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Poverty and Conflict: A Self-Perpetuating Cycle in the Somali Regional State (Region 5), Ethiopia: 1960-2010

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Poverty and Conflict: A Self-Perpetuating Cycle in the Somali Regional State

(Region 5), Ethiopia: 1960-2010

by

Bisrat Teshome

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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in
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Abstract

Region 5 is one of the most impoverished and insecure regions of Ethiopia. For decades, the region has suffered from a multitude of armed conflicts involving state and non-state actors. Region 5 is also one of the most underserved states of Ethiopia with some of the lowest levels of human development indicators nationwide. Although the adversities of poverty and conflict are widely acknowledged in their own respect, there has been little or no inquest into why poverty and conflict have prevailed under the same space for decades. Poverty and conflict have often been seen as separate phenomena that are dealt with using different sets of theories and practices in the real world. Nonetheless, a closer look at poverty and conflict in Region 5 reveals that both are strongly connected to each other. The poverty-conflict trap has been an on-going cycle in the region for the last five decades. The main intent of this research paper is analyzing the two-way relationship between poverty and conflict in Region 5. By studying this relationship, this analysis seeks to contribute to a new framework that brings peacebuilding and development closer.

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List of Acronyms

ARPD: African Rally for Peace and Development

 AU: African Union

AWR: Africa Watch Report

BCG: Bacille Calmette-Guérin (Tuberculosis) Vaccine

BMA: British Military Administration

CAI: Creative Associates International

CERF: Central Emergency Response Fund

CHF: Community Habitat Finance

CIA: Central Intelligence Agency

CJTF-HOA: Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa

COOPI: Cooperazione Internazionale

CSA: Central Statistics Agency

DESA: Department of Economic and Social Affairs

DPT/DTP: Diphtheria and Tetanus Toxoids and Whole-Cell Pertussis Vaccine

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

EPRDF: Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front

EU: European Union

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

GNI-PPP: Gross National Income- Purchasing Power Parity

HDI: Human Development Index

HRW: Human Rights Watch

IANSA: International Action Network on Small Arms

ICG: International Crisis Group

IDP: Internally Displaced Persons

IGAD: Inter-Governmental Authority on Development

IRIN: Integrated Regional Information Networks

LDC: Least Developed Countries

MDG: Millennium Development Goals

MFA: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MICROCON: Micro Level Analysis of Violent Conflict

OHRC: Ogaden Human Rights Commission

OLF: Ogaden Liberation Front

ONLF: Ogaden National Liberation Front

OXFAM: Oxford Committee for Famine Relief

PPP: Purchasing Power Parity

SLA: Sustainable Livelihood Approach

SYC: Somali Youth Coalition

SYL: Somali Youth League

UCDP: Uppsala Conflict Data Program

UIC: Union of Islamic Courts

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Fund

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

WSLF: Western Somali Liberation Front

1. Poverty and Conflict: A Self-Perpetuating Cycle in the Somali Regional State (Region 5), Ethiopia: 1960-2010

The Somali Regional State or Region 5 is one of the poorest and least developed regions with some of the lowest levels of human development indicators nationwide. The inhabitants of the region posses limited or no access to social, economic, and political resources needed for a decent standard of living. Region 5 is also one of the most conflict-prone and unstable regions of Ethiopia with a long history of violent conflicts. Various conflicts ranging from communal disputes to rebel insurgencies characterize the region, not to mention the regional conflicts in the Horn of Africa. Although the adversities of poverty and conflict are widely acknowledged in their own respects, there has been little or no inquest into why poverty and conflict have prevailed together for decades. This is because poverty and conflict have often been seen as separate phenomena that are dealt with using different sets of theories and practices in the real world. Nonetheless, a closer look at poverty and conflict in Region 5 reveals that both are strongly connected in a reciprocal relationship. The poverty-conflict trap has been an on-going cycle in the region for the last five decades.

Although scholars are far from a consensus on the primary causes of armed conflicts, several studies show the fact that civil wars erupt in countries suffering from poverty and economic decline. How poverty triggers conflict is, however, another line of contention between political economists and social psychologists. This divide is usually played out along the greed-grievance debate. The greed rebellion theory presents a simple rational choice model where the rebel's aspiration for self-enrichment and

growth serves as the primary motive of civil wars in developing countries. On the other

hand, the grievance model argues that the social discontent arising from the relative

deprivation of social groups is a potent source of civil wars in the developing world.

Poverty is one of the prime causes of armed conflicts in Region 5. The relative

deprivation of the region's inhabitants that results from their unequal share of social,

economic, and political resources nationally is a strong source of social discontent.

However, their perception of deprivation contextualizes not from an absolute standard,

but through a comparison of their socio-economic position with the actual and perceived

circumstances of other social groups in Ethiopia. This is especially important because

they perceive their deprivation and unequal socio-economic status coinciding with their

collective identity. The grievance resulting from such systematic inequalities has been

used by political entrepreneurs and rebel movements to mobilize civilians for collective

violence.

On the other side of the conflict-poverty cycle, armed conflict has directly and

indirectly contributed to the region's poverty status. In the last five decades, conflict has

destroyed and reduced the human, physical, economic, social, and natural capitals of the

region. The inhabitants have suffered from death, physical and psychological injuries,

forced migration, trade blockade, restriction on mobility, killing and confiscation of

livestock, and famine as a result of armed conflict. These damages were not only the

unintended outcome of warfare, but also part of the government's deliberate

counterinsurgency strategy that targeted civilians and their economic base. These factors

have greatly affected the welfare of the people and pushed the majority of Region 5 into poverty.

Poverty and conflict are often seen as independent phenomena with little or no impact on one another. On the contrary, this practice of isolating conflict and poverty has long ignored their double causation and cyclical relationship within the context of Region 5. The main goal of this research paper is analyzing this two-way relationship between poverty and conflict in Region 5. The study employs various theories in social psychology, conflict resolution, development studies, and economics in examining the causes and effects of poverty and conflict in Region 5 within the last five decades.

The structure for the rest of the paper is as follows. The second chapter of this paper will cover the geographic and demographic background of Ethiopia and Region 5. It also includes information on the geography and modern history of the Horn of Africa. The third chapter focuses on the dynamics of armed conflicts in the region. One of the unique characteristics of armed conflicts in Region 5 is that they occur within complex regional dynamic connecting local, national, and international factors. The armed conflicts in the region are highly connected with each other and therefore require a wider and comprehensive approach in analyzing them. The fourth chapter is concerned with clarifying the two research variables, poverty and conflict. Both are multidimensional concepts that shift their meanings in time. It is therefore crucial to have a clear understanding of these two variables before analyzing their two-way connection.

The fifth chapter contains a review of literature on some of the critical areas of the study.

The sixth chapter analyzes the different theories that have been used to establish a

relationship from poverty to conflict. It highlights the greed versus grievance debate that

has remained a major line of difference between political economists and social

psychologists on linking poverty to conflict. The chapter deals on how these theories

apply to the reality in Region 5. This section also lays out the conceptual framework that

leads from conflict to poverty. It identifies the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA)

for assessing the socio-economic impact of armed conflicts and documents on how this

concept practically applies to the situation in Region 5. Chapter seven wraps up this

research paper.

Research Purpose

Although there is a growing amount of literature on poverty and conflict in

Ethiopia, the two conditions have often been treated as separate branches of academic

inquiry. Poverty has traditionally been a concern of development studies and economics

while conflict has been the preserve of conflict and peace studies (Goodhand, 2001).

However, the challenges of the twenty-first century have revealed the intertwining

characteristics of poverty and violence. According to Stewart (2000), the post-Cold War

era has witnessed the complex and interlinked challenges of poverty and conflict. Any

strategy to tackle poverty must also work to transform conflicts while poverty alleviation

programs and development strategies can't afford to neglect issues related to conflict.

The overall aim of this research will be helping create a comprehensive and

multidisciplinary approach to conflict resolution that simultaneously addresses the

sources of violence and poverty. Understanding the two-way relationship between poverty and conflict would help to develop a new framework that brings peacebuilding and development closer.

Research Hypothesis

The research paper assumes that there is a two-way causal relationship between poverty and conflict within the context of Region 5, Ethiopia.

1.   When deprivation and inequality coincide with the social identities of people, they can be a strong source of collective grievance which can translate into violence.

2.   Armed conflict can lead to poverty by destroying and diminishing the human, physical, economic, social, and natural capitals of households and diverting national resources from development to military activities.

Limitations of the study

There are two limitations that need to be acknowledged in this research. The first limitation concerns the multidisciplinary aspect of this study. For a long period of time, poverty and conflict have been subject matters covered by multiple disciplines. Any study that tries to establish a relationship between these two complex variables requires more experience and expertise around multiple fields of studies. The second limitation refers to the time and resources allowed for conducting the research. Although the study area only covers a single region of Ethiopia, the nature of the two-way relationship between poverty and conflict is a complex subject matter that would have been better approached with more time and resources.

2. Background Information

Ethiopia: Geographic and Demographic Background

Located in the Eastern part of Africa, present day Ethiopia is a land-locked state bordered by Eritrea in the north, Sudan in the west and southwest, Somalia in the east and southeast, Kenya in the south, and Djibouti in the east (Figure 1). It covers a total area of 472,000 square miles, which is close to twice the size the of France. Ethiopia has an estimated population of 85 million (2008 estimate), the second most populous country in Africa. Christianity and Islam get about equal share with each claiming around 45 percent of the total population (Central Intelligence Agency [CIA], 2010). According to Gutu (2008), Ethiopia is home to about eighty ethnic groups that vary in population size from a thousand to about 18 million. The 1994 National Census Survey listed seventy languages spoken as mother tongues by different ethnic groups in Ethiopia (Central Statistics Agency [CSA], 1995).

Figure 1: Map of Africa and Ethiopia

Region 5: Geographic and Demographic Background

Commonly referred to as Region 5, the Somali Regional State is one of nine federal regions of Ethiopia. It is located in the southeastern part of the country bordering Somalia, Kenya, and Djibouti. The region also shares borders with other Ethiopian regional states namely, Oromia (Region 4) and Afar (Region 2). Although Region 5 is part of the Ethiopian administration, it maintains strong historical, cultural, and economic ties with neighboring Somalia. The region is often referred to as "Ogaden", named after its majority Somali clan, the "Ogadeni" (Lewis, 2004).

