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Development, Refugees Generation, Resettlement and Repatriation: A Conceptual Review

Charles P. Gasarasi

Introduction

Discourse in refugee studies throughout the 1980s and 1990s has increasingly focused on "development" as a category inseparable from the refugee phenomenon itself. In earlier studies devoted to determining root causes of refugee flows, the idea that there was a causal link between underdevelopment and the generation of refugees gained currency. Subsequently, literature on durable solutions to the refugee problem (resettlement in host countries and voluntary repatriation) placed "development" at the centre of either solution. Before long, academics, politicians and relief agencies joined hands in an advocacy campaign to make development assistance an integral part of of refugee/returnee aid. The targeted recipients of the "development" gains were the refugees themselves, the host countries bearing the refugee burden, and the local host communities—particularly

the poorest and most vulnerable members of those communities. The campaign that ensued enriched the language of refugee studies by additional entries like "Refugee Aid and Development" (RAD). The same acronym could also stand for "Returnee Aid and Development," an idea which

informs some of the work being done on repatriation of refugees.

This paper revisits the discourse as it has unfolded over the last several years in order to find out whether there exists a fundamental relationship between development and the various concerns of refugee studies, such as

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refugee movements, resettlement and repatriation. A review of much of the literature, however, does not reveal such a relationship in any fundamental sense. "Development" appears to be as one of those cherished words like "democracy," that every discipline tries to identify with, both because of the unquestionable relevance that "development" has to all fields of study and the desirability of the word's undeniably legitimating signature. Instead matters like refugee generation, the rate of success in resettlement and repatriation, and, indeed, development itself, are correlates of the type of state in whose jurisdiction they take place.

In most of the states which have generated refugees, at least in Africa, the social contract, which is supposed to be the constitutive element of a state, does not seem to have been consummated. As a result, those who found themselves at the helm of the "ship of state" have exercised the normal right of state to the monopoly of the use of violence, without feeling any obligation to protect the citizens. In the area of development, those states have arrogated for themselves the role of main providers of development, without either the will or the capacity to fulfil that function competently. What little development they have been able to realize has benefited the rulers themselves and a tiny clique around them. Using tight controls legitimized by repressive domestic laws, they have often thwarted citizens' own initiatives to pursue their own development strategies. These and other contradictions have degenerated into conflict, refugee movements and chronic underdevelopment. It would seem that the pathological nature of the state needs to be addressed first before one contemplates what development would or would not do in the areas of refugee generation, resettlement and repatriation.

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Précis

Durant les décennies 80-90, les discours sur les réfugiés ont été focalisés sur les liens entre le développement et les mouvements des réfugiés. En d'autres termes, on a associé le sous-développement à la cause du flux de réfugiés. Par conséquent, les solutions durables à ce phénomène devraient placer le développement au centre de cette problématique. Dans cette optique, les politiciens et les chercheurs se sont mis d'accord pour faire de l'assistance au développement leur cheval de bataille. Paradoxalement, l'aide au développement précoce a servi leurs concepteurs plutôt que les réfugiés et encore moins la population locale, et en particulier celle qui est la plus démunie. A partir de la littérature existante, cette étude tente de d'expliquer qu'il n'existe pas de relation de cause à effet entre le développement et les mouvements des réfugiés au sens fondamental du terme.

The Link between Economic Development and Refugee Movements

It can be argued that no scientifically driven study to date has established any correlation between economic underdevelopment and refugee outflows. Such association, to the extent that it has been articulated, has been the product of intellectual intuition at best, or North-South dialogue rhetoric at worst. Academics and bureaucrats-cum-politicians are among those who have expressed the existence of a link between economic underdevelopment and refugee generation. Of the two categories, the latter has been more unequivocal about the assertion that a positive correlation exists. The academics, on the other hand, have been noncommittal on the subject, at one moment suggesting that such a relationship exists, only to be negated later. The categorical expression of an existing relationship by bureaucrats/politicians can be exemplified by the conclusions of two reports prepared under the auspices of the UNHCR in the mid-1980s, both of which identi-

fied "economic underdevelopment as a fundamental cause of contemporary refugee flows" (Zolberg 1989, 258). Another report prepared by a group of experts appointed by the UN General Assembly, also in the mid-1980s,

... the group cites underdevelopment "inherited from colonialism" and aggravated by the world economic situation as a major root cause. As a result, the economics of the South suffer balance-of-payments problems, deteriorating terms of trade, indebtedness, and inflation. Environmental related problems of desertification and deforestation aggravate the situation. The result is generalized conditions of insecurity that threaten the basic conditions of survival, compelling large numbers of persons to flee. (*ibid.*, 259)

The general thrust of these views is that the political strife and instability that often cause refugee outflows are only a manifestation of problems of economic underdevelopment. The state is seldom mentioned as the culprit responsible for generation of refugees, except for the unfailing mention of "oppressive, segregationist and racially supremacist regimes," referring to former apartheid South Africa.

