draws on the earlier presumptions that considered conflict as a mere interruption in a linear progression on the development path. This thinking has since been challenged in recognition of the complexity and dynamic nature of different crisis situations. The contemporary debate recognises that relief and development interventions co-exist and interact variably in different situations. Thus, the categories relief and development are useful tools in aid programming but the interfaces such as protracted displacement and return which influence the transition are largely underexplored.

Relief as used here refers to humanitarian assistance provided during war to alleviate suffering and save lives. It involves short-term life saving measures, such as provision of food, shelter and medicine which are considered 'care and maintenance' functions (Eade and Williams 1995). Meanwhile, development has long-term goals such as economic growth and

national progress, modernisation, provision of basic needs, improved governance and creating sustainable growth. In this article, development is considered a desired state whereby people and communities affected by conflict are more resilient and less vulnerable to shocks and stress from future crises. Recognizing development as an outcome, in the text the term recovery is used in place of development. The key differences between relief and development aid mainly stem from the context, purpose, timeframe, nature of inputs and the political considerations.

Recovery is used increasingly to refer to different interventions in post-crisis situations. It is an attempt to overcome the shortfalls of LRRD. According to UNDP:

Early recovery is a multidimensional process of recovery that begins in a humanitarian setting. It is guided by development principles that seek to build on humanitarian programmes and catalyse sustainable development opportunities. It aims to generate self sustaining, nationally owned, resilient processes for post crisis recovery. It encompasses the restoration of basic services, livelihood, shelter, governance, security and rule of law, environment and social dimensions, including the reintegration of displaced populations. (IASC cited in UNDP 2008:7).

In this text, recovery refers to all aspects of reconstruction and rehabilitation. Specifically, recovery is a process that enables people to cope with the changing circumstances caused by the crisis but is mindful of the pre-existent and emergent challenges and how they interact and thus how they can be resolved. Hence, the most meaningful approach to recovery is to shift focus from restoring the pre-disaster situation to focus on reducing and addressing the causes of vulnerability. Thus, it is worth noting that the pace of recovery varies; needs and opportunities evolve; and that the way relief is given influences the recovery process.

According to UNHCR a protracted refugee situation is described as: ‘One in which refugees find themselves in a long-lasting and intractable state of limbo. Their lives may not be at risk, but their basic rights and essential economic, social and psychological needs remain unfulfilled after years in exile...’(UNHCR 2004d:1). This description matches the IDP situation presented here. However, for the IDPs their lives are at risk due to continued exposure to violence, abuse and exploitation. Therefore, protracted displacement heavily draws on the recovery process in a sense that the longer the period of displacement the more complex the needs.

Return is considered a vital component of the recovery process especially where displacement is involved. It entails return movement to the pre-displacement areas. Return is a 'real and tangible' process and is often linked to the notion of home as physical territory, space and symbol (Al Rasheed 1994). However, return is a very complex process characterised by uncertainty because protracted displacement radically transforms every aspect of life of affected people. The ability to return is contingent on a number of factors such as improved security, access to resources, and political will among others. In this article, return is an interface between relief and recovery. The in/ability to return ultimately influences that rate of recovery as will be discussed.

LRRD in protracted displacement

LRRD is an approach in humanitarian assistance that recognizes the need for relief and recovery activities to reinforce each other and that these synergies are intended to minimize gaps and overlaps in the response. It involves managing the delicate balance between short-term needs and long-term goals of recovery. Thus, the intent of LRRD is to serve as an efficiency measure in delivery of aid as well as extension of mandate to cover post-crisis needs that often go unmet. However, LRRD has mainly been used as an aid administrative structure and not as a response to programming realities (White and Cliffe 2000). It has proved most effective in situations of purely natural disaster without other competing constraints which are rare. Unlike disasters, conflicts are not temporary interruptions. Protracted conflicts and specifically displacement immensely disorient the course of development while post-conflict and return generate enormous challenges and opportunities that influence the transition from relief to recovery. It is especially problematic to pursue LRRD in situations of multiple and recurrent crises. For instance in northern Uganda, shortly after people had returned in 2007, there were heavy floods that reinstated relief needs when all efforts were focused on the recovery.

In complex emergencies and protracted displacement uncertainty is a norm (Maxwell 1999) and greatly impacts on the way people and agencies plan. Different changing needs and circumstances that characterise conflict and post-conflict situations undermine the ability of people and intervening agencies to determine the kind of relevant, appropriate and feasible actions. People are out of their homes but there is hope for return though it is never clear when it will be possible to return. This creates a sense of impermanence which in turn complicates the planning process. Besides, recovery does not occur in a vacuum there are

various shocks that may destabilize and stifle progress and create a new series of needs that require relief interventions and may retard recovery efforts.

The challenges to effective implementation of LRRD are mainly the institutional and political divides about the timing, the level of resources and purpose of the different types of aid. The specialization and division of labour between the different actors complicates the realization of the synergies between relief and recovery interventions. Nevertheless, compartmentalization is artificial as far as people are concerned. Often relief and recovery needs occur simultaneously within any crisis situation. The major weakness is that LRRD is often perceived from the operational perspectives of intervening agencies rather than the needs of people. According to OECD report:

Emergency relief, rehabilitation work and development assistance all co-exist in times conflict and crisis, they interact in innumerable ways. The challenge is to overcome functional distinctions of the various agencies involved and to integrate, rather than merely coordinate, relief, rehabilitation and development objectives within a framework of a long-term strategy (OECD 1997:32).

Besides, the displaced people live constantly with the risk of crisis and strategise accordingly. The major concern is how the different interventions make people more resilient and less sensitive to shocks.

In the next section, I explore the challenges of implementation of the LRRD in the context of protracted displacement. It is important to distinguish between the various activities undertaken during the conflict and post-conflict as well as to understand how actors at the front line interpret their roles and define a range of possible actions.

Applicability of LRRD in northern Uganda

Return has been a major constraint to the recovery. Uganda is applauded for adopting a comprehensive National Policy for IDPs which commits to a process of voluntary return. The Policy guarantees ‘IDPs right not to be forcibly returned and to choose freely whether to return in safety and dignity or to settle in another part of the country’ (GoU 2004: Section 3.4). However, political pressure was mounted through declaration of deadlines for IDPs to leave camps (Moro 2009). Little effort was made to understand why people were ‘reluctant’ to leave the camps. One of the paramount concerns was the lack of land and failure of government to deliver on its commitment to provide resettlement packages to all returning

IDPs (see OI, 2008). Despite these shortcomings, many people have returned and those left in the camps are the Extremely Vulnerable Individuals (EVIs) who include the old, the disabled among others. Below, I highlight some of the challenges of realising LRRD in northern Uganda.

The dilemmas

Impacts of the war vary according to the nature, duration and stage of the conflict as well as the pre-war socio-economic conditions. The major effect of protracted conflict and displacement is that it accelerates poverty mainly through progressive erosion and depletion of political, human, financial, social, natural and physical forms of capital (see Moser 1998). It systematically undermines coping and survival strategies (De Waal 1997). The cumulative lack and loss of basic capabilities makes it extremely difficult for the poor [displaced] to emerge out of poverty by their own efforts (Hulme and Shepherd 2003). The greatest challenge with protracted conflict is the breakdown of systems and support networks which aggravate poverty. Post war recovery strategies are often perceived as independent and parallel to the broader poverty alleviation objectives. However, at the heart of every disaster or conflict the response is geared to addressing the resultant poverty obtaining from the impacts of the crises as explained below.

Asset loss and livelihood deprivation: Protracted conflict aggravates the depletion of assets through destruction, depreciation or sale leading to long-term destitution; income losses, reduced consumption and nutrition (see Carter *et al.* 2004). For instance in northern Uganda, when people were forced to move into camps they only carried easily movable assets such as money, food and household items. Livestock is a valued asset but because of the rush to safety and the congestion in the camps people abandoned their animals. Besides, most of the livestock were looted or raided by the militants. Spending several years in displacement meant that livestock farming was limited thus loss of a key asset.

Besides, lack of access to the land meant that the houses depreciated and collapsed, the land grew too bushy that is was difficult to identify the demarcating boundaries which resulted in explosion of land wrangles experienced today. Some were unable to trace their land or had lost user rights such as widows and orphans. Hence, the lack of access to land deprived people of their livelihoods which are largely dependent on land availability. Since people were moved away from their land, they had to rent land on which to cultivate. However, not everyone was able to hire because the land was hardly available or too

expensive to rent. This undermined the agricultural production leading to widespread hunger and dependency on relief aid despite the irregular and inadequate proportions.

The dependency on food aid for over two decades greatly undermined the agricultural systems that are proving difficult to reinstate. Protracted displacement led to the breakdown and malfunctioning of the agricultural system due to the reduction in the total acreage cultivated [land was abandoned] and the decrease in the number of people who could actively engage in production. Contrary to Longley et al., (2006) agricultural production is immensely undermined by conflict and protracted displacement. The major challenge after the war was to ensure that people have access to their land. However, this access was not guaranteed due to the disputes and wrangles (Aciro 2008) that have left many landless. Dealing with asset loss is a major recovery task especially in situations where everything is lost. However, asset replacement becomes more complicated when land is involved especially privately owned land and where no records of ownership are available.

