

**Escaping the Trap for Good: Working for Sustainable
Peace and Development in Northern Uganda**

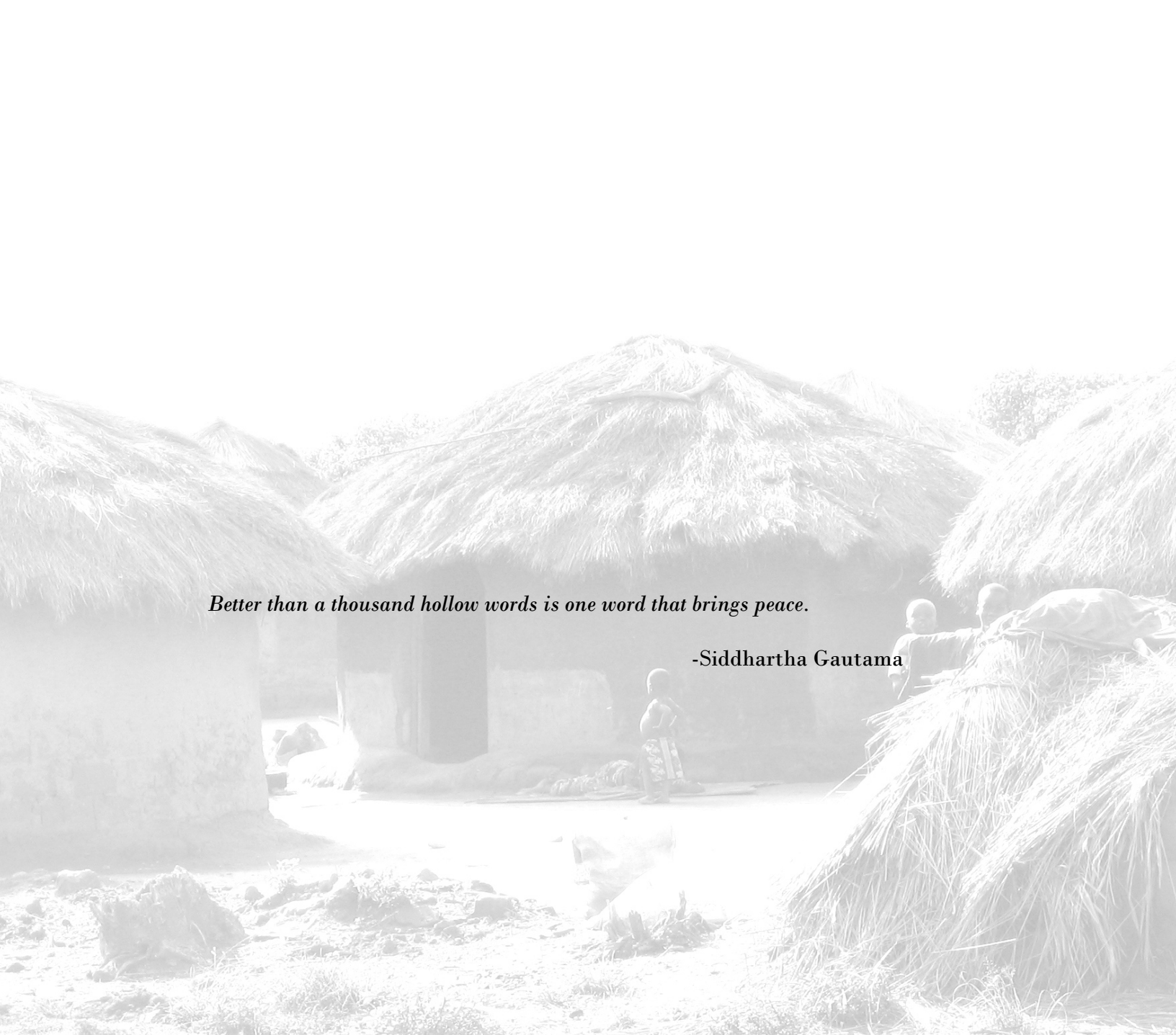
A Senior Honors Thesis

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for graduation
with research distinction in Political Science and International Studies
in the undergraduate colleges of The Ohio State University**

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**The Ohio State University
June 2007**

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Better than a thousand hollow words is one word that brings peace.

-Siddhartha Gautama

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Abstract

The international community now endorses a program of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) for facilitating civil conflict resolution and recovery. While Disarmament and Demobilization are necessary conditions for peace, I argue that the success of Reintegration programs (i.e. integrating former combatants back into civilian society) largely determines the longer-term stabilization of these countries. Therefore, my project asks how reintegration efforts shape the prospects for development and peace within a society affected by civil conflict. I use Sen's capability approach to development as the standard by which to measure the success of any recovery effort, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of how relief attempts shape the prospects of *individuals* within the post-conflict society. My research focuses on the situation in northern Uganda, a case study that presents an opportunity to analyze not only ongoing reintegration efforts but also the role of such recovery approaches within an environment of ongoing conflict. My findings are drawn from interviews and observations collected during two months of field work in the capital city of Kampala and northern town of Gulu spent interacting with relief workers, community officials, and persons affected by the conflict. On the whole, despite some immediate successes, the role of the relief efforts in bringing sustainable peace and development to the war torn society is limited by failure to pursue a sufficiently broad program of reintegration in terms of both targets and objectives. Because of inadequate consideration of the community beyond ex-combatants and neglect of broader development goals like political voice, the shortcomings of such interventions leave societies in a precarious post-conflict condition and may even contribute to the failure to end violence sooner. I conclude by offering suggestions for alternative approaches to relief and recovery through reintegration, focusing on

the inclusion of all war-affected persons in the community and objectives of political and social empowerment beyond mere economic survival.

Acknowledgements

For a work that emphasizes so much the significance of individual agency, it is perhaps a bit ironic that I owe so much of its conception and completion to the agency of others. Labeling this thesis as a product of ‘independent undergraduate research’ is truly a misnomer because the following pages would simply not exist if it had not been for the invaluable contributions of so many individuals and organizations. Those listed below, along with the countless others who have offered their support, have not only made this work possible but have also made this past year one of the most challenging yet rewarding times of my life.

I must first begin with the person without whom this project would have never begun—my advisor, Irfan Nooruddin. His influence on me over the past couple of years in the classroom has been unparalleled, but it has really been those moments in his office and walking from class that have shaped my life, this thesis included. Another 150 pages would be needed to capture everything that Irfan has meant to my fellow students and me, but I really feel that the biggest compliment I can pay to him is that he has challenged everything for me. Not many would first respond to an undergraduate’s interest in studying the conflict in northern Uganda with, “Go there”—but that really speaks volumes for the man who Irfan is.

Taking on four undergraduate advisees at once in addition to an already saturated list of responsibilities is no light task, but Irfan and I both owe the success of this venture to three of the most intelligent, driven, talented, and unforgiving young women I have ever and probably ever will meet. Without Nafisa Akbar, there would have been no Irfan, and I don’t believe words have ever been necessary to express my admiration for her as a person. Charlene Chi is one of the brightest and ambitious individuals I’ve ever known, and because of her I know never to take

myself too seriously. The past year has only increased my appreciation for Laura Tompkins's brilliant mind and boundless heart, and I have truly come to look at her as a sister over the years. The world will soon share my admiration for Nafisa, Charlene, and Laura, and it has been simply an honor to be one of the first beneficiaries of their work.

Outside of the Starbucks Four have been many close friends that have, directly or indirectly, enabled me to complete this thesis. Though vastly beyond my own intellectual capabilities, Ben Jones and Bo Chamberlin have always had the patience to listen to my 'Kennyisms' (e.g., "scarcity doesn't exist) and have offered glimpses of their genius to ground my arguments. Kara Morita, Carri Pryor, Angie Ferenchak, and both of my parents may have never really known what I was talking about, but their sincere interest and superhuman tolerance have allowed me to keep my sanity throughout this process (most of the time at least). I can only imagine his thoughts when I first sat in his office with my plans, but Prof. David Kraybill has supported me through every phase of the project and is largely responsible for making this a reality. Without Peter Quaranto and the rest of the Uganda Conflict Action Network team, I would have literally been lost. Their work is inspirational on a truly global scale, yet still Peter and others have always found the time to set me on the right track. Finally, Prof. Anthony Mughan's guidance from my earliest days on campus has been unfailing, and it is only fitting to have him sit on my final review committee.

I would have never dreamed that I would be able to travel to Uganda during my undergraduate career, and I wouldn't have had any reason to go very far beyond dreaming had it not been for the incredible institutional support I have received from the Ohio State University. Research grants from the University Honors & Scholars Center, the Colleges of the Arts and Sciences, and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences permitted me to travel and pursue

all of my goals without hindrance. Furthermore, funding from the Mershon Center for International Security Studies along with the Department of Political Science allowed me to gain incredibly helpful experience and feedback at the 2007 National Conference on Undergraduate Research in San Rafael, CA. Without the extreme generosity of all of these institutions, my work would have never left the library.

And of course, I must extend my most sincere gratitude, appreciation, and admiration for all of those who in Uganda who made those two months honestly the most powerful, challenging, and inspiring experience of my entire life. To begin, I am overwhelmed to this day by the willingness to cooperate and excitement to share exhibited by practically every organization I contacted throughout my field study. Despite my criticisms to overall approaches taken toward peacebuilding in the country, the individual efforts and commitment that I witnessed were truly inspirational given the circumstance. I owe many of those exact criticisms to the honesty and humility shown by the relief workers and peace activists who were gracious enough to sacrifice their precious time to answer each of my questions with thought and candor.

While the contributions of the interview participants are directly visible in the pages that follow, none of those meetings would have ever taken place without the individuals who really kept me alive during my stay—both figuratively and literally. Though the ‘honeymoon’ ended prematurely, Nick Maxwell will always be a powerful influence on my life, and his company in Uganda served as no exception. Looking back, landing in Entebbe with not much more than a list of phone numbers in one pocket and a list of hotels in the other was probably not the wisest move, but fate was really on my side to sit me next to the incredible woman who would introduce me to Uganda. Mrs. Kasibante got me out of the airport and put a roof over my head, but more than anything else she gave me a *family*. From the moment I was overwhelmed

searching for a pub to watch the World Cup on my first night in Kampala to the moment I was overwhelmed getting all of my bags to the airport on my final afternoon in the country, I had a brother looking over my shoulder in Edwin—Wandegeya, pork joints, and melted ice cream will never be quite the same without Eddie. With every new bed came a new home—my first protectors at Makerere’s Livingstone Hall, camp-mates at Murchison Falls, the world’s greatest hospitality staff at Hotel Roma, the Italian intellectuals in Gulu, and my Notre Dame housemates in Kamwokya—and they will all always have a part of me. One couldn’t ask for a better guide and translator than William Akena—he is the Gulu connection. The staff at Lacor hospital earned my respect as some of the world’s finest medical practitioners with their treatment of my malaria, despite my initial sentiments on that boda-boda ride back to town. I sincerely do owe my life to my ‘dreamy’ Italian nurse, however—without Alessandro, I would probably still be in that bed murmuring “Jesus man!” Anarkali was perhaps the greatest traveling mate I’ve ever had, and the beautiful mountains of Rwanda will forever remind me of conversations with an Oxford academic, endless bus rides, and newlywed discounts. And last but obviously not least, I found a true brother in the fight in Stephen Okello—I know that I will be acknowledging his influence on me for years to come, but he is largely responsible for shifting my own personal paradigm.

I must conclude by citing the real inspiration for all of the thoughts that are to follow—the people of northern Uganda. Sen and Nussbaum established for me a theoretical framework by which to respect the human individual, but the displaced persons fighting for each day in the camps demonstrated to me fully the definition of agency. From articulate camp leaders in interviews to stoic mothers preparing meals in the hot Gulu sun, I was continually astounded by the resilience of the human spirit. These people are in need, but in no way do they require ‘help.’

All they request is the one thing that has eluded them for the past two decades and the one thing the world has failed to deliver them—peace.

Introduction

Never think that war, no matter how necessary, nor how justified, is not a crime.

-Ernest Hemingway

Civil conflict has come to wreak havoc on multiple nations in the modern era. Few, if any, social or political forces can compare to civil war in terms of the destruction and suffering it can bring to a country. While battle deaths and displacement are horrendous enough in themselves, the pain of a civil war lingers for generations beyond the last shots fired in the form of a precarious political, economic, and humanitarian environment. The cruel reality of civil conflict has only been amplified by recent academic work. For one, a relationship has clearly been established between poverty and the onset of civil war. In simple terms, while the costs of violence would test the capacity of any state, the countries least able to afford an experience of civil war are the ones most frequently falling victim to widespread violence. Moreover, the countries at greatest risk of civil conflict are those recently coming out of a period of civil war. Among the myriad issues with which a nation must deal when attempting to rebuild itself after civil war, societies must first and foremost remember that all efforts are for naught if violence resumes.

As if any argument needs to be put forth to begin, the details above plainly substantiate the dire need for attention to be given to nations undergoing or recently leaving an experience of war. Clearly, any concerned parties must duly consider the immediate dynamics of bringing an end to violence, namely brokering a cessation of hostilities and disabling the warring parties of

their ability to resume conflict. Beyond this, however, measures must be taken to secure the provisional stability and transform it into a lasting and sustainable peace. The international community has signaled its acceptance of this holistic framework with the adoption of the program of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) for facilitating civil conflict resolution and recovery.

My project seeks to analyze the role and significance of the reintegration component of DDR programs in facilitating civil conflict resolution and recovery and, further, to evaluate its impact in bringing sustainable peace to the war-affected society. The model set by comprehensive reintegration programs may lend insight into the direction that broader relief and peacebuilding efforts must take to extract a nation from the vicious cycle of conflict. Lessons learned from transitioning ex-soldiers into civilian life may lend much insight into attempts to transform war-torn states into peaceful societies. A case study is taken up in northern Uganda. Two months of field research were conducted in this nation, the northern region of which has been ravaged by twenty years of brutal civil war. An evaluation of ongoing reintegration efforts there hopes to uncover lessons for the general practice of reintegration and peacebuilding as a whole. The actual persons undergoing reintegration and communities receiving them in northern Uganda also serve as a poignant reminder of the real stakes at hand in this academic investigation: the peace of a nation and lives of human individuals.

The reintegration of former combatants into civilian society marks a significant bridge between the short-term and long-term efforts at rebuilding a nation. Accordingly, this paper posits that successful reintegration can be strongly linked to successful development, namely in terms of the capabilities approach to development. The capabilities approach to development provides a valuable framework for effectively transitioning ex-soldiers into alternative

livelihoods, specifically through its unique emphasis on the individual as an end along with its broad conception of the goals of development. Such an approach allows reintegration to address multiple perspectives on the causes of civil war including economic, political, and social constructivist views, along with the many effects that come from the actual war experience. It is unique in that it attends to these dynamics at the level of the individual (*i.e.*, individual ex-combatants).

War happens for a reason, but that reason is rarely, if ever, clear-cut and definitive. Conditions must exist within a country that set the ground for a potential outbreak of violence, whether they are in the form of potential for economic gain, political grievances, or hostility among social groups. For war to commence, some spark must ignite these tensions. Such a trigger can come from opportunistic elites, economic or political crises, or foreign intervention. Any attempt at bringing peace to a conflict situation must obviously attend to all of these factors. Attention must of course be given to the immediate causes of war to bring the guns to rest, but any hope of lasting peace and stability rests on efforts aimed at addressing those underlying conditions that initially made war possible and were probably exacerbated by the experience of conflict. Reintegration takes upon itself that latter task of deep peacebuilding at the most basic level: providing a sustainable alternative to individuals formerly living within the context of combat. Such a civilian livelihood is attained once the factors that brought the person into the conflict and kept her in that position are satisfactorily resolved. Clearly these efforts must extend beyond the provision of a means of living if they are to achieve success. Health, social, educational, and security considerations play a significant role in returning a person into normal society, thus a very broad program must be adopted. While this insight is widely recognized, the

actual implementation of reintegration programs seems to lose this professed breadth as most efforts center on providing jobs and basic material assistance to ex-combatants.

A proper application of the capabilities approach exposes not only the failures to provide persons with adequate economic and political support, but also neglect of the wider social context on which any real progress hinges. Without the proper economic facilities and political opportunities, reintegration into society is severely limited and at great risk of crumbling (*i.e.*, the individual returns to combat). Just as important, however, is the fact that reintegration is impossible if there is no stable society into which to be reintegrated. Of course, practical concerns of feasibility and limited resources cannot be ignored. Nevertheless, another central tenet of the capability approach that is largely ignored in current practice can do much to overcome such obstacles, that is, the agency of the individual. Much of the aim of peacebuilding is reviving a functioning and stable society; in giving the individuals of that society a substantive role in the peacebuilding process as agents rather than merely recipients of aid, recovery takes on a much more natural course. Those with the most vested interests in its success (*i.e.*, the people of the war-torn society) become the drivers of the recovery process.

As promising as successful reintegration is to the future of a nation coming out of civil war, failed or inadequate reintegration can doom any prospects of peace. If the life former soldiers find outside of combat is unable to provide for a livelihood comparable to that experienced while at war, the ex-combatants cannot be expected to lie down their arms for long. The desirability of war is irrelevant if the targets of reintegration are introduced to a society that provides no prospect of a good, or even survivable, life. Moreover, a lack of attention for the broader war-affected community beyond ex-combatants may very well breed deep-seated hostility toward the returnees, thereby diminishing the desire for peace within the society itself.

Rather than producing valuable assets to a recovering nation, failed reintegration brings aggrieved soldiers along with equally aggrieved communities.

Northern Uganda presents a telling backdrop to all of the theory and ideas presented here. Twenty years of civil war have seen countless acts of brutality directed against innocent civilians, tens of thousands of abductions of youth into the rebel ranks as soldiers or slaves, hundreds of thousands of persons displaced off of their lands, and an entire culture and way of life pushed to the very limits of existence. Unpredictable cycles of violence and utter failure by either the government or rebel movement to represent the actual people for which both claim to fight have left an entire population helpless and voiceless as they tiredly fight for mere survival with each passing day. Reintegration efforts have been in place in some locations for over a decade now, anticipating an end to the violence that has yet to take hold. Despite the continuation of the war, these efforts proceed in attempting to secure a place in an almost entirely displaced society for persons often forced into the war. The obstacles to reintegration here are unique in many ways, but even in adapting efforts to the local context much can be learned from the Ugandan experience.

Reintegration is only one component of a broad spectrum of efforts that must succeed in any peacebuilding program. However, the lessons above, if shown to be valid, can have a powerful impact on the overall approach to post-conflict recovery. Recent years have seen an incredible influx of attention into understanding the causes, dynamics, and consequences of civil war. Beyond mere academic curiosity, these efforts have been deliberate in their aim to determine the most effective policy mechanisms for avoiding civil war and dealing with its impact on nations. While no true consensus has been reached, many important players at the international level (*e.g.*, the World Bank) are coming to back the economic perspectives on civil

conflict. Such findings have been telling and useful, but the danger in limiting policy and responses to this level is foretold by the grim experience of inadequately comprehensive reintegration. Rich datasets and successful models are an essential tool, but the stakes of individual peacebuilding efforts are far too great to rely wholly on broad truths.

The first portion of this thesis progressively establishes the broad theoretical foundation upon which the capabilities model of reintegration will be built. Chapter 1 provides a basic overview of the main tenets of the capabilities approach to development as largely put forth in the work of Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum. In Chapter 2, this capabilities framework is used to define a high-order peace, propose a novel approach to the theory on civil war causation, and account for the broad costs imposed on a society within the war experience. A perspective on peacebuilding is developed in Chapter 3 that aims for such a high-order peace by addressing both the causes and effects of war in terms of capabilities. This broad model for peacebuilding through capabilities is applied specifically to the project of reintegration in Chapter 4. Chapters 5 and 6 present the case study of northern Uganda, providing a general background to the war and analysis of local reintegration efforts respectively, all from the lens of the capabilities approach. The paper concludes with broad charges for the direction of peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and reconstruction efforts into the future.

Chapter 1

The Capabilities Approach

The government claims a lack of resources, but the greatest resources of all are human beings.

-Zachary Lomo, The Refugee Law Project

Few could ever argue that the experience of war is not a bad thing. An equal few could argue that peacebuilding is not a worthwhile pursuit. But what is it about war and peace that makes it so easy to draw these bold lines of bad and good?

In an academic context, attempts at answering that question have pursued a very practical, logical, and measurable approach. War is bad because it is unmistakably costly: conflict destroys economies, brings political upheaval to nations, and creates fatal rifts within societies. Peacebuilding is good because it brings undeniable benefits: economies are revived, politics are stabilized, and social divisions are mended. These are all testable observations with clear lessons and implications. But even so, the question just becomes more direct: what is it about the economic, political, and social dynamics of war and peacebuilding that make this subject so irrefutably important?

Broadly speaking, experiences of war and peacebuilding can be framed in terms of development. If development is looked upon simply as the betterment and advancement of a society, the economic, political, and social dynamics mentioned above make the relationship clear: peacebuilding is to be seen as a process of development while war is to be viewed as a sort of 'anti-development,' or development in reverse. As follows, the development of peacebuilding

is to be desired whereas war's anti-development must be averted. The same question remains, though: what is it about all of this that makes it so important?

The answer, in reality, is unabashedly simple: all of this matters because it affects the lives of people. Whether considering the economic implications of war or social consequences of development, the reason why individuals are to be concerned is because these issues directly affect their lives as individuals. The economic, political, and social costs of war and backwards development are human costs. The corresponding benefits of peacebuilding and development are realized as direct improvements in the human condition. Plainly put, it is the people, or, better yet, the *persons* that matter.

Such an obvious point may seem unnecessarily simple, but the emphasis on the human component carries with it radical implications for any approach taken to the subject of war or peacebuilding. An analysis of the causes and impact of war in terms of society and undevelopment is incomplete until it is related back to the individuals involved. Peacebuilding policies based on support for economic, political, and social development are lacking until the actual persons who are to benefit are considered. War, peacebuilding, and general development all involve complex social forces, but neglecting the individuals behind all of those macro-level dynamics leaves any approach at risk of ignoring what really matters.

1.1 Foundations of the Capabilities Approach

Within the field of development, such a paradigmatic shift has been proposed to center attention on what actually matters in the development process, that is, the people involved in the process. Scholars like Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum have framed their position in what is known as the capabilities approach to development. Development here is conceived of as “a process of

expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy.”¹ More specifically, Sen emphasizes “the expansion of the ‘capabilities’ of persons to lead the kind of lives they value—and have reason to value.”² In the conventional conception, development is not entirely detached from the people involved in the process, but those to benefit do clearly take a secondary role to other focuses deemed necessary for the betterment of the society. The unfortunate reality of such a stance is that oftentimes so much attention is dedicated to raising incomes or expanding political liberties that the people become mere tools through which to achieve these goals. Sen plainly condemns such a position in saying that “human beings are not merely means of production, but also the end of the exercise.”³ The interests of the people must always take precedence for those people are the only items of real value in the development equation.

At the core of this perspective is a recognition of and respect for the humanness of the individual. Mere survival is not sufficient; value must be placed on the overall condition of the person and her ability to control that condition. Nussbaum argues quite clearly in favor of an emphasis on human capabilities, positing that what is important is “what people are actually able to do and to be – in a way informed by a intuitive idea of a life that is worthy of the dignity of the human being.”⁴ All persons are entitled not only to life, but rather to a *human* life. The realization of freedom, dignity, and wellness are not fortunate, indirect outcomes as in many perceptions of development. In the capabilities approach, these elements of humanity comprise the core aims of development.

As follows from this emphasis on humanness, merely focusing on the people within the development process is not sufficient. As each individual is a human being entitled to a

¹ Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 3.

² Ibid, p. 18.

³ Ibid, p. 296.

⁴ Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, p. 5.

dignified human life, each individual must be considered an independent target in development efforts. Just as a person must not be mistaken as a legitimate means to achieve an end such as income growth or democratization, a person cannot be used as the means by which to improve the lot of another person. Nussbaum stands by this primacy of the individual with her ‘principle of each person as end’:

[One] person’s exceeding happiness and liberty does not magically make another person happy or free. Programs aimed at raising general or average well-being do not improve the situation of the least well-off, unless they go to work directly to improve the quality of those people’s lives... [Since] each person is valuable and worthy of respect as an end, we must conclude that we should look not just to the total or the average, but to the functioning of each and every person.⁵

Through the lens of the capabilities approach, basing all efforts on the interests of people is not enough; development must work towards the interest of all *persons*.

Within each individual, then, the aim of development is to be the expansion of capabilities, defined by Sen to be “the substantive freedom to achieve alternative functioning combinations,” or, more simply, “the freedom to achieve various lifestyles.”⁶ Such a framework sets the standard for developmental success very high due to the breadth of its implications. First, the functionings achieved by individuals must be taken into consideration, for this is the most direct way of gauging the welfare of a person and the actual opportunities available to her. What a person is actually able to do is of importance here, not other factors, such as income, that only serve as the means by which one can realize certain outcomes. Beyond this, however, any evaluation must also consider the process by which the person came to achieve those outcomes. True wellness depends not only on what a person does but also the ability to choose and the freedom to act. In granting equal significance to the realms of processes and opportunities, the

⁵ Ibid, p. 56.

⁶ Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 75.

capabilities approach is said to take into account not just “culmination outcomes” but truly “comprehensive outcomes.”⁷

Central to all of these considerations is the role of freedom. Given the demand for a life of human dignity, freedom is an outcome of inherent value to the individual for which development must aim. On the other hand, the respect for each individual within the development process means that freedom is also fundamental to the appropriate process by which outcomes are to be achieved. Within the capabilities approach, then, “freedoms are not only the primary ends of development, they are also among its principal means.”⁸ The life of value to which a person is entitled is one defined by freedom, and the best way to achieving this life is the path of freedom.

1.2 Formalizing the Approach

Broadly speaking, the capabilities approach calls for the higher standard of a life of human dignity, the primacy of the individual, and both the intrinsic and instrumental roles of freedom that are central to development. Though these foundations are highly conceptual and amorphous, both Sen and Nussbaum offer their view as to how such an approach is to be translated into a practical framework.

Sen categorizes the “instrumental freedoms” that collectively contribute to the realization of overall human freedom into five general groupings.⁹ Political freedoms refer to the control and voice people have regarding the structures and institutions that govern their lives. Economic facilities entail the individual’s ability to direct economic resources to consumption, production,

⁷ Ibid, p. 27.

⁸ Ibid, p. 10.

⁹ Ibid, p. 38.

and exchange activities. Social opportunities are conceived of as the measures taken by a society to provide for such needs as education, health care, and other services. Transparency guarantees are those mechanisms upon which individuals can rely to ensure the legitimacy of transactions within society. Finally, protective security involves the means by which a society prevents any of its members from falling into some condition deemed unacceptable for a human being (*i.e.*, a social safety net). While each of these types of freedom hold intrinsic value of their own right, they all have a vital role to play in achieving ultimate human freedom.

As Sen does with his groupings of instrumental freedoms, Nussbaum proposes a list of “central human functional capabilities”¹⁰ that are both desirable as independent aims and valuable in the pursuit of more comprehensive wellbeing. Capabilities like life, bodily health, and bodily integrity represent the most basic physical requirements for a life that is fully human. The list’s inclusion of senses, imagination, thought, emotions, practical reason, and play largely define what distinguishes the fully human life for Nussbaum. The opportunity to form emotional connections, make full use of one’s cognitive abilities, engage in the exploration of the grand questions in life, and enjoy recreational activities are placed directly next to the more conventionally included entitlements of protection from illness and physical harm. Furthermore, Nussbaum takes affiliation with other human beings to be a basic component of human wellness. Finally, the list posits that factors concerning the environment in which one lives are central to the human condition. The ability to engage politically in forces that control one’s surroundings, rights and guarantees of ownership, and the protection of the species that share this world with humans all fall into this category. With such a comprehensive view of capabilities, Nussbaum’s idea of development exhibits far more ambition than a classical prescription of income growth and increased consumption.