From a bureaucratic-political point of view, particularly at the height of the North-South dialogue, associating every social or political problem of the South with underdevelopment was expedient in many ways. It is not surprising therefore, that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees prescribed the following as a solution to refugee outflows:

... unless you really address the problem of development, you are never going to be able to circumscribe movements of people, whether they are refugees for economic, political, or ecological reasons—and basically the root causes combine ... If we sent proper technical assistance, if there was transfer of appropriate technology, if one focused on the rural areas rather than the cities, if the quality of life and life support systems were improved, you would begin to address the problem as it should be addressed. (*ibid.*, 259)

The above reasoning can be easily challenged by enumerating several non-refugee generating countries which are much more economically underdeveloped than those which have generated refugees. Countries like Tanzania, Zambia, Swaziland, etc., which are not on the list of refugee-generating countries, are less economically developed than South Africa, Angola and Zimbabwe, which have in the past been major sources of refugees.

As mentioned earlier, academics have been rather ambivalent on the relationship between development and generation of refugees. They have sometimes commented on the correlation in the affirmative. Gorman (1993, 1) has, for instance, commented that economic underdevelopment and refugee movements "are in a very real sense linked ... and neither can be fully resolved without taking into account the other." He further observes that "some of the most economically at risk nations were also those most responsible for generating refugee flows ..." (*ibid.*, 160). However, clearly realizing the theoretical and methodological questions raised by the above statements, he neutralizes them by making a more cautious, noncommittal conclusion:

... the argument was made that the refugee flows in much of the world are closely related to development issues and often precipitated by civil war. Civil war and refugees are clearly not confined to underdeveloped or developing nations, as the ongoing drama in the Balkans clearly attests, but the vast majority of refugee problems do exist in the developing world ... (*ibid.*, 160)

The same problem of uncertainty about the causal link between underdevelopment and refugee generation is found in Adelman's writings. On the affirmative side, he views the refugee problem and economic underdevelopment as being inseparable:

... the refugee problem is inseparable from the problem of economic development in Africa, both in preventing situations that create refugee

flows and in dealing with either of the permanent solutions available settlement and repatriation. Unless economic development occurs, neither solution is workable in the long run. (Adelman 1994, ix)

Reasoning in the opposite direction, Adelman has previously argued that economics [development] has no positive influence on preventing refugee generation or in facilitating the conventional solutions to the refugee problem:

... the belief that capital accumulation, or industrialization—that is, economics—is the cure both to prevent refugee production and to assist in one form of permanent solution (economic integration into the local economy) seems misplaced. A healthy economy is not the basis for a stable political system: a healthy political system is the primary basis for a healthy economy ... The conclusion seems straightforward enough. There will be no cure to the root causes of refugees by directly attacking the fundamental economic problems of the third world. Quite the reverse seems to be indicated. The development of a good political and legal system will be critical to the prevention of the production of refugees and facilitate the repatriation, settlement and resettlement of the refugees-refugees who seem to enhance economic growth. (Adelman 1990, 19–21)

Zolberg (1989, 260), for his part, while not totally discounting some possible relationship between underdevelopment and the refugee question, maintains that, "economic underdevelopment is by itself not a major cause of refugee flows."

The simple notion that poverty produces refugees is inconsistent with the fact that situations of extreme economic deprivation usually have not generated population outflows claiming refugee status. (e.g., the poor in India or Burkina Faso) (*ibid.*, 260)

Zolberg also raises the issue of the difficulty involved in weighting the importance of underdevelopment in the production of refugees among several other colluding causes. Assess-

ment of the role of economic underdevelopment as a cause of refugees is difficult, because it is not easy to establish the extent to which "the characteristic imbalances of economic underdevelopment contributed to violent political conflicts of the kind that historically has caused large refugee flows" (*ibid.*, 261). Regarding the supposedly beneficial effect of development upon solutions to the refugee problem, such as resettlement and repatriation, he cautions that "when massive internal poverty is related to the structure of political power and production, reforms without fundamental change in the political economy will have marginal results" (*ibid.*) Zolberg's thinking seems to be following a polity primacy trajectory. By "polity primacy" it is understood that an analytical perspective that assigns a pivotal causal role behind various phenomena to state and politics.

On the basis of the foregoing, it would seem that the causal link between development/underdevelopment and generation of refugees remains a mere hypothesis that has yet to be proved. The hypothesis may be appealing to common sense, but this alone, short of a major scientific study corroborating the hypothesis, does not confer a paradigmatic status to the assumed causal link for teaching or even policy purposes.

The "State" as the Hub of Refugee-Related Problems: A Polity Primacy View

The word "state" is written in quotation marks to indicate that there is doubt that most refugee-generating countries, particularly in Africa, qualify to be called as states, at least in the modern liberal sense. The state in most refugee-producing African countries deviates in many ways from the type of sociopolitical organization described in the social contract theories of the state. According to the latter theories, the state comes into being when individuals

leave the state of nature to better themselves through a state system ...
Individuals trade their right to pro-

tect themselves and their goods and surrender the right to self-protection to the state in return for the obligation and responsibility of the state to provide that protection (Adelman 1990, 22)

"The elemental justification for the modern state, at least since Hobbes, is its ability to provide reasonable security for its citizens" (Zolberg 1989, 264). The state's monopoly of the legitimate use of violence stems from the social contract itself.