Region 5 obtained its current shape in 1994 after Ethiopia adopted an ethnic based federal state system to reflect the distribution of the various ethnic groups found within its territory (Figure 2). Ethnic identity was employed to draw the boundaries between administrative regions. Thus, the land inhabited by ethnic Somalis became the "Somali Regional State" or Region 5. Similarly, territories populated by other major ethnic groups like the "Oromos", "Amharas", and "Tigres" became Oromia Regional State (Region 4), Amhara Regional State (Region 3), and Tigray Regional State (Region 1) respectively (Alemayehu, 2004).
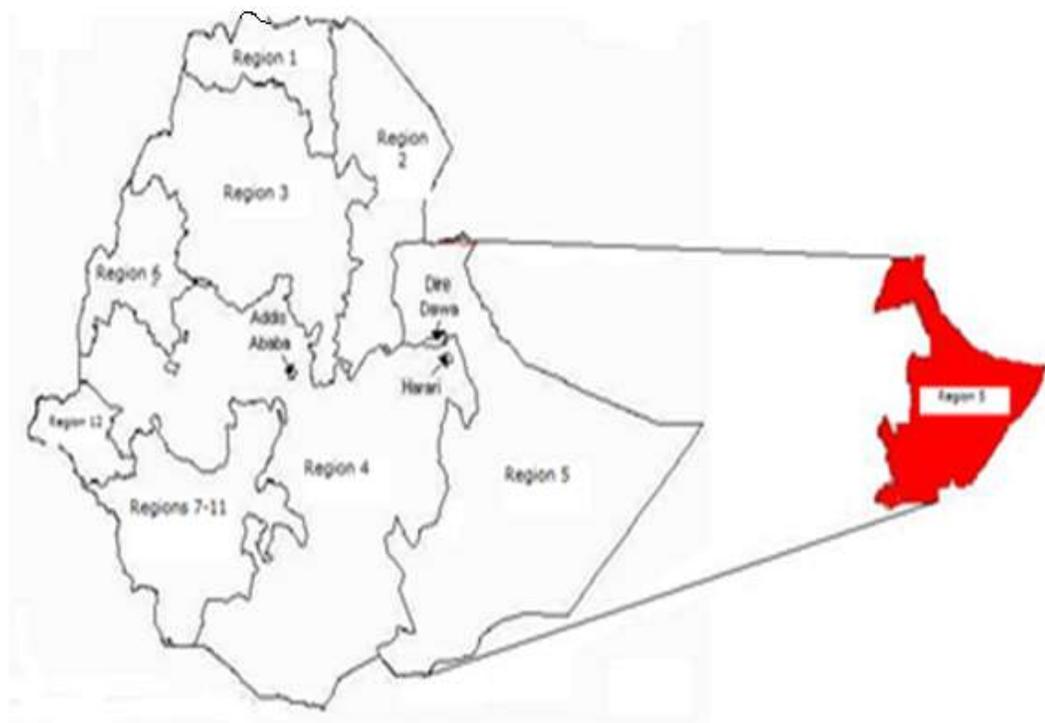
Figure 2: Map of Regional States of Ethiopia and Region 5

Region 5 covers a total area of 105,000 square miles with a population of 3.9

million (Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MFA], 2008). According to CSA (1999), ninety-

six percent of the population is of Somali descent. The inhabitants are commonly

referred to as "Ethiopian-Somalis" to distinguish them from ethnic Somalis living in

mainland Somalia.[1] Although the two groups occupy the opposite sides of an

international border, Ethiopian-Somalis in Region 5 and Somalis living in Somalia have

the same ethnic origin, culture, and history. Most of the major clan-families found

within Somalia including "Darood", "Hawiye", "Dir", "Issa", "Rahaweyn", and ethnic

"Bantus" are also present in Region 5 with varying proportions (Eno, 2008).

Region 5: Climate and Livelihood

With temperatures reaching over one hundred degrees Fahrenheit and annual

rainfall averaging between 12-19 Inches per year, Region 5 falls under arid and semi-

arid agro-ecological and climatic zones (Gebre-Mariam, 2005). The way of life in the

region is a reflection of the coping strategies adopted by its inhabitants to meet the

challenges of a harsh and fragile ecosystem. The livelihoods of most Ethiopian-Somalis

primarily revolve around animal husbandry. They are mainly nomadic pastoralists and

agro-pastoralists engaged in livestock production or a mix of livestock and crop

production. The nomadic way of life serves as an adaptive strategy to the complex

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[1] The Republic of Somalia was formed in 1960 by a merger of two former colonial territories, British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland. The country remained intact until 1991 when the central government collapsed amidst an on-going civil war.

environmental vulnerability of the region. Sedentary agriculture is practiced to a lesser extent within river valleys (Baroud, 2003).

The Horn of Africa: Geographic Background

The Horn of Africa is a tusk shaped geographical region found in the Northeastern corner of Africa (Figure 3). Its name comes from a geopolitical term that was coined during the Cold War in reference to Somalia and Ethiopia. Through time, the usage has expanded to include the neighboring countries of Eritrea, Djibouti, and parts of Sudan (Lunn, 2008) and covers 741,316 square miles (Kalib, 2007). Since the mid-1990s, the term, "Greater Horn of Africa"[2] is applied to add Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and Tanzania to the list. By all forms of designation, Region 5 forms an important sub-region of the Horn of Africa. Although it is part of the Ethiopian domain, Region 5 represents a crossroad territory that has been shaped by socio-political and historic developments in the Horn of Africa.

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[2] This term has been widely used since the U.S foreign policy proposal, "The Greater Horn of Africa Initiative" kicked off in 1994. For more information, refer to http://www.usaid.gov/regions/afr/ghai/

Figure 3: The Horn of Africa

The Horn of Africa: Historical Background

Throughout its history, the Horn of Africa has been an important geo-political region for its long stretch of shoreline along the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. For centuries, the region has attracted numerous foreign powers that wanted to secure their maritime trade routes. After the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the strategic value of the region became even more prominent among countries involved in international trade. It brought competing European powers like Britain, France, and Italy onto the scene. Egypt and Ethiopia were also two African powers that played significant roles in the region's political process. It was, however, the British who took the first step to safeguard the Red Sea route. Britain established a garrison in Aden, Yemen in 1839. At the time, Britain was prepared to deter any power from obtaining posts along the African coastline. Intense competition came from France, which secured a foothold at the Port of Obock in present-day Djibouti in 1862. Britain reacted by establishing protectorates in parts of what is today Somaliland (Northern Somalia) and Region 5. The Italians followed by expanding along the Eritrean coastline in 1885 and later setting up their protectorate in Southern Somalia (Henze, 2000).

Ethiopia not only survived the "Scramble for Africa"[3] but at the same time expanded its frontiers to areas never before reached. By combining diplomatic and

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[3] The Scramble for Africa (1880-1900) was the rapid colonization and partition of the African continent among European imperial powers. It was driven by the economic, social, and political changes that took place in Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century. Ethiopia was the only African nation to maintain its independence during the "scramble for Africa" by utilizing its military and diplomatic powers.

military tactics, Ethiopia laid claims and conquered Somali-inhabited areas of the Horn, most of which are parts of today's Region 5 (Zewdie, 2001). In 1897, Ethiopia also negotiated an important border treaty with Britain that ceded land in Region 5 (Ogaden and the Haud areas). According to Lewis (2004), 1897 remains a crucial year for the history of the Horn; the partition of the Somali inhabited territory of the Horn of Africa was complete, and Somalis were divided between five geographical units. These were British-Somaliland, Italy-Somaliland, French-Somaliland (later Djibouti), Ogaden (Region 5), and the Northern Front District in British-East Africa (later Kenya).

Ethiopia entered the twentieth century as an independent and sovereign state. But, it was only a matter of time before it was conquered by Italy in 1935. In 1940, Italy entered the Second World War and joined the Axis Alliance with Germany and Japan. It soon declared war on Great Britain and annexed British Somaliland in the Horn of Africa. The Italians then adjoined Eritrea, Ethiopia, British Somaliland, and Italy Somaliland to establish the "Africa Orientale Italiana-AOI" or the Italian East African Empire (See Figure 4).

Figure 4: Map of Italy-East Africa Empire (1940)

The empire was however short-lived as British and the Commonwealth forces drove out the Italians not only from British Somaliland but also from the entire Italian East African Empire in 1941 (Mohamud-Abdi, 2007). Italy's defeat temporarily brought most of the Somali-speaking territories in the Horn of Africa under the British Military Administration (BMA). In 1954, Britain restored Region 5 to Ethiopia based on the Border Agreement of 1897. In 1960, British Somaliland and Italy Somaliland merged to form the Republic of Somalia (Lewis, 1994).

One of the impacts of colonialism during the twentieth century was the growth of national consciousness among Somalis living in the Horn of Africa. The emergence of groups like the Somali Youth Coalition (SYC) and Somali Youth League (SYL) in the 1940s and 1950s became prototypes of Somali nationalism. These movements called not only for independence from foreign occupation but also unity among Somali communities found in different parts of the Horn of Africa (Barnes, 2007). For these nationalists, the 1897 Anglo-Ethiopian Border Agreement and the 1954 territorial concession of Region 5 to Ethiopia partitioned the ethnic homeland of the Somali nation. As will be seen in later sections, these two events are linked with the various domestic and international conflicts that erupted in Region 5 during the second half of twentieth century.

3. The Dynamics of Armed Conflict in Region 5 (1960-2010)

Region 5 has historically been a contentious region of the world with multiple forms of violent conflicts. Healy (2008) argues that barely a single decade can be identified in the last one hundred years when Ethiopia and Somalia did not experience armed conflict.[4] These conflicts have occurred at various levels ranging from local clashes to conventional warfare involving states and non-state actors. McGinnis (1999) points out that these multi-level conflicts often overlap with one another, creating a complex conflict trend in the region. The past and present conflicts of the region are part of a more broad and complex framework linking local, regional, and international factors.