Services breakdown: There has been a heavy toll on social services. Displacement affects the quality of education and compromises the accumulation of human capital. A whole generation of school children in northern Uganda were educated in camps under conditions of extreme stress and deprivation compared to their counterparts elsewhere in the country. The learning centres in the camps were basic and yet overcrowded. Respondents expressed dissatisfaction about the quality of teaching and learning characterised by the lack of teachers, equipment and inadequate classrooms. Besides, education was mainly focused on primary levels with little provision for secondary, tertiary and vocational training. This post-primary training is necessary for creating the much needed human resources in the post-war period.

Mobility: -The signing of the CoH facilitated massive return to the pre-displacement areas. This spatial dimension involved moving from the camps to the return sites. However, relief interventions were almost confined to the camp while recovery interventions were focused at the return sites. Thus, continuity as a necessity for the LRRD approach is almost unattainable. Currently, the former camps are relatively better serviced than the return areas. This reveals an acute inadequacy and disproportionality propagated into the recovery. Return involved abandoning camp services and re-establishing services and infrastructure at the pre-displacement sites. This highlights a disjuncture in the planning for services with regard to LRRD. It draws attention to the need for systematic profiling to identify the needs and opportunities available in the post-conflict period. For instance, the camps unveiled an

opportunity for post-war land use re-planning with camps serving as satellite units or full-fledged commercial centres. Of course this would involve compensation for the landlords some of whom expressed the willingness to give up their land for development. It would also require negotiating with the host communities to permit local integration of the displaced [those who wished to stay on or were unable to return]. However, the prospects of integration were vivid but not obvious because the displacement occurred within a familiar neighbourhood and cultural setting. Nevertheless, demolition of the camps erases a significant investment and leads to resource wastage. The emphasis should have been on enhancing human capacity and building infrastructure such as roads and bridges to improve connectivity between return areas and the camps. This would facilitate access to land and to sustain utilization of services in the camps. To date, people still have to walk long distances to access services which are often complicated by poor or non-existent transport infrastructure.

Timing: This is a critical aspect in strengthening the link between relief and recovery. It is about knowing the appropriate type and level of support required during the transition. In agricultural dependant areas, timing is a paramount aspect. For instance, in the study area, many of the displaced people depended largely on relief food because the camp situation did not allow for any productive agriculture. Thus, the transition from relief food to revitalizing agricultural production has been slow and cumbersome. Most of the recovery support focused on provision of agricultural inputs such as seeds, beehives, and farm tools. However, the greatest constraint has been deciding when a particular intervention is most appropriate. For instance, at the time of return, some IDPs were given seeds when the planting season had passed. Besides, some did not have fields in which to plant the crops because of landlessness. Furthermore, some IDPs received seeds when they did not have food. It was reported that some people would soak the treated seeds to remove the pesticides to make them 'edible'. Above all, in 2007, shortly after the return there were severe floods that affected crops with a resultant famine. Timing is dependent on several factors both human and natural which may not necessarily fit the programmatic reality. The above situation demands provision for both relief and recovery needs. Thus, premature withdrawal of relief food undermines the goal of rejuvenating agriculture and restoring food security. Therefore, effective LRRD should have a balanced focus on meeting the immediate needs which are often spontaneous and not necessarily place-bound as well as the long-term interventions.

Externalities: The land on which the camps were established was donated by individuals with whom the government had negotiated. However, towards the end of the conflict the land owners began demanding compensation from government because their land had deteriorated and was rendered almost unusable due to the long stay of the IDPs. This demand was turned down by the government leading to agitation and discontent. Besides, the current land law provides for individual rights to land secured by virtue of occupation (Article 237). The 2007 Land bill amendment provides further protection from eviction for occupants on customary land such as the IDPs (see Atubo 2008). Given that many of the IDPs had lived in the camps long enough to be considered *bona fide* occupants; this became a potential threat to the landowners who risked losing their land without compensation. Thus, the landowners were no longer interested in letting out their land. Rather, they preferred people to move back to their pre-displacement areas. Some respondents reported that deliberate attempts were made to make IDPs abandon the camps for example through fire threats and eviction. This was reinforced by government's declaration on the safety to return and that anybody staying at the camps would be doing so at their own risk and would be at the mercy of the landowners. The pressure generated by the land owners compelled the government to force people out of the camps through issuing of deadlines. This meant there was inadequate time for planning a proper transition from relief to recovery. There was limited time for systematic assessment of needs and exploring possibilities for tapping into the relief interventions.

Constrained Resources: Shelter is a key input in offsetting the recovery especially after protracted displacement. People have to move from the temporary shelter in the camps to more permanent structures that can effectively support livelihoods. During displacement, the people lived in small huts made of mud, wattle and thatch grass. As an effort to improve the quality of housing in the post-war period, the government pledged to provide iron roofing sheets to the returning families which never materialised. Provision of shelter is a priority area of humanitarian assistance. The sphere minimum standards stipulate the right to adequate housing as well as the security of tenure. Accordingly, 'the right to housing also extends to goods and services, such as sustainable access to natural and common resources; safe drinking water; energy for cooking, heating and lighting; sanitation and washing facilities; means of food storage; refuse disposal; site drainage; and emergency services' Sphere Handbook 2005:207). Many of these are hardly available in northern Uganda and for the IDPs shelter has been largely their responsibility. The lack of shelter confines people to camps dependent on relief because their livelihoods are dependent on the access to land. Permanent housing is a

critical link in the LRRD as a lead facilitating asset. However, the constrained budget does not permit long-term investments such as housing. The level of resources greatly determines the kind of interventions that are feasible.

Uncertainty: Protracted conflict is characterised by periods of relative calm and peaks of violence and there is uncertainty about how long the conflict will last. The transition from war to peace is extremely volatile and so are the needs. This affects the decision-making and planning processes for all the actors involved. There are several demands that require prioritization and sequencing. Security is paramount and initial recovery efforts seek to build confidence in the truce which is often difficult. For instance, despite the improved security, many of the IDPs were weary of the failure of the LRA to sign the final peace deal and that they were still on the loose. Having lived through the relentless horrors inflicted by the LRA it may take some time to rebuild the trust and confidence in the new truce. Some of the fears reported were:

I have heard announcements on Mega FM radio. They have been talking about returning home. I am just waiting for time. I want to go back because I will be nearer to the gardens. I will wait for other people to go back. I am not certain of the situation. There may be a re-insurgency.

This kind of uncertainty makes people to plan for temporary post-war measures as they adapt to the situation. This explains the emergency of transit sites when the original camps were disbanded. The way security is perceived determines whether people embark on long-term recovery efforts or design fallback mechanisms. For instance, in the areas visited people had adopted to the situation by leaving children in the camps to keep their place just in case. Uncertainty affects the ability to decide on the nature and level of inputs to invest in relief or recovery interventions. Thus, interventions focus on meeting the apparent needs and the long-term are 'avoided'.

Changing needs and reality/nature of resources: Most of the household non-food items such as household utensils, tarpaulins, blankets, and water containers were given to the IDPs when they had just moved to the camps. None of the people interviewed had received household items as they returned home. The respondents expressed concern with the nature of assistance provided or missed. The major constraint was on the type, and amount given as well as who received. Many of the respondents reported they had not received any support as they return.

It is evident that people need assistance to cope with post-war demands. However, the type of assistance and the modalities used affects the way they are translated into long-term outcomes. For instance, some of the respondents had received traditional crop seeds but they preferred high yielding crops and pest resistant varieties. Besides, the portions were considered insufficient as they had to be shared. The transition from relief aid to food security demands intense and targeted support to the farmers. For instance, if pests or birds eat the seeds then in future we anticipate a food scarcity. There is also interest in commercial crops that have high market value because they are likely to generate higher incomes that may translate into improved welfare. Thus, to facilitate recovery, the response should match the expressed need and meet beneficiary aspirations. Thus, the way an intervention is conceived and implemented may facilitate or deter recovery. Therefore, the resources provided during the different phases may not be necessarily different but the outcomes may vary.

Concluding reflections

The challenges in the implementation of the LRRD emanate from the constraints created by the protracted displacement such as loss of assets, limited access to agricultural land and livelihood activities, loss of incomes among others. It also relates to the type of aid and the modalities used. It is also depends on the level of the available resources and the time-frame within which change is anticipated. Governments and humanitarian agencies have specific recovery time-frames within which they operate which vary from six months to three years after the crisis. For instance the PRDP had a time span of three years. Such timeframes influence the transition from relief to recovery as there is pressure to meet funding deadlines and to demonstrate results. However, the process of change is much slower and messy. The major task is how to assist people in engaging more meaningfully and productively with the new circumstances rather than the fixation with categories.

Besides, return is a critical factor in influencing the recovery. The aim and purpose of return vary for instance, in the northern Uganda; the IDPs were mainly interested in escaping the terrible camp conditions and accessing the vital resources that would facilitate recovery while the government was focused on ending displacement and resolving the difference with the landowners. Nevertheless, return after protracted displacement is very intricate and influences the recovery. Thus, failure to understand and address the unique constraints caused by protracted displacement undermines the recovery process. Empowering communities to take charge of the interventions and ensuring ownership by government is a step in the right

direction. It requires working more effectively within and between institutions at local and national levels.

There is need to consider how relief interventions can contribute to recovery. For instance, the provision of housing is a dual intervention which can serve both as a relief and recovery input. However, the key issues are not the house per se but how it contributes to improving the well-being of the affected persons. In situations of protracted displacement skills training is a vital relief intervention that may be easily translated into a development output but must be tailored to anticipate post-conflict demands. Skills training can then be supported with asset replacement for effective LRRD. Most of the relief interventions focus on logistics with a minimal emphasis on skills and capacity development. None of the people interviewed reported any training support received while in the camps. It requires understanding how capacities and assets are transformed by protracted conflict and displacement. Skills development through vocational and technical training creates a vital human resource reserve that can accelerate recovery and meet critical labour requirements in the post-war period. Particularly, LRRD must be robust to address the chaos, complexity and uncertainty which prevail in post-conflict situations. There are many unforeseen circumstances, both human and natural that may upset the transition process.