In many of the legal formations called "states" in Africa, no process of social contract seems to have ever taken place. Under colonialism, whole population groups found themselves herded within the confines of arbitrarily demarcated territories without consent. The administration that ruled in these territories was the extended arm of the metropolitan state and the parties to the social contract were not the indigenous populations but the citizens of the colonial power. At independence, the neo-colonial states were not created out of any discernible social contract among the indigenous populations, nor were there, in many cases, any mechanisms to at least belatedly forge that social contract. The demarcation of the state's territory remained sacrosanctly colonial; an indigenous administration emerged and the new legal-political formation quickly seized monopoly over the use of violence and taxation. It also proclaimed itself the provider of development.

The self-assigned role of provider of development was designed to serve two twin purposes: to confer legitimacy to the "state" in the absence of a social contract and to clip the wings of other social institutions that had the potential to spread empowerment among the people, thus weakening "state" control over its extractive capacity. This was necessary because the political elites who inherited the colonial state were primarily motivated by access to material rewards through control of the economic means of production. Political power became for these elites the vital resource for self-

rehabilitation in economic status, and membership in the "state" power hierarchy was both coveted and jealously guarded. Those who managed to maintain membership in this hierarchy literally constituted the "state."

The dynamics of this false start in state formation, not born out of a social contract, have been described by Zolberg (1989, 43):

The ruling elite's project has been aptly characterized as "self-aggrandizement combined with enough redistribution to maintain its tenuous and vital hold on the state." The takeover of the colonial state apparatus enabled the organization of clientelist networks through which the state was managed. However, in answer to the demands occasioned by broader mobilization and rising expectations around the time of independence, these resources had to be expanded and these demands met. But because the takeover of the colonial state meant controlling police and military forces, African rulers were able to use coercion to refute these demands and limit costs. They also quickly discovered the full range of authoritarian techniques, from the imposition of legal restrictions on political activity in the name of national security, to the physical elimination of opponents and the replacement of autonomous associations with the state-controlled bodies.

Not only does the above eloquent description demonstrate the total absence of a social contract at the constitutive phase of the "state," but it also shows elimination of any chances to institute any such contract during the subsequent process of systematically tearing apart the social fabric among the citizenry. Zolberg (*ibid.*, 40) further observes that "although the state dominates the social scene, it is itself an extremely weak and fragile organization, with a limited capacity for managing society and directing change"—including development.

What followed was an understandable erosion of the authority of the "state," including its jealously guarded monopoly of the use of violence. In the latter regard, dissenting

citizens took up arms which they turned against the ruling elites and their supporters, but also sometimes against an innocent and defenceless civilian population (RENAMO in Mozambique). A variant of loss of monopoly over the use of violence occurred when the regime in power felt under siege and voluntarily gave a share of the use of violence to its civilian supporters by arming them (Angola in the aftermath of the ill-fated 1992 elections, Rwanda on the eve of the 1994 genocide).

Erosion of state authority was exacerbated by failure in the state's self-imposed development mission occasioned by both internal and external factors. Internal factors include poor economic planning, management, misappropriation of capital funds, the ousting of important domestic economic actors, and in some cases, a poor resource base. External factors include deterioration of international terms of trade, the energy crisis, the mounting burden of debt, and the growing reluctance of investors to face the risks of continued instability when other choices are available (*ibid.*, 44). Under such circumstances, survival dictates that a significant segment of local economic actors exit from the directionless framework of state macro-economic planning into the underworld of the "parallel economy." This act hits hard on the remaining blood vessel of the "state" with respect to authority: the exercise of its monopoly of taxation.

Stripped of presumed authority and legitimacy, the "state" ceases to be the reliable guarantor of the ruling elites' social and economic privileges. Not prepared to give up, the "rulers degenerate into outright tyrants" (*ibid.*, 44). Since refugee testimonies in the archives of the UNHCR, and countless immigration administrations show that in numerous cases refugee flight was caused by state tyranny at home, it should be possible to carry out an empirical scientific study that would demonstrate the existence of a positive correlation between state tyranny and refugee outflows. It may also be possi-

ble to demonstrate, at another level of such a study, that there is a correlation between refugee generation and the level of development of the state.

In the absence of such a study so far, the polity primacy approach which associates the refugee question primarily with state and politics is also still more hypothetical than categorical. However, it seems to have more explanatory value than the hypothesis that associates the refugee question primarily with development, even though both hypotheses can be equally criticized on epistemological grounds that "you cannot get prescriptive edicts from a descriptive thesis" (Adelman 1990, 22).

Given those epistemological constraints, it nonetheless seems that of the two hypotheses above, the polity primacy one is more productive in terms of causal logic. Causal link between state behaviour and refugee generation is closer to empirical reality than that between development and refugee generation. This difference arises because the two variables being correlated with refugee generation are different in a fundamental sense. On the one hand, "development" is an abstract category which still eludes definitional consensus among experts. On the other hand, the "state" is not as abstract, even though there are differing views about whose interests it serves. It is almost an animate corporate personality which makes things happen or not happen - including development. As variables being correlated with a single constant variable, i.e. the refugee question, the two stand in a distinct hierarchical order. The "state" is an actor; "development" is a result. The "state" is active, "development" is passive. In their influence on the refugee question, the "active" and the "passive" must produce differential impacts corresponding to the hierarchical order of the hypothesized causal agents. It is this logic that suggests that the polity primacy approach is more appropriate for the study of the refugee question: its root causes as well as its programmatic solutions.