The underlying causes of conflict in the region are complex. Various factors have been identified as root causes of conflict by commentators and policy makers. These include clan politics, ethnicity, religion, ideology, environmental insecurity, struggle for productive resources, viability and legitimacy of failed and emergent states, and outside intervention (Creative Associates International [CAI], 2008). Although these variables remain important components of the regional conflict complex, one has to also understand the unique setting under which these variables intract to generate multi-facetted conflicts.

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[4] Ethiopia (Region 5) and Somalia cover a greater portion of the Horn of Africa.

Armed Conflicts in Region 5

Region 5 represents a crossroad territory that has been heavily influenced by events in both Ethiopia and Somalia. According to Hagmann (2007), the region has for a long time been a buffer zone where Ethiopian and Somali, global, and local forces clash with one another. For the last five decades, it has staged numerous organized conflicts in the form of domestic insurgencies, interstate conflicts, and transnational conflicts. Although the fault line between these conflicts often remains elusive, violence maintains a systemic presence in the region.

In recent years, Region 5 has been known for its frequent humanitarian crisis in context of an on-going civil war and regional instability. The primary armed group currently fighting the Ethiopian government is the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), a separatist rebel movement founded in 1984. The ONLF (2009) describes itself as a vanguard organization leading the "struggle of the people of Ogaden" (Region 5) in a quest for self-determination.[5] Although the civil conflict has been going on for years through intermittent hostilities, it gained a dramatic momentum in the year 2007 after the ONLF enhanced its attacks against the Ethiopian government.[6] This was followed by a massive and brutal counterinsurgency mission by government forces that

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[5] Region 5 is traditionally referred as "Ogaden", named after its majority clan, "Ogadeen".

[6] In April 2007, the ONLF attacked a Chinese-run oil field in Abole, Region 5 killing more than sixty-five Ethiopian and nine Chinese oil workers. The Ethiopian government responded by launching a brutal counterinsurgency campaign (HRW, 2008a).

has exacerbated the humanitarian situation in the region (Human Rights Watch [HRW],

2008a).

It should be noted that the forerunner to today's ONLF was the Narsulla uprising

or the Ogaden Liberation Front (OLF).[7] The movement was born in 1963 under close

aid from Somalia's newly independent government (Mohamud Abdi, 2007). Somalia

was formed in 1960 through a merger of the British protectorate of Somaliland and the

Italian colonies of Northeastern and South Somalia. In the aftermath of its independence,

the new government was determined to incorporate all Somali speaking population of

East Africa under a single Pan-Somali state.[8] For Somali nationalists, independence was

an important first step towards creating a Somali nation-state that would ultimately

encompass Somalis in Ethiopia (Region 5), French-Somaliland (Djibouti), and northern

Kenya (Lunn, 2008). One of the strategies adopted for achieving this was to support

dissident movements in Ethiopia's Region 5 and other neighboring countries of the

Horn.

In 1963, Somalia's military support for the OLF rose to the point where it drew a

countermove from the Ethiopian side. This spilled into a brief conventional war between

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[7] The Ogaden Liberation Front (OLF) should not be confused with the Oromo
Liberation Front (OLF), a rebel insurgency founded in 1973 and fighting for the freedom
of Oromia Regional State (Region 4) from Ethiopia's rule.
[8] The nationalist scheme was enshrined in the constitution and symbolically represented
in the new flag which featured a five pointed star-each star point representing the five
territories claimed by the Somali nation; British Somaliland, Italy Somaliland, Northern
Frontier District (NFD) in Kenya, French Somaliland (Djibouti), and Region 5 (Ogaden)
in Ethiopia.

Somalia and Ethiopia until a ceasefire was brokered in 1964 (Deng & Zartman, 1991).

After a decade of withdrawal, Somalia continued its support to the rebels by helping

recreate the OLF under a new name, Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF). In 1976,

WSLF intensified its military activities in Region 5. A year later, Somalia aligned its

national army alongside WSLF forces once again transforming the intrastate conflict

into an interstate rivalry. Somalia's direct military involvement started in July 1977, and

helped bring most of Region 5 under its control. It also marked the onset of the Cold

War in the Horn of Africa (Haileselassie, 1981).

The Effects of the Cold War

The Cold War divided much of the world into two spheres of ideological

influences, one mandated from Washington and the other from Moscow. Throughout the

course of the Cold War, the superpowers were never directly engaged in armed conflict

in their own territories. Instead, the vast majority of wars fought during these days were

fought in territories of the periphery, the developing world where basic human needs

were rarely or barely satisfied (Lederach, 1997). The 1977-78 Ethio-Somali war was a

Cold War era conflict that took place in one of the poorest regions of the world. It also

added a new layer onto the already complex conflict dynamics of the region. Until the

mid-1970s, Somalia and Ethiopia were the military beneficiaries of the Soviet Union

and United States respectively. However, Ethiopia's ideological shift towards the East

bloc and Somalia's demarche to the West changed the reality. The shift of alliance was

to Ethiopia's advantage as the country benefited from massive shipment of Soviet

armaments and Cuban military personnel. This quickly changed the balance of forces on the ground. By March 1978, Ethiopia was able to push back Somali and WSLF forces and recovered all of Region 5 (Keller, 1998).

The Cold War significantly altered the conflict dynamics of Region 5. Following Ethiopia's victory, the WSLF's operation in Region 5 began to weaken. According to Lockyer (2006), by 1980, the WSLF fell in "frequency, size, and sophistication to a level that no longer made it a genuine threat to the Ethiopian regime" (p.3). In 1984, a splinter group of the WSLF, the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) emerged by promoting Ogaden's (Region 5) independence as opposed to Pan-Somalism. This was a political shift from an ethnic (Somali) to a clan-based (Ogadeni) movement. As stated in the beginning of this section, ONLF is still an active insurgency group in Region 5.

The Cold War also carried long-term political consequences for the Horn of Africa. The impacts were more devastating for Somalia as it set the stage for years of civil violence and disorder. According to Ahmed & Green (1999), the Ethio-Somali conflict has been interpreted by some as the single most important turning point for Somalia. It sowed the seed of future internal conflicts, prompting the rise of several Somali rebel movements to overthrow the regime. However, by beginning of 1990s, none of these competing factions were strong enough to assume central power (Moller, 2009). The political fragmentation left Somalia without a functioning government since 1991.

The Changing Aspects of Organized Conflicts in the Post-Cold War Period

The nature of organized conflicts has evolved in the Post-Modern period as many have become conflicts without borders involving both state and non-state actors. The flourishing of insurgent groups that span international boundaries and the cross-border intervention of states in adjacent civil wars mark the two important characteristics of organized conflicts in the post-Cold War period (McGinnis, 1999).

According to Lindbergh & Melvin (2007), Islamist militant groups are regarded as "archetypal transnational organizations" because their mode of operation often transcends state boundaries and challenges the conventional approach to state security (n.p.). One such coalition that formed in the early nineties in Somalia was Al-Ittihad-Islamiyya. The group began asserting its presence in Ethio-Somali border areas in the early1990s. It sought to liberate Region 5 from Ethiopia's rule, but unlike past resistance movements, it also wanted to establish an Islamic political order in the Horn of Africa (International Crisis Group [ICG], 2005). Al-Ittihad-Islamiyya was supported by Islamic charities in the Gulf States and had a military wing that largely consisted of veterans returning from Afghanistan's Mujahidin forces in late 1980s and early 90s (Bryden,2005).

The recent Ethiopian invasion of Somalia also marks another changing feature of organized conflicts in the region. In December of 2006, Ethiopian troops crossed into Somalia to help the weak Somali interim government oust the Islamic militia group, Union of Islamic Courts (UIC). The Transitional Federal Government (TGF) of Somalia

was formed in 2004 in Kenya under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on

Development in East Africa [IGAD] (Lunn, 2008). Despite its recognition by some

international bodies like the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN), the

government lacked any meaningful control of Somalia. Its main challenge came from

the UIC which started to control major areas of the country beginning in 2006.

According to Cliffe (1999), the majority of modern day conflicts in the Horn of

Africa have always been amplified by a pattern of mutual state interventions by

neighboring states. Although this has been a common trend of organized conflicts in the

past, the 2006 Ethiopian invasion of Somalia was a big change in the region's conflict

dynamics. Kalib (2007) adds, "In all the wars that the countries of the region have

fought against each other, never before has the army of one side enter the capital city of

another and engage in urban warfare" (n.p.).

The real motive behind Ethiopia's invasion can be approached from different

angles. First, the UIC has lent some support to Ethiopia's main insurgent groups

including the ONLF. In addition to this, Ethiopia believed that its northern neighbor

Eritrea, having fought a two year war[9] with Ethiopia (1998-2000) was engaged in a

proxy war by helping ONLF and UIC inside Somalia. Ethiopia is also a key partner of

the U.S War on Terror as part of the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-

HOA). The United States has repeatedly insisted on a link between UIC and Al-Qaeda

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[9] Ethiopia and Eritrea fought a two year (1998-2000) war over a disputed border.
Although direct fight has ceased through international intervention, the boundary
conflict remains unsolved.

and that there is the potential of Somalia being used as a staging ground for international terrorism. The U.S. hence tacitly supported Ethiopia's invasion in material and logistic terms (Slavin, 2007). Unfortunately, the military intervention which ended in 2008 has resulted in greater insecurity in the Horn of Africa and one of worst humanitarian crises in Somalia.

Summary

Region 5 represents an interface zone which has been greatly shaped by historical events in both Ethiopia and Somalia. Throughout its modern history, the region has been a theatre for organized conflicts that played out in various local, national, and international wars fought among state and non-state actors. These conflicts are interlocked with one another with a blurred line of distinction. What started as a local rebellion by OLF in 1963 was also a closely supported mission by neighboring Somalia from its very beginning. At the time, Somalia was a new state formed from a merger of former British and Italian colonies. Upon its independence, Somalia was embarked on a mission to unite all Somali inhabited territories in the Horn of Africa, one of them being Region 5. However, Somalia's intervention shifted the local rebellion into an interstate conflict. As a result, two conventional wars were fought between Somalia and Ethiopia in 1963 and 1976. The second Ethio-Somali War (1976-78) became part of the Cold War as the superpowers were drawn into it. It was a large scale conflict with long-term impacts for both Somalia and Ethiopia. The effect was stronger on Somalia's side as it led to the collapse of the central government in 1991. Somalia's statelessness

in turn brought security challenges for Ethiopia as the former became a host for local

insurgencies and some transnational militant groups. This challenge comes on top of the

growing local insurgency that is mounted by the ONLF, a predecessor of the OLF.