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Paper IV

At the doorstep: Managing and negotiating return in northern Uganda

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At the door step: managing and negotiating return in northern Uganda

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Abstract

Protracted displacement has been a major consequence of the war in northern Uganda. In 2006, the cessation of hostilities agreement was signed that led to improved security. Return has been emphasized and promoted after the conflict as a gateway to recovery. However, the return process has not been smooth. The dilemmas and challenges of protracted displacement were hardly visualized yet they have far reaching consequences for the return movement. This paper examines how the protractedness of the displacement has influenced the return process. It specifically highlights the actor struggles which have been manifest in the return process. It examines the interfaces between the different actors to reveal why it has been difficult to return. Drawing on Lefebvre's theorization on the production of space, I engage the debate on space as political and strategic. I highlight how the different actors think about space and how this in turn influences the decisions concerning return. I argue that the production of space is not autonomous but an intricate constellation of social struggles and contestations.

Key words: Northern Uganda, Return, Protracted displacement, Lefebvre, Space, Place

1. Introduction

Northern Uganda presents a unique and complex form of displacement. People were displaced within a radius of 5-20 km from their pre-displacement areas. After, the guns fell silent in August 2006 following the signing of the cessation of hostilities agreement between the government of Uganda and Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), it seemed obvious that people could easily return since they were not so far away from their homes. However, this did not happen due to the protracted nature of displacement that kept people away from their homes for several years. The protracted conflict has transformed every aspect of life for the people of northern Uganda (Finnstrom, 2008). This ranges from the population dynamics, socio-cultural setup to the way they strategize and their livelihoods.

It is against the background of protracted displacement that return has been difficult. Return is often emphasised as a framework for civil war termination because most peace agreements advocate return as a solution to end displacement but this assumption is increasingly contested (Adelman, 2002; Bradley, 2007; Chimni, 2003; Zolberg et al., 1989) especially in situations of protracted conflict. In addition to improved security, there are a multitude of conditions that must be in place for sustainable return to occur. Currently, there is limited literature on return migration, particularly for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in situations of protracted displacement. Much of the literature is focused on refugees, diasporas and emphasises the notions of home and return (Malkki, 1995, 1997; Stefansson 2004, 2006).

Factors that influence return are widely explored (Barakat and Chard, 2002; Deininger et al., 2004; Mendeloff, 2004; Sert, 2008; Turnip, 2003; Woodward, 2002). Studies in northern Uganda have mainly focused on the return and reintegration of ex-abductees and combatants (Amone-P'Olak, 2007; Corbin, 2008; McKay, 2004; Veale and Stavrou, 2003).

There are also studies that explore return challenges of the IDPs (Bjorkhaug et al., 2007; Bøås and Hatløy, 2005; Dolan, 2005; Pham et al., 2007; Salborn, 2010).

Stepputat (1994) moves the debate further to explore the politics of space and return. He highlights issues of power and control of people and territories as core aspects of return and repatriation. Drawing on the Lefebvre theorization of space as political and strategic, this paper examines the struggles between different actors and demonstrates ways in which space is managed and controlled in the process of return. I examine how the protractedness of the conflict has influenced the return process. The Lefebvre framework was found useful because it provides a framework for understanding the spatiality of all social processes. He asserts that spaces are produced and maintained through social struggles that are predominantly political and ideological.

2. Methods

The paper is based on findings from fieldwork carried out in two districts of Gulu and Amuru during March-April 2007, January -March 2008 and August 2009. The research was conducted at different sites, the camps, the transit sites and the return areas. The camps visited included: Tetugu, Awoo, Pabbo and Lugore, while the return sites/villages included Koro-Abili, Ban-dage, Tyana Kaya, Palem, Patuda, Koch Kwayo and Dika. Assisted by a field assistant and translator, we conducted in-depth interviews with IDPs and returnees who were randomly selected. However, the selected respondents were mainly household owners. In 2007, the interviews focused on the situational challenges and the hopes for return because at this time people were still in the camps. Meanwhile, in 2008, the people interviewed were still in the camps. However, they could access their pre-displacement villages. In 2009 an attempt was made to find out how people were coping with the return and also to identify the challenges they were facing at the return sites. During this field visit, we interviewed people

at the return sites as well as those still held at the transit sites (satellite camps) and this was an attempt to understand why some people were able or unable to return.

Media reports constituted a major source of data particularly the dedicated columns about northern Uganda in which issues of return and recovery were reported regularly. This was also supplemented through interviews with the local leaders who elaborated on the challenges of the return and recovery. The views of government were mainly obtained through the media reports and the excerpts are used within the text. The entire research covers the period when people were still in the original camps as well as when they started moving to transit sites or areas of origin. This approach was to allow for understanding the challenges of return. In all, the paper attempts to contrast the government position on return and the realities of return as experienced and expressed by the affected people.

3. Return and protracted displacement

Internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border (Cohen & Deng, 1998; Korn, 1999; Muggah, 2003; Vincent & Sorensen, 2001; Weiss & Korn, 2006).

However, return has always been the predominant and durable solution to ending displacement. Return is often used as a political tool to assert the termination of conflict. As Walter Kälin¹ asserts, “Authorities are sometimes anxious to promote return as a symbol of normalization after the chaos brought on by a disaster. However, they should respect IDPs’

¹ Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons 2004

right to choose whether to return to their place of origin or to resettle elsewhere, and in either case are expected to assist them to reintegrate (Guiding Principle 28)” (2005, p. 23). This is particularly desired in situations of protracted displacement where people have almost integrated in the places of refuge.

Thus, return is often a preferred policy strategy because; as Sørensen explains displacement is considered as “a temporary deviation from normal life, a disruptive event to be corrected... *However*, people do not only look back; they also look to the future and try to plan for it” (2001, p. 8). Displacement that lasts for decades as one in northern Uganda ceases to be a temporary deviation. People’s lives are fundamentally altered and these have far reaching implications for return. For instance “displacement obstructs access to previous livelihood practices and new forms of livelihood practices are created” (Van hear, 2006, p. 217). IDPs find new ways of strategizing and survival even when displaced (see Holtzam & Nezam, 2004) which are difficult to break when the conflict ends. For internally displaced persons, return is desirable though it is not the only solution and the decision to return or stay is influenced by political and strategic interests.

3.1. Producing the spaces of return

The debates about place and space are important in understanding the return. Literally, return means to go or comeback to former place. In the case of northern Uganda, this involved movement from the camps to the pre-displacement areas. The movement was largely conditioned by the improved security that rendered the existence of camps redundant. The conventional wisdom is that peace agreements must facilitate return. And often displaced people are viewed as ‘out of place’ (Cresswell, 1996; Said, 1999). This is embedded in the essentialist notions of place as ‘natural and given’. People are perceived as localized and belonging to particular places. In this way, places become fixed and static in nature (Massey,

1994). The ideology of return is about putting people back into their 'rightful' places where they belong (Allen and Turton, 1996; Hammond, 1999; 2004). This is the first line of action for policy makers which focuses on restoring the past order. However, the displaced people have multiple positionings whereby their decisions are influenced by the past, present and future prospects. They are physically present at specific localities but at the same time are part of distant places (Olwig 1997; Massey 1994b).

Displaced people's meanings of place are not restricted to the past, they draw on the present location where they need to survive and strategize. Return is largely spatially organized and people utilize different places and identities in the process of negotiating return. This underscores the fact that space is constructed from a multiplicity of social relations across spatial scales (Massey, 1994; Brun, 2001). In this paper, this is illustrated by how the different places serve different purposes for the people. For example the return areas offer the required access to cultivable land while partial residency in the camp ensures access to social services that are largely absent at the return areas. They are utilizing different places to meet their strategic interests and ensure survival.

Besides, the debates about territoriality are significant in understanding how the displaced persons and policy makers seek to create and manage spaces of return. Specifically, the arguments about deterritorialization and reterritorialization of people and places (Appadurai, 1991; Brun, 2001; Malkki, 1995; Stepputat, 1999) are significant in situations of protracted displacement. The key debate is to delink the relationship between people and places and to embrace the fact that when displaced people *lose* territory, they construct a new community within a new area (Malkki, 1995). The conceptualization of return presumes existence of a particular identity intertwined with a specific place.

The process of return manifests power and control over space as will be explored by this paper. Sack (1986) defines territoriality as the ways actors and groups of actors gain control over a geographic area through attempts to affect, influence or control actions and interactions of people, things and relationships. Hence, territoriality is about exercising power and control in the appropriation and management of space (Allen, 1997; Herbert, 1997). War often creates new order and return is never a mere re-entry but one that involves negotiating place in new context of power and inequality (Ranger, 1994). It is the power reconfigurations and transformations that often complicate the return.