The relative salience of state and politics over that of development in the entire refugee question has been clearly underscored in the literature reviewed. For example, Adelman is of the view that development must "serve other political ends" such as fair distribution of the results of economic growth:

When relative inequalities grow rather than decline, when one ethnic group is penalized to benefit another, we sow the seeds for social dissension and reversing economic growth. We sow the seeds for the production of refugees. (*ibid.*, 19-20).

Zolberg (1989, 263) also associates refugee outflows primarily with politics:

As long as refugees in our world are defined with respect to violence in the political sphere, the most proximate causes of such population movements will, in fact, be political.

From a polity primacy view of the refugee question, the diagnosis of the problem points to the pathological features of the state and its government. It follows therefore that the solutions lie in the rehabilitation of the legitimacy of the state through a new social covenant. Adelman (1994, xiii) makes this very point:

Governments that are legitimate and that rule by consent rather than by force are a prerequisite to ending refugee flows and allowing repatriation ... To facilitate regime change and peace, a number of factors must be present: agreements to secure the interests of local populations, empowerment and self-determination and, the conviction by the warring parties that the benefits of peace outweigh the gains achievable through struggle.

The enterprise of rehabilitating state legitimacy through a new social covenant entails building or rebuilding civil society and creating "an administrative system which is genuinely representative of local interests and from which no section of the population feels excluded" (UNRISD 1993, 12). This simultaneously requires instilling accountability and responsiveness in state institutions.

Refugee and Development and Polity Primacy

The last two decades have been characterized by a heavy "development" agenda in refugee studies. This is not surprising as the same thing was happening to other fields of study throughout the global environment. The prime movers of this trend were the politicians in their innumerable fora: the UN General Assembly, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77, UNCTAD, and the South-South Commission, to mention a few. In the excitement that built up, a wide range of activities were christened "development." There was one United Nations development decade; human rights activists unveiled "the right to development;" feminists coined the term "women and development," etc. Our own field could not afford missing this bandwagon, so "Refugee Aid and Development" (RAD) hit the conference halls and publishing houses. Indeed, there were good reasons to do that. The first was a legitimate concern about the negative impact refugee flows may have on host countries and local communities. The second, that is not as mundane as it may sound, was the imperative to maintain research fundability in an environment where most traditional donors insisted that a fundable research project must have a development dimension attached to its mainstream disciplinary focus. The mid-1970s gave literature on the developmental implications of massive refugee flows into developing countries, particularly in Africa. Research began in earnest in response to the perceived problem that poor host countries were paying dearly for receiving refugees. Gorman (1993) has summarized that perception:

There was increasingly a realization that large numbers of refugees, often spontaneously settled in poor countries, could quickly outpace the host country's economic and social infrastructures. Health facilities and schools in the affected regions were often overburdened by additional stress of refugee needs. In some

cases, such as Pakistan, the very relief operation itself caused a deterioration in roads, which were subjected to continuous relief convoys of heavy trucks laden with relief supplies. In arid regions, such as Sudan and Somalia, the massive concentration of refugee populations led to widespread deforestation and desertification. Stresses on fuel wood and water supplies in such areas were often acute. Host governments found themselves seconding scarce expertise and personnel to cope with relief logistics, security, range management, and the like, in refugee-affected regions. Under these conditions, the development needs of the host country, the host region of the country, and the local population in the affected regions were in danger of being ignored.

The scenario captured in the above quotation was so powerful and compelling that it tended to be accepted at face value as self-evident. In quarters requiring a rigorous scientific substantiation of such an assertion, it took the expert statements of the late Tristram Betts and Robert Chambers to stamp credibility on the scenario. Tristram Betts was an experienced rural development practitioner with many years of field work in Africa. Robert Chambers is a distinguished settlements expert. The solution suggested by these two authoritative individuals with regard to reducing the burden on host countries was RAD, which according to Callamard (1993, 137-8) responds to two intertwined goals:

1. to ensure that the financial burden of providing asylum to refugees will be shared by the international community, and
2. that additional resources will be granted for development projects that will benefit both the refugee and local populations ... It should ensure that refugee assistance does not further impoverish the poorest inhabitants of the host areas, but rather contributes to a local development process benefiting them as well as the refugees.

Chambers' field research findings on the impact of refugees on the poor in host communities, (published under

well chosen titles such as "What the eye does not see" and "Hidden Losers") excited researchers and practitioners alike. Betts' strong faith in integrated rural development impacted on action-oriented bureaucracies with the importance of a pathfinder on the operational side of RAD. The two combined to launch RAD research and RAD advocacy. Soon to witness, everywhere, recasting of institutional mandates: the UNHCR, the UNDP, NGOs, and the like strove to accommodate the great idea. At various research institutions, refugee research adjusted its priorities accordingly.