4. Defining the Research Variables: Poverty and Armed Conflict

Although poverty and conflict are different phenomena that plague many societies, the effect of one on the other has recently become the subject of much research (Draman, 2003). The main objective of this research paper is to analyze the two way association between poverty and armed conflict in Region 5. However, the poverty-conflict nexus is a complex subject that goes beyond the direct, cause-effect relationship. Both armed conflict and poverty are multidimensional concepts with no universally set meanings. They are defined through changing parameters in space and time. It is therefore imperative to have a clear understanding of these two variables before analyzing their two-way connection. The aim is not to create a new perspective but to build a framework that goes beyond the conventional meanings of both poverty and armed conflict.

Poverty

Poverty is perhaps one of the most complex concepts from which to derive a universal definition. In the past five decades, various terms have been used to describe poverty namely, income poverty, human underdevelopment, social exclusion, ill-being, lack of capability and functioning, vulnerability, livelihood unsustainablility, lack of basic needs, and relative deprivation (Maxwell, 1999). Despite this richness in vocabulary, there still lacks a coherent functional framework to define poverty. This is due to the multidimensional aspect of poverty which can only be captured by employing different indicators.

Objective Aspects of Poverty

Globally, poverty is estimated along a uniform reference poverty line expressed in common unit (income). For the purpose of global aggregation and comparison, the World Bank uses reference lines set at $1.25 and $2.00 (2005 Purchasing Power Parity-PPP) to express "extreme poverty" and "poverty" respectively (World Bank, 2008). The United Nations Development Fund [UNDP] (2007) has also developed another measure - Human Development Index (HDI) to measure the level of human development in each country. Its measurement employs a comprehensive index (HDI) which integrates three dimensions of human security; household income, life expectancy, and adult literacy.[10]

By most objective measures, Ethiopia is one of least developed countries of the world. According to a World Bank (2009) data, Ethiopia was 197th in a list of 210 countries ranked by their Gross National Incomes (GNI- PPP) for the year 2008. The UNDP (2007) also ranked Ethiopia at 169th place out of 177 countries measured by their 2005 HDI. The same report found that 77.5 percent of Ethiopians fall below the income poverty line of $2 /day while 39 percent of the population were in extreme poverty, earning less than a dollar a day.

Subjective Aspects of Poverty

Poverty is a matter of deprivation, but the way people perceive and respond to it varies in space and time. As Barash and Webel (2004) posited, one of the most

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[10] For more details on HDI and how it is calculated, refer to:
http://hdr.undp.org/en/humandev/

important, if least recognized, aspects of poverty is its psychological dimension which shapes our perception of deprivation and inequality. Although poverty can be measured objectively using widely accepted indices, it remains crucial to assess it from a social angle. Often, individuals and groups measure their social and economic well-being without the absolute economic standards like income and food consumption. They measure their well-being by relating their socio-economic status with other individuals or groups. This refers to the subjective analysis of one's well-being according to the expectations or standards set by a given society. It is this subjective view of poverty that is crucial when studying its relationship with violence. This is because it is not just the condition of being without adequate food or shelter that automatically translates to violence but the social consciousness surrounding this deprivation.[11]

Armed Conflict

Conflict studies literature of the Cold War era defined armed conflict on the basis of selective parameters. According to Brozoska (2007), the traditional conception of armed conflict focused on areas of government involvement, political objective, and military casualty at its core. In contrast, post-Cold War conflicts in Region 5 and in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa have often been outside of this realm. Armed violence is common in disputes involving state and non-state actors with or without a political motive and, in most cases, civilians are the main causalities.

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[11] Goodland (2001) states that the absolute measures of poverty are less significant than the poor people's expectations and sense of grievance.

The pattern of conflicts in the post-Cold War period has changed the general meaning of armed violence. The increasing number of non-state actors[12] involved, the deliberate killing of civilians, and the sophisticated method of arms financing have all called into question the validity of the traditional concept of armed conflict. According to Oyebade (1998), one of the implications of the fall of the Cold War is that it has created a new perspective from which to view conflicts and their resolution. To this end, one of the most widely used data-source on global armed conflicts, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), has revised its definition of armed conflict by adding "non-state conflicts" and "one-sided violence" to its global database of armed conflicts.[13] Non-state conflict involves the use of armed forces between two organized groups, neither of which is the government of a state, resulting in at least twenty-five battle-related deaths in a year. One-sided violence refers the use of armed force by the government of a state or by a formally organized group against civilians which results in at least twenty-five deaths in a year (UCDP, 2010).

Another conflict analysis tool, the Conflict Barometer, was developed in 1993 by the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research. It captures some of the

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[12] private armies, communal groups, and terrorist groups

[13] The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) collects information on armed violence that occurred after 1946. Data on armed conflicts have been published yearly in the report series, States in Armed Conflict since 1987, in the SIPRI Yearbook since 1988, the Journal of Peace Research since 1993, and in the Human Security Reports since 2005. Starting 2004, the UCDP also operates and continuously updates its online database on armed conflicts and organized violence. The UCDP data is a widely used on global armed conflicts and its definition of armed conflict is becoming a standard in how conflicts are systematically defined and studied (UCDP, 2010).

changing natures of collective violence in the post-Modern period.This model focuses

on the intensity levels of violence, separating conflict into two major categories: non-

violent and violent. Non-violent conflict consists of latent and manifest conflicts while

violent conflicts scale from crisis to severe crisis, and war (Conflict Barometer 2008,

2008) (See table 1).

Table 1

Conflict Intensities

State of Violence	Intensity Group	Level of intensity	Name of intensity	Definition
Non-Violent	Low	1	Latent Conflict	A positional difference over definable values of national meaning is considered to be a latent conflict if demands are articulated by one of the parties and perceived by the other as such.
		2	Manifest Conflict	A manifest conflict includes measures that are preliminary to the use of violent force. This includes verbal pressure, threatening explicitly with violence, or the imposition of economic sanctions.
Violent	Medium	3	Crisis	A crisis is a tense situation in which at least one of the parties uses violent force in sporadic incidents.
		4	Severe Crisis	A conflict is considered to be a severe crisis if violent force is used repeatedly in an organized way.
	High	5	War	A war is a violent conflict in which violent force is used with certain continuity in an organized and systematic way. The conflict parties exercise extensive measures and the extent of destruction is massive and of long duration.

Organized and Communal Conflicts

For the greater part of its modern history, the Horn of Africa has staged numerous violent conflicts that set states against states and communities against communities (Wasara, 2002). Considering the reality in Region 5, armed conflicts have occurred under all three categories of violent conflicts (crisis, severe crisis, and war) in the last five decades. For the purpose of this study, violent conflicts can be categorized based on the organizational structure of the conflicting parties. We can classify armed conflict along two lines: organized conflict and communal conflict.[14] Organized conflict involves conflicts that are carried out by structured groups that have a combat unit under a single military command. This is mostly carried out by the state or rebel insurgencies with specific political objectives. On the other hand, communal conflict refers to sporadic incidents of violence taking place between or within communities. It refers to violence that erupts at the community level without the use of a specially assigned and trained unit for warfare. One example of this can be inter-clan or intra-clan conflict that takes place without the involvement of other organized groups. This study follows UCDP's (2010) definition of armed conflict and focuses only on organized conflicts.[15]

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[15] An armed conflict is a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths per year in one of the conflict's dyads. A dyad is made up of two armed and opposing actors. In state-based conflicts a dyad is defined as two actors, with one or more being the government, that have a stated incompatibility. In a non-state conflict, a dyad is constructed by at least two organized actors, of which none is the government of a state, that oppose each other with arms (UCDP, 2010).

Summary

Both Poverty and conflict are dynamic concepts with meanings that shift over time. "What is poverty?" or "what constitutes an armed conflict?" are questions that find different answers with time. For any study that is analyzing the cyclical relationship between these two variables, it is important to frame them within the context of the study region. This research paper conceptualized poverty from bottom-up; that is, from the subjective experience of people. The social perception of poverty goes beyond the economic well-being of people and captures hidden dimensions of poverty. The other research variable, armed conflict is placed under a new framework that addresses the changing nature of violence in the Post-Modern world. It was divided into two groups (organized conflicts and communal conflicts) based on the organization structure of the conflicting parties in Region 5.

5. Literature Review

In the post-Cold War era, more and more studies are pointing the fact that poverty and conflict have a two-way causal relationship. This portion of the study will examine the literature that explores the relationship between poverty and conflict and that advocates the significance of studying such relationships. The following sections will review four critical areas of this study: (1) The vicious cycle between poverty and conflict 2) The impact of poverty at the onset of conflict 3) The effect of conflict at the onset of poverty, and 4) The closing gap between peace and development.

The Vicious Cycle between Poverty and Conflict

There is growing international literature on the relationship between poverty and conflict that studies the changing nature of armed conflicts and the extent to which poverty can be regarded as both a cause and an effect of conflict. Peace and conflict researchers increasingly recognize that poverty, underdevelopment, and high levels of inequality are all high risk factors for armed conflict. On the other side of this relationship, armed conflicts entail a range of economic and social damages that push societies into poverty. These include the loss of life, physical and intellectual disabilities, mass displacement of civilians, destruction of physical and economic infrastructures, and diversion of expenditures from development projects to the military sector (Hillyard, Rolston, & Tomlinston, 2005).

According to John Prendergast, endemic poverty and wide inequalities of income are often reliable predictors of conflict in Ethiopia's Region 5. Poverty has severely

limited opportunities in education, access to resources, and economic advancement in the region. When poverty is combined with deep social and economic inequalities, the struggle for scarce resources trigger violent conflicts in the region. The central role of the state in determining the resource allocation between regions has made it a major target of conflict in the last five decades (Lederach, 1997).

Region 5 is characterized by longstanding conflict between government forces and local armed rebel groups. The region has long suffered from the effects of violent conflict that has severely undermined the ability of the public sector to deliver basic social services to most of its population. It has also led to the destruction of physical and economic infrastructures causing widespread poverty in the region (Gele & Bjune, 2010).