¹⁰ See Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, p. 78.

Though Nussbaum's capabilities largely complement Sen's five categories of freedoms, her approach departs from his slightly with the introduction of a threshold. The primary goal of a society, in her view, should be to raise all individuals above a certain threshold level of each capability beneath which "a person has not been enabled to live in a truly human way."¹¹ Each capability on her list can be met with different degrees of functioning, and only at some acceptable level of functioning can that capability actually be considered realized. With this qualification, the core of Nussbaum's approach can be narrowed from the "principle of each person as end" to the "principle of each person's capability."¹² Such a principle successfully synthesizes the various theoretical foundations of the overall approach, that is the recognition of a standard of humanness, the focus on the individual as the end, and the primacy of freedom and opportunity.

1.3 The Primacy of the Individual

One of the most definitive and perhaps most radical features of the capabilities approach is the absolute priority it gives to the individual as the proper level of analysis for development. Unlike most classical interpretations of development, the capabilities approach clearly acknowledges that it is the person that matters. The only outcome of any real value is "the actual living that people manage to achieve," or, in terms clearly conceived by Sen, "the freedom to achieve actual livings that one can have reason to value."¹³ Simply put, what ultimately matters is "what individuals are actually able to do and to be."¹⁴

¹¹ Ibid, p. 74.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 72.

¹⁴ Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, p. 69.

Levels of satisfaction,¹⁵ degrees of liberty enjoyed,¹⁶ and access to the most basic primary resources¹⁷ are all important components of human wellbeing, but all of these measures lack the capacity to capture adequately the condition of the individual. Level of satisfaction is problematic as an authoritative measure because of the potential for adaptive preferences whereby “habit, fear, low expectations, and unjust background conditions deform people’s choices and even their wishes for their own lives.”¹⁸ Concentrating on liberty is valuable as it rightfully emphasizes the process by which ends are achieved, but unfortunately falls entirely short in placing value on the actual outcomes that result. Finally, though the primary goods approach succeeds in capturing available opportunities as opposed to mere functionings, no consideration is given to the personal heterogeneities that largely determine an individual’s ability to convert resources into functionings.¹⁹ The emphasis on capabilities is able to match the success of each of these alternative perspectives while avoiding their pitfalls.

To this point, much has been said on relating development to its effect on the individual, but also important is the actual role of the individual in the process. The capabilities approach profoundly recognizes that not only is the individual to be the end of development, but the individual is also to be the primary means. This is *not* to say, as earlier clarified, that an individual can be justifiably used as the means by which to achieve another’s wellbeing. What is true, however, is that a person must be recognized as the primary instrument by which to achieve her own ends. Respect for the agency of the individual is fundamental to the capabilities approach, for all that is actually called for is the provision of opportunity. Whether that

¹⁵ The foundation of a classically utilitarian approach to development.

¹⁶ The foundation of a classically libertarian conception of justice.

¹⁷ The foundation of a Rawlsian conception of justice.

¹⁸ Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, p. 114.

¹⁹ See Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 74.

opportunity is converted into actual functioning is largely up to the individual. Sen makes clear his respect and expectations for the individual:

In terms of the medieval distinction between “the patient” and “the agent,” this freedom-centered understanding of economics and of the process of development is very much an agent-oriented view. With adequate social opportunities, individuals can effectively shape their own destiny and help each other. They need not be seen primarily as passive recipients of the benefits of cunning development programs. There is indeed a strong rationale for recognizing the positive role of free and sustainable agency—and even of constructive impatience.²⁰

Rather than giving handouts of food to the poor, enable the poor to generate their own income to purchase food; rather than working for the adequate representation of the poor’s interests within government, enfranchise and empower the poor to voice their own interests to society’s leaders; and rather than shaping education systems to sensitize a society to the needs of the poor, open educational opportunities to the poor so that they are trained to address their own needs. Framing development as the expansion of freedoms inherently recognizes the advantage of engaging the individual during her own experience of development.

Through the lens of capabilities, the individual is not only the target of development and primary actor in the process, but she is also the author of what development is actually to entail. Sen recognizes this specific aspect of agency as the “constructive role” of freedom, specifically in terms of political rights and liberties.²¹ By fostering discussion, opening lines of communication, and encouraging the spread of information, freedom enables a person to act for the realization of her needs but also aids in the formation and conceptualization of what those needs actually are. Just as the individual is best able to work toward her interests, she is also the best able to formulate what those interests are. Expanding capabilities is, in this light, both the most effective and most appropriate approach to development.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 11.

²¹ Ibid, p. 148.

One final component of this perspective on development signifies the respect and reverence held for the individuals within the process. The approach explicitly declares its aim of concern to be capability, not functioning. While considering actual outcomes is necessary to capture a full perspective on the conditions faced by people, demanding a certain set of behaviors from them is a direct violation of their personhood. Even when some path is reasonably established to be in the best interest of the person, it is up to the person herself to determine her own course. Nussbaum largely frames such a stance in terms of respect held for the central functional capability of practical reason.²² Development's goal must be to achieve the environment necessary to enable one to utilize her own ability of practical reasoning to formulate her preferences and resulting actions, not to instruct the person on what is actually in her best interest.

On this matter, Sen presents a provocative critique on the notion of "rational choice" as conventionally conceived within economics and politics.²³ An overly interventionist position is dangerous in many respects, but most clearly so when its very judgments are misguided. Irrational behavior may not be the result of constraints on a person's free will but rather a limited conception of self-interest on the part of the observer. Legitimate motivation on the basis of ethics, justice, or the interest of future generations may very well lead to that which does nothing to promote the wellbeing of the performer within a calculus of rational choice behavior, and may even negatively impact one's personal advantage. While such selfless action is obviously admirable and often sparks the betterment of a society, a carelessly narrow focus on individual wellbeing would condemn such behavior as irrational and a potential threat to development. A

²² Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, p. 87.

²³ See Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 270.

respect for the individual's capacity of practical reasoning must precede any suspicion of irrational behavior.

The benefit of development to a society is limited to the benefits enjoyed by actual persons within that society. Not only are individuals to be the primary recipients of development support, but they are also to be the primary actors within and authors of any plan of efforts. Nussbaum captures the spirit of the capabilities approach in recognizing that individuals within developing societies “don't just want a piece of the pie; they want to choose its flavor themselves and to know how to make it themselves.”²⁴

1.4 A Role for Society?

Though the capabilities approach unequivocally centers on the person, society as a whole has a critical role to play in development for its individual members. Simply put, without the proper social arrangements and institutions, no person within that society would ever be able to realize fully the breadth of her capability. Sen thus recognizes that “individual freedom is quintessentially a social product,” a result of both individuals shaping society to meet their needs and, in turn, that society providing the structures essential for the expansion of individual freedoms.²⁵

Nussbaum illustrates this point neatly with her organization of the concept of capabilities into three groupings.²⁶ The first two relate directly to capacities of the person: “basic capabilities,” referring to the abilities for which people are naturally equipped, and “internal capabilities,” those facilities that are developed over time within a person. The third level, what

²⁴ Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, p. 67.

²⁵ Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 31.

²⁶ See Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, p. 84.

Nussbaum labels “combined capabilities,” indicate clearly the role of society in that they can only be realized within the context of suitable external conditions. Each of Nussbaum’s central functional capabilities mentioned above falls into this final category in that actual functioning can be achieved only if the appropriate arrangements are available within society.

The observations here are quite straightforward but nevertheless powerful. Bodily health and basic physical well-being cannot be achieved without the adequate provision of healthcare. Intellect and skills can never be developed to the point of usefulness without proper educational structures. Free speech and other political rights are practically meaningless within a political structure completely immune to public pressure and input. A focus on the individual in no way implies neglect for larger social arrangements. Rather, the capabilities approach defines the way in which these structures must cater to the needs of the people they are to serve. An appreciation for the humanness of the individual includes recognition of the social nature of the human creature. A person cannot experience expanded capabilities within a vacuum of freedom and opportunity.

1.5 Conclusion

The capabilities approach presents a novel and inspiring alternative to conventional views of development. Human dignity and lives of value to the actual persons leading them are certainly aims of any framework seeking to improve the economic, political, and social conditions within a society; the capabilities approach just takes the step of identifying these items as the primary goals of development and, even more, the primary means by which they are to be achieved. This leap is a powerful contribution to how development is conceived, but, as will be seen, its power extends even beyond the boundaries of ‘development’ as it is conventionally viewed.

Chapter 2

Peace and War through Capabilities

What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans, and the homeless, whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty or democracy?

- Mohandas K. Gandhi

Civil war exacts ghastly costs from any society undergoing the experience, whether the endeavor is undertaken by choice or forced upon the population. For these nations, the prospect of peace first offers respite from this suffering. But ultimately it is hoped that with peace will come the opportunity to recover from the pangs of violence and throw off those forces and conditions that brought the country to war in the first place.

As has been argued, the costs brought by war and opportunities that come with peace mentioned here are at their most basic level human costs and human opportunities. A useful foundation by which to frame these elements is in terms of development: conflict is essentially aimed at reversing the advances of an enemy society's development, while peace is the most fundamental of requirements for a nation to implement any development program. Within the context of civil war, the warring parties are by definition of the same society, so the development at stake is one's own. Launching from the basis of development presents a promising opportunity to capture fully the human dynamics of peace and war due to the formulation of the capabilities approach to development. In emphasizing the primacy of the individual, appreciation for the humanness of involved parties, and consideration for freedoms within a

social context, the capabilities approach focuses development on that which ultimately holds the only real value—the person.

To portray accurately the implications of war and peace, observers must heed the lessons of these advancements in the field of development by openly establishing the persons involved with the conflict to be of primary significance. This is not to claim in any way that larger social, political, and economic considerations are to be dismissed. But it is to say uncompromisingly that war and peace matter because they affect individuals; thus the individual, whether leading an armed rebellion or simply caught in the middle of the violence, must be granted her due attention.

Beyond this moral claim, however, also lies practical reason for focusing on the individual. Frankly put, it is people who do the fighting, people who stop the fighting, and people who prevent the fighting from recurring. Economic forces may fuel warring parties, but neither hyperinflation nor poor GDP growth pull the trigger. Political conditions mean much to any attempts at bringing the guns to rest, but armies cannot be stopped by ballot boxes or an independent judiciary. Social circumstances can largely determine the likelihood of a nation resuming war, but ethnic demographics and education systems don't bring troops back to the trenches. The state of war or peace in a country is determined considerably by various factors, but each of these elements only matters to the extent that they affect the decisions and behaviors of human actors.

What is suggested here is in a sense a capabilities approach to war and peace, specifically to the endeavor of peacebuilding. If peace is to be brought to the individuals within a war-torn society, a clear grounding of what peace actually means to the individual is essential. Moreover, an attempt at peace is only effective to the degree that it matches the country's experience of

war, so the causes and impact of the conflict must likewise be framed within the context of the involved individuals. While much academic attention has been dedicated to exploring the subjects of peacebuilding and civil conflict, the slight shift in perspective posited by the capabilities approach produces a new framework that may hold dramatic implications for the pursuit of peace.

2.1 Peace in Human Terms

While any rational thinker would unequivocally identify peace as a desirable goal for a society, the term ‘peace’ itself is open to many different interpretations. Perhaps the most conventional approach to defining peace is in terms of its converse, war. War is quite obviously the absence of peace, so it follows that peace must be the absence of war. To achieve peace, then, within the context of civil conflict, is to bring the violence to an end. Bringing warring parties to the negotiating table and securing a ceasefire or cessation of hostilities thus effectively brings peace to a war-torn state. Such a stance on peace is reflected in the actual mechanisms used by the international community to stabilize conflict situations, namely peace enforcement and peacekeeping missions designed to facilitate negotiations and ensure adherence to the terms that come out of such processes.²⁷

Within the actual discipline of peace studies, however, such standards only cover the requisites of what is referred to as “negative peace.”²⁸ Rather than defining a condition in affirmative terms of what needs to be present, the negative version of peace is distinguished only by the absence of some factor (*i.e.*, war). Often considered more informative and useful is the

²⁷ See Doyle, M. W., & Sambanis, N. (2000). *International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis*, p. 781.

²⁸ See Barash, D. P. (2000). *Approaches to Peace: A Reader in Peace Studies*. New, pp. 2, 179.

broader conception of a “positive peace.”²⁹ Beyond the absence of violent conflict, this peace demands a broad societal commitment to the avoidance of war. Actual structures and institutions must be established to eliminate the underlying causes of unrest, what Barash refers to as “structural violence.”³⁰ Of course none of these aims can be considered within a climate of war (*i.e.*, the absence of negative peace), but the long-term stability of the country ultimately relies upon the pursuit of positive peace.

Such considerations for “higher-order” peace have been adopted by the major actors of the international community in conflict resolution and recovery, specifically under the heading of peacebuilding efforts.³¹ Further than merely quieting the guns of war, a society must work toward the “institutionalization of peace.”³² If the nation is to avoid a relapse to war, then new domestic order must be achieved through local capacities and commitments.³³ While ceasing hostilities is no light task, the mandate of high-order peacebuilding is even more demanding:

Although the operating goal of peacebuilding has been considered to be averting the revival of a violent conflict brought under control, it should not be understood as a mere short-term prevention strategy. The main issue is to gradually create conditions which will ensure that there is no reason to resort to destructive means again, and thus peacebuilding is a long-term activity going beyond the immediate imperative of stopping the armed conflict.³⁴

The concept of peacebuilding largely captures the implications of distinguishing between negative and positive peace.

With its broad and inclusive scope, the concept of positive peace aligns well with the capabilities approach. War torments societies, but it also impacts the lives of practically every

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ See Doyle, M. W., & Sambanis, N. (2000). *International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis*, p. 795.

³² Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*, p. 21.

³³ See Doyle, M. W., & Sambanis, N. (2000). *International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis*; Hoddie, M., & Hartzell, C. (2005). *Signals of Reconciliation: Institution-Building and the Resolution of Civil Wars*; and Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*.

³⁴ Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*, p. 4.

member within that society. At the most basic level, freedom from violent conflict (i.e. negative or low-order peace) is absolutely essential for any individual's pursuit of her capabilities, falling in line with Sen's stressing of protective security³⁵ and Nussbaum's inclusion of bodily integrity and control over environment³⁶ on her list of central functionings. In addition to these fundamentals, however, the capabilities approach further calls for the recognition that humanness extends beyond protection from bullets; thus the full political, economic, and social opportunities required for a life of dignity are only available within the context of a high-order peace. The central freedoms required for a truly human life are inherently inseparable and reaffirming. Physical protection is as essential to a person's wellbeing as is economic facility within the capabilities framework; but the key point is that without physical protection or economic facility, the other becomes practically useless to a person. A high-order peace recognizes the mutual value of all realms of capabilities in securing a life one has reason to value.

With such a positive peace, the resulting security and stability provide individuals with the freedom to convert their capabilities into functionings along with the social arrangements necessary to support such realization of freedoms. On the one hand, people within a society are granted the space and opportunity to utilize their own individual capacities to achieve concrete results without any cause for fear or limiting outside constraints. Much to the contrary, the other side of a high-order peace is the presence of social institutions that actually assist the individual in realizing fully her capability. Beyond freedom from the direct threats of bombs and bullets, a positive peace allows for the fruition of individual agency along with the support needed to bring results along with that opportunity. The end of violence is essential to begin the process of

³⁵ Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 40.

³⁶ Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, p. 78.

human development, but a much deeper running peace must come if there is to be any real progress.

Bringing any level of peace to a war-torn nation is a daunting task, but a mandate of higher-order peacebuilding, though highly critical, is only more demanding. For such a comprehensive peace, the work only begins with the silencing of weapons and commitments of warring parties to an end of hostilities. From there, efforts aiming at positive peace must be based largely on two components, those being the causes and effects of the war experience. On the one hand, if a lasting peace is to come, the country must address those factors that first brought the society to the state of war. Additionally, the experience of conflict itself transforms the political, economic, and social landscape of the nation, and these impacts must receive equal attention if the society is to escape the clutches of war. Looking at the nation's climate entering the war and then as it exits has been recognized as vital to any peacebuilding effort, but doing so through the lens of the capabilities approach may provide the requisite direction for a truly positive peace.

2.2 The Onset of War as Failed Capabilities

Sustainable, lasting peace requires not merely the absence of widespread violence, but largely the absence of those factors which lead to extensive conflict. For a country to recover fully from the horrors of civil war, it must adequately deal with those factors and conditions that brought it to the brink of war in the first place. With each civil conflict comes a unique set of conditions shaped by history, politics, economics, leaders, and culture, so obviously each war will have its own story of causation. Nevertheless, observers have sought to identify trends linking the varied experiences of these countries and from these findings have constructed frameworks attempting

to explain the roots of civil war across nations. While such theories will always be inherently insufficient for revealing the full truth behind any individual war, the hope is that such models can direct efforts of conflict prevention to the most critical elements.

Though some approaches are more widely accepted than others, the existing theories on the onset of civil conflict are wide and varied. While a number of attempts have been made to categorize these competing models³⁷, they can be broadly grouped into two camps, each of which can be divided into three further subsets. One school, perhaps considered to be the more classical and conventional take on civil war, attributes the onset of war to grievances of some form that lead a group to the point of rebellion. The nature of possible grievances is really without limit, but those that are most likely can be separated into the political, economic, and social realms. Another approach gaining much recent attention and support sees civil conflict stemming more from the opportunity of rebellion. Proponents here argue that while grievances exist in all states, those cases of civil war are distinguished by the opportunities presented to aggrieved groups and others actually to take up arms. Again, this broad category of causes can be broken down into political, economic, and social groupings. While in its entirety the work on civil war causation does not fit perfectly into such classification, such a scheme is helpful in making a broad survey of the existing hypotheses.

2.2.1 The Product of Grievance

As perhaps typically viewed, those subscribing to the grievance-driven model conceive civil war as the failure of the established state order to deal effectively with the complaints of some faction of the population within the political or other relevant realm. The original disgruntlement

³⁷ See Sambanis, N. (2002). A Review of Recent Advances and Future Directions in the Quantitative Literature on Civil War; and Brown, M. E. (2001). Ethnic and Internal Conflicts: Causes and Implications.

coupled with the state's failure to respond drives the aggrieved party to take action outside of legal structures of the nation, namely through violent protest by rebellion. The first potential sources of such tension are to be found in the sphere of politics.³⁸ Minority parties may become exasperated with the lack of fairness within political institutions or lack of political rights to the point at which they see war as their most viable means of survival or expression. Intergroup politics can also lead to civil war if relations within a state are sufficiently hostile and antagonistic to breed such an environment of anxiety among factions. Along these same lines, a strong national ideology that lacks civic inclusiveness can radically embolden a majority while causing marginalized groups to fear for their security, leaving the country ripe for the outbreak of violence. In other cases, a political elite may aggravate any of the aforementioned tensions within a society to stir war for the purpose of her own personal grievances or lust for power.³⁹ In all of these scenarios, some political aim primarily motivates a party to initiate war.

In much the same fashion, economically-related grievances can drive groups to war. Relative deprivation theory posits the most popular argument here that persistent group economic inequalities lead to growing despair and demand for political change among society's most oppressed, eventually driving them to the point of violence.⁴⁰ Also possible is the experience of economic development and modernization bringing about rising expectations within society that simply can't be realized and, in turn, promote mounting turmoil within a

³⁸ See Brown, M. E. (2001). *Ethnic and Internal Conflicts: Causes and Implications*.

³⁹ Some would refrain from listing a lust for power under the heading of 'grievance.' This is typically seen in rubrics that separate causalities between 'grievance' and 'greed,' with lust for power typically considered to be of the latter class. Such approaches, however, are largely based on distinctions between legitimate social injustices and individualistic considerations for personal gain. The perspective here focuses rather on a distinction between ends-driven and opportunity-driven explanations and considers elite desires for power to be essentially associated with goal-motivated conflicts.

⁴⁰ See Sambanis, N. (2004). *Poverty and the Organization of Political Violence: A Review and Some Conjectures*, p. 15.

rapidly changing and uncertain environment.⁴¹ Finally, poor economic performance in general, such as slow growth, inflation, and unemployment, may produce levels of tension and frustration great enough to bring a country to war.⁴²

The last category of grievances is generally paralleled by those listed above but is framed and constructed in a specifically social context. Very similar conditions of political and economic marginalization may arise, but they come as the result of greater forces of cultural discrimination and group perceptions within the country.⁴³ Identities based on the conception of ‘we’ and ‘other’ are shaped by relations with other groups, the role of leaders, and modernization. These identities do not necessarily bring about war but can become very volatile and prone to violence if their security or stability comes under threat.⁴⁴ Falling under the general label of ‘ethnic conflicts,’ these, like other grievance-driven wars, are caused primarily by some goal, dissatisfaction, or threat perceived by the aggressors.

2.2.2 Taking Advantage of the Opportunity

While the second broad approach to the onset of civil war does not categorically reject the existence and role of grievances, these theories stress that conflicts are principally opportunity-driven. Though many may hold grievances and would benefit if they were to be redressed, the costs of actually partaking in a rebellion are typically too great for the average individual to achieve any net advantage.⁴⁵ Regardless of the level of grievance, civil war will only occur if it

⁴¹ See Sambanis, N. (2002). A Review of Recent Advances and Future Directions in the Quantitative Literature on Civil War, p. 220.

⁴² See Brown, M. E. (2001). Ethnic and Internal Conflicts: Causes and Implications, p. 217.

⁴³ Ibid, p. 218.

⁴⁴ See Jeong, H., & Väyrynen, T. (1999). Identity Formation and Transformation.

⁴⁵ In this way, rebellion is viewed as a public good. See Sambanis, N. (2002). A Review of Recent Advances and Future Directions in the Quantitative Literature on Civil War, p. 223.

is perceived by a sufficient number to be feasible and rational to fight one.⁴⁶ This perspective, then, frames civil war in a model of economic rational choice whereby actors will only partake in the ‘public good’ of rebellion if their expected net benefit outweighs the opportunity cost of taking up arms.

Obviously, as it does form the core of the conventional view of civil war causation, grievances play a large role in the rhetoric leading up to, during, and after conflict. Subscribers to the opportunity-centered school perceive such erring of grievance to be in large part the construction of an image to do business. Wars are primarily driven by the opportunity to achieve one’s aims, but rhetoric is necessary to project some semblance of legitimacy to both the individuals within rebel forces and those of the masses beyond. The level of authenticity of these grievances can be viewed in three ways: most cynically as a contrived and baseless front for the greed of rebels; in the powerseeking variant as accurate to the extent that they describe the rebels lust for power⁴⁷; and in the subjective grievance variant as the true motivation behind rebel actions, real or imagined, but still dependent on the feasibility of war.⁴⁸ Regardless of how legitimate or sincere the rhetoric actually is, each of these three stances implies “that rebels are not necessarily heroes struggling for a particularly worthwhile cause, and that the feasibility of predation explains conflict.”⁴⁹

The specific varieties within the greater opportunity-centered framework all basically describe circumstances in which war becomes the most feasible and attractive means for achieving ends, whatever those ends may be. In the political realm, the existence of a weak state

⁴⁶ That is to say, in economic terms, war will begin only if the opportunity cost of fighting is acceptable.

⁴⁷ Though this ‘lust for power’ may be identical to that categorized as a variety of grievance, within this sense the lust for power will only motivate war to the extent that war is a feasible and attractive means to that power. In the grievance approach, the lust for power was enough in and of itself.

⁴⁸ See Collier, P. (2000). *Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy*, p. 4.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

leaves the current authority at a handicap for policing the territory to prevent the buildup of rebel forces while the prospect of actually being able to capture power becomes a real one for potential rebels.⁵⁰ Violence thus becomes to a large extent merely a matter of political rational choice.⁵¹

Perhaps most popular at the current moment is the economic variant whereby the failure of economic development is seen as the “key root cause of conflict.”⁵² One view is that such an economic situation directly brings about the weak state condition just mentioned.⁵³ The primary economic interpretation posits that meager development results in an inflated “supply of rebels” given that low income and educational attainment make for a low opportunity cost of rebellion.⁵⁴ Other economic explanations focus primarily on the profitability of the war venture, citing diaspora funds, natural resource wealth, and levels of foreign aid as the primary determinants of the likelihood of civil war.⁵⁵

Finally, from a social standpoint, the ethnic, religious, or other broadly demographic makeup of a country could present the opportunity for the outbreak of civil war. Whether or not actual tensions or discrepancies are present as in the analogous grievance model, the right social composition can present potential rebels with an ideal platform upon which to base their efforts.⁵⁶ The existence of minority groups just large enough to be perceived as a threat to the majority or a history of social tension leaves a nation ripe for the creation and manipulation of identities strong enough to bring a country to war.

⁵⁰ See Brown, M. E. (2001). *Ethnic and Internal Conflicts: Causes and Implications*, p. 214.

⁵¹ See Sambanis, N. (2002). *A Review of Recent Advances and Future Directions in the Quantitative Literature on Civil War*, p. 223.

⁵² See Collier, P., Elliott, V. L., Hegre, H., Hoeffler, A., Reynal-Querol, M., & Sambanis, N. (2003). *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*, p. 53

⁵³ See Sambanis, N. (2004). *Poverty and the Organization of Political Violence: A Review and Some Conjectures*, p. 9.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* See also, Collier, P. (2000). *Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy*; and Collier, P., Hoeffler, A., & Sambanis, N. (2005). *The Collier-Hoeffler Model of Civil War Onset and the Case Study Project Research Design*.

⁵⁵ See Collier, P. (2000). *Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy*.

⁵⁶ See Sambanis, N. (2002). *A Review of Recent Advances and Future Directions in the Quantitative Literature on Civil War*, p. 227.

2.2.3 *Truth behind the Theory*

As mentioned, one of the biggest supports for the grievance approach to civil war onset is the rhetoric that invariably dominates conflict experiences. One has trouble logically conceiving of widespread, lasting violence not driven by substantial aims and motivations. If an individual is willing to kill others and put her own life in serious jeopardy within the context of armed conflict, her reason for doing so must extend beyond a mere profit motive.

The revision to the conventional grievance approach, on the other hand, is largely rooted in a look at who actually is fighting civil wars.⁵⁷ For one, the actual proportion of a society to participate actively in rebel forces is remarkably small, casting doubt on any thought of popular uprising. Surely, not everyone who supports a rebel movement will necessarily take up arms, but within the grievance-based model of causation it is difficult to explain what would hold an aggrieved person back from fully joining the rebels if her claims are legitimate (or perceived to be legitimate). Moreover, the vast majority that actually does fight in a rebellion are young males lacking education, not the group conventionally expected to be most in touch with the political, economic, and social grievances to arise within a society. Within the context of war, many of these that do join the rebels are actually doing so for their own safety to catch some degree of respite from and control over the tumultuous situation of war in which they find themselves. Lastly, claims of grievance-based rebellion become suspect when it is realized that many among the forces are not ‘fighting for a cause’ at all but rather forcefully recruited or even abducted into the ranks (*e.g.*, child soldiers). Suddenly the assumed link between widespread social tension and actually resorting to arms becomes much less certain.

⁵⁷ For this complete argument, see Collier, P., Elliott, V. L., Hegre, H., Hoeffler, A., Reynal-Querol, M., & Sambanis, N. (2003). *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*, p. 68.