The initial euphoria notwithstanding, RAD research and practice has remained by and large underdeveloped. In the sphere of research, it was soon realized that it was not easy to establish a positive correlation between hosting refugees and experiencing a net loss in development. Chambers himself (1993, 37-38) admits this:

The effects of refugee influxes on economic development vary a great deal. At one extreme, they can make things worse, as they appear to have done in Bas Zaire in 1978, straining food supplies and services, and exacerbating the effects of drought ... On the other hand, food aid and cheap labor, together with refugee trading, and artisan and farming activities can entail and stimulate economic development ... Whether refugees depress or stimulate economic development depends heavily on official policies and interventions.

In examining Chambers' "Working hypotheses about which rural hosts gain and which lose" (*ibid.*, 39), what emerges clearly is that some local people gain while others lose. Since the studies do not balance the gains against the losses, it is not possible to interpret the net effect of refugee presence on the host communities. The net index of such impact could be as positive as it could be negative.

Another problem that marks Chambers' field studies is the unconvincing assertion that the worsening economic conditions of the poorest among the

hosts is caused by the presence of refugees. Even if a "prima facie" case of such deteriorating conditions among the poorest of the hosts was accepted, one would still need proof that no other factors were responsible for that deterioration. This is important, particularly since 1973, for a whole host of macro-economic factors have contributed to the increasing misery index among the rural poor: increasing inflation, structural adjustment programs, a fall in international commodity prices, removal of government subsidies and price controls, etc. Chambers does not factor such macro and micro-economic variables into his observed deterioration of the living conditions of the poorest, and this is an omission that weakens his research, and there is no awareness of any RAD research work that has gone beyond these weaknesses in order to support the practical side of the RAD philosophy. Thus, from a purely academic point of view, it would seem that RAD rhetoric has had a life of its own, independent of any solid scientific justification.

In actual practice, RAD has proceeded along a normative trajectory in the sphere of politics and advocacy. This is where our notion of polity primacy becomes functional. First of all, regardless of whether or not the theoretical foundations of RAD are correct, its operational fate lies with the states - both aid donors and recipients. One of the normative demands of RAD is that development assistance takes into account the effects of large numbers of refugees on the economic and social life of the host country. Some of its principles are that:

The UNHCR and the international community as a whole should orient assistance in a fashion that longer-term implications are anticipated [and that] ... Infrastructural and refugee-related development projects should be additional to [aid] provided for a country's regular development programming (Gorman 1993, 65).

The term "long-term," that distinguishes RAD from ordinary relief aid, is at the centre of the RAD controversy. It raises the question whether provid-

ing "additional" long-term development assistance is a reaction which is always proportionate to the loss incurred by the refugee host state, and whether such a loss could not simply be defrayed by an appropriate short-term relief package. In addition, RAD thinking also assumes, often incorrectly, that the beneficiary host state would unconditionally be willing to accept development assistance, regardless of the administrative modalities of such assistance.

For the purpose of discussing the proportionate response issue, we will use the experience of Tanzania in the wake of the recent influx of close to 500,000 Rwandan refugees at the time of the 1994 genocide. Mhina (October 1994) has reported the following negative effects of the above refugee influx in Ngara District, where the huge Benaco camp is located:

- (i) The stocks of food were used up: either sold, given for free or stolen by the refugees [at crossing points] before the refugees could enter the relief supply system.
- (ii) Farms [of local people] were destroyed, either trampled by people or livestock.
- (iii) Water sources were affected either through overuse or human pollution.
- (iv) There is great environmental degradation resulting from indiscriminate cutting of trees [several hectares of forest have been wiped out for firewood and other uses].
- (v) Some local villagers died from diseases brought by refugees. At Kasange 6 local people died of dysentery together with 21 refugees.
- (vi) Some schools were destroyed by refugees who stayed in them.
- (vii) Women have been affected because some of their used up crops were a source of their independent income to purchase clothing and other items. Men are refusing to take responsibility and hence the women are forced to work in farms in non-affected villages in return for food for the family.
- (viii) There is increasing theft and armed robbery. At Rusumo village

3 people were recently wounded by bullets following an armed robbery. Apparently, the refugees who had sold everything can only steal now. At the same time, there is organized crime operating from Benaco.

To the above we could add:

- (ix) The slow destruction of roads caused by heavy convoy trucks carrying relief supplies.

A close examination of the above problems shows that hardly any of them justifies long-term development assistance. Problems (i), (ii), (vi) and (vii) are about losses that can be easily quantified. An administrative machinery could be put in place to process compensation of those affected, debiting the claims against the relief budget made available for that particular emergency. Problem (ix), which is about rehabilitation of roads, can be negotiated with the World Food Programme (WFP) which uses those trucks. WFP could then make a budgetary allocation for that purpose as it has occasionally done with respect to infrastructural rehabilitation elsewhere (e.g. Bujumbura Port). Such assistance to repair existing infrastructure is not "long-term" development assistance.