Although the causal relationship between poverty and conflict is far from simple, research has shown that poor countries are at a higher risk of experiencing violent conflicts. At the same time, the excessive numbers of violent conflicts taking place in Least Developed Countries (LDC) are the main sources of poverty. According to the UN (2004), in the 1970s and 1980s, over forty percent of countries affected by civil conflicts were LDCs. The proportion increased to fifty percent during the period 1990-95 and fifty-eight percent in 1996-2001 (UN, 2004).

While there is no automatic linkage between poverty and conflict, an accumulating body of evidence suggests that their relationship runs in both directions. Violent conflict reinforces poverty by disrupting societies and rolling back human

development gains built up over generations. Similarly, poverty is part of the cycle that

creates and perpetuates violent conflicts in LDCs. Poverty and violent conflict

systematically reinforce each other and for many societies, the conflict trap is part of the

poverty trap (UNDP, 2005).

Copson (1991) uses a similar argument in highlighting the two-way linkage

between poverty and conflict in Africa. The author points out the continuing prospect for

violent conflict outbreaks in countries affected by poverty, social cleavage, and

repressive government policies. Copson also underscores the difficulty to foresee

economic or social development across Africa until the burden of violent conflicts ends.

The poverty-conflict hypothesis is still a new area of study that is attracting

research from disciplines like social psychology, conflict resolution, political economics,

and development studies. Despite a general consensus on the direct and indirect impacts

of conflict on poverty, there still remains a disagreement on the primary conflict

triggering effects of poverty. Kanbur (2007) states that the causality from conflict to

poverty is not much in doubt as violence destroys or impairs incentives for development.

In contrast, the precise nature of causality in the other direction, from poverty to conflict

is more ambiguous and subject to a greater debate.

The Impact of Poverty on the Onset of Conflict

For years, a debate has raged in academic circles over the principal sources of

conflict. While there still remain some disagreements about the causes of conflict, many

studies show that the overwhelming majority of civil wars erupt in countries suffering

from persistent poverty or sharp economic decline (Rice, Graff, & Lewis, 2006).

According to Catholic Relief Services [CRS] (2010), seventy-three percent of

the poorest billion people in the world have lived through a violent conflict or are

embroiled in conflict now. Poverty breeds hopelessness and frustration among people

and makes them, especially the young and unemployed, more vulnerable to calls for

violence.

According to Lederach (1997), the majority of armed conflicts take place on the

margins of societies that are struggling with poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment.

They also occur in territories where basic necessities such as housing, health, and

education are rarely or barely satisfied. The Horn of Africa represents one of these

regions where the lack of basic human needs faced by certain segments of society serves

as a predisposing factor for armed conflicts (Lederach, 1997).

While violent conflict is not confined to the global south, a disproportionate

share of armed conflicts take place in poor countries. More than half of the countries in

Africa are affected by at least one form of armed conflict. These conflicts are not

temporary emergencies and have systemic and enduring features. The chronically poor

increasingly live in contexts of chronic insecurity (Goodhand, 2001).

In the last two decades, poverty and conflict have become the biggest challenges

to sustainable development around the world. Poverty plays an important role in

triggering and sustaining armed conflicts, and it is often cited as one of the principal

factors responsible for instability in many parts of Africa. In 2002, thirty-eight of the sixty-four low-income countries around the world were associated with armed conflict: all of them were Sub-Saharan African countries (Draaman, 2003).

A large majority of the poor across the globe is affected by widespread violence and conflict. Many studies of civil war point to low per capita income as a strong factor in the outbreak of conflict. The role of economic factors in the outbreak and duration of civil wars has attracted the attention of many scholars from various disciplines. Some of these studies have drawn attention to the relationship between conflict and poverty. They highlight the significant role played by factors like resource predation and social grievances on the onset and duration of civil conflict (Justino, 2008).

Although poverty is an increasingly acknowledged causal factor of conflict, recent studies on civil wars are split on the actual process leading from poverty to conflict. According to Ballentine and Nitzschke (2006), the greater part of the academic debate has become polarized around the greed versus grievance dichotomy, juxtaposing "loot-seeking" with "justice-seeking" rebellions, and, more generally, the significance of economic versus socio-political drivers of civil war (Ballentine & Nitzschke, 2006, p.2).

The two contrasting perspectives, greed and grievance, have been utilized to explain the onset of civil wars in the developing world. While the greed theory mainly receives support from economists, the grievance proposition is famous among experts of social psychology, development studies, and conflict resolution. According to Murshed and Tadjoeddi (2007), the greed rebellion theory is an economic explanation of civil war

which argues that domestic conflicts stem from the self serving motive of rebel groups whose major goal is to illegally capture natural resources like oil, diamonds, and timber. Some of the actions suggested for ending such conflicts include limiting the income-generating means of rebels. The other argument, the grievance model, states that relative deprivation and the grievance it produces is the main source of conflict. People mobilize against their governments in response to current or anticipated deprivation. The social, economic, and political marginalization of people results in mass frustration which can translate into violence. One of the solutions suggested for ending such conflicts is to address the inequality line between social groups (Murshed &Tadjoeddi, 2007).

Greed Rebellion Theory

The greed theory has been an influential body of knowledge used by various international analysts and policy makers on the onset of civil conflicts in developing countries. Collier and Hoeffler (2001) argue that greed is the main driving force behind most domestic conflicts. Their argument rests on the notion that poor countries with slow economic growth and a high proportion of primary commodity exports in their GDP face higher risks of conflict. A sluggish economic growth translates into the lack of employment opportunities, thus making recruitment to rebel forces much easier. On the other hand, a high proportion of primary commodity exports in the GDP indicate the availability of plunderable resources which rebels can capture to fund their warfare (Collier & Hoeffler, 2001).

The greed rebellion theory finds its root in the Rational Choice Theory (RCT)

which is based on the assumption that human beings are rational and calculate the likely

costs and benefits of any action. Malesevic (2004) points out that the RCT views the

human nature as intrinsically selfish, greedy, and largely unchangeable. It assumes that

individuals are motivated by self-interest in a world of permanent competition over

limited resources, power, and status, and as rational individuals, they choose an

alternative that is likely to give them the greatest satisfaction. Although the theory has

long been a dominant paradigm in economics, it has recently gained prominence in

various disciplines including political science and sociology (Malesevic, 2004).

The greed theory reflects on the economic rationality of leaders and followers,

which find war to be more profitable than peace. Its proposition is drawn from post-Cold

War civil conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa where armed struggle for controlling natural

resources served as an incentive for profit-seeking groups to engage in violent behavior.

Hence, the abundance of non-renewable natural resources in poor societies, which is

labeled as a "resource curse" by proponents of this model, is seen as an important factor

in igniting civil wars (Stewart, 2008).

Several rebel movements in Africa have been implicated with the plundering of

natural resources through illegal taxation and cross-border smuggling. For instance,

illicit diamonds (conflict diamonds) have been used by rebels to fund the civil wars in

Angola, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

According to Lichbach (1995), a rebel organization has the ultimate duty of acquiring

resources to secure the inflow of new fighters and to keep its current membership intact.

These tasks critically depend on the rebel's ability to offer rewards or payments to its

new and old members. This also explains a rebel group's aspiration of grasping material wealth through illegal means.

The attempt to benefit materially from war, through looting or other forms of violent accumulation, is hardly a new phenomenon. Economic considerations often shape the calculations and behavior of the parties to a conflict, giving rise to a particular war economy and a distinctive dynamic of conflict. Even where military and political objectives appear to provide the obvious rationale for fighting, conflicts are still likely to be influenced by economic motives and opportunities, especially at the local level (Berdal & Malone, 2000).

Keen (1998) argues that scholars have long regarded conflict as simply, a breakdown in a particular system, rather than the emergence of a new, alternative system of profit and power. The persistence of civil war in developing nations cannot be explained without acknowledging the fact that internal conflict can be profitable, both for elites and for ordinary people involved. Hence, for significant groups both at the top and at the bottom of society, violence can be an opportunity for self-enrichment rather than a problem.

Proponents of the greed rebellion theory strongly dismiss the notion that grievance is a motivating factor of civil wars. Collier (2000) argues that conflicts are far more likely caused by economic agendas than by grievance. Collier says, "the true cause of much civil war is not the loud discourse of grievance but the silent force of greed" (p.92). Although the rationale behind rebel organizations is essentially greed, the actual

discourse played may be entirely dominated by grievance. This is done in order to

maintain a good public image and attract new recruits. Collier also rejects the view that

inequality or relative deprivation is connected to civil conflicts. Collier argues that

"inequality, whether measured in terms of income or landownership, has no effect on the

risk of conflict...this is, of course, surprising given the attention inequality has received

as an explanation of conflict" (p.97).

Grievance Rebellion Theory

The argument of the greed rebellion theory is refuted by the grievance model

which uses a different causal connection between poverty and conflict. Ostby (2004)

argues that greed based studies of civil war argue that relative deprivation and grievance

have no connection with the outbreak of civil conflicts. Ostby stresses the fact that the

vast majority of these studies tend to concentrate exclusively on economic inequality,

thus failing to capture the multidimensional nature of inequality. Given the fact that the

human population is different in many respects, it is important to remember that

inequality can be much more than just income inequality. The greed theory also uses an

individualistic approach to inequality by focusing on inequality among individuals even

though what it is trying to study is group conflict. This may explain why so many greed

theorists have failed to find a relationship between relative deprivation and conflict

(Ostby, 2004).

The grievance rebellion theory argues that relative deprivation and the social

grievance it produces is the major source of armed conflict. Under the grievance

hypothesis, the dynamics linking poverty to conflict rest on two important steps in the

conception of poverty. The first is the shift from the traditional, income based approach

of poverty to a broader view which also includes social, cultural, and political

dimensions. A single focus on the economic attribute of poverty fails to capture the

multidimensional aspects of human well-being. The second shift refers to the swing

from an absolute view of poverty expressed in standard economic terms to a form of

poverty defined by values prevalent in a given society. This marks the move to relative

poverty which focuses on how individuals perceive their relative position in society. A

group's access to social, economic, and political resources can be influenced by the

relative position of its members in society. Often, the social position of individuals is

part of a serious imbalance of opportunities that limit certain members of society from

accessing various types of resources. The unequal status or the relative deprivation of

some individuals and groups is an ultimate source of grievance which can translate into

collective violence (Verstegen, 2001).