3.2. The spatial triad

Henri Lefebvre (1976, p.31) argues that “Space is not a scientific object removed from ideology or politics; it has always been political and strategic”. This is amplified in his book *the production of space* (Lefebvre, 1991). Lefebvre’s theorization has mainly been used in analysis of creation and utilization of public spaces (McCann, 1999; Hossain, 2011; Leary 2009; Ng et al., 2010). Lefebvre’s framework highlights ways in which spatial contradictions emerge and how they are rooted in socio-political interests. The authorities are concerned with constructing and regulating public space through policy that governs the use of spaces while the people are concerned with access and utility of spaces. This creates friction in the way the different actors perceive and appropriate space. According to the Lefebvrian conceptualization of space, ‘Space is no longer a category of fixed and given ontological attributes, but a becoming of an emerging property of social relationships’ (Jimenez, 2003, p.140). Space is seen as a political tool of state spatial strategies of administration, repression, domination. Thus, space is a site of political conflict and class struggle that are transformed into social conflict and creative appropriation (Butler, 2009) of space. This paper considers the relationship between the two spaces conceived and lived spaces within which space

emerges as a political tool for social regulation and a site of political struggle and social conflict. It highlights the struggles between the different actors evident in the return agenda.

3.2.1. Representations of space (Conceived space)

This is an abstract and discursively constructed space which subsumes ideology and knowledge within its practice. It remains largely imagined and is constructed through discourse (Soja, 1996). It is a kind of space that we engage through our thoughts, ideas, plans and memories. Conceived space constitutes 'the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic sub dividers and social engineers as a certain type of artist with a scientific bent- all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived' (Lefebvre, 1991, p.38). In this way this space is characterized by 'egocentric thinking of specialized intellectuals' who manifest 'separated schizoid consciousnesses' in form of contradictory or conflicting ideas about managing space.

The conception of space is largely verbal and constituted by intellectually derived signs and images. The representations are in form of policies, plans, programmes and goals for return. These representations often seek to impose order (Soja, 1996, p.67) which is constituted via control over knowledge, ideology and, I add resources. Overall, the conceived space is heavily infused with representations of power but is also vulnerable to contestation and subversion.

3.2.2. Spaces of representation (Lived Space)

This space refers to the directly lived space of everyday life. According to Lefebvre, representational space 'embraces the loci of passion, of action and lived situations' (p.42) and thus has a time factor embedded. He argues that it may be seen as directional, situational or relational because it is qualitative, fluid and dynamic. This space does not conform to rules of consistence or cohesiveness. It is experienced through complex symbols and images of its

inhabitants and users. It also relates to the aspect of 'sense of place' which refers to the 'more nebulous meanings associated with a place: the feelings and emotions a place evokes'. These meanings can be individual and based on personal biography or they can be shared. A shared sense of place is based on mediation and representation (Cresswell, 1996, p.1).

This space constitutes the directly lived space which often "overlays physical space making symbolic use of its objects". Lefebvre asserts this space is dominated and often passively experienced [by practitioners] who use their imagination to change, appropriate, codify and rationalize it. Nonetheless, the lived space is the terrain for generation of counter spaces, spaces of resistance to dominant order arising precisely from their subordinate, peripheral or marginalized positioning (Soja, 1996, p. 68). On this basis, lived space is both oppressive and enabling. However, it is a space of negotiation and contestation where power is often manifested and challenged. Lefebvre emphasizes that power relations are inscribed in space.

3.2.3. *Spatial Practice (perceived space)*

This concerns the production and use of material space which is perceived as concrete. It refers to the routines that constitute everyday life. This space can be empirically mapped out. Spatial practices have close affinities to perceived space (Merrifield, 1993, 2006) i.e. people's perceptions condition their daily reality with respect to the usage and management of space. Perceived space is bounded space that includes a specific location or site. In essence, it is related to the concept locale- 'locale or setting where everyday-life activities take place' (Agnew, 2005, p. 89). This includes the 'visible and tangible aspects of place' (Cresswell, 1996, p.1). Nevertheless, spatial practice extends beyond the material place or physical objects to include our everyday routines, for example the socio-economic processes by which space is produced.

3.3 Analytical approach

Drawing on Lefebvre's theorization on production of space and territorialization debates, the paper analyses how power relations are embedded in the production of space and how places are constantly remade through practice. It explores the interfaces between the different actors to reveal why it has been difficult to return. The spatial triad facilitates the analysis of how the different actors perceive, appropriate and manage space. Meanwhile, the debates on territorialization highlight how power and control is manifested in the return process.

Overall, Lefebvre provides a framework for reading and understanding spaces within which everyday life and state action unfold. In this paper, the conceived space represents the space of the practitioners, including government and the humanitarian actors. This is because their conceptions of space are largely informed by knowledge and ideology which draws on past experiences which may not necessarily rhyme with the contemporary realities. It often deals with planning for what space should be rather than what it actually is. On the other hand, lived space represents the space of the affected people who have direct experiences of the realities of conflict, displacement and return and therefore, their perceptions of space are based on experience rather than ideology. They deal with issues of what space is and how it can be managed. The perceived space is constantly remade through practice and represents an interface space in which the divergent perceptions of space are manifested.

4. The return process in northern Uganda

The signing of the CoH created relative security which enabled the government to lift all restrictions on the freedom of movement for IDPs which in turn facilitated massive movements from the original IDP camps towards the pre-displacement homes since November 2006. Statistics from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR Gulu) indicate ca.80 per cent of the IDPs have moved out of the original camps and returned to their

home areas. Most of the camps have been officially decommissioned; only 14 are left of the 251 (2005) and were replaced with 282 transit sites. However, according to OCHA reports (April 2011), there are an estimated 73, 239 IDPs in Northern Uganda now (UN OCHA, 2011). Northern Uganda is unique in a sense that the active conflict period was almost distinct with over 90 per cent of the population confined to the camps for several years (Allen, 2005; Odokonyero, 2006). Indeed some of the children born in the camps had become adults. Thus, post-conflict involved disbanding the camps and returning to or closer to pre-displacement areas which has been a very intricate process. The camp phase-out process was managed by the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC). A committee named District Camp Phase-out Committee (DCPC) was established with the mandate to assess the camps and the return status and make recommendations for either decommissioning or other appropriate course of action².

Uganda is applauded for adopting a comprehensive National Policy for IDPs which commits to a process of voluntary return. The Policy guarantees 'IDPs' right not to be forcibly returned and to choose freely whether to return in safety and dignity or to settle in another part of the country' (Office of the Prime Minister, August 2004, section 3.4). However, political pressure was mounted which contravenes these provisions through declaration of deadlines for IDPs to leave camps (Moro, 2009). Little effort was made to understand why people were 'reluctant' to leave the camps. One of the paramount concerns was the failure of government to deliver on its commitment to provide resettlement packages to all returning IDPs (IDP Policy, GoU 2004: section 3.14; Oxfam International, 2008). However, the protracted conflict has an overriding effect in determining the return.

4.1. The actors

²Minutes from Meeting with Gulu District LCV Chairperson Mr. Norbert Mao Held on 15 April 2009

The major actors considered in this paper include the government, the humanitarian actors and the affected people who represent the major groups of actors involved in the return. The government is represented by the senior leaders (Ministers and district leaders) and technocrats as well as the local leaders (the local council leaders). The humanitarian actors include the humanitarian agencies, Nongovernmental organizations both national and international that have been involved in activities to facilitate return and recovery for example the World Food Programme (WFP). The affected people refer to the people who have been affected by the conflict and displacement. They also represent the group of actors required to return to the pre-displacement areas who include the IDPs and the returnees.

4.2. Promoting or enforcing return

Ideally, the government has the responsibility to protect and provide for its citizens. The government of Uganda has attempted to fulfill these obligations in the various ways possible. The engagement in the peace negotiations was a crucial step in ending the conflict. After the conflict, return and the end of displacement became eminent. Return was seen as a prerequisite for recovery. Thus, recovery was tied to the ability to return and end of displacement. However, the complexity and magnitude of the challenges associated with protracted displacement were not fully comprehended. Therefore, it has been difficult to get people to move back to their pre-displacement areas. This compelled various government authorities to actively enforce return as demonstrated below.

The Minister of Relief and Disaster Preparedness Prof. Tarsis Kabwegere, has said ‘food rations in camps in northern Uganda have been reduced to encourage internally displaced people to return home’. He told the Presidential and Foreign Affairs Committee that, “The World Food Programme and the disaster committee discussed the matter. Because these people have stayed in the camps for many years, it has become difficult for them to leave. We

have reduced the rations so that they think of moving to their homes and produce their own food...” (Africa News Service, 29 July 2006, by Nandutu)

‘Internally displaced persons have developed a tendency of enjoying camp life’, Parliament was told on 16 August 2006. The State Minister for defence said as a result the government was finding it hard to convince IDPs ... to go home. (*New Vision*, 16 August 2006 by Mubiru)

Gulu Resident District Commissioner, Rtd. Col. Walter Ochora³ recently directed all relief agencies in the region to suspend relief food distributions to IDP camps in order for the return process to take place. Speaking on behalf of government, Ochora said a number of the IDPs were hesitating to go back home because of the free food in camps adding that only the disabled and the elderly would continue to be supplied with food (Adungu, 30 September 2008, by Laker).

The government position emphasises food rations as an obstacle to return. Thus, termination of food rations was promoted to kick-start the return process. It was in the interest of both the government and the affected people to return for those who were able but the major issues of contestation involved the timing and circumstances. Of course for the government, there was also a push from the owners of the land on which the camps were established who were seeking compensation and wanted people to vacate their land. The government wanted people to return as soon as it was declared safe to return while the people were still monitoring the security situation and the conditions at the return sites. Besides, protracted displacement meant that some people had reestablished their lives in the camps and return was viewed as a ‘new wave’ of displacement.