Problems (iii) and (v) are one-time events of an emergency nature, which require emergency health and sanitation measures that can be funded from short-term relief budgets. Regarding environmental degradation (Problem iv), it is not administratively impossible to introduce a tree planting scheme in the refugee camp, making the refugees replace the trees they cut for firewood and other purposes. This is not improper because just as refugees have rights, they also have obligations. Finally, the security problem expressed in (viii) does not require any international assistance at all. Tanzania has quite a sizable army and a Field Force Unit. During peace time, these forces are available and more than adequate to police a refugee camp, large as the latter may be. Securing the national territory and its citizens is a duty that the state must be able to perform,

and conditioning it upon availability of "long-term" development assistance is irrelevant.

The problems experienced by Tanzania are in many ways standard elsewhere in the third world. Many of the same problems appear on Farr's list (1993, 122) with respect to Afghan refugee influxes in Pakistan. It is such problems that are used to make a case for development assistance, meaning in the long-term. A closer look at the nature of the problems has shown that they can be solved through short term measures, easily accommodated in an improved packaged relief program. This would be done by drawing on the resources of the international community which, incidentally, has lately shown more readiness to provide relief assistance more generously than development assistance. Perhaps the reasons for this are that humanitarian assistance in crisis situations has more visibility, and that administration of such assistance can be placed in the hands of agencies the donors trust, avoiding the host state bureaucracies which the donors distrust. However, it should be noted that long-term development assistance constitutes often a disproportionate response to the burden imposed by refugee influxes, irrespective of donor preferences, which do not, in themselves, always stem from good intentions.

Differing from the development assistance-as-compensation case, RAD makes a good argument that for successful integration of refugees in host communities, long-term development programs should benefit both the refugees and the local populations. This idea is the foundation philosophy of the "Integrated Multisectoral Development Projects" within Burundi, Zaire, Uganda and other countries, thanks to the efforts of the late Tristram Betts and others like him. However, in a world of polity primacy, such highly rational philosophies do not stand a chance of successful realization unless they do not invade the political interests of states and their bureaucracies. Alas, in most cases they do. Development projects are, by their very nature,

about allocation of resources. They are about who gets what, when and how. This is what politics is about.

Where RAD-type integrated projects were initiated, they often did not survive. Pitterman (1993, 21) has documented some of the failures:

Integrated projects in two areas of Uganda were abortive because of "policy changes by the government that, for a variety of political and other reasons, declared against development projects in those regions." ... In 1971, Project BDI-7 failed in Burundi partly as a result of project mismanagement and ill-defined objectives and partly because of the political upheavals there in 1971.

Since going into the details of the failure of each individual RAD-type project is beyond the scope of this paper, we will simply attempt to sketch the contours of the intra and interstate political forces that kill such integrated projects. Very often, the donor states

because they feel ousted by the parallel administration, in terms of both jurisdiction and resource allocation. Where the local bureaucracies do not manage to reject the arrangement outright, they accept it very reluctantly, but only when they can at least secure the status of "local counterpart" participation. Most integrated projects are run through the latter kind of arrangement. As a result, struggle often ensues between those two power poles. In some cases the two sides strike some "modus vivendi" which may sometimes crystallize into a mutual "modus" to misappropriate project funds. The latter scenario dictates an opaque "modus operandi" which distances recipients' participation in the project. Either this, or the extreme case of local and foreign managers failing to reach a "modus vivendi," end up killing the project.

This may explain Gorman's observation (1993, 147) that "as a matter of

[I]t should be noted that long-term development assistance constitutes often a disproportionate response to the burden imposed by refugee influxes, irrespective of donor preferences, which do not, in themselves, always stem from good intentions.

which fund those projects want to see an administration parallel to the local one stationed at the project site, in order to manage the project. Staff for such an administration is preferably to be recruited from the donor state, or at the very least it has to be another agency approved by the donor state. This conditionality may at times stem from a genuine concern to properly account for the taxpayer's money, but it may also be motivated by the donor state's concerns in its human resource development agenda: unemployment reduction, internships for area studies specialists, increasing the salaries and benefits for some members of the work force through expatriation, etc. Quite often, a significant amount of the development assistance is assigned to administrative and logistical overheads.

In the recipient state, the bureaucracies find this approach unacceptable

policy, many governments have been reluctant to implement the logic of RAD ... Those governments of poor countries which accept RAD do so only if implementation does not oust their sovereignty. When sovereignty is not touched, RAD is welcome because after all it helps the "governments to re-establish their legitimacy as the focal point of development planning ..." (Callamard 1993, 142).

The irony about RAD is that it is most vulnerable where its argument is the strongest: integrated development for both refugees and local communities. At the centre of this vulnerability lies the politics of project implementation among competing operational agencies. The host state feels its sovereign jurisdictional status ordains it to be the sole operational agency despite its proven poor record in its development mission; the donor state feels it has the right to place its money under

the management of its own chosen agents, at the very least in a joint administration with the host state. NGOs, local authorities and targeted communities also vie for control of the projects.