Despite its multidimensional characteristics, poverty implies a diminished or

deprived access to economic, social, or cultural resources that are needed to satisfy basic

needs. The exposure of the poor to such socio-economic conditions that stem from the

unequal share of material and non-material resources can give rise to a distinctive

pattern of collective behavior. Human needs theorists like Richard Burton have

characterized such collective behavior that emerges from the denial of basic needs as

social frustration and aggression. The failure to satisfy basic needs, according to Burton

(1987), is a sufficient explanation of social dissidence and deviant behaviors as well as

of political and social instabilities. Deep rooted social conflict springs from deprived human needs.

The denial of material and non-material needs have been known to cause frustration, prompting a possible reaction in the form of aggressive behavior. If we were to strictly apply the frustration-aggression theory, Opotow (2000) argues that all social frustrations from unmet needs can result in collective violence. However, frustration-aggression is not a direct cause and effect relationship, and frustration doesn't always result in violence. Likewise, not all violence is the result of frustration. To this end, Opotow employs Leonard Berkowithz's argument which points out that the effect of frustration on aggression is also mediated by the perception of one's status in a larger system or relative to others (p.409-410).

Pruit (2006) states that the basic source of conflict lies in unmet needs that are either opposed by other party's needs or simply deprived by another party. In spite of that, need deprivation is not always a sufficient cause of conflict. Often, groups can endure need deprivation for many years without resorting to violence. Two bodies of theories have been developed to explain how need deprivation produces conflict: these are relative deprivation theory and group mobilization theory (Pruit, 2006).

Relative deprivation occurs when social groups subjectively perceive themselves as unfairly disadvantaged over other groups perceived as having similar attributes and deserving similar rewards (their reference groups). Relative deprivation is the outcome of a social comparison process whereby one group compares its socio-economic status

with other similar groups. The discontent arising from relative deprivation has been used to explain radical politics, social movements, industrial disputes, and the whole plethora of crime and deviance (Young, 1999).

The concept of relative deprivation has been extensively used in social psychology, sociology, and other social sciences for more than six decades. The concept was first articulated by Stouffer and his colleagues in their wartime study, "The American Soldier" (1949), which found out that people evaluate their social or economic position not according to absolute standards but on the basis of their position relative to others around them. Although the concept of relative deprivation has been overshadowed for a long time, the post-Cold War period has seen its resurgence and its integration into theories of collective behavior. The concept of relative deprivation has since then acquired an important role in understanding the source of collective violence (Walker & Smith, 2002).

Relative deprivation arises from differential access to various types of resources- social, economic, political, or cultural. Hence, it refers to inequalities among individuals or groups across one or more dimensions. Social psychologists further break the concept of relative deprivation into egoistic deprivation and fraternal deprivation. Egoistic deprivation is the feeling that one individual is deprived relative to another while fraternal deprivation is the feeling that one's group is deprived relative to another group (Draman, 2003).

According to the group mobilization theory, there are three stages on the way to group action. First, individuals must strongly identify with a collective or group which forms an important part of their self definition. Second, there should be a perception of group deprivation, and the acceptance that the individual's deprivation is part of a larger pattern of deprivation victimizing the whole group. The third stage is group organization where members assume the roles of leaders and followers and pool their actions for a common purpose (Pruit, 2006).

Based on the results from numerous case studies, Stewart (2002) discusses the group aspect of relative deprivation by highlighting the systematic inequalities between identity groups. Stewart identifies inequalities among groups that are also differentiated in religion, ethnicity, region, or racial affiliations as horizontal inequalities. This is different from the conventional approach to inequality (vertical inequality) which measures disparity between individuals or households. Horizontal inequalities are multidimensional with political, economic, and social elements. They are established when the lines of inequalities coincide with cultural or regional boundaries. This can be a source of social grievance on behalf of the deprived group. Here, cultural identities like ethnicity and religion can become powerful mobilizing agents leading up to collective violence. Disturbances arising from horizontal inequalities may take the form of sporadic riots, as has occurred in various cities in the U.S. during the civil rights movement or in civil wars, such as the Biafran and Eritrean succession wars or even massacres, as witnessed in Burundi and Rwanda, and local and international terrorism (Stewart, 2002).

Horizontal inequalities refer to the group aspect of relative deprivation. Although the term is a new addition to the pool of development studies literature, the concept has long been applied by social psychologists studying group conflicts. Gurr (1991) argues that inequalities and discrimination along lines of ethnic and regional cleavage are potent sources of conflict in African societies. The denial of opportunity to reduce these inequalities results in collective grievance. The greater the inequalities, the more likely the disadvantaged groups are geared for collective action. This is particularly true if the inequalities are reinforced by customary and legal barriers established by dominant groups. Under such circumstances, communal identity provides an easy basis for mobilization. Where identity remains strong, it is relatively easy for political leaders evoking symbols of common ethnic or religious interests to propagate ideologies of resistance and organize group members for violent action (Gurr, 1991).

According to Gurr (1970), the primary causal sequence in political violence is first the development of discontent, second the politicization of the discontent, and finally its actualization in violent action against political objects and actors. "Discontent arising from the perception of relative deprivation is the basic, instigating condition for participants in collective violence" (Gurr, 1970, p. 13).

The perceptions of deprivation or disadvantage are usually based on inter-group comparisons rather than the estimation of the in-group position alone. People can compare their in-group with an advantaged out-group. During this process, members of the disadvantaged group perceive discrimination on the level of group identity rather

than on that of individual identity. Hence, social identity and feelings of relative

deprivation can reinforce one another. Members of a group with a more salient social

identity can compare their group with another group and perceive more relative

deprivation. On the other hand, relative deprivation impacts the salience of social

identity by increasing in-group solidarity (Korostelina, 2007).

Most contemporary civil wars in developing countries have ethnic dimension

with ethnic groups fighting against one another or struggling against regimes dominated

by other ethnic groups. According to Murshed and Gates (2003), social identity is a

strong mobilizing force by which groups organize in pursuit of collective ends. The

capacity of ethnicity to facilitate collective action is superior to most other organizing

forms except religion. However, ethnicity by itself can't produce mass violence. It

requires a well defined grievance that can be framed through the identity group in

question. A shared sense of relative deprivation strengthens identification with the in-

group and provides a strong base for political mobilization. That is why horizontal

inequalities are so important in organizing groups for political violence. Political

entrepreneurs usually seize this opportunity of inter-group inequality to add symbolic

systems and mobilize groups for violence (Murshed & Gates, 2003).

In his recent study, Sen (2008) underlined the complex picture of the poverty-

violence relationship. He argued that poverty and inequality are importantly linked to

violence and that relationship is contingent upon the social and cultural circumstances of

the conflict setting. He added that it is the synergy between poverty and cultural

identities that increases the significance of group inequalities and may contribute to

violence.

Conflict resolution scholars have effectively applied the grievance rebellion

theory in analyzing various civil conflicts in Africa. Copson (1991) argues that the

second Sudanese Civil War (1983-2005) between the North and the South erupted as

Southerners became aware of their region's relative impoverishment. This became a

source of collective grievance that mobilized Southerners (Black Africans) against the

Northerners (Arabs). The presence of socio-economic inequalities along the line of the

Arab/African identity was essential in bringing the two groups into conflict.

Rothschild (1997) also documented on the pattern of resource distribution and its

impact in Ethiopia during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie (1930-1974). During this

period, available developmental resources were used to promote growth only in selected

provinces of Ethiopia. Allocations for social services like health and education were

clustered in Shewa Province (Central Ethiopia) and the capital, Addis Ababa. This has

led to the social and economic exclusion of large segment of the population. Rothschild

adds, by the end of 1973, there were only eighty-five hospitals in the country, twenty-

five of which were in Shewa province and Addis Ababa. The relative deprivation of the

hinterland was important in forming collective grievance against the government. This

neglect of the periphery helped to ferment the 1974 revolution which overthrew the

Emperor and intensified the regional insurgency movements (Rothchild, 1997).

Horowitz (1985) states how colonial rule in Africa shaped group relations and made ethnic identity a more important matter than it might otherwise have been. Colonial rule entailed a differential recruitment of ethnic groups into new roles that set new standards of group worth in many African societies. The differential distribution of opportunities and resources between ethnic groups has led to an emergence of dual groups labeled as "advanced" and "backward" groups. The disproportionate representation of some ethnic groups in the modern social, economic, and political sectors meant the deprivation of others. One of the important factors that have produced an extraordinary amount of conflict in many African countries is the juxtaposition of "backward" or deprived groups with "advanced" or privileged groups (Horowitz, 1985, p.147).

The Impact of Conflict on the Onset of Poverty

If poverty leads to insecurity, it is also true that the destabilizing effects of conflict constitute a major factor of poverty. Poverty is both a cause of conflict and a consequence of it. Conflict imposes a substantial cost on a nation's economy and on the welfare of its citizens. It can result in as many as thirty percent more people living in poverty (Brainard, Chellet, & LaFleur, 2007).

Armed conflict is one of the leading causes of human misery and destruction in the world. Conflict claims the lives of combatants and civilians alike, often in greater tolls for the latter category than the first. It leads to massive population displacements, social break-down, capital flight, ecological damage, and loss of livelihood. During

armed conflicts, public infrastructures like bridges, hospitals, and schools are often targeted by militants. This greatly undermines a government's capacity to provide basic services to its citizens. Moreover, scarce resources are diverted from productive activities to violence. According to Barash and Webel (2004), "there can be no question that on balance, war is impoverishing. It is essentially a parasite, feeding off the economic and social strength of societies, and like most parasites, it weakens the host" (p.492).

The Horn of Africa is gravely affected by protracted armed conflicts that are interconnected at the local, national, and international levels. Conflict and insecurity severely constrain development efforts by destroying physical infrastructures, disrupting trade and markets, and diverting human and financial resources away from productive sectors. Conflict also imposes huge economic and social costs through human displacement, violation of basic human rights, and the destruction of livelihoods. These costs disproportionately affect poor and marginalized groups, including women and children (Eteffa, 2005).