Given these observations and the breadth of theory attempting to explain the onset of civil war, recent attempts have been made to test empirically the validity of the competing positions over broad datasets of civil war occurrence. Many prominent actors within the international community, such as the World Bank, are becoming convinced that statistical evidence shows the cause of civil wars to be much better explained by opportunities for rebellion as opposed to grievances in their conventional sense. Proxies such as male enrollment in secondary education, per capita income, and economic growth rate all have substantially negative impacts on conflict risk, while items such as inequality, political rights, ethnic polarization, and religious fractionalization have little discernable effect.⁵⁸ Rebels may still be motivated by grievances, but those grievances are largely disconnected from the larger social concerns represented by the variables mentioned above. Such evidence suggests that societal tension only brings about violent civil war where rebellions are financially viable. The grievances for which wars are fought and even the divisions along which conflicts are waged are thus subjective creations of the rebel organization and may be completely lacking of objective legitimacy.

Though these findings add much to the macro-understanding of civil conflict, a review of specific case studies reveals some significant shortcomings and inaccuracies within such attempts to model the onset of war.⁵⁹ A look at actual experiences of war leads to discrepancies with the very measures upon which such strong positions are being taken, in every area from political, economic, and social conditions to even what is actually considered civil war. If

⁵⁸ For a comprehensive overview of empirical findings, see Collier, P., Hoeffler, A., & Sambanis, N. (2005). *The Collier-Hoeffler Model of Civil War Onset and the Case Study Project Research Design*; Collier, P. (2000). *Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy*; Sambanis, N. (2002). *A Review of Recent Advances and Future Directions in the Quantitative Literature on Civil War*; and Sambanis, N. (2004). *Poverty and the Organization of Political Violence: A Review and Some Conjectures*.

⁵⁹ See Sambanis, N. (2005). *Conclusion: Using Case Studies to Refine and Expand the Theory of Civil War*.

various indicators of grievance are not being accurately represented (*i.e.*, levels of political or economic inequality), then statistical conclusions are surely skewed.⁶⁰ Even if opportunity-driven theories can present empirically robust support for their positions, however, a realistic perspective cannot ignore the key role that factors such as ideology play in the emergence of political violence.⁶¹

Ultimately, despite the amount of statistical rigor and creative effort put into the endeavor, a definitive or even functional explanation of the general causation of civil wars remains elusive. Though empirically sufficient positions have been offered, practical wisdom and qualitative knowledge demonstrate clear shortcomings in the numbers. When all considerations are made, the very distinction between ‘grievance’ and ‘opportunity’ becomes increasingly difficult to define. Some may be led to think that this proves any attempt to be a futile enterprise; individual wars are so unique and varied that no broad model could possibly capture a universal essence to the onset of civil conflict. On the other hand, each attempt does seem to offer some valuable insight into the nature of civil war across cases. With this in mind, a modified take on civil conflict onset in terms of the capabilities approach offers a sort of synthesis of the views considered above in the hopes of providing a useful framework by which to approach peacebuilding efforts.

2.2.4 The Capabilities Revision

While empirical studies to this point have suggested the accuracy of one particular model, namely the failure of economic development as the primary contributor to the risk of civil conflict, case studies and theory argue that such a narrow view leaves much wanting in terms of

⁶⁰ Ibid. For specific discrepancies with representation on economic inequality, see Sambanis, N. (2004). *Poverty and the Organization of Political Violence: A Review and Some Conjectures*.

⁶¹ See Sambanis, N. (2004). *Poverty and the Organization of Political Violence: A Review and Some Conjectures*.

capturing the reality of civil war onset. Practically speaking one must realize that given the wide-ranging nature of wars that are fought, any attempt at generalizing causation must cover a broad set of factors. Some would point out, however, that surely an accurate model could be achieved by incorporating every competing view; but what would really be the use of that model if it does nothing to distinguish between all the varied explanations that are already known? The challenge, then, is to avoid excessive narrowness while maintaining the practical utility of a generalized framework. It is argued here that this balance can be achieved by evaluating, reframing, and combining the existing theories in terms of the capabilities approach.

At the outset, the capabilities approach would agree with the popular position that sees development failure as the leading cause of civil war. But departing from the standard interpretation of development in a strictly economic sense, the argument here is for the emphasis to be on failed human development in terms of freedoms and capabilities. Grievances in all forms can be viewed as restrictions on freedoms, while opportunities for war can be understood as the failures of societies and individuals to realize their full capacities. A society failing to provide for its members the opportunity to achieve a life of human dignity, to live a life one would have reason to value, is a society prone to fall under the scourge of civil conflict.

The grievance model posits that conditions within a country for some segment of the population become so intolerable that affected persons protest collectively and violently against the entity they see responsible for meeting their demands.⁶² The variants of this theory can be explained through the capabilities approach on two levels. Firstly, the conditions perceived by the aggrieved group to be so insufferable can all be fit within the frameworks of freedoms and

⁶² This 'entity' is typically the government of the country, but may also be some other group or institution within the society, e.g. a rival political party or ethnic group.

capabilities proposed by Sen and Nussbaum.⁶³ Political marginalization, volatile intergroup politics, and inflammatory political ideologies are all violations of basic political freedoms and the ability to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life. Economic inequality, instability, and malperformance at the highest levels constrain the economic facilities of individuals to provide for their basic needs. Even cultural discrimination and the formation of hostile identities can be seen as direct barriers to social opportunity and protective security, blocking people from meeting their basic needs for affiliation. On another level, those targets upon which grievances, and ultimately violence, are aimed are really the failures of the society to provide the arrangements necessary for the fulfillment of individual capabilities. In the most basic form, rebellions signify the failure of a government to provide an environment conducive to full human development. War directed at bodies other than governments can be accounted for as well. Rival political parties and ethnic groups can check individual freedoms just as much as any formal state institution. On the whole, the concept of grievances developing into full-scale civil conflict fits cleanly into the capabilities framework and is even strengthened by it.

On the other end of thought, the opportunity for a feasible and profitable war seen to be the driving causal factor for conflict can be viewed plainly as a gap in the human development of a society. Just as a poorly performing economy is seen as a form of development failure, so should a poorly performing state or society. In broadly defining the goal of development to be the full realization of human capabilities, the needs of the individual extend equally into the economic, political, and social realms. As follows, the development of a society relies not merely on the functioning of the economy, but also on the performance of the state and the society. A mechanism by which each of these conditions provides for the feasibility of war is

⁶³ See Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 9; and Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, p. 78.

offered in the existing theory that was covered, but the defining link for the three conditions is the precarious state in which each leaves the citizens of a country. War becomes a feasible, profitable, or attractive option firstly due to the failure of institutional structures in place to maintain stability within a country. Additionally, the opportunity for war presents itself because the appreciation and expectations for a level of human dignity have been compromised to the extent that the decision to resort to violence becomes a matter of mere rational choice. In some work in support of the opportunity-driven conception of civil war onset, grievances are made out to be a mere tool by which rebel leaders recruit support, convincing people of their own plight (regardless of objective merit) through the creation of a sort of Marxian “false consciousness.”⁶⁴ If this account is accurate, it is merely another clear sign of failed human development. The fact that individuals could be manipulated in such a manner signals neglect and abuse of the practical reason and individual agency stressed within the capabilities approach. Human development roots itself in respect for the individual and the capacity of the individual to think, choose, and act on her own merit. Rebel leaders propagating skewed information to build up their forces are essentially using individuals as a means to an end, and there could not be a more direct violation to the concept of human development. Conflict may never arise unless the opportunity presents itself, but this capabilities interpretation hints that the conditions necessary for the opportunity to arise are the very same that give rise to grievances.

Finally, one specific strand within the existing theory merits attention in this revised analysis, that is, the conception of rational choice. Those of the opportunity school unfairly dismiss grievances as secondary factors, even likely to be unfounded, while propping up the legitimacy of rational choice models. Sen’s critique of the political and economic conceptions of

⁶⁴ See Collier, P. (2000). *Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy*, p. 5.

‘rational choice’ becomes quite pertinent here.⁶⁵ In evaluating the opportunity cost and expected net benefits of initiating war, potential rebels should be expected to consider items such as ethics and justice as central to their decisions. Suddenly the neat calculus proposed by the opportunity models is ‘polluted’ with the influence of factors that had been conveniently set aside into the category of grievances. Just as grievances are claimed to be a product of subjective perception, the degree of opportunity for conflict is an assessment based on many factors beyond the scope of clear empirical representation.

In sum, a capabilities approach to the onset of civil war sees conflict rooted in the failure of a broadly conceived interpretation of human development. A society that leaves no room for the political, economic, and social freedoms of its members, fails to acknowledge the humanness and agency of every individual, and proves unable to provide the arrangements and environment necessary for the realization of central human capabilities finds itself in great risk of the outbreak of violence. Such conditions supply ample fuel for the development of dangerous grievances while simultaneously setting the grounds of opportunity for a profitable and viable war. The tumult experienced by each person barred from a life of human dignity will not find too much difficulty eventually engulfing the entire nation in the grips of civil war.

2.3 The Experience of Civil War as an Attack on Capabilities

The preceding analysis of the onset of civil conflict largely attempted to cover every factor that could reasonably lead to the outbreak of war. However, one of the most telling indicators of a country’s risk of falling into such violence was omitted—a previous experience of civil war.

⁶⁵ Legitimate motivation on the basis of ethics, justice, or the interest of future generations may very well lead to that which does nothing to promote the wellbeing of the performer within a calculus of rational choice behavior, and may even negatively impact one’s personal advantage. A carelessly narrow focus on individual wellbeing would condemn such behavior as irrational. A respect for the individual’s capacity of practical reasoning must precede any suspicion of irrational behavior. See Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 270.

Along with the marginalized developing countries discussed earlier, the nations empirically shown to be in the most danger of civil war are those recently exiting an experience of war. This finding gives rise to a tragic cycle aptly known as ‘the conflict trap.’⁶⁶ A society just coming out of a war is prone to fall into the conflict trap since it has had little opportunity to redress all of the factors that originally brought the country to violence. In addition to that, however, the actual occurrence of war only serves to aggravate further these risk factors while burdening the nation with even more problems to address. Attempts at positive peace must then not only tackle the causes of war but also the very experience of war.

Statistical evidence shows that the economic, political, and social plights of those entering wars are already intense, and war simply makes everything worse. As the capabilities approach is able to capture the role of individuals within the onset of war, so too can it illustrate the individual’s experience within a large-scale civil conflict. The costs of war are immense to the suffering society, but high-order peace demands realization of the impact the violence has on each member of the population. All foundations of a lasting peace begin with people and the society’s capacity to meet the needs of its people; thus all efforts toward peace must be placed within the context of a population just exiting a period of turbulent violence. While hopes are certain to be high when the violence ends, tragically the postconflict context is the least suitable for sustainable peace and development. The recent war experience may have even originated in a desire for a better society, but what is left is a fractured and embittered nation dominated partly by spoiler interests that have profited from the now ending war and partly by widespread fear of a relapse into further violence.⁶⁷ The sad lesson of experience and data is that “modern civil war

⁶⁶ See Collier, P., Elliott, V. L., Hegre, H., Hoeffler, A., Reynal-Querol, M., & Sambanis, N. (2003). *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p. 22.

has not been a useful force for social change, but has been development in reverse.”⁶⁸ An unavoidable step in rebuilding a nation then must be an assessment of the society as it is coming out of the war experience.

2.3.1 At the Expense of Freedom and Capabilities

If civil war is ‘development in reverse,’ then it must affect a nation in all those areas which are to be addressed by development, only in quite the contrary fashion. In framing development in the terms proposed by Sen’s instrumental freedoms and Nussbaum’s central human functional capabilities,⁶⁹ one can explore the costs of war in each of these areas specifically in terms of human capabilities. These costs come largely at two levels: direct losses faced by individuals and damage to the overall society’s ability to provide for its individual members. Peace and development require both individual capacities and the social arrangements necessary to have those capacities realized, and war strikes at the heart of each. The predicament faced by societies attempting to recover from these effects of reverse development becomes only more awful when recalling that many of the same development issues are often behind the initial motivation and opportunity for conflict.

At the most basic level, war constitutes a direct assault on the notion of human development in that it is a direct attack on the very lives of humans. Unfortunately, and increasingly so, this threat extends far beyond those actually taking up arms and operating on the battlefield:

In the modern civil war the composition of victims differs radically from the wars of the early 20th century, in that the impact has shifted from military personnel to

⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 32.

⁶⁹ See Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 9; and Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, p. 78.

civilians. At the beginning of the 20th century about 90 percent of the victims were soldiers, but by the 1990s nearly 90 percent of the casualties resulting from armed conflict were civilian.⁷⁰

With such a direct violation of the need for protective security, the fundamental capabilities of life, bodily health, and bodily integrity fall beneath the crushing weight of the fatalities and displacements that are a reality of any widespread violence. Realizing any capacity of value is impossible in a society in which mere survival is an uncertainty.

Also central to the fulfillment of human capability are the political freedoms that are valuable in their own right but further enable an individual to conceptualize her needs and desires and then act for their realization. This liberty and voice effectively grant a person control over the forces that govern her life. Within a context of war, however, the individual fundamentally loses all control over those governing forces, the political realm being no exception. Rather than fostering basic political rights, freedoms, and procedures, war creates an environment governed by “war-related hostility, institutional failure, loss of government legitimacy, and the intensification of previously existing political cleavages.”⁷¹ Critical issues demanding political attention are most often neglected as supposed leaders of the country are consumed by a struggle for power amongst themselves.⁷² Meanwhile, the outlets through which the population is to pursue its demands, namely civil society institutions, are typically destroyed during the course of war, leaving, if anything at all, fragments too polarized and too little developed to handle the dire needs of society.⁷³ At its heart, civil conflict is a product of the

⁷⁰ Collier, P., Elliott, V. L., Hegre, H., Hoeffler, A., Reynal-Querol, M., & Sambanis, N. (2003). *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*, p. 17.

⁷¹ Sambanis, N. (2002). A Review of Recent Advances and Future Directions in the Quantitative Literature on Civil War, p. 225.

⁷² See Ball, N. (1996). The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn Societies, p. 608.

⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 609.

failure of a nation's political system, so it comes as no surprise that war leaves virtually no room for political freedom and thus development.

In terms of economic facilities, again, war creates a situation in which the individual loses all control over the forces governing her life. In terms of individual capacities, conflict immediately disrupts the livelihoods of those within the country through death, injury, displacement, conscription, or abduction.⁷⁴ Any direct exposure to conflict typically destroys a person's ability to provide economically for her own basic needs leave alone advance or prosper, that is unless the individual happens to be one of the few actually and willfully profiting from the war experience. Even if some ultimately find themselves better off after war, the fact is that those gains were not achieved through the freedom and opportunity deemed necessary for actual human development. On a larger scale, war detrimentally impacts the economic ability of a society to provide an environment suitable for the fulfillment of capabilities. Violence disrupts most conventional avenues of exchange and provision, be they physical, institutional, or informal. Consequently, even those who actually manage to retain their livelihoods still find themselves in precarious circumstances. For one, war causes societies to shift limited resources from productive projects to destructive activities, doubling the cost borne by the nation.⁷⁵ In addition to the political upheaval mentioned above and social fractures to be discussed, much of this disruption also comes in the form of the destruction of infrastructure. War diminishes infrastructure to levels that, though horrendous, are to be expected since transportation and communication systems are primary targets within war.⁷⁶ As is true on many levels, the greater the military success, the greater the economic costs.

⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 607.

⁷⁵ See Collier, P., Elliott, V. L., Hegre, H., Hoeffler, A., Reynal-Querol, M., & Sambanis, N. (2003). *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*, p. 13.

⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 14.

Finally, civil war wreaks havoc on the social face of a country, undermining the social opportunities and transparency guarantees demanded by Sen and blocking the affiliation capability stressed by Nussbaum. On a broad level, as covered before, conflict prevents a society from providing the education, health, and other services required for combined capabilities, whether it is through physical destruction of facilities, the diversion of funding, or devastation of human capital. The effects go much deeper, however, striking at the core of human relations:

[Civil war] severely weakens the social fabric of a country by destroying communities, engendering a culture of violence, creating a sense of impermanence and mistrust that makes collaboration on long-term efforts difficult to achieve, impoverishing the culture, and wreaking psychological trauma.⁷⁷

Such losses can be conceived in terms of declining social capital in that widespread expectations and incentives for honesty are replaced by expectations and incentives for corruption.⁷⁸ Within a war environment, human development is subject to the tension and confrontation present not just on the battlefield but also permeating throughout society.

2.3.2 Not Just Reversing but Attacking Development

Civil conflicts can be defined as development in reverse for all of the effects mentioned above, but what war is essentially is an attack on the very notion of development, particularly when coming from the approach of capabilities. Beyond turning around the steps a society makes in its political, economic, and social advance, the violence of war defies the logic and principles that are at the very heart of human progress. Regardless of the legitimacy or decency of the original motivation, the decision to take up arms is inherently a choice to neglect the rights and

⁷⁷ Ball, N. (1996). *The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn Societies*, p. 610.

⁷⁸ See Collier, P., Elliott, V. L., Hegre, H., Hoeffler, A., Reynal-Querol, M., & Sambanis, N. (2003). *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*, p. 21.

value of the individual. War is not merely a setback for development but rather a paradigm shift in the way the society views human life.

The capabilities approach to development is founded in a respect for the primacy of the individual human being; war directly violates this stance and all of the powerful implications that come with it. For starters, the idea of people as the ends for which all means must strive is completely turned on its head: people become the primary means by which to achieve some other end that at best intends to improve the lot of those fortunate enough to make it out of war and at worst promises to only benefit greedy and corrupt war managers. While group interests are to reign supreme within the war effort, the value of the individual comes to be measured largely in terms of her ability to slay other individuals. The agency of the person is recognized and utilized to its fullest, but unfortunately the capacity of each person to determine and work toward her own advancement is left wholly out of the equation. Whether a willing soldier or abducted fighter, displaced civilian or casualty of war, to any soul subjected to war the thought of freedom in any of its forms is entirely lost.

Beyond all else, development as freedom is a recognition of the humanness and dignity of all living beings. Human life cannot be sustained by food or income alone; it demands room for imagination, play, rational thought, and relationships with other human beings. A society is to place no bounds on the capacity of the individual. Rather, arrangements are to be made for each person to realize her fullest potential and beyond. War has an uncanny ability to eliminate these notions of humanness and dignity on all levels. To national leaders, military generals, outside interveners, and even academic onlookers, how often is it that human lives become mere measures of costs and gains in the calculus of the onset and experience of violence? A

successful and meaningful peace can only come with a broad appreciation for the humanity of every person and the fundamental clash between war and human development.

2.4 Conclusion

As has been shown, the powerful accomplishment of the capabilities approach in capturing the significance of the individual within the context of development can be extended into the realms of peace and war. A high-order, positive peace can be described as the setting in which individuals are free to pursue the kind of lives they would have reason to value. On the other end, the onset of war, whether explained as the violent expression of grievance or primarily driven by opportunity, can be seen as the result of inadequate levels of human development. Finally, the actual experience of war can be framed in terms of further lowering levels in all realms of development. Quite clearly, the key to escaping war and realizing peace becomes human capabilities.

Chapter 3

Peacebuilding as Beyond War, Towards Capabilities

Peace is the only battle worth waging.

- Albert Camus

War is bad; peace is good. Of course ‘bad’ and ‘good’ are vacuous terms lacking any substantial meaning, and surely some will make credible arguments as to why war sometimes must be waged and peace sacrificed for the sake of some greater good.⁷⁹ But the point with which we began is still the same: in terms of human costs and benefits, the desirability of peace over war is as simple as terms of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ make it out to be. Peace, that is a positive or higher-order peace, is defined here to be the very condition under which humans are free to achieve their capabilities in the absence of any real threat of violence. Civil war has been shown to be rooted in the failure of development as broadly conceived to include the economic, political, and social situation of individuals within a nation. Moreover, the actual experience of violent conflict exacerbates these societal ills and leaves a country with even further barriers to peace. Obviously, all nations aspire for what is good, and those societies caught in the bad find themselves in a precarious position. The remedy to their plight, however, is fairly straightforward from that which has been discussed: peace is rooted in successful human

⁷⁹ Though some would make this argument, empirical evidence suggests that the costs of war are so great that violence is never an effective means by which to achieve such a ‘greater good.’ Economic measures, of course, can only go so far, but it is hard to deny the overwhelming costs to a society brought by war. See Collier, P., Elliott, V. L., Hegre, H., Hoeffler, A., Reynal-Querol, M., & Sambanis, N. (2003). *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*, p. 32.

development; war is rooted in and defined by failing human development; thus the path from the bad to the good is the promotion of human development.

Such a solution to the terror of war is captured in the endeavor of peacebuilding. One cannot deny the significance of immediate factors in the onset and conclusion of war⁸⁰, but the intent here is to set the foundations within a war-torn society for a broad and lasting peace. To do so, as has been said, requires attention to both the original forces that brought the country to the point of civil war and all of that which comes along with the actual experience of violence. Relatively superficial influences can ignite the cannons and silence the guns, but peacebuilding seeks to get at those deep-seated issues underlying the violent conflict that hold the key to sustainable stability for the nation.

Though the precise nature of the effort varies among circumstances and actors, one can conceive of peacebuilding fundamentally as the processes of reconciliation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction within a war torn nation.⁸¹ Collectively these components aim first to prevent any relapse into widespread violence while also establishing the foundations for a long-term, higher-order peace within the country. Of course it is to be expected that conflicts will arise within any society, yet alone one barely removed from such a tumultuous and divisive period; but the aim of peacekeeping is to establish the norms and institutional framework within which such conflicts

⁸⁰ A vast literature exists on the immediate causes of both the onset of war and the cessation of hostilities. For one review of the former, see Walter, B. (2002). *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars*; Wagner, R. H. (1993). *The Causes of Peace*; Waterman, H.(1993). *Political Order and the "Settlement" of Civil Wars*; and Zartman, W. (1993). *The Unfinished Agenda: Negotiating Internal Conflicts*. For the latter, see Brown, M. E. (2001). *Ethnic and Internal Conflicts: Causes and Implications*; and Sambanis, N. (2002). *A Review of Recent Advances and Future Directions in the Quantitative Literature on Civil War*.

⁸¹ For a variety of definitions of 'peacebuilding,' see David, C. (2002). *Does Peacebuilding Build Peace?*, p.18; Jeong, H. (2002). *Peacebuilding: Conceptual and Policy Issues*, p. 7; and Kumar, K. (1997). *The Nature and Focus of International Assistance for Rebuilding War-Torn Societies*, p. 2.

can be resolved without resorting to violence (*e.g.*, through a legitimate political system).⁸² With such purpose, parties to the war from all sides join together with outside actors to tackle the needs of the community through the familiar three-pronged approach of political, economic, and social initiatives.

Currently some degree of consensus exists in declaring the neoliberal model to be the optimum basis of all peacebuilding efforts.⁸³ In this thinking, the institution of formal democratic processes and a market-based economy, fostered by the support of outside intervening actors, provides the best foundation for peace within an embattled society. Such conjectures stem from three central tenets of liberal thought: that such standards as democracy for peace are to be valued inherently, that interdependence (*e.g.*, of open-market economies) leads to exorbitant costs of war, and that international institutions possess a unique ability to foster cooperation among states.⁸⁴ From there, the liberal perspective posits three aims of the peacebuilding model: a positive peace based on the absence of structural violence; human security that extends beyond basic needs to the realms of good governance, sustainable development, and social equity; and a cooperative security that ensures protection through a joint partnership of internal and external actors.⁸⁵ In a broad sense, it is the promotion of justice and human dignity through an emphasis on human rights and development that brings a society out of war for good.⁸⁶

⁸² See David, C. (2002). *Does Peacebuilding Build Peace?*; Doyle, M. W., & Sambanis, N. (2000). *International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis*; Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*; and Jeong, H. (2002). *Peacebuilding: Conceptual and Policy Issues*.

⁸³ See Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*, p. 10.

⁸⁴ These three components comprise what is commonly known as the 'Kantian Triangle' from the classic theories of Immanuel Kant; see David, C. (2002). *Does Peacebuilding Build Peace?*, pp. 25-26.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. 27.

⁸⁶ See Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*, p. 22.

3.1 Complications of the War Context

Commitment to justice and human dignity is to be commended, but the glaring reality of peacebuilding is that this is not the typical development project.⁸⁷ Nations invariably struggle with comprehensive human development in its own right, but those societies attempting to pursue similar goals within the context of war face a daunting set of additional obstacles.⁸⁸

To begin, the parties expected to partner in peacebuilding efforts are the same parties who are or very recently were at war with each other. Before any work on concrete rehabilitation or reconstruction can begin, primary actors in the conflict must become committed to the endeavor, effectively signal their commitment to their counterparts, and sufficiently accept the commitment of those counterparts.⁸⁹ Throughout the course and in the aftermath of war, a few components of traditional realist theory can impact significantly the relationships of vested actors.⁹⁰ Relative standings in conflict or the nature of a war's conclusion largely determine the balance of power that is brought into the peacebuilding program. Meanwhile, a security dilemma urges actors to concentrate on their own independent survival oftentimes at the cost of the other actors now cast in shadows of skepticism. Establishing trust among ex-opponents and holding parties to their commitments is vital to any attempt at peacebuilding, and in the absence of such measures one cannot help but expect any efforts to be doomed to failure.

Secondly, the project is asking a society that has been clinging to the edges of survival throughout a horrifying war experience to adopt an initiative that is inherently multifaceted and

⁸⁷ See Ball, N. (1996). *The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn Societies*, p. 616.

⁸⁸ See Doyle and Sambanis's conception of a triangular 'political space' within which peacebuilding must operate: Doyle, M. W., & Sambanis, N. (2000). *International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis*.

⁸⁹ See Hoddie, M., & Hartzell, C. (2005). *Signals of Reconciliation: Institution-Building and the Resolution of Civil Wars*, p. 30; and Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*, p. 7.

⁹⁰ See David, C. (2002). *Does Peacebuilding Build Peace?*, pp. 30-33.

long-term in nature. On the one hand, actors in wartime situations are pressed to make decisions based solely on the basis of immediate survival; thus attention must be given to shifting the scope of these actors.⁹¹ At the same time, the society as a whole has adapted itself to focus on the most urgent of needs and to function overall within a framework of day-to-day subsistence. As a result, one must recognize that the local capacities for adoption of such a radically different approach to life are certain to be constrained. Any long-term effort must first ensure that the most basic needs of the society are met, and within the context of war the demand for security often trumps most else. The local faculties for rehabilitation and reconstruction are critical within the peacebuilding framework, but insecurity can completely immobilize those already distressed capacities.

Finally, given the intense mediation needed to effect commitments along with diminished local capacities existing within the war torn society, the level at which international actors are committed plays a critical role in the success of any peacebuilding effort. A neutral and disconnected party is necessary in the tremendous task of building trust between parties that at one point were working for the other's destruction. Moreover, given the devastated conditions likely to be found in a country undergoing the ravages of war, the financial, technical, and institutional support essential for effective peacebuilding can only come from international bodies like the United Nations and capable foreign nations. Peacebuilding simply is not an independent exercise for nations affected by war.

3.2 Complications of the Peacebuilding Context

⁹¹ See Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*, p. 10.

Largely due to the special circumstances of war detailed above, another set of concerns exists regarding the actual nature of peacebuilding itself. As the exercise itself is very young and still being developed, many of the questions regarding the appropriate approaches to peacebuilding are simply unanswerable at this point. Within the limited number of cases in which a peacebuilding program has been formally initiated, successes have been varied as much as the failures. From practical concerns of implementation to underlying challenges of the objectives of the effort, the simplicity of bringing good in the form of peace is complicated quickly.