Answering who the appropriate operational agent should be is not easy. Donor states may have suspect motives for sending their own people to the projects. Most host countries have a poor record of development management. Such record does not justify those states' self-imposition on new development initiatives when they are already presiding over many moribund projects. NGOs, recently rediscovered as the missing link in the development mission, have their problems too: narrow mandates that fall short of the vision of an "integrated" approach to development; dubious images and goals for some; the professional quality of their staffers, etc. The remaining credible actors are the local communities themselves, which unfortunately nobody seems ready to empower.

What the foregoing seems to suggest is that even RAD is at the mercy of polity primacy.

Repatriation and Development: What Kind of Development?

The RAD approach has also been prescribed for repatriation. According to Gorman (1993, 154):

[t]he principles that apply to refugee aid in developing countries equally apply in the case where the country of origin receives repatriated refugees back from asylum. Among these principles is the notion that assistance should be targeted to rehabilitation of regions to which refugees and displaced persons return, rather than providing assistance solely to repatriating refugees or internally displaced populations as separate and distinct groups.

As Gorman explains, the argument in support of returnee aid and development is the same as RAD's:

Returnees can place just as significant a burden on the economic and social infrastructures of their countries of origin when they return, as

they do on their countries of asylum, when they initially flee. Massive poverty and overburdened infrastructures are impediments to successful repatriation and integration of returnees, just as they are to the provision of assistance in refugee affected regions of asylum countries. Moreover, for the local populations that continue to occupy refugee or returnee affected areas, any large or sudden influx of people, whether strangers from across the border or the familiar faces of returning kinsfolk or former neighbours, can be disruptive. (*ibid.*, 5-6)

As a twin to RAD, returnee aid and development is destined to experience the same implementational problems with regard to the question of appropriate operational agencies of development projects and the kind of development envisaged in the areas where returnees settle. In connection with the appropriate development strategy, UNRISD (1993, 25) has suggested an approach that achieves a better balance between humanitarian and development assistance:

It is important to achieve a better balance between short-term humanitarian assistance and development aid by channelling more resources toward small-scale community-based projects and quick impact assistance designed to rehabilitate agricultural production and essential social services. Long term development assistance should focus less on large-scale capital intensive project and more on human resource development, capacity building within the public administration, infrastructural repair and safety nets for vulnerable groups.

Like RAD, returnee aid and development thinking recognizes that returnees are not necessarily a burden to the areas they return to. It recognizes that they may actually be an asset for development, hence the need to reintegrate them "within the authority structure at local government and cooperative levels" (Koehn 1994, 104).

Following the realization that development projects have long suffered from lack of active participation of local communities and their respective

institutions, repatriation-related development assistance has lately placed great emphasis on community-centred development strategies, marginalizing the developmental role of the state. Such strategies are intended to counter the flaws inherent to national development approaches which,

pursue large scale, macro strategies without considering the needs of ordinary people and directing the benefits of development to the poor, produc[ing] a lopsided pattern of growth that fails to deal with the pressing human problems of underdevelopment. (James Midgley, in Callamard, 1993 145).

This is the "Basic Needs Approach" defined as the satisfaction of

the minimum requirements essential for decent existence, including items of private consumption (food, shelter and clothing) as well as certain socially-provided services (safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport, health and educational facilities. (Callamard 1993, 136-7)

Empowerment of community grassroots for development has been attempted in several areas. In Tigray, the "baito" (local council) system was conceived and employed "from grassroots up ... [as] part of a two-pronged strategy aimed at self-empowered survival" (Hailu et al. 1994, 37). In 1985, the Eritrean Relief Association developed a one-year agricultural rehabilitation program by empowering the communities to increase food production through distribution of seeds, tools and oxen, fertilizers, pesticides, and workshops for production, maintenance and repair of tools (Sorenson 1994, 79).

In Central America, a Special Program for Displaced Persons, Refugees and Returnees (PRODERE) has "instituted a planning network that permits the participation of local groups, such as mayors' offices, community representatives, NGOs, cultural organizations, and professional associations Community members are also involved in the execution of projects" (Mihalkanin 1993, 99). The effectiveness of the program is supposed to be

enhanced by visible results of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs). These projects have the aim of:

anchoring repatriation, as a durable solution by maximizing returnees' chances of significant reintegration into their communities ... [They are expected to bring about] the economic and social reactivation of communities, towns or even entire regions serving as the basis on which national development plans can be built ... in most repatriation operations, returning refugees are provided with a basic package of rehabilitation assistance including foodstuffs (usually for a three to six month period), shelter materials, seeds, other agricultural inputs and cash grants (approximately \$ 50 per person). (UNHCR 1992, 2-4).

PRODERE is a multisectoral program involving road construction and improvement, rehabilitation and construction of schools, rehabilitation of health clinics, provision of credit for local production projects, housing schemes, humanitarian legislation, and job creation (Mihalkanin 1993, 99-106).

Despite such innovations in the area of returnee aid and development, achievements toward sustainable development remain very minimal. UNRISD (1993, 13) has made the same observation:

It has become almost a cliché to assert that relief work needs to be turned into sustainable development initiatives. The issue has been debated for years, but almost nothing has been done.