Government expected people to return before it could embark on the recovery programme (GoU, 2007). The government promised providing the necessary services and

³ Deceased

some incentives such as roofing material and resettlement kits including food, oxen and ox-ploughs to those who return. Meanwhile, the people were more interested in having their problems resolved before they could return. This created an operational impasse which compelled the government to 'liaise' with the humanitarian agencies to 'suffocate' supplies at the camps. This was also reinforced through issuing of deadlines for return. Nonetheless, return never happened for many. The inability to return for some of the IDPs resulted in creation of transit sites or what the government called the decongestion sites. This can be viewed as a 'negotiated space' where all actors realize their objectives to a large extent.

The conceived space is characterized by conventional wisdom that advocates return once peace has been reinstated. However, the lived space deals with various realities that influence and condition return. The misreading of the reality is evident whereby dependency on food rations was emphasized as the major reason holding people in the camps. It is true; that over 80 per cent of the population in the camps was dependent on food aid and breaking the dependence on food rations has been difficult. However, the camp situation did not allow for any productive agriculture. There was no access to their fields due to the insecurity so the food rations were the only option available. Nonetheless it is not, the only reason as to why people are unable to leave the camps. This is demonstrated in the selected individual accounts below.

4.3. The lived space: people's experiences

I use some selected stories of the internally displaced persons in the camps to demonstrate the various factors influencing return. These stories illustrate the diverse experiences of the affected people and the uniqueness of their individual stories. It demonstrates the fact that IDPs are not a homogenous group to which universal policies can be applied. The stories

highlight the diversity evident in the lived space characterised by incoherence and inconsistencies to which order may not necessarily apply.

4.3.1. The teacher

David is a primary school teacher by profession. He comes from Parak Parish, Lakwana Sub County in Gulu district. He teaches at one of the primary schools in the camp. He buys food because he is not entitled to a food ration card. When asked about his hopes and preparations for return, David had this to say:

I often visit my home place during weekends to monitor the security situation. I am tired of the camp lifestyle that is why I made the decision to return. I know of some 20 families that have already returned. I will take my family when it is time to go. We should have left but I have not completed the house, so we may not have where [referring to the house] to sleep. I have five acres of land which I can use for agricultural production in order to boost my income. This will enable me to meet my needs adequately. I will also have my freedom of movement. I hope to continue with teaching but supplement it with agriculture. I have started repairing my house. The house is almost complete (roofed and fitted with doors). I am also preparing the gardens for planting at the onset of the rains. I hope to practice animal husbandry as well. I hope to buy cows, goats, poultry and ducks. (Personal communication)

David as a paid civil servant has a steady and diversified form of income. This has enabled him to enjoy a relatively comfortable life in the camp. However, he feels return is important as it will facilitate access to other resources which would boost his income base and better his life. His case demonstrates the willingness to return but the conditions at the return sites present a key constraint.

4.3.2. Kennedy the preacher man

Kennedy is a peasant farmer and a Christian gospel preacher. He is also from Parak Parish, Lakwana Village in Gulu District. He is a land-owner where the camp is established. He has a WFP food ration card which entitles him to receive monthly rations but he occasionally buys food to supplement the rations and cultivates some crops for subsistence purposes. He reported that his family currently stays in Masindi (former border district) but he always comes to monitor the situation on the land and to collect food rations. He also narrates about his hopes and preparations for return.

Before the war I was a student at a vocational school in Gulu where I was studying business administration. However, I dropped out of school for fear of abduction by the rebels... We feel the need to go back to school if given chance. I was also practicing agriculture and preaching... We now lack many basic services. I look forward to having my former life. I also feel displaced even if I am still in my home. My wife is doing a course in tailoring. I plan to rebuild my house and I also want to practice family planning. We cannot maintain more than these [children] we have. (Personal communication)

Kennedy is excited about the prospects of peace and return which he perceives as essential for restoring his life. However, Kennedy's case represents another dimension of displacement and return. As a landowner, he demonstrates a key dilemma of 'in situ' displacement. His situation, challenges the conventional way of thinking about displacement which often implies physical movement. In his case, displacement is caused by change of conditions that makes people feel 'out of place' even when they have not moved. He also demonstrates the integration that results from protracted displacement but also the desire to stay connected to places of origin.

4.3.3. Christine the widow

Christine is a resident in Tetugu camp but she is originally from Idure, in Lalogi subcounty. She is a widow and has one living child. Two died due to illness while one was kidnapped by

the LRA. Her husband was also kidnapped and perhaps killed by the rebels as she speculates. Her major income activities are farming and handicrafts. She has a regular income from papyrus mat sales. She has a food rations card but also cultivates crops on rented land to supplement the rations and sometimes she buys food from within the camp. When asked about her hopes and preparations, Christine recounts the past life.

Cultivation was a major activity, however as the war intensified I turned to charcoal burning and selling firewood because these bring quick income. I used to cultivate on my land and did not beg for farmland. But now I have to beg and pay for land which I have in plenty back at home. I used to have poultry, and livestock that would help me earn income, and I could slaughter for my visitors or give as a gift, and also eat during the festive season. But now I don't have any. Those days firewood was not a problem because it was abundant on my land and I would use the excess for charcoal burning which I would sell. But now I can't do it. When it came to feeding, we had access to fruits, vegetables, honey which would help us keep our children looking healthy and nice but now because we lack these and our children are malnourished. Educating the girl child was very valuable because once she could read and write, suitors would come formally to ask her hand in marriage but now this has vanished. Now, it is a relief when your child is taken because of poverty. I hope to return home because I want to be self sustaining like I used to be. I want my children to grow up from a home not a camp. I also want to know where my land boundaries are demarcated. I still have ownership over the land of my late husband. I desire for everlasting peace. I have learnt a lot from this conflict. All we need is peace. Once we have peace then we can do anything. (Personal communication)

According to Christine, peace is the fundamental prerequisite for return. She desires to restore her pre-war lifestyle which she considers more desirable. The zeal to return is evident in pursuit for self-sustenance. For her, access to land is a key concern. Widows and orphans

have been identified as the most vulnerable groups with regard to post-conflict land ownership. She is ready to return but weary about the sustainability of peace.

All these stories demonstrate diverse accounts of the people's experiences and how they postulate their post-war situations and return. The inaccessibility to the land was considered a significant challenge that compromised their livelihoods. The motivation for return is evident however; it is the conditions at the return sites that have held people back. People were eager to leave the camps in order to enjoy freedom of movement, have accessibility to resources, especially land, and to resume economic activities. The need for food rations does not figure prominently in their narrations. This implies that their needs are not confined to food as emphasized. The respondents seek to address the most immediate needs which can facilitate their return and recovery.

These actors illustrate the contestations that exist between the conceived spaces and the lived spaces. The challenges are explored from different dimensions and perspectives that create contradictions in the way spaces are perceived and appropriated. The issues of power and control are manifest as the government has the capacity to withhold food rations and also to enforce return through deadlines and in this way camp demolition was a strategy to get people moving.

4.4. The counter views

The government was actively engaged in enforcing return and weaning the population off the food rations. Given these circumstances, WFP defended its position regarding the reasons for cutting the food rations. "Until we have sufficient funds to buy food locally, we will be forced from 1 April to reduce by half the amount of maize and beans that we give to each displaced

and refugee family in Uganda,” said the WFP Uganda Country Director Tesema Negash⁴. WFP reported to have received only US\$37 million of the US\$127 million it had appealed for in order to provide relief and recovery support in 2007. This implies there were different motivations surrounding the food cuts. This illustrates the power struggles between the different actors in justifying the reasons for their respective actions. Each actor seeks to emphasize their decision that is drawn from their mandates and ideology.

The government officials were focused on justifying the reasons for food cuts which was presented as a collaborative initiative with the WFP. The statements from government representatives reechoed the message in various ways:

Mr. Musa Ecweru, State Minister for Disaster Preparedness, said "The mood all over is that people want to regain their dignity by producing their own food and not relying any more on WFP [UN World Food Programme] for survival. Though some areas in northern Uganda have achieved this, a dry spell has [prevented] others from getting there...Areas in northern and north-eastern Uganda including Karamoja and Teso are experiencing acute food shortages due to a drought." An agreement, the minister said, had been reached with WFP to phase out general food. In the same media report, Mr. Nobert Mao, Gulu District chairman observed that "General food distribution is no longer necessary, but they still need to continue their response to the most vulnerable people"(IRIN 16 March 2009).

Three months later, the Gulu Local Council (LC) 5 chairman Norbert Mao appealed to the World Food Programme (WFP) and the relief and disaster preparedness ministry to intervene and provide food to the population, which is threatened by famine. He said the WFP withdrew from providing relief food supplies to the region prematurely. "The people returned to the villages when the planting season had passed. They have no food to take them to the next harvest," Mao explained (The New Vision, 10 June 2009 by Ojwee).

⁴News Press Release 16 March 2007. WFP forced to cut food for nearly 1.5 million war displaced in Uganda , <http://one.wfp.org/english/?ModuleID=137&Key=2406>

The analysis of challenges has a spatial and temporal twist especially when politics is involved. In this case, the spatial contradictions are evident and are infused with power and ideology. The government maintains its position on food ration cuts but the reality reveals the necessity for food aid. The analysis for intervention is constituted at different spatial scales in which the magnitude of local challenges diminishes as illustrated. The district leader, one closer to the people later criticized the termination of food rations which he supported in the beginning. The reasons for change are not clear. However, this illustrates the way spaces are political and strategic but also that spaces are dynamic and constantly changing.