The first point of concern on peacebuilding missions stems directly from the points mentioned above regarding the context of war. In addition to considering the overall implications of the war context, individual rehabilitation efforts must emphasize the specificities of each independent war context. The appropriate nature of two peacebuilding programs actually may be completely different if their respective situations are so disconnected as to demand entirely separate approaches. A list of wide-ranging variables for the case should determine how an effort is to proceed: the method for ending conflict; the level and intensity of conflict; the weakness of political and organizational infrastructure; the extent of existing development; and the levels and types of war damage.⁹² Though each of these items shapes the general framework of peacebuilding, failure to fit a specific program to its specific context leaves any general lessons useless.

Once a practical direction has been adopted, questions arise regarding the strategy of implementation. To start, one must ask with whom the primary responsibility of carrying out the peacebuilding operations should lie.⁹³ Experts widely recognize the need for local ownership of

⁹² See Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*, p. 24.

⁹³ See David, C. (2002). *Does Peacebuilding Build Peace?*, p. 22.

programming to ensure sustainability,⁹⁴ but actors cannot afford to neglect the distressed state of capacities within violence-ridden societies mentioned above. The necessity of external support is equally acknowledged, but again, problems arise if too much is expected given the potential of generating dependencies within communities.⁹⁵ Closely related, operations must decide to whom are efforts to be directed. Of course individuals throughout the society are in dire need of focused attention, but should priority be given to larger institutional structures so that lower-level concerns can be met more effectively in the long-run?⁹⁶ Further dilemmas arise concerning the timing of implementation.⁹⁷ On one side are the ‘gradualists’ who frame peacebuilding as a strictly postconflict endeavor that can only find success once warring parties have ceased direct hostilities (*i.e.*, a negative peace has been achieved).⁹⁸ While recognizing the need for a foundation of stability before any long-term successes can be realized, ‘synergists’ see peacebuilding rather as a complement to more conventional routes of securing an immediate peace (*e.g.*, peace negotiations, peace enforcement, and peacekeeping).⁹⁹ If peacebuilding can aid in the effort of meeting the most urgent needs while beginning to address deeper problems of the society, this school contends that there is no reason to wait. The final issue regarding implementation addresses the emphasis given to the various domains of peacebuilding. As some make a clear case for the priority of either political, economic, or social measures in establishing order within a tumultuous nation, others argue that these sectors are largely interdependent and

⁹⁴ Local ownership and participation is widely recognized as vital throughout the literature; for one instance, see Ball, N. (1996). *The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn Societies*, p. 621.

⁹⁵ Concerns of dependency on humanitarian support are also widespread; for an example see David, C. (2002). *Does Peacebuilding Build Peace?*, p. 39.

⁹⁶ See Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*, p. 32.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-31.

⁹⁸ See David, C. (2002). *Does Peacebuilding Build Peace?*, p. 21.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

inattention to any area can bring ruin to the entire operation.¹⁰⁰ Likewise, efforts at humanitarian aid and relief are often clearly kept separate in the field from the development and reconstruction efforts that are assumed to follow.¹⁰¹ One can understand the motivation to keep programs as streamlined and effective as possible, but one can also ask what exactly is the distinction between the two (*i.e.*, where does relief end and development begin?). Overall, even the soundest of intentions are prone to failure without due attention to the who, the when, and the how of implementation.

Finally, even beyond all of these matters of peacebuilding planning and operations, challenges can be raised as to the very purpose and goals of the endeavor as a whole. One point of contention draws a line between an ‘exclusivist’ and an ‘inclusivist’ school.¹⁰² The former posit that the war context is so unique and demanding of special attention to areas like security that ‘development’ is an entirely separate and ineffective concept for peacebuilding. From the opposite side the inclusivists argue that the two approaches are intrinsically linked and that peacebuilding must naturally fit into a larger context of development if a society is to attain a truly positive peace.

An even more fundamental challenge to peacebuilding, however, comes with skepticism of the overarching neoliberal model’s appropriateness to the war context. Given the commonly perceived ‘goodness’ of peacebuilding, very few have questioned the basic paradigm on which peacebuilding has operated. But recently the likes of voices like Roland Paris have challenged the almost universally accepted model of democratization bringing conflict from the battlefield into the political realm and marketization spurring the economic growth necessary to quell

¹⁰⁰ See the discussion on ‘functional interdependencies’ in Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*, pp. 27-29.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² David, C. (2002). *Does Peacebuilding Build Peace?*, p. 21.

tensions within an embattled society.¹⁰³ The crux of the rebuttal contends that such pursuits have “the potential to stimulate higher levels of societal competition at the very moment (immediately following the conflict) when states are least equipped to contain such tensions within peaceful bounds.”¹⁰⁴ Paris cites five “pathologies of liberalization”¹⁰⁵ that largely capture the explosive risks of introducing democracy and marketization to a war-torn nation. First, encouraging the growth of civil society is not enough in itself if the forces that arise promote not inclusion and compromise but rather prejudice, insularity, and extremism, as can be expected during and after civil conflict. Secondly, “ethnic entrepreneurs” can exploit societal divides to attain power within a liberalization process.¹⁰⁶ In addition, hurried elections can further polarize an already divided electorate, distancing the nation even further from resolutions to the conflicts that still abound. Moreover, elections can be used as a tool of opportunistic leaders to legitimize their authority before actually working to reverse the country’s democratic transition. Finally, the “economic dislocations and asymmetrical effects” that are to be expected with marketization efforts serve as sufficient ground for reigniting unrest and violence within a country.¹⁰⁷ In light of the tensions that already exist, the absence of official institutions to which to turn, and the familiarity of violence, one can reasonably expect the destabilizing effects of liberalization foretold here.

3.3 Hopes of the Capabilities Context

¹⁰³ See Paris, R. (1997). *Peacebuilding and the Limits of Liberal Internationalism*; and Paris, R. (2004). *At War’s End: Building Peace After Civil Conflict*.

¹⁰⁴ Paris, R. (2004). *At War’s End: Building Peace After Civil Conflict*, p. 6.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 160-168.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 162.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p. 167.

The difficulties, complications, and uncertainties presented by peacebuilding attempts are considerable, but that alters neither the basic goodness of the peace that is sought nor the value and necessity of pursuing it. Practically speaking, however, if the points of contention are not addressed, it does not matter how valuable or necessary peace is because it simply will not be achieved. Appreciating the validity of the obstacles and understanding the young endeavor of peacebuilding will significantly evolve with further experience, but perhaps there is still room for immediate improvement. Paris makes a huge step in uncovering the lack of challenge to the underlying paradigm, but the solution may not be in a change but rather an alteration to the paradigm. The guiding principle holds that justice and human dignity are the goals for which peacebuilding strives; taking inspiration directly from the capabilities approach to development, why not make justice and human dignity the basic functions on which peacebuilding operates? Justice and human dignity are directly related to the concepts of freedom and capabilities. Within the capabilities approach, their value is taken to be both inherent and instrumental, meaning that they are both that for which development aims and the path by which development is to be achieved. In like manner, justice and human dignity—and freedom and capabilities—are to be both the ends and means of peacebuilding.

Beginning with the most fundamental questions raised on peacebuilding, from the capabilities perspective one must view peacebuilding within a development framework. The lessons and experience with development are too rich and applicable to isolate peacebuilding solely because of the special context of war. All development efforts face unique and difficult impediments that must be considered, and the security threats and fractured society with which peacebuilding meets are just the same. Moreover, peacebuilding seeks to establish a high-order, positive peace based on the establishment of political, economic, and social norms and

institutions that reaffirm justice and human dignity within a society—how is this mission any different from that of development? While the war context does present special obstacles, the two ideas are naturally reaffirming and inseparable.

In response to the critique of the neoliberal model of peacebuilding, Paris himself points in the right direction with his proposal of the Institutionalization Before Liberalization¹⁰⁸ strategy:

What is needed in the immediate postconflict period is not quick elections, democratic ferment or economic “shock therapy” but a more controlled and gradual approach to liberalization, combined with the immediate building of governmental institutions that can manage these political and economic reforms.¹⁰⁹

Though democracy and market economics may be ultimately desired, the fractured society needs to take steps to prepare itself for the inherently destabilizing effects of competition that come with liberalization: allowing political parties and processes to mature before holding elections, fostering the growth of a civil society that moderates existing tensions, and pursuing economic reforms that diminish rather than exacerbate societal divisions.¹¹⁰ The capabilities approach demands that each individual be granted her due freedoms and opportunities, but only to the extent to which it does not infringe upon the capabilities of others. Within a war-torn nation, the immediate distribution of democratic and market privileges will benefit some, but obviously these benefits will come at the cost of many within society. This is not to say that individual freedoms should be withheld, but rather that the appropriate freedoms are pursued through the appropriate means. Peacebuilding must ensure that freedom comes to all persons, and the most effective way of doing so is by emphasizing the social arrangements that will allow such freedoms to flourish. Paris gives priority to governmental institutions, but other options exist in

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, pp. 179-196.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 7.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p. 188.

the form of traditional structures like community networks, cultural organizations, and religious bodies.¹¹¹ In the end, however, one must come to recognize the value of the individual within society. Opportunists, pariahs, and spoilers are sure to be found in all nations, but if pursued in a thoughtful and careful fashion, freedom in its broad sense serves as the best curb to the abuse of freedoms. The key to peace is not limiting capabilities but rather broadening the conception of capabilities beyond a vote in an election or access to a market.

In terms of the approach taken toward individual peacebuilding missions, the lens of capabilities provides the ultimate guide for addressing the particularities of each war context. As has been discussed, such a framework allows for a detailed and accurate representation of the causes and effects of a conflict that reaches to the most basic unit of society—the individual. In this way, the capabilities approach provides a model for operations to touch upon the most powerful of social forces, the most poignant of individual sufferings, and everything in between. By granting fair attention to each level of society, peacebuilding programs can adjust to fit any circumstance on any scale.

With regards to implementation, the capabilities approach entails clear responses to the concerns raised. As to the question of who should control peacebuilding operations, this perspective unapologetically calls for the primacy of the ‘recipient’s’ agency. Of course outside assistance is required within a nation undergoing the ravages of war, but the sustainability and success of the peacebuilding mission depends on the role of the actual communities attempting to heal and rebuild themselves.¹¹² In fact, the primary role of an external actor, and any actor for that matter, is the promotion of capabilities within society. A fundamental tenet of capabilities is

¹¹¹ See Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*, p. 32.

¹¹² See Ball, N. (1996). *The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn Societies*, p. 621; and Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*, p. 32.

agency; thus the real goal of peacebuilding is to enable a nation to secure its own stability and effectively transfer that responsibility to the nation. Again, as much as freedom and human dignity are the goals valued within peace, they must also be the primary instruments in attaining that peace. By this standard, the affected society must have ownership of as much of the peacebuilding activity as possible, and where it is not possible the primary goal must be to make it possible by expanding capabilities.

The quandary of who is to be the primary target of peacebuilding programs would seem equally clear-cut within the capabilities approach, but an important clarification must be made. The approach does, without exception, call for the primacy of the individual, but that should not be interpreted as all operations needing to be directed at individuals. Rather, all efforts must be framed so as to give highest concern to the individual. In one light, this does indicate that no individual can be sacrificed or passed over for the benefit of any other individual or group; every person is entitled to individual consideration and protection. On the other hand, individuals can only realize their capabilities within a suitable environment, so at times it is in the best interest of the individual to direct efforts toward larger projects on infrastructure, social arrangements, and political and economic systems. Each person within a community matters, but every person suffers when society as a whole is neglected.

Finally, the matters of timing and domains of peacekeeping operations can be handled together within the capabilities framework. As demonstrated in Sen's listing of freedoms and Nussbaum's conception of central capabilities,¹¹³ all freedoms are intrinsically linked and deficiencies within any area of capabilities are a limitation of a person's overall capability. For Sen, protective security is on level with economic facilities, while Nussbaum places

¹¹³ See Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 9; and Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, p. 78.

opportunities for affiliation right beside bodily health. Not only are these items to be valued equally, but the promotion of one is actually the promotion of all. The point is that the mission of peacebuilding must not be to secure human survival but rather human dignity and lives people would have reason to value. What this means for the issue of timing is that peacebuilding in the capabilities framework is to be as it is conceived by synergists—the pursuit of the broader objectives of peacebuilding are a natural complement to the more readily accepted avenues toward achieving an immediate cessation of hostilities. As follows, work toward a recovering society's overall development must not wait for other mechanisms (*e.g.*, negotiations, peacekeeping, etc.) to run their course. Under the same argument, peacebuilding operations must not divide their emphasis among separate domains of work. In terms of focusing on the political, economic, or social needs of a nation, the capabilities approach insists that they are all in fact interconnected. While work in one area supports efforts in the others, inattention to any area will result in damages to the other sectors as well. In the same way the distinction between relief and development is unnecessary and probably even detrimental to peacebuilding as a whole. Categorically labeling some needs as more urgent or vital to survival effectively denies the right of person to a dignified life that she can value. Human beings are not commodities to be protected or resources to be developed; if peacebuilding is to improve human lives, then it must not limit itself within the confines of conventional timelines and priority structures.

3.4 Realizing the Capabilities Approach to Peacebuilding

Though the theoretical foundation of the capabilities approach is sound, the clear skepticism that should arise is the matter of practicality. Promotion of freedom, dignity, and justice is of course desired, but how can this possibly be achieved within all of the constraints of the war context

which have been so plainly laid out? The need for peacebuilding as framed above is all the same, but the fact is that any operation will be limited by the basic confines of resources, time, commitment, and feasibility along with all of the other factors brought on by war. Though critics typically cite the primary shortcoming of the capabilities approach to development to be its lack of practical value, within the peacebuilding realm the approach offers clear and fully realizable guidelines for implementation.

On a broad level, capabilities-focused peacebuilding could operate on the basis of a threshold as proposed by Nussbaum.¹¹⁴ In this thinking, there exists a level of capability below which a person is prevented from living a life worthy of a human being. Actually, the notion of a threshold is highly applicable to the entire war experience. Earlier arguments attributed the cause of conflict to a lack of human development that inflamed grievances and created opportunities to the point at which widespread violence took over a country. The threshold idea really completes this argument in that a level of capabilities across a society could be conceived that is necessary to maintain stability and prevent war. The actual experience and effects of war, then, can be viewed as pushing a society further and further below that threshold of development. Bringing high-order peace to a nation thus requires bringing the society back above the threshold level in a sustainable fashion.

In terms of actual peacebuilding operations, a threshold approach would insist that priority would be given first to bringing all individuals above a certain threshold in *all* categories. This is in line with the conventional practice of attending first to those in most need, but the revision of the capabilities approach is in the definition of ‘need.’ In some cases it may very well be that food, shelter, and medicine are what is needed most to return an individual to a

¹¹⁴ See Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, pp. 73-74.

life she has reason to value. But not difficult to imagine also, especially when speaking of a war situation, are instances where the most direct path back to a truly human life are an economic livelihood, the end of political repression, restored social networks, or sufficient cultural freedom. Just as the most prominent causes and detrimental effects of violent conflict could be found within the political, economic, or social realms given the individual circumstance, the most urgent needs of a society in restoring peace could be of any nature. The task of a peacebuilding mission, then, is first to identify those needs of a society falling furthest beneath the threshold required for positive peace. Initial programs would be directed toward enhancing capabilities in those realms, and from there efforts would move to other areas satisfying the threshold standard. In response to critics condemning both peacebuilding and the capabilities approach as trying to achieve too much, the threshold concept establishes clear goals and boundaries for operations while still sufficiently addressing the deep and broad needs of a nation trying to attain peace.

3.5 Conclusion

The notion of bringing a war-torn nation into a state of high-order peace is a daunting task, and as would be expected the endeavor of peacebuilding runs into a fair amount of obstacles. In remaining committed to that which actually matters within such a process (*i.e.*, human individuals) and recognizing the effort's inherent relationship with development, however, peacebuilding can overcome many of these hurdles by framing itself within the capabilities framework. Such an approach allows for a clear, promising, and feasible path by which a nation can restore lives of human dignity and freedom.

Reintegration as Peacebuilding on the Level of Individual Capabilities

You can't separate peace from freedom because no one can be at peace unless he has his freedom.

- El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz (Malcolm X)

In seeking to bring a nation from the bad of civil conflict to the good of positive peace, peacebuilding missions understandably entail a broad spectrum of activities. Securing immediate stability within a context of war is a daunting task itself, but, as has been discussed, peacebuilding goes even further in attempting to extend that stability into the long-term. To achieve this sustainable peace, a process of development must be initiated to enable the country, on the one hand, to recover from the experience of violence and, on the other, to address the underlying causes of the war. Full realization of positive peace, however, demands successful development as defined by the capabilities approach. Improvements within society must come at all levels while maintaining a focus on the human individual. Consequently, peacebuilding must reach into the realms of politics, economics, and society from the broadest macro forces to the most detailed micro levels. What is ultimately needed, then, is an integrated approach of countless individual programs working toward the common goal of positive peace through human development.

Within this broad spectrum of activities has arisen one set of efforts that, while limited in its scope, largely captures the overall peacebuilding framework, that is disarmament,

demobilization, and reintegration (DDR). Though DDR narrows its focus within the conflict to the realm of soldiers, the process encapsulates much of what needs to occur on a broader scale for a nation to transition from civil war to positive peace. The disarmament and demobilization phases signal the immediate measures that need to be taken for a society to escape the grips of violence and prepare itself for an attempt at peace. Handing over weapons and exiting the battlefield are representative of the initial advances a country needs to make in escaping the war experience. While the significance and necessity of these steps cannot be understated, the principal requirements for a positive peace are captured by the reintegration component. A country's attempt to move from a period of intense violence to a lasting state of peace and development is poignantly mirrored by the effort to transition a soldier successfully into civilian life. While the capabilities approach calls for national peacebuilding to function as if on the level of individual human beings, reintegration can literally be viewed as peacebuilding at the level of the individual human being.

4.1 From War to Peace on the Individual Level

If a country is to be taken out of a context of war and put into a context of peace, the people in the country within that context of war must too be put into a context of peace. This simple point holds no truer for any segment of the population than it does for those actually waging the war. While armed forces often play a large role in bringing an immediate end to a conflict, their role within a country also constrains a nation's advance to sustainable peace. In draining already limited resources, detracting from the establishment of accountable government, and promoting conflict over compromise, a significant military presence can easily serve as a destabilizing force

within unstable societies.¹¹⁵ However, the elimination of armed forces, whether of the government or of a rebel movement, is no simple task since those forces are comprised of individuals who are among their respective ranks for some reason. Whether fighting out of some deeply ingrained ideological motivation or merely to earn a livelihood, combatants are sure to have some interest in retaining their position as soldiers. Even if forcefully abducted and compelled to fight, individuals may reasonably grow attached to their positions or fear a return to normal society. Some conflict situations are so intense or protracted that “ex-combatants will have no experience, or memory, of pre-war peaceful patterns of life,” effectively making reintegration “a misnomer.”¹¹⁶ A primary key to peace, then, becomes the creation of alternative incentives to violence, providing these persons with an acceptable and sustainable position outside of their military roles.¹¹⁷ Failing to bring ex-combatants out of their warring roles beyond the short term creates a serious threat of disruption to any strides toward peace and development.

This is the charge of reintegration: helping individuals secure a feasible and livable place within civilian society after having been disarmed and demobilized. The ‘R’ component of DDR following disarmament and demobilization actually can be conceptualized as a series of ‘Rs’ including reinsertion, relocation, resettlement, repatriation, reunification, reconciliation, and rehabilitation.¹¹⁸ In practice, though, the process is typically broken into two sections:

¹¹⁵ See Ball, N. (1997). *Demobilizing and Reintegrating Soldiers: Lessons from Africa*, p. 85.

¹¹⁶ United Nations Secretary-General (2006). *Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations*, p. 14.

¹¹⁷ See Sundh, L., & Schjorlien, J. S. (eds.). (2006). *Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilisation Reintegration: Final Report*, p. 4.

¹¹⁸ See Meek, S., & Malan, M. (2004). *Identifying Lessons from DDR Experiences in Africa*, p. 7; and United Nations Office of the Special Advisor on Africa & Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone (2005). *Conference Report on Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration (DDR) and Stability in Africa*, p. 11.

reinsertion and reintegration.¹¹⁹ The former refers to the transitional material support, both cash and in-kind, offered to ex-combatants and their families during and directly after the demobilization process to meet their most basic needs.¹²⁰ The safety allowances, food, clothes, shelter, medical services, education, training, employment, and tools provided here are strictly temporary measures, a sort of survival kit, intended to counter the initial shock of entering civilian society and should last no longer than one year.¹²¹

Though these temporary handouts are necessary, support to former soldiers and their families must transition into the broader and more sustainable reintegration phase as smoothly and quickly as circumstances allow. It is here that the ex-combatant attains full civilian status and thus confronts the responsibilities and realities that come with this new life. The goal of the reintegration process, then, is to enable the former soldier to achieve and sustain independence within society through productive activity.¹²² Support, on the one hand, is typically of an economic nature, setting out to provide the demobilized individual with sustainable means for living.¹²³ Included here are education, vocational training, and career counseling to prepare the person for work, along with the establishment of micro-companies, public works, and other

¹¹⁹ See Ball, N. (1997). *Demobilizing and Reintegrating Soldiers: Lessons from Africa*, pp. 89-90; Ball, N., & Van de Goor, L. (2006). *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Mapping Issues, Dilemmas and Guiding Principles*, p.2; Carames, A., Fisas, V., & Luz, D. (2006). *Analysis of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) Programmes Existing in the World during 2005*, p. 23; Colletta, N. J., Kostner, M., & Wiederhofer, I. (2004). *Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration: Lessons and Liabilities in Reconstruction*, p. 170; Sundh, L., & Schjorlien, J. S. (eds.). (2006). *Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilisation Reintegration: Final Report*, pp. 31-32; and United Nations Secretary-General (2006). *Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations*, p. 8.

¹²⁰ See Ball, N., & Van de Goor, L. (2006). *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Mapping Issues, Dilemmas and Guiding Principles*, p.2.

¹²¹ See Carames, A., Fisas, V., & Luz, D. (2006). *Analysis of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) Programmes Existing in the World during 2005*, p. 23; and United Nations Secretary-General (2006). *Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations*, p. 8.

¹²² See Ball, N. (1997). *Demobilizing and Reintegrating Soldiers: Lessons from Africa*, p. 90.

¹²³ See Carames, A., Fisas, V., & Luz, D. (2006). *Analysis of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) Programmes Existing in the World during 2005*, p. 23.

employment opportunities to put her on her way to financial independence. In addition, some reintegration programs also seek to facilitate the social rehabilitation necessary for full transition through psychological counseling for the ex-combatant, coupled with awareness and sensitivity programming within receiving communities.¹²⁴ On the whole, reintegration becomes a long-term, open-ended process aiming, in fact, to become obsolete once the demobilized have established their positions within civilian society.

Given the stakes involved and the circumstances surrounding the initiative, reintegration plays as large a role in rebuilding and stabilizing a nation as does any other peacebuilding effort. Successful reintegration not only eliminates the immediate threat of soldiers reigniting violence but also contributes to a nation's long-term development with the addition of new productive members to a society and to prospects of peace by building mutual confidence and trust among former adversaries.¹²⁵ In this way, reintegration serves as an ideal model of peacebuilding in extending beyond the demands of a negative peace to set the foundations for a sustainable positive peace. Both figuratively and literally, reintegrated individuals can be viewed as the primary building blocks of a nation's recovery from civil war.

With that said, one must remember that reintegration on its own, and even DDR as a whole, addresses only a segment of what is required for full recovery. A comprehensive transformation of society necessitates attention far beyond DDR's limited focus on combatants, security, and stability.¹²⁶ Equally as critical, reintegration and other DDR programs cannot expect to find any success in their own right unless implemented within a broader peacebuilding framework. If these measures are overburdened by all post-conflict demands, they will flounder

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ See Kumar, K. (1997). *The Nature and Focus of International Assistance for Rebuilding War-Torn Societies*, p. 11.

¹²⁶ See Sundh, L., & Schjorlien, J. S. (eds.). (2006). *Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilisation Reintegration: Final Report*, p. 15.

and fail to deliver on even their originally intended aims.¹²⁷ Moreover, without adequate political and financial backing from involved parties, no achievements can be expected.¹²⁸ Reintegration and related measures must be driven by a political process striving for a broad peace agreement along with sufficient commitments to provisions for the actual implementation of programs. Reintegration is vitally necessary for rebuilding a nation but not sufficient for true recovery.

Beyond these valid limitations, the concept of reintegration faces perhaps even more pressing difficulties on its own right. Even after confining reintegration to its specific aim of transforming the life of a soldier into the life of a civilian, the nature of the effort leaves great room for challenges and complexity. Again, the connection between reintegration and peacebuilding as a whole becomes useful. Many of the issues confronted in bringing a nation out of a state of war into a state of peace are applicable to the process of delivering the individual from a state of war into a state of peace. The same questions asked of peacebuilding can be directed toward the reintegration effort: What should be the primary focus of the initiative, and where should limits be drawn? Who should be responsible for doing the work, and to whom should it be aimed? When should the effort begin, how should it proceed, and when it is complete? As was the case with peacebuilding, an application of the capabilities approach provides a clear and promising framework for reintegration efforts.

4.2 Delivering a Comprehensive Peace within the Capabilities Context

¹²⁷ See United Nations Office of the Special Advisor on Africa & Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone (2005). *Conference Report on Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration (DDR) and Stability in Africa*, p. 28.

¹²⁸ See United Nations Secretary-General (2006). *Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations*, p. 3.

In addressing the concerns cited above, perhaps another question presents a more appropriate place to begin: why the capabilities approach? As with the basis for the approach itself, the reasons for its applicability to reintegration are both intrinsic and instrumental. With regards to the former, the foundations and aims of the approach are inherently valuable and to be desired. Reintegration plainly centers on individual human beings; thus a framework based upon the primacy of the individual is an ideal match. The emphasis on human dignity, freedom, and agency that defines the capabilities approach largely captures that for which reintegration aims with each ex-combatant. Not only does this framework encapsulate the goals of reintegration, but it also provides the optimal path by which to achieve these aims, hence its instrumental value. As a peacebuilding mechanism, reintegration must address that which is experienced during war as well as the underlying causes of the conflict. The capabilities approach has been shown to be the optimum tool for exploring these two elements at the level of the individual, so naturally its utility should extend into the attempt to resolve these issues for each former soldier. On these grounds of complementary ends and means, the capabilities approach is adopted as the framework for addressing the challenges and complexities of reintegration.

Among the most fundamental issues with reintegration is the role of development. On one end are those who stress that development is not to be confused with the true objectives of disarming and demobilizing soldiers in order to bring them into civilian society. Security and stability must not be overlooked or lost in over-ambitious and peripheral aims that are not even likely to be achieved through reintegration.¹²⁹ The needs of a nation exiting war are clear, and the achievements to be expected from DDR as a whole are limited. Others view reintegration, along with its disarmament and demobilization antecedents, as a natural complement to

¹²⁹ See Ball, N., & Van de Goor, L. (2006). *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Mapping Issues, Dilemmas and Guiding Principles*, p. 1; and Meek, S., & Malan, M. (2004). *Identifying Lessons from DDR Experiences in Africa*, p. 11.

development initiatives. As development initiatives assist in smoothing the DDR process, DDR provides the security and stability groundwork necessary for a postconflict nation's political, social, and economic development.¹³⁰ The capabilities approach would go one step further, however, in identifying development and reintegration to be, in actuality, one in the same. When conceived in full as the expansion of the economic, political, and social freedoms and capabilities of the individual, human development and reintegration become inseparable.