The problems of realizing post-repatriation sustainable development are, once again, closely connected to the nature of the state and polity primacy. Since returnee aid and development in developing countries is almost entirely provided by rich donor countries, it is prone to the vagaries of the political interests of such donors. UNRISD (1993, 18-20) has aptly articulated this problem:

The political problem is that long-term development programmes are not only more expensive than humanitarian assistance, but funding

for them is even more dependent on the perceived political self-interest of donors ... The UNHCR and other United Nations agencies are required to adopt a non-political stance in their relations with states and yet their funding is so organized (annual discretionary grants, earmarking of funds, etc.) that they can be used as instruments for advancing the national interests of the major donor countries.

This picture becomes even more bleak when one considers the assistance conditionalities of the Bretton Woods institutions which have become the watchdogs of the interests of the donor countries. This will be illustrated by the case of Rwanda, which has recently sought assistance from the major donors in order to meet, among other things, program needs to resettle an estimated 3 million returning refugees and internally displaced persons.

At a Geneva Round Table Conference of January 18-19, 1995, a US \$764 million budget was presented to various potential donors for Rwanda's

in the productive sectors; and a liberal trade and exchange rate regime" (World Bank Representative, January 1995).

These principles, in depressed third world economies like Rwanda's, have terrible consequences on peasant subsistence economies, small scale manufacturing, and even petty trade, which sustain the very livelihoods of third world populations. Taking Rwandan peasants as an example, an unregulated liberal trade regime means removing restrictions on the importation of food commodities. This is a sure way of killing per capita food production for nutritional and cash needs, thus undermining the basis for development in a predominantly rural subsistence economy. Such an approach dictated from above does not help "repatriation and development."

But even if the development approach were right, for example, targeting support to strengthen the survival strategies of returnees and the stayees alike, the politics on the ground would

The problems of realizing post-repatriation sustainable development are, once again, closely connected to the nature of the state and polity primacy.

medium-term reconstruction (US \$264 million to support the resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons, and US \$500 million to support the socioeconomic rehabilitation effort). Even assuming that this amount will be made available, the government will be bound to spend it in the context of the Bretton Woods institutions' structural adjustment program straitjacket, with all its well known adverse consequences on social and political stability.

The conditions attached to the above recovery program take away the government's latitude to steer the economy in the direction of an inward-looking dynamic. The assistance package prescribes, among other things, "the adoption of a comprehensive and transparent privatization policy; a private sector freed of unnecessary regulations to enable recovery and growth

still determine program success or failure. Factors identified by Mihalkanin (1993) as hampering reconstruction programmes in Central America help to underscore the pivotal role of politics and state. Some of those factors are: distrust between the government and NGOs; distrust among neighbouring countries; distrust between potential donor states and the government; distrust among political parties; distrust of the technical competency of the governments; and occurrence of human rights violations such as disappearances and extrajudicial executions.

The above problems clearly stem from politics, whose dynamism is shaped by the deficient nature of the state. Yet ironically, it is the same state which is in a unique position to provide solutions to those problems. For example, in the Central American case, Mihalkanin (1993, 106) suggests the

following measures to improve QIP implementation: "legal protection; monitoring of uprooted population movements; ensuring safety and security; overseeing project implementation, and developing democratic institutions." It is the view presented here that no actor, other than the state, is equipped to implement these measures.

The particular problems of RAD and those of "repatriation and development" are part of a larger "ensemble": it is the general development problematique, at the heart of which lies the crucial question of what kind of development is suitable for developing countries. This riddle is still engaging the minds of development analysts and no consensual breakthrough seems to be in sight on the horizon. LLambias-Wolff (1995) has identified a new breed of development models which depart from the dominant "market forces" model. These models are summarized as: "grassroots community development; a Green Alternative; community-oriented economics; radical socialist strategies; the Lisbon Group; ecofeminism; and the fundamental human need approach" (ibid., 14-15). What these approaches seem to have in common is a community-centred view of development, which in many ways implies loosening the state's grip on community control. If this is the case, realization of such development alternatives will require fundamental reforms in the state itself.

Where the state does not represent a social contract, this should happen so that community-centred development finds support in an enabling and responsive macro-economic environment which only the state can create. This is important because outside a sound macro-economic context,

... parochial community-based strategies which assume that massive problems facing the developing countries can be solved through local efforts alone, are unlikely to bring about real social and economic improvements. (James Midgley, in Callamard 1993, 145)

Conclusion

On the basis of the literature surveyed, there is no proof that there exists a causal link between refugee generation, durable solutions and development, respectively. In the absence of evidence, placing "development" at the centre stage of refugee studies may detract research efforts from the actual centre of gravity of the whole refugee problematique. It is proposed here that an appropriate centre is the state, and that the refugee question is a function and product of state behaviour, as is development itself. To that extent, a product (the refugee phenomenon) cannot be more causally related to another product (development) than it is to the producer of both (the state). The preference for a polity primacy approach to the study of the refugee question is informed by that logic.

It is therefore suggested that refugee studies would do well to redirect some of its research capability to the pathological condition of the state and the means that would make the latter amenable to rehabilitation. Whereas the pathological condition of the state may be more obvious in developing countries, it also afflicts certain rich industrial states whose excessive self-interest often contributes to refugee-generation and undermines the success of durable solutions. ■

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