According to the Ogaden Relief and Development Organization [ORDO], one of the impacts of the long civil war in Region 5 has been the extreme shortage of basic social services. The implications of inadequate access to social services have in turn strained the human capital development and the productive capacity of the region. Region 5 has 1.3 million children without primary and intermediate schooling and another 1.3 million adults without access to any form of adult education (ORDO, 2010).

Conflict is commonly cited as an important cause of poverty. The effects of conflict are often immediate and dramatic. On the other hand, the consequences also accrue long after the fighting has stopped, usually as war over-hang effects. Depending on the magnitude and duration of conflict, the impacts also manifest at a variety of levels including national (macro-level), local (meso-level), and household (micro-level). (United States Agency for International Development [USAID], 2005).

The damaging impact of any armed conflict depends on its size (the area and the population it covers), stage, duration, and strategies adopted during the course of the fight. The negative outcomes of some organized conflicts can extend beyond the local setting and cover a wider area. Large scale interstate and intrastate conflicts are known to have significant socioeconomic impact that can be felt at the national level (Green, 1994).

The most obvious way in which a civil war damages an economy is through the destruction of human and physical resources. Another consequence of conflict is the disruption of the regular social and economic activities in the conflict setting. Social order and the rule of the law are often suspended during armed conflicts. The destruction wrought by warfare and the erosion of institutions and organizations constitute deterioration in the economic environment. Conflict also entails the diversion of government spending from development enhancing activities to military buildup. Moreover, the insecurity caused by armed conflict discourages domestic investments

and push human, physical, and financial capitals outside of the conflict setting

(Collier, 1999).

The World Human Security Center points out that as of the beginning of the

1990s, the number and intensity of organized conflicts have decreased worldwide.

However, this is counter to the experience of Sub-Saharan Africa where most of the

world's armed conflicts currently take place. At the turn of the twenty-first century,

more people were killed in wars in this region than in the rest of the world combined. It

has been suggested that armed conflict in the region is now the single most important

determinant of poverty (Schindler & Bruck, 2007).

Africa has been one of the fertile grounds for armed conflicts during the second

half of the twentieth century. These conflicts have been a major cause of human

suffering and underdevelopment in the continent. According to Copson (1994),

"measured in terms of death, refugees and displaced persons, and lost economic

opportunities, African war is one of the great calamities of our era" (p.97). The extent of

disaster caused by conflict may never be fully grasped, both for technical and emotional

reasons. In addition to its human impact, armed conflict has been responsible for

massive disruption of societies, their networks, and their institutions. Africa's wars have

also caused serious economic consequences for the countries involved. The day to day

cost of running a war have in many instances crippled national economies, stalled

development projects, and deterred potential investments in conflict-afflicted countries.

Armed conflict is also behind most of the famines that occurred in the continent during

the last five decades (Copson, 1994).

A research made by OXFAM and the International Action Network on Small

Arms [IANSA] (2007) points out that compared to peaceful nations, African countries in

conflict have, on average, 50 percent more infant deaths, 15 percent more

undernourished population, 20 percent more adult illiteracy, 2.5 times fewer doctors per

patient, and life expectancy reduced by five years.

The consequences of armed conflicts on the social and economic development of

nations have been well documented. In the last two decades, there has been a growing

body of empirical research focusing on the impacts of violent conflicts on poverty.

While these studies examine the effect of conflict on poverty from many angles, the

majority are macro-level economic analysis of conflict. According to Ibanez (2010), a

large strand of economic literature estimate the impact of civil conflict on economic

growth and social outcomes based on aggregate economic data. However, such data fall

short of identifying the mechanism and channels through which conflict impacts

economic activities and social conditions leading to poverty. Moreover, it is important to

go beyond aggregate data in designing policies that aim to mitigate the effects of conflict

and promote sustainable peace (Ibanez, 2010).

Although most researches on conflict are macro-level studies, there is a growing

awareness on the importance of a micro-level analysis. According to Schindler and

Bruck (2007), some studies have started to include the impact of conflict at the

household level instead of solely relying on national level data. These studies employ

the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) to measure the impacts of conflict on the

human, physical financial, natural, and social capitals at multiple levels including,

national, local, and household levels.

One of the characteristic features of armed conflict is that it destroys the social

and economic foundations of individuals and households. The results can temporarily or

permanently halt the ability of households to maintain a sustainable livelihood and meet

their basic needs. According to the SLA framework, people's capacity to generate and

maintain their means of living depends on drawing on a range of core assets called

capitals. These assets serve as the building blocks of people's livelihoods. There are five

types of assets that all together enable people to pursue sustainable livelihoods. These

are human, physical, economic, social, and natural capitals. The extent of access to these

capitals is strongly influenced by the amount of control, or lack thereof, that people have

over their surroundings. Armed conflict represents one of the factors that hamper the full

utilization of livelihood capitals and push people into poverty (Kollmair & Gamper,

2002).

At the grassroots level, human capital refers to the knowledge, skills, and

capabilities possessed by members of a household for pursuing their livelihood

activities. Conflict destroys the human capital of a household directly and indirectly.

According to Orero, Heime, Cuttler, and Mohaupt (2007), conflict can impact on the

human capital of households by causing death, forced migration, physical and mental

disabilities, declines in health and nutrition status, and reducing education opportunities. These factors constrain the short-term and the long-term capacities of households to earn income and can drive them into poverty. In addition to this, conflict weakens the financial capital of households by disrupting production activities, diminishing credits and savings, and causing market failures. Moreover, conflict wipes out the physical capital of households by destroying assets and production inputs. During armed conflicts, a large number of physical assets are destroyed, seized, or abandoned. The loss of such capital limits the productivity of households and signals a significant loss of welfare. In addition to these effects, conflict entails a breakdown in natural resource management and customary rights which results in the mismanagement and depletion of natural capital in conflict affected areas. The other consequence of conflict is the effect on social capital through disrupting family networks and relationships of trust and cutting off access to wider institutions of society (Orero, et.al, 2007).

The processes of violence impact the economic status of households through the direct and indirect human, physical, social, political, and cultural transformations they entail. Some of the direct effects of conflict include changes in household composition and income due to death, physical and psychological injuries, and conscription into the military. Another direct effect of conflict includes changes in the household economic status due to the destruction of assets and livelihoods and the effects caused by forced displacement and migration. The indirect effects of conflict are reflected at the local level or at the national level. Local indirect effects include changes in households' access to local resources, employment, credit and insurance markets, social relations and

networks, and other institutions. At the national level, the indirect effects of conflict

consist of a decline in economic growth which can impact household welfare

(Justino, 2008).

The Closing Gap between Peace and Development

The essence of studying the bidirectional relationship between poverty and

conflict suggests the need for a comprehensive approach that addresses the two

variables. According to Hillyard et al. (2005), the outcome of studying the two

dimensions of the poverty-conflict relationship is helpful in devising policies and actions

that simultaneously reduce poverty and promote peace. This means integrating

peacebuilding and conflict resolution with anti-poverty strategies and those international

programs ostensibly concerned with reconstruction. This represents a new interface of

research and practice in the fields of poverty and conflict (Hillyard et al. 2008).

The Horn of Africa has long suffered from the effects of widespread poverty and

protracted conflicts. There are multiple causes of conflict in the region one of which is

the unfair distribution of resources which results in the social and economic exclusion of

certain groups of society. This often entails in disparities through the lack of

infrastructure, social services, and security between different regions of a country.

Equitable development plays a positive role in conflict prevention by addressing the

long-term structural causes of conflict, such as poverty, injustice, and poor governance.

At the same time, peace and security are fundamental to poverty reduction and

sustainable development in the Horn of Africa. Given the prevalence and the high risk of

poverty and conflict in the region and the clear link between the two, it requires a

holistic approach that simultaneously addresses both problems (Eteffa, 2005).

At the turn of this century, world leaders of the North and South met at the 2000

UN Millennium Summit and made a commitment to meet the Millennium Development

Goals (MDGs). One of the ambitious goals set at the time was to reduce poverty and

human deprivation by half in the year 2015. According to Penh (2009), despite the

progress made by China and India in the past decade, poverty has remained a significant

challenge in conflict-affected countries where nearly one-third of the world poor lives.

The virtual challenge of the poverty-conflict cycle has stimulated a new discussion and

partnership among the poverty reduction and conflict resolution communities. While

significant intellectual and practical contributions have been made in the fields of

poverty and conflict over decades, knowledge and practice in the convergence of these

two fields is still new and evolving (Penh, 2009).

The recognition of the mutual relationship between poverty and conflict has also

brought the realization of the causal interrelatedness between peace and development.

Although conflicts tend to reverse development, in many ways, the lack of socio-

economic development itself constitutes a powerful source of grievance which under

some circumstances can precipitate violent conflict. It is from this point that various

international and multilateral agencies have started to address peace and development in

a more holistic and integrated manner. For instance the Security Council, one of the

principal organs of the United Nations responsible for maintaining international peace

and security, has progressively been integrating development with peacekeeping and peacebuilding. It has extended its focus by addressing the immediate reconstruction needs and the long term development and resolution of the structural causes of conflict. In addition to this, other UN bodies that traditionally focus on socio-economic development such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) are increasingly getting involved in crisis prevention and conflict resolution thus integrating, peace and development issues into their missions (Ocampo, 2004).

With the increasing knowledge on the two-way relationship between poverty and conflict, the debates on peacebuilding and development are also moving closer together. There is now a greater understanding of the shared objectives of sustainable development and sustainable peace. In conflict prevention, the balance has shifted from exclusive military response to more structural approaches that focus on the long-term aspect of preventing a civil war. In development cooperation, increased attention is being paid to the political conditions for development and the need to focus on the causes rather than the appearances of poverty. Conflict resolution is also becoming an integral part of the quest to reduce poverty and attain sustainable development. Moreover, development agencies are recognizing the need to work in and on conflicts rather than around them. More focus is being directed towards peacebuilding, which reflects a step toward a long-term engagement and away from an earlier short-term concentration on post-conflict recovery and reconstruction efforts (Verstegen, 2001).