The connection between the two concepts is unavoidable considering the nature of the reintegration enterprise. To begin, the subjects of reintegration are distinguished by their relatively low levels of human development. This lack of development is attributable to two familiar factors: the cause of war and the experience of war. Firstly, whether recruited or forced into the military ranks, individuals typically become involved in the violence in part because of their diminished capabilities.¹³¹ Moreover, the wartime experience often diminishes the physical and psychological condition of the individual even further.¹³² The average soldier at the end of a conflict is characterized by minimal levels of literacy and education, limited productive skills, weak social links, few personal possessions, no housing or land, little civic awareness, many dependents, and psychological trauma.¹³³ These handicaps collectively leave the ex-combatant unfit to deal with the typical demands of everyday civilian life. Thus the role of integration becomes the pursuit of human development. In response to the claims that reintegration and

¹³⁰ See Sundh, L., & Schjorlien, J. S. (eds.). (2006). *Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilisation Reintegration: Final Report*, pp. 4, 9, 10, 14.

¹³¹ Low levels of human development leave an individual highly susceptible to either abduction (e.g. children) or recruitment by the military (e.g. the unemployed and uneducated) or a rebellion (e.g. the aggrieved); see Collier, P., Elliott, V. L., Hegre, H., Hoeffler, A., Reynal-Querol, M., & Sambanis, N. (2003). *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*, p. 68; and Sambanis, N. (2004). *Poverty and the Organization of Political Violence: A Review and Some Conjectures*, p. 9.

¹³² See Ball, N. (1997). *Demobilizing and Reintegrating Soldiers: Lessons from Africa*, p. 86.

¹³³ See Ball, N. (1997). *Demobilizing and Reintegrating Soldiers: Lessons from Africa*, p. 86; Colletta, N. J., Kostner, M., & Wiederhofer, I. (2004). *Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration: Lessons and Liabilities in Reconstruction*, p. 171; and Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*, p. 144.

DDR as a whole cannot afford to lose sight of the primary goals of security and stability, one has to realize that the only way to accomplish those ends is through the successful and lasting placement of former soldiers in society, which of course can only be achieved with successful human development. The development focus allows reintegration to go beyond the demands for immediate stability and begin the foundations of a comprehensive and sustainable peace.

To achieve this promised success, though, reintegration must adopt the development focus in full and shape its progress and objectives as so. In simple terms, reintegration must aim to enable individuals to realize lives of full human dignity that they value and have reason to value. These familiar demands of Nussbaum and Sen¹³⁴ clearly extend beyond their philosophical roots to reveal their full weight in this case: if an individual fails to attain a life of dignity that she values and has reason to value within the reintegration process, what is to keep her from disrupting the fragile peace in her society by reverting to her warring state? In a sense, the stakes for development (*i.e.*, successful reintegration) become the stability of a nation.

With the emphasis on human development, a core element of reintegration becomes respect for the freedom and agency of the individual. Unlike other peacebuilding or development initiatives, reintegration sets as its primary unit of attention the actual lives of human individuals. Any effort hoping to find success must consider this fact by respecting the inherent value, capabilities, and rights of its subjects. Firstly, the process must come within the context of a political agreement (*e.g.*, peace negotiations) by which candidates for reintegration make known their willingness to partake in such programs.¹³⁵ The programs that then come into effect must actually be designed to match the circumstances of intended participants while

¹³⁴ See Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*; and Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*.

¹³⁵ See Sundh, L., & Schjorlien, J. S. (eds.). (2006). *Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilisation Reintegration: Final Report*, p. 19.

remaining flexible enough to adjust to their changing needs.¹³⁶ To respect fully their capacities as human individuals, both the needs and aspirations of ex-combatants should serve as the basis upon which reintegration programs are designed.¹³⁷ Once efforts are in place, care must be taken in framing the various aspects of reintegration as opportunities rather than directives.¹³⁸ Any coercion within the reintegration enterprise not only violates the fundamental premises of the effort but also puts at risk the viability of the exercise. Any pressure felt or perceived by participants can incite levels of distrust or discomfort sufficient for abandoning the reintegration effort and returning to the battlefield. Given this, one of the most effective ways in which to ensure the sustainability of a reintegration program is by offering options to the former combatants in such areas as form of employment and type of education.¹³⁹ With interventions based around counseling and surveys, the lives into which ex-combatants enter will truly be one that they have reason to value. Even with this, though, despite the enormity of the stakes at hand, the nature of reintegration has it that no results can be forced or guaranteed. The focus of programs must be to build up the capabilities of individuals and offer them opportunities to pursue a new life, but no sustainable good can come out of just handing that life to the ex-combatant. While it is hoped that the former soldier will come to realize that her best interests are served by giving up the way of the bullet, nothing can be done to ensure this development that would also further the potential for peace. Nevertheless, the alternative reaffirms the necessity of the reintegration venture:

¹³⁶ See United Nations Secretary-General (2006). *Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations*, p. 9.

¹³⁷ The characteristics, needs, expectations, and aspirations of demobilized soldiers can and have been collected through survey initiatives; see Ball, N. (1997). *Demobilizing and Reintegrating Soldiers: Lessons from Africa*, p. 101; and Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies: Strategy and Process*, p. 145.

¹³⁸ See Ball, N. (1997). *Demobilizing and Reintegrating Soldiers: Lessons from Africa*, p. 98.

¹³⁹ See Colletta, N. J., Kostner, M., & Wiederhofer, I. (2004). *Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration: Lessons and Liabilities in Reconstruction*, p. 176; and Meek, S., & Malan, M. (2004). *Identifying Lessons from DDR Experiences in Africa*, p. 30.

What is virtually guaranteed is that unless ex-combatants have a real opportunity to acquire functional skills or resume or recreate sustainable livelihoods, they will not return to normal civilian life.¹⁴⁰

Another implication of the human development focus is that reintegration must broaden its aims to incorporate the full scope of human capabilities and grant equal priority to each. While some have professed the holistic approach required for complete and successful reintegration,¹⁴¹ most practical designs for programming are dominated by an emphasis on economic and, at times, social rehabilitation. Securing a sustainable economic livelihood and fostering acceptance within the community is of vital importance, but these items on their own fall far short of providing ex-combatants a life of full human dignity that they would have reason to value. Reviewing the underlying causes of war and the full impact of the war experience demonstrates that the needs of ex-combatants attempting to secure a new life extend into the full list of freedoms and capabilities comprised by Sen and Nussbaum.¹⁴² If an individual is to accept fully her new position in civilian society, her demands of political voice, intellectual development, and even the opportunity for leisure must be taken just as seriously as her needs of shelter, social acceptance, and employment. What leads the former soldier to take up arms in the first place and the impact a war experience has on her probably extends beyond a lack of housing, social marginalization, and unemployment; thus reintegration must broaden itself to address these more 'human' areas. An inability to seek political acknowledgement or the stifling of one's freedom to think and enjoy life can prevent an individual from achieving the full

¹⁴⁰ Sundh, L., & Schjorlien, J. S. (eds.). (2006). *Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilisation Reintegration: Final Report*, p. 24.

¹⁴¹ See Carames, A., Fisas, V., & Luz, D. (2006). *Analysis of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) Programmes Existing in the World during 2005*, p.5; and Sundh, L., & Schjorlien, J. S. (eds.). (2006). *Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilisation Reintegration: Final Report*, p. 23.

¹⁴² See Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 9; and Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, p. 78.

humanness demanded for successful reintegration just as much as the more conventional economic and social factors.

In addition to the nature of the reintegration effort, planners must decide to whom the programs will be directed. Obviously reintegration sets out to place former soldiers into civilian society, but narrowly limiting efforts to just the ex-combatants themselves leaves programs ineffective and even potentially dangerous. At the most basic level, individuals exiting the armed forces typically have to secure a place within civilian society not only for themselves but also for the dependents for whom they provide.¹⁴³ Any program must recognize this fact by targeting ex-combatants along with their families, or else the support offered will prove highly inadequate and possibly result in enough frustration to provoke a return to the warring life.

Beyond these personal levels, one must also consider how the greater communities intended to receive these reintegrated soldiers fit into the overall process. In terms of effectiveness, no hope of a productive and worthwhile civilian life can reasonably exist unless there is a productive and worthwhile civilian society in which to pursue that life.¹⁴⁴ Such a functioning society is far from given since within the civil war context, the same communities expected to receive individuals have most often shared the same relationship to the violence as the ex-combatants: each community to some degree still contains the underlying causes to the conflict while also having to deal with the additional complications that come with the actual war experience. Postconflict societies often lack the capacity to sustain themselves yet alone facilitate the rehabilitation of former soldiers. Perhaps even more troubling, the communities into which ex-combatants are reintegrated are the communities that have fallen victim to the violence and destruction perpetrated by those very same ex-combatants. Receiving them is one

¹⁴³ See Ball, N. (1997). *Demobilizing and Reintegrating Soldiers: Lessons from Africa*, p. 103.

¹⁴⁴ See United Nations Office of the Special Advisor on Africa & Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone (2005). *Conference Report on Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration (DDR) and Stability in Africa*, p. 10.

matter, but actually to witness their direct receipt of support and assistance within reintegration programs is more than enough to instigate resentment within the society that could, in turn, lead to the stigmatization of reintegrated individuals and even the renewal of conflict.¹⁴⁵ Not only does the community dynamic potentially eliminate the utility of any reintegration effort, but it may even reverse its aim of contributing to overall stability and security.

The insight of the capabilities approach to be remembered here is the critical role a society has to play in the development of its individual members; human development is simply impossible without the proper social arrangements and institutions.¹⁴⁶ If reintegration is to be a true development initiative, then equal attention must be given to the individual former soldiers and the greater communities receiving them.¹⁴⁷ At the most basic level, such a broadening of support will alleviate any feelings of resentment and hopefully even be enough to win the community's support of the reintegration efforts. Such a shift in sentiments will not only increase a community's receptiveness of reintegrated individuals but may also serve as a direct foundation of peace between past rivals. In practical terms, thoughtful support given to communities directly alleviates some widely felt problems while also increasing the capacity to receive participants of reintegration programs, hence increasing the effectiveness of reintegration efforts. While former soldiers certainly require some unique and specialized assistance, many reintegration programs become more efficient if aimed at the larger society. Rather than training

¹⁴⁵ See Ball, N., & Van de Goor, L. (2006). *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Mapping Issues, Dilemmas and Guiding Principles*, p.3; and Colletta, N. J., Kostner, M., & Wiederhofer, I. (2004). *Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration: Lessons and Liabilities in Reconstruction*, p. 176.

¹⁴⁶ Such a statement reflects Sen's idea of individual freedom as "quintessentially a social product" [Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 31.] and Nussbaum's conception of "combined capabilities" [Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, p. 84.].

¹⁴⁷ See Landry, G. (2005). *Child Soldiers and Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration in West Africa: A survey of programmatic work on child soldiers in Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Guinea*, p. 16; Meeke, S., & Malan, M. (2004). *Identifying Lessons from DDR Experiences in Africa*, p. 33; Sundh, L., & Schjorlien, J. S. (eds.). (2006). *Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilisation Reintegration: Final Report*, pp. 5, 27, 29, 31; and United Nations Secretary-General (2006). *Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations*, pp. 13,15.

ex-soldiers for self-employment, energy can be spent creating microenterprises, public works, and other programs that employ community members alongside the reintegrated.¹⁴⁸ Instead of designing education programs for returnees, schools and training centers could be established for the entire community. Opportunities for political development and participation can foster rehabilitation while also bringing together ex-combatants and victims of war. Through multiple avenues, extending benefits to the general community has the potential to improve the communities on their own right, enhance the effectiveness of reintegration, and foster the establishment of a sustainable positive peace within the developing societies.

The issue of the targets of reintegration efforts leads naturally into its converse: if everyone is to benefit from reintegration programs, who is responsible for actually designing, implementing, and facilitating these efforts? As has been discussed, the nature of civil war, both in terms of lingering causes and the experience itself, leaves societies with greatly reduced capacities. Thus with any peacebuilding effort, reintegration included, the need for support from outside actors such as various branches of the United Nations, foreign governments, the World Bank, and nongovernmental organizations becomes an unavoidable reality.¹⁴⁹ However, the effectiveness and sustainability of any effort in large part hinge on the degree to which influential parties on the national level, including the government, rebel forces, and civil society, involve themselves with the process. Within a postconflict situation requiring respect for the sensitive stability that is in place, reintegration must be defined broadly by national ownership.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ See Ball, N. (1997). *Demobilizing and Reintegrating Soldiers: Lessons from Africa*, p. 100.

¹⁴⁹ See Meek, S., & Malan, M. (2004). *Identifying Lessons from DDR Experiences in Africa*, p. 14.

¹⁵⁰ See Ball, N., & Van de Goor, L. (2006). *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Mapping Issues, Dilemmas and Guiding Principles*, p. 7; and Sundh, L., & Schjorlien, J. S. (eds.). (2006). *Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilisation Reintegration: Final Report*, p. 21.

As follows, a primary objective of outside actors is to enhance national capacities so that ownership and control can be transferred in the earliest stages of reintegration.¹⁵¹

Despite this national role, the capabilities approach goes further in demanding recognition for the agency of the human individual: the primary targets of development initiatives are to be in fact the primary agents in the process. In terms of reintegration, the efforts aimed at receiving communities and former combatants must be driven by those very same communities and ex-soldiers. A capabilities-centered reintegration project must not only set freedom as one of its principal objectives, but also utilize freedom as the primary tool in achieving that very end. On one side, local communities must be granted their own ownership of the reintegration process through genuine participation in the design and implementation phases.¹⁵² As on the national level, this requires outside actors to attach the highest priority to developing local structures and capacities able to take on such a role.¹⁵³ The capabilities approach asserts that the community itself best knows how it can help reintegration participants and what support it needs to do so, and this local knowledge cannot be ignored. If an environment suitable for the reception of ex-combatants is to be established, the process must be locally driven and controlled. In a similar light, the individuals targeted to enter civilian society must be granted their own ownership of the reintegration process. External actors and even the receiving communities of course play an important role in reintegration, but the primary actor in

¹⁵¹ See United Nations Secretary-General (2006). *Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations*, pp. 3, 9-10.

¹⁵² See Ball, N. (1997). *Demobilizing and Reintegrating Soldiers: Lessons from Africa*, p. 94; Colletta, N. J., Kostner, M., & Wiederhofer, I. (2004). *Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration: Lessons and Liabilities in Reconstruction*, p. 180; Landry, G. (2005). *Child Soldiers and Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration in West Africa: A survey of programmatic work on child soldiers in Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Guinea*, p. 2; Meek, S., & Malan, M. (2004). *Identifying Lessons from DDR Experiences in Africa*, p. 11; and United Nations Office of the Special Advisor on Africa & Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone (2005). *Conference Report on Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration (DDR) and Stability in Africa*, p. 29.

¹⁵³ See Landry, G. (2005). *Child Soldiers and Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration in West Africa: A survey of programmatic work on child soldiers in Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Guinea*, p. 16.

any program must be the individual actually attempting to find a sustainable position within civilian society. The function of the reintegration effort is to enhance capabilities and provide opportunities; the actual realization of a livelihood and new life is the responsibility of the participant. Of course the hope is that the new life in civilian society is attractive enough that the individual will choose to take advantage of these opportunities for a new life in civilian society. As targets for reintegration do make such a choice, however, the opportunity to pursue a life outside of this civilian capacity progressively diminishes. The aim is then to reach a critical point at which enough ex-combatants adopt the civilian life that even if an individual returnee rejects the reintegration project, she will have no real opportunity to return to a viable military force. Within the capabilities approach, reintegration must not only be directed toward but also directed by both the ex-combatants and receiving communities.

One final practical issue that needs to be addressed is the matter of timing within the overall context of conflict and peacebuilding. As was the case with peacebuilding efforts in general, the capabilities perspective proposes that reintegration be viewed as a natural and necessary complement to all other efforts at establishing peace within a country.¹⁵⁴ Simply put, the role of reintegration is important enough that a war-affected nation cannot afford to abide by some structured ordering of relief and rehabilitation efforts. An orderly process is presented whereby disarmament precedes overall demobilization, preparing the way for short-term reinsertion that smoothly transitions into the long-term reintegration phase; but it must be realized that the nature of the war experience and struggle for peace are not as neat and

¹⁵⁴ See Meek, S., & Malan, M. (2004). *Identifying Lessons from DDR Experiences in Africa*, p. 34; Sundh, L., & Schjorlien, J. S. (eds.). (2006). *Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilisation Reintegration: Final Report*, p. 4; and United Nations Secretary-General (2006). *Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations*, p. 3.

predictable as to allow such a linear flow.¹⁵⁵ There is never really a time during the peacebuilding process or even the conflict phase when the need for reintegration or overall DDR measures does not exist; thus the appropriate time to launch these programs is really a matter of when the needed actors are prepared to do so. In the postconflict period, parties to the conflict along with outside actors must recognize the weight of the issue of lingering military forces and convert this recognition into a sense of urgency in addressing the problem within peace negotiations and peacebuilding plans. Even during the course of the war, however, efforts should be made at establishing some semblance of a reintegration program. Individual soldiers are sure to exit the conflict before the violence ends, and the existence of a reintegration program may even draw some troops out of the ranks. If pursued appropriately, reintegration may even have a role to play in accelerating the end of violence by creating individual seeds of peace with exiting soldiers joining civilian communities. In any case, reintegration is a long and complex process fundamental to any attempt at peace; thus it is in any war-torn nation's interest to begin the process as soon as it can.

4.3 Realizing a Capabilities-Driven Reintegration

Though the theoretical weight of the proposal is clear, the capabilities model for reintegration arrives at the very same practical dilemma of the broader peacebuilding model: how can such a framework ever be realized in practice? Admittedly, the project is highly ambitious. Reintegration based on the principles of human dignity and freedom seeks to enhance the full range of human capabilities within ex-combatants while also developing the capacities of

¹⁵⁵ See Meek, S., & Malan, M. (2004). *Identifying Lessons from DDR Experiences in Africa*, p. 39.

communities to receive these individuals in all of the same areas. In addition, the effort is to be primarily designed and driven by the very individuals and communities set to benefit from the program. All the while, the project is to initiate at the earliest possible moment, perhaps even while the war still wages on, and align itself with all other efforts seeking to bring peace to the country. Still, though the capabilities approach does set a high standard for reintegration, the effort is ultimately feasible so long as the capabilities framework is utilized in full.

As with peacebuilding as a whole, the primary tool for realizing the reintegration model in practice is the threshold approach offered by Nussbaum.¹⁵⁶ By this standard, a threshold level exists for each human freedom and capability that must be met in order to achieve a life of human dignity. This can be translated to fit the reintegration model in two ways. On one end, programs must aim to bring the full range of freedoms and capabilities possessed by an individual ex-combatant to a point at which civilian life becomes desirable and sustainable. On the other end, efforts must work to develop the full range of capacities of the community to the level at which they can provide a suitable existence and livelihood for former soldiers. The key to succeeding in these areas practically is by matching the reintegration program to the specificities of each individual locality.

Naturally, the political, socio-economic, and security contexts into which a reintegration effort is introduced vary with each locality; thus each effort must adapt itself to fit its specific locality.¹⁵⁷ The lens of capabilities offers the ultimate guide for designing a program that plainly sets what needs of the community and candidates for reintegration must take priority. Such an evaluation is achieved first by appreciating the agency of beneficiaries, both the community and

¹⁵⁶ See Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, pp. 73-74.

¹⁵⁷ See Ball, N., & Van de Goor, L. (2006). *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Mapping Issues, Dilemmas and Guiding Principles*, p. 1; and United Nations Secretary-General (2006). *Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations*, p. 15.

ex-combatants, and simply asking them what they need from a program to achieve the desired ends.¹⁵⁸ The capabilities approach is unique in that it demands actors to think beyond conventional measures of employment and physical security and aim for other realms such as political needs and intellectual freedom that truly complete a life of human dignity. From this survey, the actors themselves can determine which capabilities and capacities are below the threshold level in themselves as individuals and the community as a whole. It may very well be that such an exercise will show the areas in need of most attention to be simple matters of economic livelihood and protection, but equally as feasible are demands for political participation or opportunities for entertainment. If done as prescribed on a local basis, broad similarities should be found among individual self-assessments since all are operating in generally the same context; thus the breadth of reintegration can be limited to a manageable level while still accounting for the needs of each human individual. From these demands, an assessment can be made of the present condition to determine the optimal path toward the expressed ends. Items such as the economic climate, the state of political structures, and the social and cultural mechanisms naturally present in communities can help shape programs that are both effective and feasible despite the challenges of the war context.

With this carefully planned approach, external and national actors can then assist communities in establishing the reintegration efforts. At all times, energies should be directed toward bringing above the threshold level the most underdeveloped capabilities of the reintegration candidates and most restricted capacities of the community. Through this approach, the abilities of both the ex-combatants and receiving community will continuously develop, allowing for increasingly local ownership and progression to other areas of human development in need of attention. By utilizing the agency of the involved actors, the

¹⁵⁸ For a telling example of the value of such a project, see the World Bank's *Voices of the Poor* project.

reintegration process should gradually become self-sustaining, all the while furthering the goals of security and stability though in an indirect manner. Though complete success cannot be reasonably expected, this model offers a promising outlook for the overall fate of ex-combatants and the societies into which they are received, as well as the foundations for a broad positive peace nationwide.

4.4 Conclusion

The project of reintegration largely serves as a microcosm of the overall peacebuilding effort. In many ways, the attempt to bring a former combatant from a military existence to a civilian livelihood mirrors that of transitioning a nation from a state of war to a state of peace. As such, the insights provided by the capabilities approach to peacebuilding extend to the realm of reintegration. This framework, if followed, offers great promise to securing sustainable peace and productivity at the individual level both within former combatants and the communities which are to receive them.

The War Reality: A Case Study of Northern Uganda

There is nothing that I liked there. They collect all the children together and make you beat someone to death. Once there were about seven who tried to escape, including two girls. The commander decided not to kill the girls. He picked one boy to be killed. He placed his head on a piece of wood. He told one of the girls to come and chop this boy into small pieces. She started trying to cut his head off, but was not doing a good job. The other boys were told to help. When they had almost taken the head off, they had to chop the body into small pieces. Then they were told to play with the dead person's head. The boys had to throw it in the air four times, and the girls three times. The girls were bare-chested. After that, they commanded the girls to smear blood of the dead boy on their chest. After that, they put the head of the boy in a central place, put clubs all over it covering the head, and informed us that anyone who tries to escape will have the same thing.

- 9-year-old escaped abductee in Gulu town¹⁵⁹

Crossing northward over the sprawling rapids of Karuma Falls, one quickly gets the sense that the Uganda on this side of the Victoria Nile is a different Uganda. Initially the impression is that this is a territory of pristine and quiet beauty. A family of baboons nonchalantly paces the dusty roadside, greeting the vehicle as it embarks on the straight, narrow road. On either side, tranquil green fields covered in thick lush flora extend as far as the eye can see, finally joining the cloudless blue sky in what must be some far-off country. No sign of life breaks the vast panorama aside from an infrequent plot of cultivated land or even more sporadic grouping of grass-thatched huts. These sights take one back to a simpler time of quiet traditional peoples making a modest living off of the land. The stillness and simplicity of it all prove quite

¹⁵⁹ Interview conducted in 2003. See Lomo, Z., Hovil, L., et al. (2004). *Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*, p. 33.

infectious, as onlookers pass into a drowsy appreciation and fondness for the beautiful monotony of the landscape.

And then, suddenly, the brutal reality of the scene hits. Deep into the flat, green heart of the northern territory, travelers on Gulu Road are struck by the ghastly sight of communities that one can only hope are not permanently inhabited by human beings. The innocence of the grass-thatched hut seen earlier placed in a quiet field is entirely corrupted as literally hundreds crowd a distinct plot of red, dry dust. The mystifying absence of life outside of green bushes and baboons is similarly disrupted by skeleton-like adult figures mixing among throngs of children all burdened by swollen bellies. Any resemblance of past ages is likewise broken by the rumble of white SUV's through the settlements, each bearing a unique name of foreign origin on its side. And just as one adjusts to this new reality, she is thrust back into a world of quiet green fields, stretching to the horizon.

This is the reality that is today's Acholiland—the northern districts of Uganda traditionally inhabited by the Acholi ethnic group.¹⁶⁰ The region has been ravaged by two decades of violent civil war, both Africa's longest running conflict¹⁶¹ and “the world's worst forgotten emergency.”¹⁶² The story of this land is really told through the sights listed above, that is when interpreted in the proper light. Grass-thatched huts and narrow-dusty roads serve as indicators of the region largely missing out on the internationally-heralded development enjoyed by most other areas of the country. The sprawling green countryside is a poignant reminder of the fertility and richness left untapped across the districts. Coupled with the lack of habitation,

¹⁶⁰ See Appendix I for maps depicting the location of the violence and ethnic geography of Uganda.

¹⁶¹ See Oxfam International. (2005). *Northern Uganda: Children Paying with Their Lives for UN Security Council Inaction*.

¹⁶² This was the description of the Northern Uganda conflict by Jan Egeland, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. See Paul, D. (2006). *Fulfilling the Forgotten Promise: The Protection of Civilians in Northern Uganda*, p. 6.

these fields also hold histories of ghastly rebel attacks and tragic civilian casualties. Finally, the camps of internally displaced persons tells of the present condition of this Acholi people, trapped between overbearing forces of repression and grasping for its last holds on survival.

Models and statistics successfully portray the experience of conflict in terms of ideas and figures, but the full extent of the costs and suffering brought by war on a society can only be captured by an intimate look at a specific case like that of northern Uganda. While one can only expect to reveal details and lessons unique to the Ugandan context, such a study also allows for parallels to be drawn to the broader conception of war and peace through the lens of capabilities that has been built to this point. It is hoped that this exercise will not only substantiate some of the theory that has been proposed, but also will provide practical lessons for formalizing the conceived model for reintegration.

5.1 Methods

This brief background to the Ugandan conflict and evaluation of reintegration efforts to follow comes largely as the result of a two-month field study in July through September of 2006 spent between the capital city of Kampala and northern town of Gulu.

The former serves as home to the headquarters of practically all relief, development, and advocacy organizations operating within the country. This allowed for more than a dozen substantial interviews with various officers, advocates, and heads of programs from various reputable local and international groups pertinent to the research topic. The time further provided a general sense of the sentiments regarding the northern conflict and prospects for the future of the region and the nation as a whole. Being in the political center of the country granted exposure to all of the various dimensions related to the war, especially since the period

of study coincided almost directly with the commencement of peace talks between the Government of Uganda and rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in southern Sudan. Issues of resettlement and reintegration took a leading role in the peace negotiations from the earliest moments, so all positions being taken on those items by various sides as well as in-depth analysis on the proposals being made were readily accessible within the media and broader discourse in the city.

The latter half of the study dedicated itself to a more intimate investigation of the research topic through approximately four weeks in the north based in Gulu, the town that in many ways serves as the epicenter of the conflict and all relief and humanitarian efforts that have been made. Interviews were continued here with another dozen or so individuals from various agencies who have had direct and intensive exposure to the conflict and reintegration efforts. Furthermore, visits were made to five separate internally displaced person (IDP) camps found outside the town to gain a firsthand perspective of how communities were being affected by the conflict. Here the investigator spoke with camp leaders and various inhabitants of the camps who relayed their own personal experiences, observations, and hopes for the future. While the time in Kampala was highly valuable to the work, the experience in Gulu went very far in grounding the project and putting real faces and voices to all of the theory and policy involved with the research.