These challenges demonstrate the ways in which problems take new forms at different spaces thus creating changing realities that affect the return. The problem remains the same but the dynamics keep changing which ultimately affects the way solutions are defined. People at the camps are concerned with the deficiencies at the return sites. At the transit sites, people are much closer to their homes but still unable to resettle. The people at these sites have experienced some of the challenges in the return villages and have decided to stay for a while at the transit sites while they finalize preparations for return. People at the return sites are fully aware of what life at the villages is and their solutions are grounded in their experiences. The fact that the variations are not so evident at a glance makes the responses and interventions vulnerable to generalization 'one size for all'. However, as people move from the camp to the return areas they come closer to the reality that they have to live with. Thus, they are more aware of the dynamics involved.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

These findings demonstrate how the different actors perceive challenges to return and these are closely linked to how they view the different spaces. For the government, improved security provided the green light for endorsing return. It draws on the ideology of safety as a

major requirement for return. The Uganda national IDP policy guarantees IDP rights on return and resettlement. However, not all these requirements were satisfied. Rather the focus was placed on ending displacement. Indeed, Chimni (2003) stresses the fact that return is not necessarily concerned with protection and safety but is often concerned with ending displacement. This highlights how the professionals seek to enforce order even when the circumstances dictate otherwise.

The spaces of return are created and recreated by the different actors. The camps ceased to be useful after the war but for the people camps were more than a 'safe haven'. Their livelihoods and being were largely shaped and determined by the existence of camps. Of course, return was the most desirable solution but the existent challenges complicated the decision-making processes. Every actor has their own space governed by different realities, obligations, rules and resources. Often, there is a shared view about the general nature of the problem but limited scope for negotiated solutions.

As illustrated, there are contested representations of space by the government authorities and the IDPs. The nuanced accounts of the affected people demonstrate the differences in the lived spaces which cannot be adequately captured in official plans. The lived spaces are sites of power struggles emanating from the differences in technical expertise and lived experiences. For instance with regard to solutions to displacement, government's perception was that people should return to the pre-displacement areas. This is informed by notions of home which subsume the knowledge that home 'is' but rarely consider the fact that it 'becomes'. Government issued several deadlines for return including demolition of camps. However, there were resistances often subtle but significant. Those unable to return shifted to the transit sites closer to their pre-displacement areas. Hence, imposing order does not change the circumstances that hinder people from returning. They always find alternatives. The transit sites emerged as an alternative to failed return. Perhaps we also need to think about the

extra dimension of space, called the negotiated space which results from the interfaces between the different actors.

Finally, the lived spaces are under constant flux and therefore characterized by inconsistency which does not necessarily comply with order. It is not strictly defined by conditions in there but rather the ideologies and perceptions of what it is and how it may be used and managed. The practitioners often draw on intellectually derived signs and passive experiences. For instance improved security was seen as an adequate pre-requisite for return. Meanwhile the affected people also use complex symbols and signs that draw from the empirical realities. For instance, the durability of the peace was a pending issue but more importantly there are people who could not return because they have nowhere to return. Thus the different readings of space do present dilemmas for action. There is a dominance by the powerful actors to perform all the roles [defining the problems and identifying solutions], which then creates a conflict in understanding of what is required and how it can be done and thus the operational impasse. This has kept people at their doorstep long after the conflict.

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Interpretations and Conclusions

Question 1

In different disaster situations, how differently do actors perceive recovery and does this facilitate or hinder effective recovery?

Recovery is a complex process as highlighted in the thesis. Various actors seek to address the challenges emerging from disasters on the basis of their ideologies and mandates which may not necessarily draw on the needs. Spaces of recovery largely reflect actor interests and ideologies as opposed to needs. There are different approaches for instance ones that seek to restore the old order and those that attempt to bring something new or to modify the old. As highlighted there are no definite ways because whichever approach is used has its merits and demerits. For example housing in Sri Lanka was an attempt to bring something new which entailed moving people from the buffer zone and giving them the modern type of housing. This was an effort to 'build back better' but as discussed in paper I, it was overshadowed by issues of livelihoods, culture, gender and politics. Meanwhile, in northern Uganda, return was promoted as a crucial component of the recovery initiatives. This is was more of an attempt to restore the old order where people can return to their pre-displacement areas. However, this has not been an easy task due to the protracted nature of displacement that kept people away from their homes for years. Against this background, reinstating the old order is complicated because for the internally displaced people so much has changed and is even unrecognisable as discussed in paper IV.

Dealing with pre-existent challenges

The crucial challenge is disasters do not necessarily erase the past. There are pre-existent issues that need to be dealt with in the post-crisis period in order to facilitate sustainable recovery. Every crisis has its own impacts which consequently define the recovery practices. For instance, natural disasters cause massive destruction but may not necessarily affect the

social texture of society. However, conflict deeply affects the social fabric of society that is often difficult to recover. New structures come into existence and new agencies are constituted. These affect the access to resources and new power structures emerge that have to be negotiated, embraced or resisted in the recovery process.

In Sri Lanka, there was an overlap between the conflict and the tsunami and the later attracted spontaneous response. The reasons why the tsunami took precedence are complex and bring to question what motivates action in crisis situations. However, it is clear that the type of crisis greatly affects the way recovery practices are conceived and therefore how spaces of are constituted. Recovery is more complicated in conflict situations as demonstrated by the Sri Lanka case. For instance, in south Sri Lanka there has been significant progress while in the east the process has been slow and affected by the political environment in which aid has been politically managed. Meanwhile, in northern Uganda, politics is also eminent especially in finding solutions to the displacement and return as discussed in paper IV.

My argument is that recovery is focused on addressing the visible impacts of war and disaster such as shelter, food, water while the invisible aspects are hardly considered. The pre-existent structures are not adequately considered yet they have fundamental implications for the recovery. Issues of marginalization, exclusion, vulnerability which are often embedded in the socio-economic and political setting usually pass unnoticed. Nonetheless, restoring the old order or bringing in something new requires understanding the pre-existing challenges which are often part and parcel of the disaster or conflict.

Structure and context

Place matters in the recovery process. There are differences embedded in different places that may facilitate or constraint recovery. The structures are similar for example gender, culture, politics or ethnicity. However, there is always a variation in the rules and dynamics which are contextual and contingent. The role of politics in Sri Lanka is illustrative of how different

places can be prioritised irrespective of need. In Uganda, also politics was manifest in defining the coverage of the recovery plan. The inclusion of the north-eastern and eastern districts is not necessarily justified by the needs as already discussed. Gender as a structure also influenced the recovery in the two cases. In Sri Lanka, women experienced difficulties in accessing housing grants which required a man as the registered recipient (Khasalamwa 2009) yet in the traditional system girls inherit houses from their parents as reported in the interviews. In Uganda, gender took on different dimension with regard to land ownership. This was particularly for widows and those who remarried whereby there was no guarantee for ownership. This illustrates how gender as a structure is manifest in the recovery practices and in both cases women are disadvantaged. The recovery practices also created and reinforced vulnerability of certain groups. In Uganda, the landowners where the camps were established were denied compensation while in Sri Lanka the tenants of destroyed houses did not qualify for the housing assistance. Thus, during the recovery process, new structures emerge that restrict people to certain categories which affect their ability to recover. This illustrates how the structures influence the way spaces of recovery are constituted.

Practice often seeks to create order and recast the nature of realities which inevitably shapes the spaces of recovery. For example the housing scheme in Sri Lanka illustrates the desire to create something new and better. The need for housing was dire but the processes and modalities involved undermined the full potential of the programme. It set out to change various aspects of life but people were not ready to embrace sudden change especially if it had significant consequences on the way they strategize. For instance, livelihoods represent an established structure because people are accustomed to specific livelihoods passed down through generations for example fishing, and coir weaving. In such cases, creating alternatives to established order is problematic.

Resources

In defining structures, Giddens (1984) identifies the allocative and authoritative resources which deal with issues of material and power. Recovery is often influenced by the level of resources which determines the nature of interventions feasible. However, there is a delicate balance between the allocative and authoritative resources. In Sri Lanka, it was possible to undertake massive reconstruction initiatives because the material resources were available. However, there were issues about accessibility and usability. The authoritative resources that allow access to the allocative were scarce. The resources were managed by different actors (government, donors, and humanitarian agencies) who decided where the resources would be availed which also contributes to determining the spaces of recovery. The use of beneficiary lists illustrates the ways in which access to resources was managed.

Through beneficiary lists, the authors have to power to define who is eligible and therefore can access resources. As discussed in paper I not everybody in need of assistance was included on the beneficiaries list. The issues of power were embedded in the identification process. Besides, these beneficiary lists often reinforced the pre-existing structures of political, gender and ethnic divides. Thus, availability of resources did not automatically guarantee accessibility and issues of usability are also discussed in paper I. In this case, the role of resources was undermined by the existing structures which did not facilitate equity in the distribution of aid resources. Still, in Uganda the distribution of resettlement kits was actively managed by the government and the distribution of roofing iron sheets was politicised in a sense that the political cadres were in charge of the distribution. This also created selectivity on who would benefit from the project.

Question 2

How are the spaces of recovery constituted and negotiated amongst the different actors?