In the end, the field study enabled the researcher to conduct twenty-nine in-depth interviews with various experts on the situation in northern Uganda, gather firsthand qualitative observations on life conditions in areas directly affected by the violence, and collect a great wealth of various reports and documents detailing the conflict and reintegration efforts.¹⁶³ Most

¹⁶³ Interviews will be categorized into four general groupings: IDP camp leaders (5), reintegration workers (4), broad relief officers (13), and peace advocates (7), the number of interviews in each category listed in parentheses. See

importantly, the interaction with actual agents of reintegration and members of the communities into which individuals are to be reintegrated gave insight into the research topic that simply could not have been achieved without firsthand exposure to the situation.

This case study of reintegration in northern Uganda will proceed along the same theoretical framework that has been established to this point. As a peacebuilding measure reintegration must address both the effects of war and its underlying causes at the level of the individual; thus the specific war context of northern Uganda will be presented in terms of the impact of the actual experience of war followed by the underlying factors that surround the war. From there, an analysis will be made of reintegration efforts currently underway in the region as viewed from a capabilities approach to peacebuilding. To conclude, an alternate structure for reintegration efforts will be offered that accounts for the effects and underlying causes of war through the capabilities perspective.

5.2 Displacing and Abducting Human Capabilities: The Northern Uganda War Experience

To this point the assumption has been made that war exacts massive costs from any nation that must bear the weight of its experience. One naturally infers that the extreme violence and destruction that conflict brings will impact a society considerably. When the conflict is of a civil nature, however, that impact certainly must only deepen and broaden. While all of these are fair and easy speculations to make, one really cannot gather the full consequence of the accounting of war without analyzing the statistics, statements, and broad implications of an actual bout of warfare. Not only that, this information must be organized within an adequate framework to

Appendix II for a listing of organizations represented by interview participants. Qualitative observations will serve generally as a broad foundation for the case study analysis but also provide some specific insights. All reports and documents used will be cited.

gain a comprehensive understanding of how violent conflict affects a society. A brief overview of the current state of affairs in northern Uganda through the lens of the capabilities approach achieves exactly this. Such a perspective makes plain the economic, social, and political obstacles to peace brought by the war experience in Uganda, particularly with respect to the issues of widespread civilian displacement and the nature of violence that have come to define the conflict.

5.2.1 *Broad Costs*

In terms of basic economics, the conflict has undoubtedly been a burden to the country at an expense of \$1.7 billion over its twenty-year duration, a number that actually doubles the Ugandan government's total tax revenue for 2003-2004.¹⁶⁴ Naturally, the brunt of this cost has fallen upon the northern region where the conflict has actually taken place, with an estimated total for 1986-2006 of \$864 million.¹⁶⁵ In a poverty-stricken nation such as Uganda, such an expenditure can dramatically affect development efforts. The basic social arrangements required for the realization of combined capabilities (*e.g.*, an education system, health care, transportation and communication infrastructure, and avenues for political voice) suffer greatly when such a substantial sum of money is directed to other areas, yet alone areas that directly lead to the destruction of those needed social structures (*i.e.*, military pursuits).

Despite the magnitude of these figures, one must realize that these huge sums are actually the aggregate of individual human costs over entire societies as they represent opportunity costs of forgone agricultural production and labor productivity within the war context. The violence that has pushed people off of their lands and compromised their capacities to work (*e.g.*, by way

¹⁶⁴ See Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda (2006). *Counting the cost: Twenty years of war in northern Uganda*, p. 22.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

of otherwise preventable illness or loss of life) has brought levels of absolute poverty to the north far more severe than in any other region of the country.¹⁶⁶

5.2.2 Displacement

One of the most devastating components of the northern Uganda conflict has been the phenomenon of displacement whereby civilians within the area of violence have been forced off their lands and into IDP camps.¹⁶⁷ The traditional Acholi way of life is one largely defined the people's relationship to the land.¹⁶⁸ Livelihoods universally revolve around or at the very least are significantly supported by the farming of the north's fertile soils. Societies are structured by homesteads in which a core family group occupies a small grouping of huts. Those homesteads are dispersed at very low densities across the region with vast fields separating families, allowing for the development of strong family structures through which older generations pass on Acholi ways to the youth. Families, for the most part, spend their days working the land on which their homestead lies and living off of the fruits of their labor. To remove the people of the north from their land is to remove those people from their very way of life, and displacement has uprooted the Acholi people and culture in this exact way.

The breadth of displacement in northern Uganda is truly difficult to conceive. In terms of numbers, the situation is almost literally one in which "everyone is displaced."¹⁶⁹ As of March 2006, an estimated 1.8-2 million in a Ugandan population of 25.5 million were living in 202 IDP

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 23.

¹⁶⁷ For various perspectives on the impact of displacement, see Branch, A. (2005). *Neither Peace nor Justice: Political Violence and the Peasantry in Northern Uganda, 1986-1998*; Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda (2006). *Counting the cost: Twenty years of war in northern Uganda*; Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. (2006). "Only Peace Can Restore the Confidence of the Displaced"; Li, K. (2005). *Children Bear the Brunt of Uganda's 19-year Conflict*; Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of the Republic of Uganda (MFPED). (2004). *Post-conflict Reconstruction: The Case of Northern Uganda*; and Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. (2005). *Learning in a war zone: Education in northern Uganda*.

¹⁶⁸ Information gathered from interviews with IDP camp leaders, peace activists, and broad relief officers.

¹⁶⁹ Interview with peace activist.

camps across the north.¹⁷⁰ Among these IDPs, it is believed that fully 94 per cent of the Acholi population was at that time living as refugees within their own country.¹⁷¹ The severity of the crisis only deepens when realizing the dynamic of time. Though these camps were originally claimed to serve as temporary holding points for civilians,¹⁷² practically all IDPs have been in camps since the late 1990s, thousands even having been forced to live in this state as early as 1986.¹⁷³ What was proposed to be a few months disruption of normal life has become ten or even twenty years of a completely alien existence in which a new normalcy has been created. Though displacement is to be regretted in any circumstance, the sheer magnitude and longevity of the northern Uganda case has resulted in a calamity that “just simply is not natural.”¹⁷⁴

As if the mere fact of displacement was not costly enough to northern Ugandan society, one cannot even begin to grasp the plight of these people until considering the context into which northerners have been displaced. Though the survivability of the IDP camps can be called into question even under their original purpose as temporary areas of protection, what is left now after their far-expired use are environments simply unfit for human existence, yet alone lives of human dignity. Again, the statistics are staggering. Population densities have been documented to exceed 1,700 people per hectare, making some camps more crowded than some of Africa’s worst urban slums.¹⁷⁵ Approximately 95 per cent of camp-dwelling Acholi are suffering from absolute poverty, meaning that they live with a per capita consumption of less than \$0.75 per

¹⁷⁰ See Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda (2006). *Counting the cost: Twenty years of war in northern Uganda*, p. 13.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² While some camps were spontaneously established by civilians fleeing violence, the Government of Uganda officially demanded the movement of northern populations into camps at various points under claims of temporary attempts to increase protection and flush out rebel forces from the region. See Branch, A. (2005). *Neither Peace nor Justice: Political Violence and the Peasantry in Northern Uganda, 1986-1998*, p. 19; and Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda (2006). *Counting the cost: Twenty years of war in northern Uganda*, p. 25.

¹⁷³ See Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda (2006). *Counting the cost: Twenty years of war in northern Uganda*, p. 13.

¹⁷⁴ Interview with broad relief officer.

¹⁷⁵ See Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda (2006). *Counting the cost: Twenty years of war in northern Uganda*, p. 13.

day.¹⁷⁶ A 2006 study found that 68 per cent of IDPs earned absolutely no income in the month prior to their being interviewed.¹⁷⁷ In an economy once driven almost single-handedly by agricultural production, only 22 per cent of households within the region were found to have access to land of any kind in September 2005, leaving 84 per cent of households dependent upon food relief.¹⁷⁸ 60 per cent of schools in the northern districts were ‘non-functioning’ as of March 2006, leaving 250,000 children with no access to education.¹⁷⁹ Within the few classrooms that did exist within camps, pupil/classroom ratios were estimated at 1:109.¹⁸⁰ As of June 2006, IDPs in Gulu district had access to less than 7.5 liters of safe drinking water per day, and that could only be attained by waiting 1 to 4 hours daily at wells that are shared by 5,000 people or more.¹⁸¹ In the same camps, despite international standards of 20 people per latrine, the average coverage was 98 people per latrine.¹⁸² These harrowing sanitation conditions coupled with the fact that 43 per cent of health facilities in Gulu are ‘non-functional’ have given rise to outbreaks of meningitis and cholera, joining the malaria and HIV/AIDS that are already the leading causes of death in the north.¹⁸³ On that note, Acholiland camps in January through July of 2005 experienced a crude mortality rate of 1.54 per 10,000 people per day, compared with a rate of 0.48 for the same period for the widely recognized humanitarian crisis in Darfur, Sudan.¹⁸⁴ 72 per cent of the deaths in the camps were classified as ‘excess deaths’ coming not at the hands of violence but rather directly attributable to “poor living conditions, poor water and sanitation,

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 24.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 23.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, pp. 17, 18.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 19.

¹⁸⁰ See United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA). (2006). *Gulu Monthly Profile: June 2006*, p. 4.

¹⁸¹ Ibid, p. 4.

¹⁸² Ibid, p. 4.

¹⁸³ Ibid, pp. 3, 4.

¹⁸⁴ See Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda (2006). *Counting the cost: Twenty years of war in northern Uganda*, pp. 14, 15.

inadequate health care provision and health educations, and extreme poverty.”¹⁸⁵ With all that said, perhaps the most staggering figure of all to remember is that up to 2 million people were living in these unthinkable conditions, some for as long as ten or even twenty years.

Though the statistics tell much, numbers alone fail to capture fully the impact of displacement on societies in northern Uganda. To this end, framing displacement in terms of capabilities goes far in adding substance to the figures. Firstly, and perhaps most obviously, forced movement into the camps has brought levels of human development far beneath threshold levels of human dignity in all areas. Using Sen’s framework of five instrumental freedoms,¹⁸⁶ one can begin with the terribly low incomes, absolute poverty, lack of access to land, restriction of movement,¹⁸⁷ and absence of any functioning economy that have devastated economic facilities across the camps. Barely surviving education and health systems along with disturbing sanitation conditions similarly diminish social opportunities across the region. Political freedoms suffer given IDPs’ constrained ability to pressure government officials, participate in civil society, and even access national media. Transparency guarantees are made almost impossible given the lack of capacity to regulate and govern within the camps, a task delegated to the sometimes abusive and often unqualified government military forces. Finally, the ongoing risk of rebel attacks and military abuse as well as the difficulty faced in keeping people alive yet alone providing a social safety net put Sen’s requirement of protective security in a much compromised state.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 17.

¹⁸⁶ See Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 9.

¹⁸⁷ Under military claims as being a measure for protection, a curfew is typically placed on IDP camp dwellers. The camps visited in Gulu district typically had in place a restriction on movement outside of the camp premises from 6pm-7am. During these times, any IDP caught outside of the camp limits is taken to be a rebel and is treated as such by the military monitors of the camp (i.e. violently attacked). Such a condition puts an even further strain on access to land since one can only reasonably reach, work, and return from land that is with three to five kilometers.

This analysis on various realms of development can be expanded into those additional areas covered by Nussbaum's central human capabilities. Basic physical capabilities are impaired by the ever-present risk of violence and disease within camps. IDPs' capacity to interact with others has been severely hampered also given the complete disruption of social structures and traditional mechanisms for community relations. Furthermore, deeper human needs such as forming emotional connections, using one's cognitive abilities, engaging in deep thinking about life, and enjoying recreational activities are all basically forgotten in such a context of fighting for even day-to-day survival. Clearly, displacement in northern Uganda has been a detriment to development in all possible respects.

In the most basic sense, the displacement caused by the war experience has been a blow to the human individual in every area deemed important within the capabilities approach. As has been demonstrated, the concept of freedom in any of its forms is largely a foreign one to IDPs. Any recognition of the agency of the individual has been likewise lost in a situation in which people have become completely dependent upon relief assistance for survival.¹⁸⁸ When the primary complaint of displaced persons is inadequate levels of food distribution,¹⁸⁹ one cannot reasonably believe that individuals have much control over the forces determining their own survival. Hopes for realizing a life of human dignity that one truly has reason to value are difficult to retain when one's mindset is entirely focused on her survival from one day to the next. And ultimately all of this individual neglect adds up to create a social circumstance in no way fit to foster the development of individuals within the community.

When realizing that entire generations are being reared within this context of displacement, the Acholi people's prospects for human development become awfully dim.

¹⁸⁸ Sentiment expressed in interviews with IDP camp leaders, peace activists, and broad relief officers.

¹⁸⁹ All IDPs interviewed shared this opinion.

Within the capabilities framework, the only relief to the plight of IDPs is an immediate recognition of the dignity and agency of the human individuals who make up these displaced populations. Only by focusing efforts on enabling people within the camps to pursue and realize their own inherent potentials will levels of development rise beyond the thresholds of human dignity below which they have fallen so dangerously as a result of displacement.

5.2.3 Violence

Along with displacement, the northern Ugandan war experience is unique in terms of the nature of the violence brought by the conflict. Though violent warfare always imposes costs on the society in which it occurs, the specific scope of violence that has occurred for the past decade or so in northern Uganda truly is exceptional. Defined by the forced abduction and conscription of children, brutal and random attacks on civilian populations, and unpredictable longevity, the war in Acholiland has brought unthinkable devastation to the population.¹⁹⁰ At the same time, the unique dynamics of the war have left troubling hurdles to peace:

Conflicts [like that in northern Uganda] have challenged comfortable, Western assumptions about war and about children: that war, while not always desired, is sometimes “necessary”; that war is fought between trained, adult soldiers; that casualties of war are primarily soldiers, not civilians; that there are clearly defined aggressive and aggrieved parties; and that children are innocents in need of benevolent state protection during war.¹⁹¹

Statistics again prove useful in providing an initial look into the costs born by communities affected by the war. Within the so-called ‘protected’ IDP camps, deaths reported as being caused by violence totaled 3,971 between January and July of 2005, resulting in a violent mortality rate of 0.17 per 10,000 people per day that exceeded the parallel rate experienced

¹⁹⁰ See Appendix III for a description of the violent tactics utilized by the rebel LRA forces.

¹⁹¹ Veal, A., & Stavrou, A. (2003). *Violence, Reconciliation and Identity: The Reintegration of Lord's Resistance Army Child Abductees in Northern Uganda*, p. 7.

during the same time in Iraq of 0.052.¹⁹² In addition, since the beginning of the conflict, it is estimated that as many as 29,000 children, some only eight years of age or younger, have been abducted by rebel forces.¹⁹³ As a result of these abductions and subsequent forced conscription, it is believed that fully 80 or even 90 per cent of the rebel fighters are in fact abducted children and youth of local communities.¹⁹⁴ To avoid becoming one among these ranks by being abducted from their homes at night as so many had, approximately 45,000 children migrated daily during peak periods of violence to community centers where they could safely sleep amongst each other in what became known infamously as the “night commute.”¹⁹⁵ Beyond these exact figures have been countless murders, attacks, and mutilations suffered by civilians over the course of the war’s twenty-year history. The situation in northern Uganda is one in which literally “everyone has been affected by the violence.”¹⁹⁶

As hinted in the statistical overview, the violence imposed on northern civilians reaches far beyond the boundaries of conventional warfare. To begin, while the initial stages of the northern rebellion featured attacks on conventional military targets, the focus of violence has shifted over the years to the point where hostilities have been directed almost exclusively at the civilian population.¹⁹⁷ While the rebel LRA forces have gradually moved to the full adoption of civilian-aimed terror tactics to pursue their aims,¹⁹⁸ the government Uganda People’s Defense Force (UPDF) has widely failed to protect civilians from such attacks and has even been

¹⁹² See Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda (2006). *Counting the cost: Twenty years of war in northern Uganda*, p 15.

¹⁹³ See Paul, D. (2006). *Fulfilling the Forgotten Promise: The Protection of Civilians in Northern Uganda*, p. 6.

¹⁹⁴ See Veal, A., & Stavrou, A. (2003). *Violence, Reconciliation and Identity: The Reintegration of Lord’s Resistance Army Child Abductees in Northern Uganda*, p. 16; and Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children. (2005). *Learning in a war zone: Education in northern Uganda*, p.1.

¹⁹⁵ See Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children. (2005). *Learning in a war zone: Education in northern Uganda*, p.1.

¹⁹⁶ Interview with peace advocate.

¹⁹⁷ See Lexow, J., & Lange, E. (2002). *Mid-term Review of Primary Education in Gulu, Northern Uganda*, p. 12.

¹⁹⁸ See Branch, A. (2005). *Neither Peace nor Justice: Political Violence and the Peasantry in Northern Uganda, 1986-1998*, p. 8.

involved in attacks on northerners in their own right.¹⁹⁹ The brutal, unpredictable, and oftentimes indiscriminate²⁰⁰ nature of this violence has completely disrupted the normal functioning of society as the entire population has been gripped by a paralyzing fear. Adding to this horror is the fact that most attacks have featured abductions, namely the seizure of youth to be used as forced labor, sex slaves, or actual combat soldiers. On the one hand, this results in incredibly traumatic experiences for abductees in which even small children are brutally broken down physically and psychologically, subjected to horrifying displays of cruelty, desensitized to violence, and left to fight independently for their survival.²⁰¹ At the same time, civilians are left subjected to the horrendous violence of the rebel forces knowing all the while that those atrocities are being carried out by the very children that have been abducted from their communities.²⁰² On top of all of this, the war has been characterized by drastic ebbs and flows in the levels of violence. At multiple points over the twenty-year history great strides have been made toward peace, only to be upset at the last instant by one side or the other.²⁰³ Consequently, moments of the highest hope have regularly been followed by periods of unprecedented brutality, leaving civilians highly skeptical of promises from either side in the war and completely exasperated with the continuation of violence. Thus, in many respects, the conflict truly has degenerated into a “war against humanity.”²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁹ Sentiments shared in interviews with peace advocates; see also Lomo, Zachary, Lucy Hovil, et al. (February 2004). *Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*, pp. 30-32.

²⁰⁰ Though many attacks are of an arbitrary nature, one must be careful not to dismiss the violence of the LRA as without cause. This issue will be addressed in the next section. See also See Branch, A. (2005). *Neither Peace nor Justice: Political Violence and the Peasantry in Northern Uganda, 1986-1998*, pp. 6-8.

²⁰¹ For a substantive overview of the abduction experience, see Veal, A., & Stavrou, A. (2003). *Violence, Reconciliation and Identity: The Reintegration of Lord's Resistance Army Child Abductees in Northern Uganda*.

²⁰² See Lomo, Z., Lucy H., et al. (2004). *Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*, p. 32.

²⁰³ Sentiment expressed in interviews with IDP camp leaders, peace activists, and broad relief officers.

²⁰⁴ Interview with broad relief officer.

As with displacement, utilizing the capabilities framework to analyze the impact of violence allows for a full comprehension of the costs of the war experience on human development. Given the unique dynamics presented by the northern Uganda conflict, specifically abduction, it must be realized that costs are incurred at both ends of the violence. In terms of political freedoms, the voice of civilians has been practically muted by the real threat of reprisal for any efforts made to act against the rebel movement.²⁰⁵ On the other end, abductees are forcefully indoctrinated at a very young age to see their primary means of political expression to be the gun, stunting the development of any civic awareness. With regards to economic facilities, civilians' livelihoods are completely disrupted by the nature of the violence, for example preventing them from traveling to their fields in fear of attack or even accumulating resources in fear of looting. Economic costs are likewise felt by forced recruits who have had their primary formative years for education and skill development stolen from them. Socially and psychologically, attacks conducted by former community members frequently result in cleavages within those societies. The social and psychological impact experienced by soldiers with abduction should be obvious, but it is useful to emphasize the indoctrination tactic of forcing new recruits to view themselves as entirely on their own and everyone else as enemies:

The individual accounts of children forcibly recruited as soldiers who later escaped had a shared theme: their primary task was to survive. Put simply, the enemy is anyone who threatens your survival. This can be within the LRA or externally in combat. Unlike many guerrilla movements, the 'enemy' is not defined on ideological grounds as part of achieving a political aim, but pragmatically in terms of survival.²⁰⁶

In all these ways, with some validity it can be said that the violence in northern Uganda is almost designed as an attack on the development of human capabilities. Individual freedom and agency

²⁰⁵ See Lomo, Z., Lucy H., et al. (2004). *Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*, p. 32.

²⁰⁶ Veal, A., & Stavrou, A. (2003). *Violence, Reconciliation and Identity: The Reintegration of Lord's Resistance Army Child Abductees in Northern Uganda*, p. 30.

have been paralyzed by the constant threat of brutality while social arrangements for the development of capacities have crumbled. Complete disregard for human dignity has successfully created a realm of fear and destruction entirely unfit for individual persons and communities as a whole to pursue lives that they might have reason to value.

Again, the only hope of exit from this realm of brutality and fear is an emphasis on the development of individual capabilities and freedoms. Those capacities that have suffered from subjection to such awful violence must be the primary targets of recovery for any relief effort to make lasting achievements. Successful attempts to restore diminished capabilities at both the individual and societal levels become naturally reaffirming in working to bring communities above the threshold levels of development necessary for peace.

5.3 Widespread Complicity in a Vacuum of Legitimacy: The Underlying Causes of the War

Beyond the immediate impacts of war described above, if peacebuilding efforts are to bring any long-term stability to a nation the underlying causes of the war must be sufficiently addressed. Of course every conflict brings with it a complex set of historic, political, economic, and social dynamics that cannot reasonably be hoped to be resolved in their entirety within any manageable timeframe. Nevertheless, high-order peace demands that any attempt to resolve or recover from widespread conflict must reflect an ample understanding of the context in which efforts are being made and directly target those fundamental roots of the violence. As has been shown, the capabilities approach presents a unique tool by which to frame the conditions that lead to violence, allowing for insight into how those factors can be addressed. Analyzing the forces that

underlie the civil war in northern Uganda in this manner provides a context in which peacebuilding efforts must operate in order to be successful.

As troubling as northern Uganda's experience of civil war has been, the broader context in which this conflict is being waged presents perhaps even greater obstacles to the prospect of peace in the region. The horrific displacement and violence to which societies have been subjected in actuality are merely the immediate and surface-level manifestations of deep-seated problems and tensions that fuel the continuation of the war. Historical precedents, regional disparities, disregard of the civilian voice, and the complicity of outside actors all play a role in this twenty-year experience of hostilities. In their own way, each of these factors can fundamentally be attributed to a lack of development as viewed in the capabilities approach.

5.3.1 A History of Violence

Since peacefully gaining its independence from British colonial rule in 1962, Uganda's history, particularly in terms of power transitions, has been one mired in bloodshed, brutal revenge, and violent suppression. Never has the nation experienced a peaceful transition of power, and one would have trouble finding a single period since independence when some rebel movement was not active in some region of the country. Though one would be completely without basis in claiming Ugandans to be an inherently violent people, at the highest levels of power there has developed what can be described as a culture of violence and impunity:

These cycles of violent politics and revenge perpetuated by previous regimes have created a political environment in which armed mobilisation [sic] was seen as a legitimate means to address the grievances of one's group and the only means to access political power. Given that Tito Okello's Acholi-dominated government immediately preceded the [presently ruling National Resistance Movement], it is hardly surprising that armed conflict broke out in northern Uganda.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁷ Lomo, Z., Lucy H., et al. (2004). *Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*, p. 10.

In this light, the present war in the north can be viewed as the direct result of a pattern of armed aggression present since the earliest days of statehood.

Such a pattern, however, is not merely an unfortunate historical accident, but rather is rooted in an environment of constrained capabilities. The reason why opposition movements continuously resort to arms and militarization is because no other avenue exists by which their dissent can be voiced and power attained.²⁰⁸ Such an explanation fits fairly well into the opportunity-driven model of civil war causation.²⁰⁹ Cyclical violence has led each incoming regime to secure its authority by forcefully repressing any voices of opposition and closing off entry points into the political system. The result has been a clear deprivation of political freedoms within the country and the absence of suitable social arrangements to foster civic development, especially within regions unsupportive of ruling regimes as the north is today. If a threshold level of political opportunity is reached, one can reasonably see the terrible cycle of violence finally being broken.

5.3.2 *Regional Disparity*

Since the earliest days of British colonialism and even before, a rift has divided the Ugandan territory. The nation actually falls at a major ethno-linguistic intersection point on the African continent, with speakers of the Nilotic languages in the north and dialects of the Bantu language family spoken across the south.²¹⁰ British colonizers exploited these ethnic differences under a policy of “divide and rule” to secure control of the land.²¹¹ The southern territory, inhabited by

²⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 8.

²⁰⁹ See Chapter 2 for a discussion of this model and how it fits into the capabilities approach to civil war causation.

²¹⁰ Information from an interview with a peace activist.

²¹¹ See Leggett, I. (2001). *Uganda: An Oxfam Country Profile*, p. 15; and Lomo, Z., Lucy H., et al. (2004). *Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*, p. 10; and Veal, A., & Stavrou, A.

what the British saw as the peaceful, cooperative, organized, and civilized Baganda people, was selected as the primary target of economic investment with an agricultural base for sugarcane and tea as well as the capital, parliament, university, main hospital, and best infrastructure of the colony. The disturbed, hostile, brutal, and martial Acholi 'tribe' of the north was conversely seen as unfit for political administration and economic governance; thus they were relegated to the seat of military power and enjoyed no real investment in development. These unfounded categorizations have not only led to detrimental prejudices that extend into the contemporary landscape, but they also laid the foundation for a completely inequitable development experience, the effects of which are felt to this day.

Leaders of the post-independence era have done little to mend this regional divide and may have actually exacerbated tensions over the years.²¹² Since the initial handing over of the state to the northerner Milton Obote by the British, control has violently shifted hands through a series of regimes set on fortifying their legitimacy among supporters, often at the expense of anyone falling anywhere outside of that immediate ring of support. The current government that came to power with the military victory of President Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Army is widely viewed to favor the southern and western regions of the country.²¹³ Many see the current administration as working directly against the people of the north with the intent of reversing the discriminatory practices of former regimes hailing from the north or punishing northerners for the atrocities they committed on inhabitants of other regions throughout the rule of these same governments. Whether the result of intentional government policy or not, the north has clearly missed out on most of the internationally-acclaimed development advances

(2003). *Violence, Reconciliation and Identity: The Reintegration of Lord's Resistance Army Child Abductees in Northern Uganda*, p. 9.

²¹² See Lomo, Z., Lucy H., et al. (2004). *Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*, p. 11.

²¹³ Sentiment expressed in interviews with all categories of subjects.

enjoyed by the rest of the country in recent years.²¹⁴ This impoverished state may in fact be the result of lingering effects from colonial discrimination or simply the product of twenty years of war, but what really matters in this context is the fact that many northern people *perceive* their troubles to be the result of deliberate governmental action.²¹⁵ To a large extent, especially within the northern districts, a national identity and unity has failed to take hold. In this context, clear disparities between regions serve as fertile breeding grounds for growing perceptions of oppression and sentiments of resentment, and the launch of a rebellion like that of the Lord's Resistance Army becomes quite understandable.

Attributing the underlying causes of the war to perceptions of regional disparity and subjugation is a clear example of the grievance model of civil war onset that, as previously illustrated, can be interpreted through the lens of capabilities.²¹⁶ Simply put, the basis of the grievances that have incited a rebellion is a lack of development as broadly conceived in the capabilities framework. Economic marginalization and political oppression have diminished capabilities in these areas to a point sufficiently below the threshold level for individuals to see no alternative but to express their discontent through violent means. In restoring capabilities above this critical threshold, it is hoped that adequate avenues will be made available to the aggrieved parties to draw them off the battlefield and into productive efforts aimed at redressing the disparities that remain.

²¹⁴ Uganda has become a model performer in the eyes of many international lenders, notably for its successes in the areas of economic liberalization, HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, and education. For more on the country's economic successes, see Friedman, T. (2000). *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, p. 357; and Wagubi, P. (2003). *Uganda: WTO Agreement on Agriculture: The Implementation Experience –Developing Country Case Studies*. For its work on HIV/AIDS, see Leggett, I. (2001). *Uganda: An Oxfam Country Profile*. For advances in education, see Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. (2005). *Learning in a war zone: Education in northern Uganda*, p. 85.

²¹⁵ See Lomo, Z., Lucy H., et al. (2004). *Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*, p. 12.

²¹⁶ See Chapter 2 for a full discussion of the grievance model and the capabilities explanation to civil war causation that stems from it.

5.3.3 *A Rebellion and Government Both Lacking Legitimacy*

The opportunity-driven model for civil war causation largely frames the situation as one in which a rebel force takes advantage of some unfortunate dynamic within a country to attempt a forceful overthrow of the standing regime. In the case of Uganda, this can be viewed as the current government falling victim to the regrettable historical trap of violent transitions of power that is being exploited by the rebel LRA. On the other hand, the grievance model interprets a rebellion to be an oppressed party's violent response to a government's failure to meet its demands through established mechanisms. In this light, the LRA's actions are rooted in what it perceives to be legitimate claims of subjugation at the hands of the present leadership. As has been shown, each of these seemingly contradictory models is to some degree accurate in the case of northern Uganda. The overarching reality for the people of northern Uganda, however, as unfortunate as it may be, is that neither the LRA nor the government merits any real legitimacy for their side in the war. Both are complicit in the continuation of a war that fails to take into account the actual voice of the people for whom both claim to fight.

On one side of the war is the Lord's Resistance Army of Joseph Kony, a rebel movement that has achieved international infamy with its brutal attacks, abductions, and use of child soldiers. The force's affiliation with spiritual mysticism,²¹⁷ widely perceived failure to articulate a political agenda, and blatant disregard for international standards of human rights are grounds enough for many to discredit the group as a crazed terrorist organization wreaking havoc on children and civilians with no clear purpose. In much the same sense, LRA claims that they are in fact fighting for the Acholi and other peoples of the north from which they come are readily

²¹⁷ Particularly within the international media, accounts of the LRA are dominated by Kony's claim of being possessed by the Holy Spirit and goal of replacing the current Ugandan Constitution with the Christian Ten Commandments.

dismissed given the fact that those very same people have gradually become the primary target of their campaigns.²¹⁸

Such responses to the LRA, however, miss many important factors that underlie the violent attacks. For one, people of the north do have legitimate grounds on which to base grievances against the current regime given their clearly impoverished and marginalized state relative to the rest of the country. Though the past twenty years have not seen Kony or any other LRA members making any strong attempts to explain their campaign, the rebel group has come to recent peace negotiations in Juba, South Sudan, with a clear political agenda that falls largely in line with those same grievances felt across the north.²¹⁹ Moreover, their brutal attacks against northern populations, though extreme, do serve tactical ends by punishing any civilian attempts to assist the government in the war while also clearly demonstrating the government's failure to protect its own citizens.²²⁰ Their abuse and employment of children among their ranks, while equally disturbing, serves as an incredibly effective means by which to ensure the movement's intensity and sustainability. With all this in mind, it becomes clear that the depiction of the LRA as a baseless and chaotic band of psychotic killers is quite naïve. Their violence is to at least some degree rooted in legitimate grievances and tactical aims, and no hope of the conflict's end can exist unless those foundations are recognized.

The key fact relevant here, however, is that the LRA, while perhaps understood, enjoys no semblance of popular support among the people of northern Uganda.²²¹ The rebellion may very well be founded on goals shared by the northern population, but in no way does that

²¹⁸ Information from interviews with peace activists and broad relief officers.

²¹⁹ For positions of the LRA presented at the Juba Peace Talks, see 'Uganda's roadmap to the end of northern region insurgency.' Positions at the Government of Uganda/Lord's Resistance Army Talks Mediated by the Government of Southern Sudan. *The Daily Monitor*, 18 July, 2006, pp. 4-7.

²²⁰ See Branch, A. (2005). Neither Peace nor Justice: Political Violence and the Peasantry in Northern Uganda, 1986-1998, pp. 6, 8, 17.

²²¹ Information from interviews with IDPs and peace activists; also see Lomo, Z., Lucy H., et al. (2004). *Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*, pp. 22, 33.

population view the LRA as representing its cause. Kony unsuccessfully sought the backing of the northern people when he began his campaign in the late 1980s, and any hope for support was killed in the early 1990s when the LRA directly shifted its violence toward civilians as punishment for their support of government efforts to bring the war to an end.²²² The sentiment widely expressed across the north is that people are simply tired of war and do not see violence as the means by which to redress their suffering.²²³ The unfortunate reality they face, however, is that the real barriers to their long-term peace and development are being voiced by a group whose actions they in no way support and over which they have no control, a group that in fact is responsible for the expansion of their suffering. The natural dismissal of any demands coming from the LRA, then, is actually a dismissal of the real needs of northern Ugandans.

On the other side of the battlefield, however, stands a Ugandan government every bit as out of touch with the needs of the north as the brutal LRA rebels. Northerners find themselves in a position of terrible oppression that has lasted for practically the entirety of President Museveni's two-decade rule. At the very least, the government has failed the north in doing anything to alleviate their suffering. Multiple attempts at concluding the war, both peacefully and militarily, have failed and typically have even resulted in a worsening of the violence against civilians. Meanwhile, the region has seen little if any of the development advances ushered in by Museveni across the rest of the country.

²²² Ibid, p. 15. As relayed by a peace activist, however, some evidence suggests that the Ugandan government forced civilian participation in the 'Bow and Arrow' civil defense units they formed to fight the rebel forces. These homeguard units received their name from the fact that civilians were armed only with traditional weapons such as spears and bows and arrows when directed to confront the LRA forces (who were fully armed with modern machines of war). Kony and the LRA were aware of the civilians' unwillingness to cooperate with the government efforts, but nevertheless saw the homeguard actions as betrayal and thus punished northern populations for their lack of support.

²²³ Sentiment expressed in interviews with IDPs, peace activists, and broad relief officers.

More than just failing to improve their plight, however, many northerners see the current regime as having an interest in the continuation of their suffering.²²⁴ In the eyes of the current administration, the subjugation of the Acholi may function as both retribution for atrocities committed under periods of northern rule and the suppression of a potential challenge to its power. The existence of a war situation in general also provides Museveni, who himself came to power by force, with an acceptable context to silence any voices of dissent while maintaining a strong military upon which he can center his authority. Moreover, in combating the ‘terrorist’ LRA forces in the north, Museveni has become a lauded partner in America’s ‘war on terror’ with legitimate basis for funneling foreign assistance directly into the military budget.²²⁵

Such speculation is highly understandable given the government’s performance in fulfilling its duty of protecting the citizens of the north. Spectacular blunders in attempting to reel in the LRA both at the negotiating table and on the battlefield, inability to protect civilians from LRA attacks, and widespread claims of UPDF abuse against civilians serve as marked examples of the regime’s failures. Perhaps most glaring of all, however, is the government’s direct responsibility for the displacement crisis. Civilians were forcefully ordered to abandon their lands for ‘protected villages’ in order to increase protection and enhance military effectiveness.²²⁶ While coming up short on both of those aims, this temporary strategic policy has resulted in the complete disruption of northern societies for the past decade or more and is seen by many as a deliberate attempt of genocide by the government to destroy Acholi culture.²²⁷

²²⁴ See Branch, A. (2005). *Neither Peace nor Justice: Political Violence and the Peasantry in Northern Uganda, 1986-1998*, p. 2.

²²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 3. All of these speculations into the Museveni regime’s interests were also expressed in interviews with peace activists.

²²⁶ See Lomo, Z., Lucy H., et al. (2004). *Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*, p. 25.

²²⁷ Sentiments expressed in interviews with peace activists.

Under the continued threat of LRA violence and stuck in IDP camps under official government order, the north is literally left with nowhere to turn.

Returning to the capabilities model, the terrible position in which northern Ugandans find themselves can again be described as being below the threshold level of development. As has been discussed, this condition presents both the opportunity for violence and the grounds for grievance. In the Ugandan context, however, the people holding the legitimate grounds for grievance through their suffering and to whom the opportunity for violence is available given the absence of any political alternative largely hold no influence over the actual conflict itself. Peace can only come if these primary actors are given a prominent stake in the effort.

5.3.4 Outside Complicity

In addition to all of these internal factors is the growing role of foreign influences as the war in northern Uganda continues. For the sake of this exercise of identifying the local context in which peacebuilding efforts are to operate, it is not necessary to flush out fully the regional and international dynamics of the conflict. What is critical to recognize, however, is the mounting dependence on foreign actors that has developed within all parties to the conflict. The level at which the government of Uganda relies on foreign aid presents valid grounds for concern as 50 per cent of its budget comes from outside assistance.²²⁸ Such a situation directly impacts any nation's level of democratic accountability to its citizens as leaders become beholden to the interests of foreign donors rather than its people. A parallel situation exists with the LRA in that the rebellion has historically been sustained by outside sources of finance.²²⁹ This arrangement

²²⁸ See Mwenda, A. (2006). *Foreign Aid and the Weakening of Democratic Accountability in Uganda*, p. 1. The significant role of foreign aid was also a key theme in interviews with peace activists.

²²⁹ See Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of the Republic of Uganda (MFPED). (2004). *Post-conflict Reconstruction: The Case of Northern Uganda*, p. 26.

allows the rebels to function in the absence of popular support, freeing them to a large extent from accountability to the people actually affected by the war.

Lastly, the surging presence of humanitarian organizations across the northern territory has created a state in which northerners have become entirely dependent on outside relief assistance.²³⁰ Given the extensive duration of the conflict, a 'relief industry' has arisen in northern towns like Gulu whereby the survival needs of IDPs serve as the major source of employment for educated locals along with the numerous foreign workers present in the country. Rather than aiding in the recovery of societies, relief organizations in this context have actually at some level been responsible for the continuation of the war.²³¹ On the one hand, naturally arising interests of self-preservation may lead some actors to concentrate solely on ways by which to expand their relief efforts at the expense of looking for ways to end the conflict. Moreover, the nature of relief efforts has been to ensure the physical survival of war-affected persons rather than pursuing overall well-being. Not at all to say that there is not a need to keep people alive, but holding societies right on this brink of survival may be just enough to avoid the humanitarian catastrophe needed to spark a sense of urgency in resolving the conflict.²³² But at the same time, the efforts are not enough to alleviate the immediate sufferings of northerners to the point where they can move beyond concerns day-to-day survival to do their own part in pressing for an end to the war.

The key lesson to be taken from the capabilities approach here is the emphasis on agency. Again, peace can only come to the people of northern Uganda if they are given a substantial stake in the efforts to achieve that peace. To this point, foreign influence on both the government and the LRA has to some extent enabled both parties of the war to ignore the voices

²³⁰ Sentiment expressed in interviews with IDPs, broad relief officers, and peace activists.

²³¹ Stance proposed in interviews with peace activists.

²³² Ibid.

of those actually bearing the brunt of the conflict's costs. Moreover, the position of northerners is being further marginalized by the very efforts meant to bring them relief. A lasting, high-order peace for the region can come if it is realized that physical survival is not enough, and true relief must be brought in the form of comprehensive human development.

5.4 Conclusion

With any war situation comes unique barriers to a substantial peace, and the case of northern Uganda is certainly no exception. The conflict there has created a situation of almost total displacement along with a society deeply impacted by the brutally personal nature of the violence. Coupled with those effects are the still present conditions that brought the country to war and underlie its continuation, namely the historical precedent of violence, deep-seated regional disparities, the marginalization of northern civilians, and complicity of foreign actors. As any peacebuilding effort hoping for success must address each of these items in turn, the capabilities framework offers a promising foundation from which to launch such an imposing undertaking.

Peace Needed at All Levels: Reintegration in Northern Uganda

Peace in northern Uganda can only be attained and sustained by rejuvenating individuals, making people get back their humanity.

- Michael Oruni, World Vision Uganda

There is indeed a strong rationale for recognizing the positive role of free and sustainable agency—and even of constructive impatience.

- Amartya Sen²³³

Minutes after receiving a call that he will be able to fit me into his schedule, I am sitting in the car beside the head and founder of a northern rehabilitation center on his way to a meeting with a potential donor. My knuckles are a bit whiter than usual as he hops over curves and cuts across four lanes of chaotic Kampala traffic all while browsing through his Palm Pilot, but I am beginning to respect this man's stubborn refusal to let even one moment go to waste. Despite my own difficulty in concentrating on anything apart from our chances of actually making it to his next meeting alive, my interview subject eagerly tells me of the amazing strides his organization has made over the past few years in aiding in the full recovery of victims of the northern conflict and the ambitious plans he holds for the future. It takes only a few responses for me to realize that beneath the business suit and fancy electronics is a man truly committed to improving the lives of those countless souls who, to no fault of their own, have been caught up in the brutal

²³³ Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*, p. 11.

experience of war. With this judgment in mind, I ask him how he came to dedicate himself to such a purpose. “Well, I was abducted twice as a youth...”

...I finish the last bites of my early breakfast as my friend relays to me some of his contacts with whom we could meet to finalize the day’s schedule. Looking out at the hot morning sun rising over the familiar dusty streets of Gulu town, I am struck by a figure far removed from the typical passers-by. A chiseled yet filthy figure topped by straggled silver hair shuffles confusedly past our porch, stark naked and glistening in the sun. His hallow eyes convey the same message being voiced in his incoherent murmuring, that any mind that may have once accompanied this pitiful frame has long departed and a destination for his wandering need not exist. My companion, a long-time resident of the town, shows no surprise at the spectacle but senses my silent request for an explanation. “Some that are taken just never make it all the way back.”

Though admittedly cases of the extreme, these two examples clearly show what is at stake with reintegration on the level of the individual, but also hint at the substantial impact such efforts can have on the overall prospects of a nation seeking to throw off the scourge of civil war. On the one hand, successful reintegration can mean the difference between a traumatic war experience being the driving force behind a lifetime of accomplishment and productivity or the impossible weight blocking any return to normalcy. Beyond this, however, returning former combatants to civilian society can play a critical role in redressing some of the most fundamental forces that brought a nation to war in the first place. Though only time will tell the true extent of success being achieved with current reintegration efforts in northern Uganda, the capabilities framework that has been built to this point allows for a reasonably confident evaluation of the role reintegration has played to this point.

6.1 Uganda's Attempt at Peacebuilding One Person at a Time

Despite various moments in its 20-year history when observers thought the war to be over and made the necessary preparations for such, reintegration efforts in northern Uganda are technically being made within the context of an ongoing conflict. Levels of violence at the time of study were at an extreme low resembling a peacetime situation, but given the war's history none were prepared to say that the violence had come to an end. Moreover, the efforts that are being made, though largely designed and established in similar periods of stability, have all continued to function during some of the most intense periods of brutality the region has ever seen. Thus, the northern Ugandan case presents a unique example of peacebuilding before any formal peace has been agreed to among warring parties.

As such, reintegration in the region has not been a component of a formal disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) program as such exercises typically are. The official basis of the effort in northern Uganda is the national Amnesty Act of 2000 that offers a comprehensive pardon to all citizens involved with acts of rebellion against the government since January 26, 1986.²³⁴ Though applying to all Ugandans across the nation, this law was largely the result of religious and cultural leaders from the north rejecting the attempts to end the conflict militarily that had thus far failed.²³⁵ As such, the amnesty offer largely reflects the wishes of those actually affected by the war. An Amnesty Commission along with a Demobilisation and Resettlement Team were established with the passing of the Act, and it is these bodies who oversee programs that largely parallel those found in any formal DDR process.

²³⁴ See Lucy, H., & Lomo, Z. (2005). *Whose Justice? Perceptions of Uganda's Amnesty Act 2000: The Potential for Conflict Resolution and Long-Term Reconciliation*, p. 4.

²³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 6.

Acting in conjunction with these official efforts are international actors and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) who are responsible for much of the actual reintegration work being done and were functioning well before the inception of the government's amnesty program. Though the official support of the government is beneficial to the efforts, reintegration in its present form almost entirely hinges on these other groups. Whether completely indigenous to the locality or a branch of the world's largest humanitarian organizations, these actors are present at every step in the reintegration process and, in turn, have an influential role in the design, implementation, and success of all efforts.

Aside from the setting of an ongoing war outside of a formal DDR process, the Ugandan experience with reintegration is also unique in whom efforts are aiming to reintegrate. Certainly the Amnesty Act was established to draw actual fighters with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and other rebel groups out of the bush.²³⁶ The reality in the north, however, is that practically all of those who comprise the LRA forces were at one time forcefully abducted, and many of those among the LRA ranks take no part in the actual fighting but serve in various other capacities such as laborers or sex slaves. Regardless of the role they fill, however, these individuals are powerfully impacted by the experience of war and are thus in serious need of attention and treatment if they are to rejoin civilian society. Even though most were originally forced into the rebellion, the brutal and deliberate tactics employed by the LRA draw many fully within their ranks or convince abductees that no life exists for them back in civilian society. Whatever the case, anyone attempting to break ties with the LRA requires the support of a reintegration program, and failure to provide adequate assistance presents just as severe a threat to overall peace in northern Uganda as it does in any other reintegration context.

²³⁶ "Out of the bush" is the phrase typically used to describe the exiting the LRA or other rebel ranks.

Though the details of the process vary depending on location, the reintegration experience centered around Gulu town serves as a useful representation of efforts at the broader level.²³⁷ This area has on the whole been hit harder by violence and has thus received more attention from the relief community than any other region in the north. Consequently, Gulu presents the most established, supported, and comprehensive reintegration programming currently found in Uganda. As such, any successes realized here serve as a practical model by which to frame all other efforts in the country while any shortcomings are fairly sure to be shared by reintegration in other localities.

The reintegration process begins at reception centers administered by the Uganda People's Defense Force (UPDF)²³⁸ though largely under the influence of human rights organizations like Save the Children Uganda. Received here are LRA soldiers and abductees rescued or captured in UPDF military operations²³⁹, individuals who have managed to desert or escape the LRA ranks, and those that have been found or received by civilians coming out of the bush. Here individuals are registered and preliminary evaluations are made as to the most appropriate steps to follow given the individual's physical and mental condition, experience with the rebels, and history before involvement with the war. Alternately, persons who have come out of the bush but have not passed through the formal reception centers are invited at any time to visit the Amnesty Commission offices in any town to apply for official amnesty and reintegration support. From either of these two reception points, returnees are directed to the appropriate agencies to meet their situation. Persons deemed to have experienced minimal trauma or who

²³⁷ See Appendix III for an account of the reintegration programming experienced by former child abductees.

²³⁸ The official military of the Government of Uganda.

²³⁹ In light of the dynamics of abduction and forced conscription that have been mentioned, it is often impossible or meaningless to differentiate between 'soldiers' and 'abductees' or 'rescued' and 'captured.' The role of human rights organizations at the reception centers has largely been to sensitize the UPDF troops to this dilemma so that those being received are not treated as 'the enemy' and their delicate situation is respected.

have spent only a small amount of time with the rebels are typically provided a reinsertion package of cash and basic living materials such as a mattress, cooking utensils, and basic foodstuffs.²⁴⁰ Those who have had a more intense affiliation with the rebel movement are referred to providers of deeper and more specialized assistance that generally comes in some form of medical care, psychosocial therapy, vocational skills training, or reunification support. Any minor or child mother²⁴¹ coming through the reception centers, however, is sent on to a special rehabilitation center. Within Gulu town, one such center is administered by the international NGO World Vision while another is run by a local NGO named Gulu Support the Children Organisation (GUSCO).²⁴² These institutions provide returnees with food and other basic physical needs, medical treatment, counseling services, structured activities, assistance with family reunification, and referral to opportunities for formal education or skills training programs. Again, the nature and duration of services provided are determined by the individual circumstances of the returnees. Once the war-affected persons are returned to their communities, follow-up services are provided to monitor progress and provide any additional support or referral that may be needed. In addition to all of this, World Vision, GUSCO, and other organizations have programs which work with receiving communities to sensitize them to the situation of the returnees and build local capacities to help facilitate the reception process.

²⁴⁰ See Lucy, H., & Lomo, Z. (2005). *Whose Justice? Perceptions of Uganda's Amnesty Act 2000: The Potential for Conflict Resolution and Long-Term Reconciliation*, p. 8.

²⁴¹ This is the term used for female returnees who were abducted as youth, were impregnated and gave birth while held captive, and return to civilian life with a child. 'Child mother' is meant to signify the fact that these girls or women were forced into motherhood without experiencing a full childhood of their own.

²⁴² While indigenously founded and operated, GUSCO does receive significant funding and support from outside sources such as Save the Children in Uganda, the United Nations Children's Fund, and the World Food Program.

6.2 Uganda's Success in Peacebuilding at the Individual Level Caught Up in the Broader Context

Evaluating the actual performance of reintegration initiatives in Uganda is admittedly difficult since it is in fact attempting to place individuals affiliated with the warring parties into civilian livelihoods while the war officially has come to no resolution.²⁴³ Nevertheless, any success that is achieved is reason enough to believe that this is a worthwhile endeavor, and points of failure should be seen as opportunities to build upon that already realized progress. Some notable immediate accomplishments have been achieved with reintegration programs in Uganda, but, as would be expected, the efforts fall far short in many of its longer-term aims.

Given the staggering obstacles that the efforts must confront, reintegration in Uganda has achieved incredible success in some areas, notably within the realm of short-term recovery. The horrors and trials often experienced by abductees are quite inconceivable, yet on the whole structures have been established to meet the immediate needs of those directly exiting the bush. Reception and rehabilitation centers have continually improved their methods to the point where little criticism can be made of their direct work with returnees. A critical lack of resources does exist, but full use is made of that which is available to meet the immediate nutritional, medical, and other basic needs of those being received. Furthermore, counseling efforts at the centers appear to be well received and highly effective. Individuals are given the opportunity to speak on an individual basis with trained counselors, share their experiences with peer groups, partake in organized activities (*e.g.*, sports, performances, small industries) to re-normalize their day-to-

²⁴³ The evaluation that is to follow is based primarily on interviews conducted along with qualitative observations from the field study. Previously completed reports supplemented this study's direct data, but practically all findings were found to be in common. For these other evaluations, see Allen, T., & Schomerus, M. (2006). *A Hard Homecoming: Lessons Learned from the Reception Center Process on Effective Interventions for Former 'Abductees' in Northern Uganda*; Hovil, L., & Lomo, Z. (2005). *Whose Justice? Perceptions of Uganda's Amnesty Act 2000: The Potential for Conflict Resolution and Long-Term Reconciliation*; Veal, A., & Stavrou, A. (2003). *Violence, Reconciliation and Identity: The Reintegration of Lord's Resistance Army Child Abductees in Northern Uganda*; and Verhey, B. (2002). *Child Soldiers: Prevention, Demobilization and Reintegration*.

day activities, and prepare for a timely return to their families and communities. Those with special needs (*e.g.*, child mothers, handicapped, severely traumatized) are also accommodated to meet their unique circumstances. Additionally, initial problems informed agencies of the need to sensitize families and communities to issues surrounding reinsertion such as stigmatization and resentment, and fruitful efforts have since been made to these ends. The real effectiveness of all of these efforts is proven by the surprisingly favorable results of reuniting returnees with their families and communities as expressed by both the agencies sponsoring the programs and the communities who have actually received individuals from the centers. The forgiveness offered to former combatants is genuine, and communities really have opened their arms to those attempting to resume a civilian life. In addition to this broad success have even been individual cases of war-affected persons coming through the centers, succeeding wonderfully in education or skills-training, and going on to lead highly productive lives, sometimes even coming back to work for the actual centers that initiated their return. These accomplishments really serve as a model for the potential of reintegration programs in any war-afflicted society.

Unfortunately, those individual cases of comprehensive success are not a regularity, and the progress made in the early stages of reintegration largely crumbles when moving into longer-term considerations. The overarching dilemma faced by reintegration is the failure to address the deeper problems that define the overall context of northern Uganda. In plain terms, if the aim of reintegration is to reintegrate ex-combatants and other war-affected persons into civilian society, what hope can there be when there exists no society into which they can be reintegrated? The disastrous impact of two decades of war and all of the underlying causes to that violence have destroyed any real foundations on which reintegration can be built, and any immediate successes achieved are really just damned to run into the ground.

In direct response to the achievements mentioned above, one cannot expect any of them to last long given that returnees are being delivered almost exclusively to IDP camps completely devoid of any support structure to uphold that original progress that was made. Full meals at reception and rehabilitation centers give way to constant hunger as no one in the camps can regularly meet their dietary needs. The medical attention given to the wounds of abduction and war is replaced by a vacuum of health care support within an environment ripe for the spread of countless infectious diseases. One leaves the organized programming of games and performances for a community that has had its culture and structure torn from it, and days run into each other in an endless pattern of idleness. No longer within the protected gates of the center, returnees find themselves in camps notorious for their lack of protection and susceptibility to rebel attack. Surface level symptoms of trauma may have been addressed, but no one can predict the long-term effects of such harrowing experiences. One can be certain, however, that all of the new obstacles faced by the recently returned are enough to bring back the horrifying experiences of the bush and reverse any of the short-term assistance provided. Despite claims otherwise from rehabilitation managers, most within the camps and observing from the outside noted a severe deficiency in monitoring and follow-up after participants leave the centers, so one cannot even be sure of the extent to which the initial support has an actual effect if at all.

Beyond the overturning of initial progress, failure is even more prominent in the later stages of reintegration. As has been mentioned, reintegration aims at the full return of individuals to civilian communities in all realms—social, economic, and political. With respect to the first of these, the obvious reality, as has been said, is that no real social structures exist to receive the war-affected persons. Positive steps have been made in curbing resentment at

reinsertion packages and stigmatization of returnees in general, but full social reintegration is impossible when no one in that society has any real position to begin with. Traditional mechanisms and family structures have no room to operate in the camps, so there is really no capacity beyond basic family relations and friendships to welcome those coming back into a community. In the case of adult returnees, community and family leadership roles have become largely meaningless within the context of IDP camps; thus no social positions of any worth exist into which ex-combatants can be placed. The prospects for returning youth are even more troubling, however, in that the cultural and family structures traditionally responsible for their social development have been uprooted entirely with displacement. Any sense of social reintegration is difficult to achieve when the receiving society is itself struggling to function.

Economic reintegration, as is the norm, probably receives more attention than any other area but finds itself buried in just as much failure. Given that most returnees were abducted as children and have in some cases spent extended amounts of time in the bush, they possess very little if any productive capacity upon which they can base a sustainable livelihood. The optimal solution, as expressed by many of the returnees themselves, is to resume formal schooling. Many, however, are reluctant to follow this path either because they would have to rejoin classes comprised of much younger pupils, are in need of an immediate source of income, or simply do not feel themselves mentally fit. The case is more frequently, however, that the resources simply do not exist to make formal education feasible. Practically no one is able to afford the costs of schooling, and sponsorship programs from outside donors are few and far between. Moreover, most schools have been left non-operational from the war and the education system that remains is of pitifully poor quality. The primary alternative, then, is to pursue vocational skills training. Much success has come in the actual training, but this progress means little when considering

what lies ahead for those now in possession of skills. For one, it is widely complained that no tools are provided to accompany the training, and without the proper tools employment is hopeless. In addition, only a limited number of training programs are available, so the result is scores of tailors, brick-makers, bakers, and carpenters entering the market. Perhaps the most important point is to be made here, though, on the condition of the market into which they enter. As with every other social structure, basically no market exists. Northern IDPs are entirely dependent upon agencies for their most basic needs of survival, so one cannot reasonably expect that a blacksmith will receive much business. A functioning economy is a reasonable prerequisite for economic reintegration, but it is one presently unmet in northern Uganda.