Paper II about Uganda and Ghana considers the implementation of humanitarian policies. It highlights how the different actors perceive and react to the policies. The policies are well articulated and appear to address the key concerns of the people they are intended for. However, the policies are redefined as they descend the myriad of actors. Each actor generates narratives that legitimize their space in particular ways. Different actors have differing and sometimes contradictory narratives. It is through these narratives that practice is shaped and the spaces of recovery are constituted. Profoundly, there are divergences on the expectations which are also linked to the resources. This paper also highlights ways in which the agency of the affected people is often side lined by technical expertise. However, as illustrated the failure to listen to the voices have open up spaces of resistance. These voices although considered subtle, they have consequential impacts in defining the spaces of recovery. It illustrates how people can pursue alternative courses of action which are often structured by the available alternatives. It is evident that people can engage with structures in different ways such as negotiation, resistance or navigation. However, the ability to change the structures is limited and people often try to live with the structures. This is also illustrated in paper I and IV for example when people revoked the buffer zone in Sri Lanka and how enforced return resulted into new settlements often referred to as the satellite camps or transit sites. It may be difficult to change the rules and structures but people often manoeuvre using their agency. Recovery entails managing a fine balance between structures and agency.

Furthermore, in paper IV, I discuss the issues of return in northern Uganda and I highlight the actor struggles in relation to return. It is evident that different actors have different standpoints regarding the process and timing of return. The government was focused on promoting return on the basis of improved security, meanwhile, the displaced people were eager to return but the conditions and circumstances at the return sites deterred their progress. Some of the issues highlighted included landlessness, unavailability of food, lack of social

services among others. The challenges of practice are also discussed in paper I, for example some of the tsunami affected people received grants for agriculture support. However, some of the beneficiaries used the grant to cater for their immediate needs. These are forms of bargain and negotiation through which spaces of recovery are redefined.

Additionally, paper III explores the challenges of return in post-protracted displacement and the applicability of the Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) in such situations. This paper highlights the dilemmas of transition from relief to recovery in a protracted situation. Protracted displacement creates enormous challenges which make recovery very complicated. For example weaning people off food aid has been particularly difficult. As discussed in paper IV, cutting food rations was emphasised in order to facilitate return. This was done with little consideration for what it implies re-establishing the food production and consumption system which were heavily degraded by the conflict. Besides, food production is determined by several factors such as accessibility to land, the weather as well as the viability of the seeds. Managing the gap between planting and harvest was problematic.

Furthermore, protracted displacement creates new communities and the conflict fundamentally alters structures both physical and non-physical. For example, land ownership was not a big issue before the conflict because land was managed communally. However, due to the displacement and the increased economic value of land the need for identification and ownership has emerged. There is a new system of ownership that has resulted in land wrangles that in-turn have complicated the return and transition to development. The reconfiguration of space as in loss of ownership of land influences how people think about recovery.

There are many actors involved with the recovery interventions for instance it was reported that over 890 agencies were involved in the post tsunami recovery (UN Humanitarian Information Centre (HIC) Directory for Sri Lanka 2005 cited in Silva 2009). This presented a coordination dilemma. There are so many initiatives by different actors at different levels which creates operational dilemmas. The mandates are different and the agendas are diverse which results into confusion, duplication of efforts and creates conflict between the different actors. Every stakeholder involved needs to understand their individual and organizational limits. This delineates the different actor-worlds and their practices. In pursuing their respective mandates, they constitute multiple and intricate spaces of recovery. . With so many actors involved, there is often a communication gap between the different actors which hampers progressive engagement and collaboration. The communities get conflicting messages from the different actors which ultimately create multiple paths to recovery. This was evident in Sri Lanka in relation to the buffer zone policy.

In post-conflict situation, the recovery is informed by the durability of the peace. It is difficult to plan interventions because different actors are consciously planning and mindful of the outcomes of the peace negotiations. In northern Uganda, the recovery was initially dependent on the outcomes of the peace negotiations in Juba. The obsession with the Juba process or 'Garamba tourism' made communities so disillusioned and the expectations were high which inevitably affected the local decisions and interventions. A similar situation was observed in Sri Lanka, where the post-tsunami recovery was halted in the east due to the conflict that was still on-going. This illustrates how spaces of recovery are constituted both at the ideological level and the physical level.

Question 3

How can we account for the variations in the spaces of recovery in relation to the needs created by the disaster?

This question highlights the relationship between actors, spaces and structures. Ideally, the actors are similar because they have closely related ideological standpoints. Here I mean for example the government; donors and humanitarian agencies have the responsibility and duty to assist. The affected people also share related experiences emanating from the conflict or disaster. However, the spaces and structures therein tend to vary and impinge on the practices. These structures include the political setting, ethnicity, gender, culture and resources among others. Besides, the effects of disaster or conflict vary both in space and time. Every individual, household, community suffers differential impacts and this creates a variation in the context of action. These variations largely account for how diverse spaces of recovery emerge despite the similarity of needs.

The structures are similar but the dynamics vary. For example the political landscape mattered particularly in the conflict situations which were heavily infused with political tensions. In Sri Lanka, the eastern province tsunami aid was slow to trickle in because of the conflict which hindered access for many of the humanitarian actors. While in the south, easy access and the political will allowed for rapid interventions that facilitated recovery. The war was a constraining structure in the east. Interventions were only possible three years later after the tsunami when most of the humanitarian actors were winding up the tsunami operations. This partly explains the geography of recovery in Sri Lanka. In Uganda, politics has also been influential especially in defining the scope and coverage of the recovery plan. Not all the 55 districts included in the PRDP were directly affected by the conflict as explained earlier. Every district has its own form of challenges that have significantly impacted on the wellbeing of the people. However, the PRDP fails to systematically address the specific challenges created by the war in northern Uganda. It is more of a political tool that attempts to reward different loyalties than a systematic plan for recovery.

Issues of ethnicity are evident in the two cases. In Sri Lanka, ethnicity is a major structure that has an influential role especially on the distribution and access to resources (De Silva 2009). The distribution of tsunami aid resources was inclined to reflect the ethnic setup (Khasalamwa 2009). The south is largely a Sinhalese area while the east is mixed and largely composed of minority groups. At the local level, ethnicity is more complex and there were reports about who gets listed as a beneficiary and which areas were prioritized for recovery interventions. In Uganda, the wars have mirrored the struggles for power between the north and south. There are grievances that have been ignored and this has been a source of resistance and rejection of government programmes in the region (Anonymous native, personal communication 2009). There have been several programmes aimed at the recovery of northern Uganda but there are hardly any results to show. Of course there has been mismanagement of funds but as reported the will of the people seem to be undermined by the political grievances. Thus, despite the availability of resources, there is marginal transformation.

Returning to the debate on spaces of recovery, these are both physical and constituted by the different actors. I highlighted the fact that the different actors have ideologies and mandates that ultimately define the way they perceive challenges and solutions to recovery. The different actors create spaces of action autonomous from organizing models/policies (see Mosse 2004). These different spaces of action are where the articulations are reworked and transformed to suit the interests and demands of different actors (Long 2004). Thus, recovery occurs at different levels and takes different forms as illustrated in this thesis. I argue that there are two types of spaces of recovery; the ideological and physical spaces which are usually contradictory as they are informed by differently perceived realities. The ideological space seeks to transform and change communities while the physical draws upon the realities presented by the disaster. In encountering these different spaces, actors are engaged in

different strategies such as negotiation, resistance, subversion and exchanges that involve knowledge, expertise and resources. Drawing back on the findings, the modified framework of spaces of recovery which reflects the dynamism and fluidity is presented below.

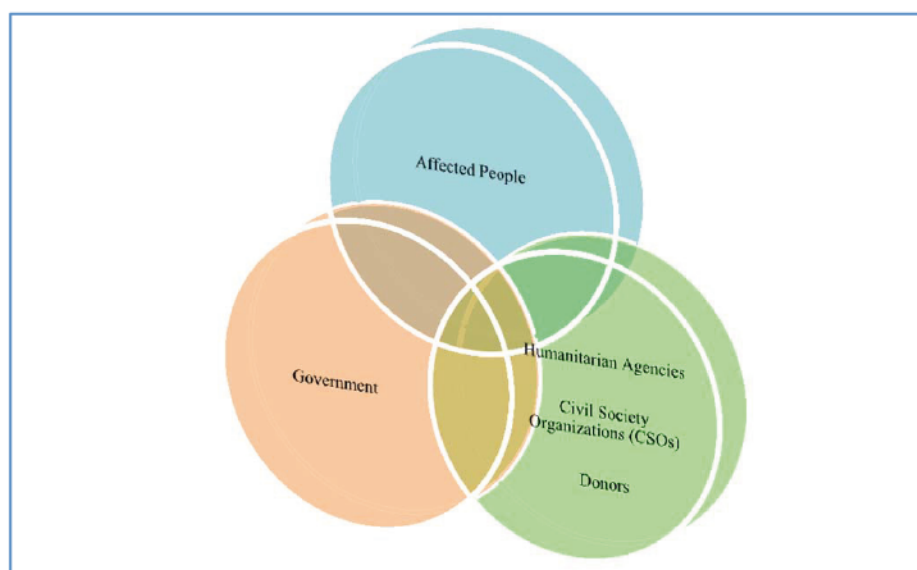


Figure 4: Modified spaces of recovery

The initial framework shows an idealistic perception of recovery. Meanwhile, this new figure reveals the complexity of spaces within which recovery happens. As illustrated, there are complex constellations and interactions between the different actors. These spaces are under constant flux driven by changing realities both internal and external. There also other actors who do not fall in the listed categories but have substantial influence in defining the spaces of recovery for example the market and other philanthropists. These spaces expand or contract on the basis of autonomy, negotiation and resistance displayed by the actors.