A final area that has been argued here to be of critical importance, though ambitious, is the realm of political reintegration. It is positive to note here that, as reported in practically all interviews, most returnees and IDPs alike still see themselves as Ugandans. Though widely recognizing historical injustices and unacceptable handling of the present conflict, most still see the north as a part of the one nation of Uganda. Some do admit their complete loss of faith in the current Museveni administration, but the majority still look to the government as the actor primarily responsible for addressing the needs of the north. In more practical terms, however, no real avenue seems to exist for individual political participation. The dearth of political capacity of the north in general is sufficient to deem the progress of political reintegration to be negligible. For one, the endemic repression of political opposition nationwide is felt particularly by those in the north. Many expressed particular dissatisfaction with the lack of representation of those actually affected by the war at the Juba Peace talks being held between the government and the LRA. Confidence remains in local government officials and representatives to the federal government, but the extent of their influence can be obviously called into question given

the government's inexcusable failure to resolve the northern conflict over the past twenty years. Surprising organization does exist in the election and governance of individual camp leaders, but these competent figures serve no role outside of an infrequent source of local insight for humanitarian agencies and ambassador to other camp visitors such as student researchers. On the whole, the preoccupation with ensuring day-to-day survival and receiving what little they can from functioning agencies, along with simple fatigue after years of seeing no improvement in their lot, prevents any significant development of a collective and representative political contingent within the camps. Again, it is difficult to develop political activity in returnees with a community that possesses no real political voice of its own.

Despite commendable efforts within the initial phases given the unlikely odds of the undertaking, reintegration programs in Uganda are simply insufficient to effect any permanent change within the lives of individual returnees or the broader communities in general. Promising highlights such as the use of former abductees on the radio to draw remaining rebels out of the bush and at high-profile events to put direct pressure on influential officials have had their role in bringing peace to the nation. But on the whole, no capacity exists within communities to receive ex-combatants and abductees yet alone put them to productive purposes. The marginalized state of northern societies may actually serve as a direct counter to reintegration in prompting some actually to return to the bush and others to avoid the great degree of risk that comes with an attempt to escape the rebel ranks. Reintegration has aimed at providing a sustainable life for war-affected persons, but efforts have widely failed to accept that fact that *everyone* in the north is a war-affected person.

6.3 Progress Individually and Broadly with the Capabilities Revision to Reintegration

The shortcomings of reintegration in northern Uganda are largely rooted in a failure to recognize fully the context in which such efforts attempt to operate. Obviously the realities of displacement and effects of brutal violence block the success of returning ex-combatants and abductees to civilian life, but also in the way are the forces underlying the onset and continuation of the war. Uganda's violent national history is largely responsible for the existence of the violence itself as well as the lack of urgency in resolving the conflict. The regional disparities that serve as the grounds for grievance upon which this war was largely launched also come through in the failure to provide a suitable environment to which reintegration participants can return. Having the general population of the north caught between two warring parties equally dismissive of their wishes leaves little room for communities to voice what they actually need to receive these persons. Finally, the dependence on outside support within all parties prevents the development of an indigenous urgency and movement to end the war. Just as the capabilities approach provided the basic framework through which such issues must be addressed, the capabilities model for reintegration offers a way by which to correct the failures of current efforts and contribute to a broader effort of bringing peace to the country.

The simple key to successful reintegration is the realization that it is essentially a development project. An understandable urgency exists when attempting to treat such severe problems at the risk of losing returnees back to the bush or even losing lives, but clearly any immediate assistance provided is undermined if broader considerations are not made. When the goal is provide an entire livelihood to an individual, the distinction between 'relief' and 'development' has no meaning. The only meaningful reintegration into society is that which is

sustainable, and such sustainability can only be achieved by expanding the capacities of the individual returnee and the receiving community.

Perhaps the most urgent revision within the northern Uganda context is an emphasis on the notion of combined capabilities. Simply put, any building of capacity at the individual level means nothing if the proper social arrangements do not exist to convert those capabilities into functionings. Ex-combatants and former abductees can be provided with all the skill sets in the world, but if no economy exists in which they can find employment the entire effort is futile. Individual reintegration participants can be counseled to the greatest lengths and with the utmost intensity on how to readjust to a civilian lifestyle and social structure, but what is the point if they are being returned to a completely dysfunctional civilian context? Any attempt to restore the lives of those directly disrupted by the LRA cannot be separated from attempts to restore all of the lives disrupted by the war in general. As follows, reintegration programs must be refocused to aim assistance *primarily* at the communities which are to receive the returnees. Rather than continuing to be the marginal beneficiary of some sensitization training and small industry formation, reintegration in northern Uganda must aim first to build local capacities able to handle new members of society and the special needs that they bring. The success realized in training community members as monitors and counselors within the IDP camps should be broadly extended. Beyond facilitators of social reinsertion, available resources should be directed toward the training and employment of health workers, teachers, vocational-skill trainers, and entrepreneurs so that an actual structure begins to develop that is not only useful to reintegration participants but also the recovery of the greater community in general. While the reintegration project requires special accommodation for the needs of former soldiers and abductees, the majority of that which is needed for their realization of a sustainable livelihood

can be of equal benefit to all in society. Though the focus must remain on the individuals within the process, successful human development demands attention to the broader social context in which it is to happen.

Despite the wonderful promise of this proposed extension of beneficiaries, it must be realized that all of these attempts are being made within an environment of complete displacement and an ongoing civil conflict. Twenty years of living in camps and being subject to violent warfare is not a natural or sustainable existence, and reintegration programs must not serve to normalize this situation in any sense. Training individuals and building structures to foster the reception of returnees into the camps is really an inherently defeatist approach. How can one achieve a life of freedom and human dignity in a setting completely devoid of freedom and human dignity? The key insight here is that if reintegration is to achieve an actual livable alternative for those coming out of the bush, the aim must not be to make the current situation in the camps livable but rather to change the current situation in the camps. As is presently the case, the basic goal of reintegration is to prepare returnees for life in the camps. It is thought that efforts to provide vocational training and psychosocial support to reintegration participants are successes in adapting to the local context, but in reality they are serving as mechanisms by which to normalize and perpetuate the current conditions in the north. The 'local context' should not be seen as that to which programs must adjust, but rather that to which programs must respond.

An understanding of the real local context, that is the historical roots of the conflict and deeper dynamics underpinning the contemporary situation, allows one to see that the fundamental problems faced by the people of the north are not of an entirely economic or social nature. The reality is in fact that neither a functioning economy nor legitimate social structure exists upon which any individual yet alone a returnee can support herself. But the deeper truth is

that the cause of this situation and the only hope for real recovery are largely a function of political factors. A review of the current situation through the lens of capabilities reveals that the political capacities of northerners fall just as far below threshold levels of development as do economic and social capacities, and perhaps even more so.

Just as the aim of reintegration needed to be broadened to the wider community, then so does the scope of the project need to be extended into the political realm. Returnees are in fact often the most apt to recognize the unsuitability of the environment into which reintegration looks to place them. Unlike the communities receiving them, ex-combatants and abductees have not had the opportunity to grow accustomed to camp conditions, and in some cases are even coming out of a lifestyle in the bush that is favorable to that found in the camps. At this point, however, absolutely no attention is given to providing them with the basic political freedoms and opportunities needed to express these views. As with the economic and social realms, this is largely a function of the fact that those same political freedoms and opportunities are also absent and ignored at the level of the broader community. The impact of this oversight cannot be stressed enough. No one can reasonably deny the crisis being faced by those in the camps and inadequacy of the response thus far given, yet no accountability exists to spur the appropriate actors to action. As time carries on with no relief to their suffering, a certain level of despondency can only be expected from those within the camps; but the same cannot be said for those who have not adjusted to the present circumstance, that is, those returnees just being introduced to the camps. In one sense this presents a very dangerous prospect: individuals just exiting a military life in which they are trained and literally brainwashed into pursuing their needs through the use of violence are introduced into a situation teeming with grounds for legitimate grievance yet no mechanism by which to express that grievance. One really cannot

imagine a greater threat to stability than this, and certainly one must see the impossibility of achieving lasting success with reintegration in this current setting. On the contrary, however, this same scenario presents great potential: such a ‘threat to stability,’ if channeled correctly, can be exactly what is needed to redress the plight of the north and even bring a long-awaited end to the conflict. Granting reintegration participants the capacity and opportunities to voice directly their experiences and needs to government and international officials, providing media outlets by which real grievances can be aired,²⁴⁴ and opening positions of real political power to returnees and receiving communities would go far in ‘de-normalizing’ the ongoing crisis faced by all in the north. Those leaving the bush may be the last hope in convincing the appropriate actors that the situation in the region is not acceptable and cannot be sustained any longer if any national claim to development or democracy is to be made.

The situation in northern Uganda exemplifies the lesson of the capabilities approach which stresses the inseparable nature of all capabilities. Economic and social conditions in the region have deteriorated so far largely as a result of the political marginalization experienced before and throughout the war. The remedy of this situation requires the economic and social attention that has been given (along with the necessary reforms in those areas), but most critically efforts must realize the role of political development, specifically within the context of reintegration. No relief has come because no real pressure has been put on leaders to act. The potential to organize politically in the north is apparent in the presence of the camp leaders and faith in local politicians, but no effort has been made to enhance these capacities. Psychosocial counselors, health workers, teachers, and skill trainers all have their role to play, but right beside

²⁴⁴ The media, specifically radio, has successfully utilized the voice of returnees, but this has typically come in the form of drawing remaining rebels out of the bush and praising the reintegration programs presently in existence. The media outlet mentioned here must be of a much more critical nature discussing the ongoing plight of those not in the bush and directed at government and international actors able to effect change in their situations.

them should be grassroots organizers and civil society developers. Ex-combatants and former abductees present a unique combination of threat and opportunity to peace prospects, and the nation cannot afford to ignore their potential for change any longer.

Despite their promise, recommendations to expand reintegration benefits to all civilians and foster the development of political capacities by which to pursue radical change run into some serious constraints of feasibility. Of course the situation of all war-affected persons would be improved if communities received their due attention, but how can this ever come about when the main obstacle faced by current reintegration programs is a lack of resources? Even more obviously, how can one reasonably imagine reintegration working to develop a mass voice of opposition to the very government responsible for administering those efforts? The ultimate key to any of these reforms being made is a commitment to one of the most powerful tenets of the capabilities approach—the principle of agency. The individuals at whom reintegration is aimed are not to be merely the primary targets, but also the primary actors in the process. Moreover, individual freedoms and capabilities within ex-combatants, abductees, and individuals in the receiving communities are to be both the primary ends and means of reintegration. What this means is that ultimate control over reintegration must be handed over to those directly involved with the process. The design, implementation, and management of efforts must all be left to those who are ultimately to benefit from the endeavor.

Such an emphasis addresses the first issue of resource shortage by positing that the greatest resources available to any effort are the human beings around which it is centered.²⁴⁵ Basically, the capabilities approach demands an actual commitment to the pledge that now barely makes it off of the marketing pamphlets of humanitarian agencies, that is, that all work should

²⁴⁵ Words taken from quote by a peace activist: “The government claims a lack of resources, but the greatest resources of all are human beings.”

primarily focus on the building of local capacities. Camps are teeming with literally hundreds of thousands of unemployed individuals; thus any lack of specialized support should only last for the duration of specialized training. Though few, individuals within communities that have been entrusted with primary roles in reintegration have proven their worth as monitors, advocates of reception, programming managers, and camp leaders. There is no reason to believe that this success would not be paralleled in other areas. Moreover, such positions serve as natural roles to be filled by those completing the reintegration process. Why waste resources on vocational skills training when no better expert exists on reintegration than those who have actually gone through the process? Agencies have no basis for not extending this delegation of responsibility to encompass the full realm of reintegration activities. Moreover, the constitutional component of the agency principal has it that the same actors are to be the primary authors of the effort. Communities and returnees have the most specialized knowledge of what is needed for successful reintegration, so reliance on their own wishes would eliminate the duplication and waste of resources that now come as outside actors primarily determine the details of the reintegration program. Transferring ownership of efforts to those whose lives largely depend on its success naturally results in the most effective and efficient use of available resources.

The concern raised on the issue of the government and other influential actors allowing efforts to enter political areas probably not favorable to their interest is without a doubt an obvious and serious one. The reality is, however, that no real success in reintegration can be achieved without radical reform in the handling of the overall war context, and this reform can only be brought by powerful and organized pressure from those most affected by the conflict. In one sense, this must be viewed as an instance of necessity outweighing feasibility. But still, the

likelihood of the government or agencies directly beholden to the government's wishes²⁴⁶ allowing the development of a mass base of opposition as a core component of reintegration simply does not exist. Given its distaste for and behavior towards official entities of political opposition, the current administration can never be expected to foster directly any grassroots movement of the kind. The only hope for such a force to take hold is a shift in reintegration practices that emphasizes the principle of agency. The best explanation for why no widespread movement has yet developed within the camps is twofold: these communities have grown accustomed to years of political marginalization, and total dependency on relief agencies allows no opportunity for mass-based grievance and organization. The agency argument suggests that if local communities and returnees are granted full ownership of the reintegration effort (as most relief practitioners already claim to attempt), they will come to see the areas in which current practices are inherently deficient. Along with the organizational capacities that naturally develop while administering reintegration and other recovery efforts, local groups will begin to fill in the gaps missed by previous owners of the efforts. The steady development of individual and local capacities would then reach a threshold level at which they are no longer dependent on the assistance of outside agencies and thus beholden to government whims. One must then hope for pressure from within communities to reach a critical mass at which point those in power have no choice but to meet or suppress violently the demands. All of this speculation may be a bit fantastic, but the main point to emphasize is that ownership of reintegration must be granted to the primary actors in the effort if dependency and subjugation to outside influences is to end and real progress realized. No one can speculate with complete accuracy as to what needs to occur

²⁴⁶ All NGOs operating within Uganda must receive direct permission and approval from the government; thus it is practically impossible for any NGO to support any effort in reasonable opposition to official positions.

for reintegration to achieve its aims fully, but what is certain is that the opportunity to shape the effort needs to be granted to those relying on its success.

6.4 Conclusion

Reintegration in northern Uganda presently faces some impossible odds. Fundamentally, an attempt is being made to reintegrate former combatants and abductees into a civilian society and economy which do not exist. Nevertheless, hope is to be found in the improbable success being realized within the initial stages of the process. If any of this progress is to be extended or even sustained, however, issues with the general situation and underlying forces in northern Uganda must be addressed. To these ends, the capabilities approach presents a framework that not only promises measures by which to improve current efforts but also avenues by which reintegration itself can play a part in the radical reform necessary to bring peace to the region. In directing efforts toward building the capacities of receiving communities, extending attention into the realm of political development, and shifting full control and ownership of the project to those directly involved, it is hoped that an indigenous foundation for peace and development will arise that has to this point been lacking.

Conclusion

Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding.

-Albert Einstein

In speaking of war and peace, it is the individual that matters. Such an insight has conventionally been taken to mean that the ‘big players’ in politics and society determine the courses of war and prospects for peace. Of course, government heads and rebel leaders make decisions that impact nations, and single personalities can alter entire landscapes by taking the role of peacemaker or spoiler. But here the reference to the individual is directed at the *human* individual. More specifically, the entire story of civil war and peace can be told through individual human freedoms and capabilities. Levels of development as measured by the degrees of freedoms and capabilities present within a society can provide either sufficient grievance or opportunity to bring a nation to war. Perhaps the primary impact of the war experience is the degree to which it lowers further these same levels of freedom and capabilities across society. Peace is fully realized once the freedom and capabilities enjoyed by individuals have been restored to an adequate and sustainable level. From the onset of war to the attainment of peace, it is the lives of individuals that must take chief priority.

Borrowing directly from the capabilities approach to development, such a perspective on peace and war serves two aims. On the one hand, the normative claim can be made that individual human lives are simply to be valued. Freedom and capabilities are inherently good things and must therefore take precedence under such serious circumstances. What is more, the

individual holds significant instrumental importance in the calculus of war and peace. Terms of conflict and stability are largely determined by the degree of freedom and capabilities within a society, and those levels can be directly influenced by the very same forces themselves. Human lives are thus the primary determinants of as well as the primary forces on war and peace.

In plain terms, it is the people that matter. War happens because some people have some problem with their lives, and they see violence as the best or only way of dealing with it. War is costly because it hurts people in the worst ways, that is, it prevents people from leading lives of dignity that they value, all because of the actions of other people. For peace to come, people must regain their ability to live freely and pursue a life of meaning, and the best method for doing so is by making use of the abilities inherent within those same people.

Relief and recovery efforts claim to function on the basis of valuing human life, but humanitarianism most often denigrates the individual to the role of recipient or patient. Respect for persons and the intent to build local capacities are wonderful catchphrases by which to open the checkbooks of donors, but the interest of such organizations naturally becomes to achieve success in their efforts. Not surprisingly, agencies' aims are not typically framed in terms of working towards their own demise. Projects may be terminated once they have achieved their goals, but more often than not this serves not as a basis for exit but rather grounds for the expansion of efforts into other areas. This is not to dismiss categorically the valuable services provided by the humanitarian community, but it is to say that the overarching directive of such efforts is misguided. Relief interventions are fundamentally aimed at addressing the needs of people within a certain context, and as such inherently work to perpetuate and normalize a situation that almost without exception is entirely unsuitable for lives of human dignity.

The argument can be made that, at least at the highest levels, relief and recovery actors are beginning to realize these areas of concern and are taking measures to reform current practices. The recognition of these problems is commendable, but everything after that becomes just as troubling. In some cases, as has been mentioned, concern of complicity in extending crises enters an agency's operations just enough to make it into the mission statement found in an annual report, but efforts on the ground reflect little comprehension of that text. More broadly, however, bodies like the United Nations and the World Bank involved with relief and recovery initiatives are devoting much attention to the inherent dangers that come with such projects, as evidenced by models like the 'conflict trap' and comprehensive peacebuilding. Their response, however, has been focused on redirecting and expanding into areas they believe to get at the heart of conflicts, but real world experience and case studies repeatedly show their models to still be lacking. A prime example of this is the World Bank's mission to uncover the roots of civil conflict in economic underdevelopment. Though the broad lessons resulting from such empirical studies are informative, a review of practically any actual independent civil war incidence reveals that these explanations are severely lacking in capturing the full picture. The real danger comes in the policy recommendations that follow, as resources are funneled primarily into areas that may only marginally impact any real world threat or implication of conflict.

It is not so hard to realize that individuals are the principal victims within war and beneficiaries from peace, but human beings are also the primary actors and agents for change within these contexts. Rather than expending vast effort in seeking ways by which to hit at the core of civil war causation and continuation, why not devote attention to handing over the effort to those most familiar with the actual war context and that which needs to be done to change it? Organizations go to great lengths in learning all the specificities of a locality to become qualified

for intervention there, but that locality is already full of experts whose experience and commitment to the cause could never be rivaled. Shifting efforts into new directions of assistance really just broadens the scope for failure, but a sole focus on handing over the effort to those directly involved presents little room for error.

Moreover, relief efforts often aim to meet the needs of a community by going into those communities, conducting surveys, fostering dialogue between community members, and shaping policy around those needs. In many ways, is this not the same function performed by a government? Obviously such interventions are being made in areas where government activity is severely constrained if present at all, and just as often, as is the case with northern Uganda, the government that does exist is not to be expected to do anything substantial in alleviating the suffering of the people. Nevertheless, rather than taking the place of government, relief organizations should aim to support the development of some sort of indigenous political movement that fits the local context. Attention is broadly given to the realms of economic and social needs, but ignoring political dynamics may block the most necessary development needed to address the fundamental issues shaping the crisis.

Much work needs to be done in developing models by which ownership can be transferred more successfully to those actually involved with relief efforts such as peacebuilding, and the notion of focusing primarily on political structures for overall recovery is at an even more rudimentary state. The basic lesson, however, is clear: peace and overall development within a nation demands the knowledge, commitment, energy, and resources that can only be brought by those at whom efforts are aimed. Barriers of legitimacy and concerns of complicity are basically eliminated when people are put in control of their own survival and futures.

True commitment to the notions of freedoms, capabilities, and lives of human dignity can only come with recognition of the agency of the individual. The ultimate fighter in the war for peace must be the human individual.

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II. Ethnographic Map of Uganda



Source: Lomo, Z., Hovil, L., et al. (2004). *Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*. Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 11, p. 49.

III. Areas Affected by the Northern Uganda Conflict



Source: Lomo, Z., Hovil, L., et al. (2004). *Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*. Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 11, p. 50.

Appendix II

Interview Subjects

29 interviews were conducted in July and August of 2006 in Kampala and Gulu town. Participating subjects have been organized into four general groupings: IDP camp leaders (5), reintegration workers (4), broad relief officers (13), and peace advocates (7), the number of interviews in each category listed in parentheses. Anonymity will be kept for the privacy of the subjects, but the organizations with which they are affiliated are listed below in their respective categories.

I. IDP Camps

Alokolum IDP Camp
CooPe IDP Camp
Koro-abili IDP Camp
Lacor IDP Camp
Unyama IDP Camp

II. Reintegration Organizations

Gulu Support the Children Organisation (GUSCO) [3 subjects]
World Vision

III. Broad Relief Organizations

Gulu Amnesty Commission
International Rescue Committee
The Kids League [2 subjects]
Noah's Ark Children's Ministry Uganda (night commuter shelter)
Oxfam International
Save the Children in Uganda [2 subjects]
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA)
United Youth Action for Progress [2 subjects]
World Vision Uganda

IV. Peace Advocate Organizations

Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda (CSOPNU)

Human Rights Focus

Northern Uganda Peace Initiative (NUPI)

Quaker Peace and Social Witness Uganda

The Refugee Law Project

School for International Training

Uganda Conflict Action Network (Uganda CAN)

Appendix III

Account of LRA Abduction and Reception at a Rehabilitation Center

The following account was provided in an interview with Michael Oruni, a Programme Coordinator with World Vision Uganda who has had extensive first hand experience in dealing with the experiences of children abducted by the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) who go through rehabilitation centers like the one administered by World Vision in Gulu town.

Children are abducted from *anywhere*: at home during the night, going to market, in school, etc. When the LRA forces come to villages, they first order everyone out of their homes. If you refuse to come out, the soldiers will torch the house. Everyone is thus brought into open, old and young alike. The rebels then begin to choose who will come with them. If you are a parent and protest your son or daughter's selection, you will be killed in front of your children. This all constitutes an introduction to another life as the violence starts right at the compound from which you are abducted. The LRA forces proceed to loot the homes before burning down the entire village. This impresses upon children the fact that there is nothing left to which they can return and that they are going for good.

The treacherous journey is then made to the rebel base. Oftentimes forces to run much of the distance, the weak are simply left behind or killed. Once camp is reached, the new recruits are first separated by age. From there you can either be sent to a commander or used as 'an example.' Those fortunate enough not to be selected as this 'example' are forced to participate in his or her killing so that they can become strong. Killing the person with clubs, machetes, and

even bare hands is to teach the new abductees that this is what will happen to them if escape is attempted. Understandably, at that point most let go of the idea of escape.

This killing is followed by ‘rituals of introduction.’ First is ‘registration’ where you are given 50-100 strokes of the cane to introduce you to pain. A soldier must never cry. If you cry, you will be beat until you stop crying, and then beat until you cry again—basically, just be quiet and become a strong soldier. Next is ‘initiation.’ Shear butter oil, a very precious oil used for cooking and traditional ceremonies, is used for a sign of the cross on the forehead, mixing Christianity with fanaticism. The sign of the cross is made all the way down to your feet to tell you that with this oil you are now initiated in the rebel ranks of Joseph Kony and no longer control yourself but are under the control of the spirits. “If you try to escape, the spirits will take you back, and you will be killed. Because the spirits are on you, whatever you’re thinking, we know—think of escape, we will see it in your face.” In this way, the rebels use the psychology of children to create fear.

They then begin the move to Sudan—on barefoot; through the bush, snakes, etc.; walking for one or two weeks; pursued by the military at times; going three or four days without eating because there is no time to sit down and cook. They ask if you want to rest—if you say yes, they’ll kill you to give you permanent rest. This is really *survival of the fittest*—only the strong make it to Sudan. In Sudan, the new recruits meet a hot and dry summer. Without water for weeks, children beg for each other’s urine and suck water out of mud—it’s either this, or you die. Only the strong can survive this journey.

Upon reaching Sudan, abductees are introduced as new recruits. More rituals follow and then one week of rigorous military training. Girls are separated to be wives. Kony takes the most beautiful, and the rest are dispersed throughout the ranks. Girls are given as rewards. They

are balanced between military training, building houses, and being a wife. Anytime is time for sex—sex is the right of the man, no questions.

There is almost no food at all. Recruits must search the bush for any leaves to eat. Many die from hunger or cholera. In southern Sudan, guns are a piece of normal property—a woman washing dishes will have her gun with her. Children must raid these homes for food—20 go, 10 return.

Some are sent back to Uganda to get more supplies. The rebels will make sure you go to your own village to loot and abduct more children. Of course government soldiers are waiting, so you must fight the entire time while in Uganda.

Then there is the escape scene. The child makes the personal decision that enough is enough, and she must leave. If someone reports you, you will be killed—so you can't trust anyone, can't share your plan with anyone. Escapees spend weeks alone lost in the bush, torn between the choices of wandering alone, reporting yourself, or going back to the rebels. You will die in the bush if you stay alone. If you go home, they will kill you or hand you over to government soldiers who will take you to camp called 'World Vision' where they will torture you, poison you—and you die. Children are not sure if they should just remain with rebels and die, but many take the risk.

Some children come to the [World Vision Rehabilitation] center through bicycle riders. Some come directly to the center with guns, grenades, and anything else for defense. Some go through local religious or traditional leaders. When they arrive, the children are ready for torture and hard labor—but wait, you start to see other children, and they're alive! You thought they were killed—children clap and sing Christian songs of surviving death. Finally arriving home, children hug each other and cry together.

Upon arrival, basic materials are given for living. At eating time, the children are so hungry they can die, but they are sure that the food in the center must be poisoned. But they see everybody else eating, so join in. They eat any amount of food that comes to them because they don't know when they will eat again—many will actually eat themselves sick. Many arrive at the center sick, suffering from foot sores or STDs, pregnant, or having stomach problems. One girl was taken to Alabama to extract a bullet that went through her eye.

Children are then taken to counselors that are properly trained. Personal timetables are set for time just to talk—many are laughing on the outside, but inside they are really dead. It is not until they break down that they are they ready to heal. Many look fine physically from the outside, but inside they are crazy.

The returnees are put into groups with other children who went through a similar experience, for example killing a parent or being forced to lick blood. Everyone feel so bad, but they assure each other that they were forced to do it and share with each other how to cope with the trauma. Other approaches are also used like games, sports, and traditional songs and dances— it's just a different world to see them laughing and playing

Time then comes for reconciliation—abductors and abductees are present in same center, eating and playing together. The very person who cut off your ears and lips is the one in front of you in line for food—*you never see reconciliation like this.*