Nonetheless, the spaces of recovery are so limited because different actors seek to address different dimensions of the challenges. For the affected people, addressing the pre-existing challenges is part and parcel of the recovery. Overall, I argue that the contexts vary

and this explains the differences in how spaces of recovery are constituted. Although the needs are similar but the ideologies about how they could be addressed vary widely. Place definitely matters and practice is largely influenced by the context of action which I have discussed with in relation to various aspects of recovery.

A synthesis

This thesis has highlighted the challenges of post disaster recovery that stem from ideological struggles on the conceptualization of problems and solutions to address the effects of disaster. Broadly the thesis provides insights on dilemmas of development and change that still elude us despite the wide scholarship. Recovery offers a platform for restarting/starting development in communities affected by disaster. However, redevelopment in such situations is very complex as it deals with both the impacts of the disaster as well as the pre-existent challenges. The thesis reveals that development in such situations deals with multiple and ever changing realities which are hardly covered by planned interventions. Thus spaces of recovery are dynamic and fluid largely defined by the changing nature of needs. This explains why it is difficult to demonstrate rapid and significant change. Besides, development is not strictly a technical undertaking but more of a political encounter of ideologies as demonstrated throughout the papers. It is evident that recovery is not prescribed but rather a continuously negotiated endeavor and the subaltern actors express themselves through their actions.

In addition, Sri Lanka demonstrates a complex interaction between resources and context. Resources play a fundamental role in driving the development and recovery processes. However, the availability of resources did not automatically translate into effective recovery. This is largely attributed to the contextual effects dominated by political and ethnic divisions. Hence change is largely driven by internal factors and that interventions must be

sensitive to people's ways of doing things and empowering them for self-reliance in seeking solutions to their problems and betterment of communities.

In summary, many disasters occur rapidly but in their wake they leave indelible effects on society and on the lives of those affected. Every society and individual is affected differently. There are no quick fixes, it may not be even possible to restore what was lost and it is even more challenging to bring in something new or different. However, it is important to appreciate the different contexts and differential impacts in order to tailor the interventions accordingly. Above all, we need to acknowledge the people's resilience and unimaginable capacities and creativity in the face of crisis. The best that all concerned parties can do is to facilitate but not to direct the process of redefining their lives after extremely tumultuous situations.

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Appendices

Interview Guide Uganda

Comparative Perspectives on Humanitarian Response in Post Crisis Situation: The Cases of Northern Uganda and Sri Lanka

Interview Guide for Internally Displaced Persons (Uganda)

A. Current Status

1. Name of Respondent:.....
Place of Origin:.....

Campsite:.....

Sex:.....

Level of Education:.....
2. How many children do you have? How old are they?
3. Are they in school and in what class?
4. When did you come to this camp
5. What do you do for a living?
6. How much money do you earn per day?
7. How do you spend that money? Are you able to save?
8. Have you ever received a loan? If yes, from whom?
9. How many people live in your home
10. How far do you walk for drinking water?
11. Where do you find food?
12. What some of your biggest problems related to staying in the camps?
13. How do you solve these problems?
14. Have things become harder or easier since you have been here?

B. Before Moving to the Camps

15. What was your life like before the conflict and how did the conflict change your family life?
(Did you work, what did you do, and how many people did you have in your life?)
16. Before the war, what were you doing?
17. Can you describe why you left your home?
18. Did you ever see or meet the LRA?
19. What are your thoughts and feelings about the LRA?
20. What possessions did you bring with you? (did you have any money on you when you arrived, material possessions, others resources, items with religious meanings, reminders of home, personal or cultural possessions)
21. What did you do with the possessions you left behind?
22. Have you accumulated any possessions during your stay in the camp? (mention them)

C. Return to home

23. Do you hope to return to your home? If yes, why have you decided to return home?
24. If no? Why do you prefer to stay in the camp?
25. Who helped you make this decision?
26. Are you going back alone or with a group?
27. Do you know of other families from your village that are returning back home?

28. What preparations have you made for your return home?
29. What major problems do you anticipate as you return home?
30. What kind of work (occupation) will you be doing for your survival when you return?
31. If you had the opportunity, what type of work would you be doing?
32. Do you still have ownership rights over your land? How do you verify ownership?
33. What would you like for yourself and your family in the future? What do you hope for?
34. Have you received any form of assistance as you prepare to return home?
35. What type of assistance has been offered or pledged?
36. Who is offering this assistance?
37. Are you happy with the assistance received? Give reasons
38. Are you unhappy about the assistance received? Give reasons
39. What were your expectations regarding the assistance?
40. What improvements would you like to see?
41. Are there people you think would be willing to speak with us? Can you help us to identify people with whom it would be beneficial for us to speak?

Interview Guide for Returnee IDPs (Those who have moved to their homes from the camps)

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Sex:
4. Place of residence:
5. Marital status:
6. Number of Children and their ages:
7. Occupation:
8. Is this your place of origin? If no where do you come from?
9. Where have you been living?
10. When did you come to this camp?
11. When did you return?
12. Why did you choose to come back?
13. What do you do for a living or what is your major source of income?
14. How much money do you earn on a weekly basis?
15. What are the major expenditures or expenses? Please specify the expenditures.
16. What materials are used for the house? (e.g. Mud and wattle, thatch grass, bricks and iron sheets) **You can observe**
17. What are the major challenges that you are currently at the new site?
18. How do you solve the challenges?
19. Have you received any form of assistance? Please specify the source of assistance if any.
20. What type of assistance have you received
21. Has it been helpful?
22. Is there any other type of assistance you would have loved to receive?
23. List them and give reasons why.

Interview Guide Sri Lanka

Humanitarian Response in Post Crisis Situation: The Cases of Northern Uganda and Sri Lanka

Beneficiary Interview Guide

A. Current Status

42. Name of Respondent:.....
Place of
Origin:.....

Present
location.....

Sex:.....
Age:
- Level of
Education:.....

43. How many children do you have? How old are they?
44. Are they in school and in what class?
45. When did you come to this place? Why this place?
46. Have you found what to do in the new place?
47. What your income is like compared to the previous work?
48. What are the major expenses that you incur? Are you able to save?
49. Have you ever received a loan? If yes, from whom and for what purpose?
50. Do you receive any subsidies?
51. How many people live in your home?
52. What some of your biggest problems that you are currently facing?
53. How do you solve these problems?

B. Before the Disaster

54. What kind of work were you doing before the disaster?
55. How did the disaster change your family life?
56. Were you staying in this place before the disaster?
57. Did you move to this place? Can you describe why you left your home?
58. What possessions did you bring with you?
59. What happened to the possessions you left behind?
60. Have you accumulated any possessions during your stay in this place? (mention them)

C. After the Disaster

61. Do you hope to return to your home? If yes, why have you decided to return home?
62. If no? Why do you prefer to stay in this place?
63. What preparations have you made for your return?
64. What major problems do you anticipate as you return home?
65. What kind of work will you be doing when you return?
66. If you had the opportunity, what type of work would you like to do?

- 67. Do you have any user rights to any land? If yes, what type of rights do you have?
- 68. Do you have title deeds to the land?
- 69. What would you like for yourself and your family in the future? What do you hope for?

D. Assistance (any form of financial or material support)

- 70. Are you receiving any form of assistance?
- 71. What type of assistance are you receiving?
- 72. Who provides the assistance?
- 73. When did you start/stop receiving the assistance?
- 74. What do you think about the kind of assistance received?
- 75. What were your expectations regarding the assistance?
- 76. What changes would you like to see?

Interview Guide Organizations

Humanitarian Response in Post crisis Situations: the cases of Northern Uganda and Sri Lanka

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to understand what constitutes Post crisis reconstruction and recovery with reference to the work of Humanitarian agencies. This is part of a larger research programme that seeks to develop knowledge that contributes to poverty reduction and recovery in the post-tsunami and post-conflict (post-crisis) situations with particular reference to Sri Lanka. I am particularly interested in the work of NGOs because they play a critical role in the reconstruction and recovery processes. I am specifically interested in the livelihoods aspects of recovery.

The purpose of the discussion will be to gather information on aspects related to the recovery process. The questions to guide the discussion are listed below. The information provided will only be used for academic purposes and no other than stated. The Information whether in the form of data, reports, and photographs and regardless of how communicated or recorded, observed or received during the research will be treated as confidential and proprietary and will be kept as such.

Guiding questions

1. For how long has your organization been working in Sri Lanka?
2. What are the major programmes being implemented currently?
3. What programmes are targeted for the tsunami recovery?
4. What needs was the organization addressing prior to the tsunami?
5. What are the needs being responded to after the tsunami?
6. What are the new needs and how did you respond to them?
7. What implications did these have on the organization's mandate?
8. How does the organization think about the long-term needs in crisis situation (ongoing conflict)?
9. Have the programmes originally developed for the conflict need reconceptualization for the tsunami response? What were the major issues that needed redress?
10. Did the programmes originally developed for disaster intervention in other areas work the Sri Lanka situation? What worked and what had to be changed?
11. Do you still receive funding earmarked for tsunami recovery?
12. What are the major achievements so far?
13. What are the major challenges you have encountered in the response?
14. What lessons have been learnt?

Photographs



Plate 1: Focus Group Discussion with Small Holder farmers in Hambantota



Plate 2: Visit to the Grama Niladhari in Tissamaharama



Plate 3: Interview with IFRC project beneficiaries in Ampara



Plate 4: Section of the Elephant Fence in Jullapalam



Plate 5: Key Informant interview with an IDP



Plate 6: Focus Group discussion with Bee Keepers



Plate 7: Group Discussion with Local Leaders, Amuru District



Plate 8: Key informant, a beneficiary of the bee keeping project