Lederach (1997) also highlights a similar argument by underscoring the importance of the link between peace and development. For Lederach, both peace and development endeavors must be connected to a longterm goal that sustainably transform a given population from a condition of extreme vulnerability and dependency to one of self-sufficiency and well-being. They should lead to a proactive process that is capable of regenerating a "spiral of peace and development instead of a spiral of violence and destruction" (p.75).

Summary

In recent years, the poverty-conflict nexus has often played out along the greed-grievance debate, which presents two models to explain violence under conditions of poverty. Popular among political economists, the greed model was developed based on the influential work of Collier and Hoeffler (2001). It argues that civil war ignites as a result of the predatory aspirations of rebels who want to grasp wealth through the extortion and looting of primary commodities like oil and diamonds. Furthermore, the lack of economic opportunities under poverty makes the cost of joining rebel groups lower for the poor. On the other side of the debate, social psychologists have developed their hypothesis, the grievance model. It is mostly based on the work of Gurr (1970) who employs the notion of "relative deprivation" as the micro-foundation of collective violence. When members of a collective group perceive deprivation in comparison to another group or when there is a disparity between their aspirations and capabilities, it can lead to frustration and aggression.

The causal interaction between poverty and conflict is bi-directional. The impoverishment of any social group creates a ripe condition for conflict and the destructive and depressing impacts of conflict are factors that in turn perpetuate poverty The connection is two-way, but it is not a linear relationship where one is the automatic result of the other. The significance of studying the two-way linkage between poverty and conflict lies in strengthening the partnership between peace and development; doing so helps to converge the communities of conflict resolution and development for a common purpose.

6. Analysis

From Poverty to Conflict: Region 5

A 2008 baseline study of violent conflicts in Ethiopia identifies the main causes of domestic conflicts as controversies over ethnic identity and religion, disagreements over border and administrative arrangements, population dynamics, mineral extraction activities, and discriminatory caste-like culture. In spite of its contribution in pointing out the important elements of conflict in Ethiopia, the study failed to recognize poverty as a major factor in any of Ethiopia's domestic conflicts (African Rally for Peace and Development [ARPD], 2008).

The above conclusion is common among many studies of intrastate conflicts in Ethiopia. Assefa (1996) asserts that most of the wars waged in the Horn of Africa during the past six decades have been described in terms of ethnic conflict, both by the adversaries themselves and by external analysts. The majority of modern day conflicts in Ethiopia have been presented as inter-ethnic rivalry for cultural autonomy and self-rule. The reason for this, according to Stewart (2009), is that most conflicts are classified based on their organizing identity, irrespective of the true underlying motive (p.5). Therefore, we often focus on the basis of how people are mobilized instead of the socio-economic and political causes of such mobilization. This is also true of Region 5 where past and present organized conflicts are simply portrayed as ethnic strife between the

"Amhara" or "Tigre" [16] ethnic dominated central governments of Ethiopia and ethnic

Somalis in Region 5.

On the contrary, the identification of Region 5 inhabitants as ethnic Somalis or as

members of the majority Ogadeen clan does not automatically translate into collective

violence. As Gross Stein (1996) argues, social identity and differentiation do not

inevitably lead to conflict. If they did, conflict would occur at all times under all

conditions. Boix & Stokes (2007) also argue, "this is not to deny that ethnicity plays a

part in conflict, but that it is insufficient to look at the presence of groups (ethnic,

religious, sectarian, etc.) to explain the onset of conflict" (p.420). For Boix and Stokes,

the salience of ethnic identities itself may be the outcome of a conflict rather than its

cause.

The single focus on ethnicity as the underlying source of armed conflicts has

often ignored the role of poverty in triggering and sustaining conflicts in Region 5. This

has led to poverty being treated as a side issue with no significant link to violence. As

will be seen in the next sections, poverty plays a crucial role in igniting and maintaining

the civil war in Region 5.

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[16] The Amhara and Tigre are the major ethnic groups accounting for 30.1 percent and 6.2 percent of the national population respectively (CIA, 2010). In many discourses, the Amharas are believed to have dominated the political scene of the country since the middle ages, until replaced by the Tigres in 1991. Rebel groups like the ONLF (2009) argue that "past Amhara and present Tigre" domination is one of the leading causes of long-term instability in the country. Such views have been contested by scholars like Assefa (1996) who questions if "Amhara domination" is a code word that disguises other social grievances or if it signifies supremacy of one population over another.

Greed or Grievance?

In recent years, the poverty-conflict nexus has often played out along the greed-grievance debate, which presents two models to explain violence under conditions of poverty. According to these two theories, the impetus to rebel can be related to either economic or socio-political factors. What can we label the civil war in Region 5? Is it greed based or a grievance driven conflict? This question can be answered by analyzing the region's socio-economic profile and identifying the conflict-motivating factors for rebel leaders and their followers.

According to Dzurilla (2010), the greed driven theory of civil war argues that poverty and the lack of economic opportunities drive insurgencies into action. Rebels use a cost-benefit analysis to determine if the economic incentives of waging war outweigh its relative costs. Moreover, an economy highly dependent on exporting primary products such as diamonds or oil is at a greater risk of civil war. This is because such commodities are easily looted by insurgencies for buying weapons and ammunition and paying off their fighters. Region 5 does not extract or export non-renewable resources like oil or diamonds. According to Devreux (2006), a crucial part of the region's economy relies on pastoralism, which mainly involves exporting livestock to neighboring countries. It is true that in recent times the region has attracted foreign oil companies from China, Sweden, Canada, United Arab Emirates, and Malaysia, which have signed exploration deals with the Ethiopian government. According to Salopek (2007) of the Chicago Tribune, the real prize is not the potential crude oil but the

estimated 4 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in the region. Although there is a huge

potential of future production, there has not been any real extraction of oil or natural gas

in the region.

The ONLF has on numerous occasions warned foreign companies to halt their

operations in Region 5.[17] Despite its strong opposition to oil exploration activities in the

region, the ONLF does not draw its support through the prospect of looting natural

resources or demanding royalties from the oil companies. Its fighters are neither paid

soldiers nor are recruited on the promise of any material or monetary compensations.

The operational finance of the group is also not associated with the extraction and

extortion of natural resources. [18] The region is endowed with untapped resources of

natural gas and oil, but it is unrealistic to say that the motive behind the civil war is

about making profit from an undeveloped resource. Nevertheless, the presence of oil

companies can certainly complicate the dynamic of the conflict in the region.

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[17] The ONLF accuses these oil companies for collaborating with the Ethiopian
government and wants to discourage their investment in the region. In April, 2007, the
ONLF raided a Chinese run oil exploration project that left 74 people dead including 9
Chinese workers (ibid).
[18] According to HRW (2008), the ONLF is a grassroots social and political movement
that consists of a rural-based guerrilla force. Its fighters regularly interact with civilians
and obtain food and water from a network of civilian supporters in the towns and
villages. Despite the attempts by the Ethiopian government to label the ONLF as a
terrorist group, the U.S and the European Union (EU) didn't enlist the ONLF as terrorist
organization by the end of 2010.

Therefore the basic idea that greed is the main factor in the region's civil war is simply misleading. Below are some of the factors that support this argument:

1. The economy of the region relies on the export of livestock to neighboring countries. The region doesn't produce or export non-renewable natural resources that serve as a potential loot for rebel insurgencies. Proponents of the greed theory focus on the economic dimension of armed conflicts and argue that rebels finance their operation through the exploitation of natural resources. On the contrary, the ONLF is not involved in resource capture as part of funding or running its operation. The civil war in the region can't be categorized as a resource war.

2. The ONLF doesn't have a commercial agenda in its fight against the government.

3. The ONLF doesn't promise its fighters financial or material incentives upon enlisting.

4. One of the characteristics of greed-based civil wars is the emergence of war economies, which is made possible by the climate of impunity and lawlessness that civil war helps to create. In this type of economies, civilians participate in

unregulated activities such as mining, smuggling, or growing illicit crops. This is

not the characteristic of the civil war in Region 5.[19]

5.   The greed theory contends that the lack of economic opportunities in poverty-

stricken societies makes the opportunity cost of joining rebels low. Hence the

decision to enlist in a rebel group is based on a simple rational choice that

measures the economic cost and benefit of violence. Compared to a civilian life,

an ONLF fighter often experiences a very hard life in an inhospitable

environment with minimal access to the basic necessities of life. Even by

Rational Choice Theory (RCT), which is the corner stone of the greed rebellion

theory, it is difficult to suggest that the personal benefits associated with joining

the rebel group outweigh the relative costs of a civilian life.

The Role of Collective Grievance in the Civil War

Both the greed and grievance theories concur that poverty is an important

predisposing condition for violence, but they still differ in their approach on the actual

conflict driving factors. Although the greed model can be employed in several contexts,

its applicability to the civil war in Region 5 remains very limited. On the other hand, the

grievance theory offers a more practical approach to the context of Region 5. The

grievance model posits that many of today's conflicts emanate from and are fought out

in frontier regions that have historically suffered from marginalization, limited voice,

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[19] The cross-border import and export trade between Region 5 and neighboring Somalia
is largely considered as a contraband transaction by the government. On the contrary,
this trade predates the current conflict and is not the direct result of the civil war.

and hard-core poverty (Goodhand, 2001). The relative deprivation of social groups produce collective grievance that can be exploited by politicians and rebel groups to generate conflicts.

According to the grievance theory, the underlying circumstances or the socioeconomic and political conditions that negatively differentiate ethnic Somalis as a cultural or regional unit from other similar groups form an important tangent of the five decades civil conflict in Region 5. Here, the socio-economic and political marginalization of the people is framed through their cultural identity. In simple terms, the coupling of the Somali cultural identity and the relative deprivation perceived by members of this same cultural group explains the root source of the violent civil conflict in the region. Lunn (2008) supports this argument by stating that one of the factors that exacerbate the likelihood of armed conflict in the region is the relative deprivation of its people in terms of access to social, economic, and political resources.

Historical Deprivation of Ethnic-Somalis in Modern Ethiopia

For the greater part of its modern history, Region 5 has been one of the most deprived and insecure regions of Ethiopia. Armed conflict and poverty are constant sources of vulnerability for the people of the region. Living in one of the most fragile ecosystems of the world, pastoralists of the region are not only exposed to various natural and man-made disasters, but they also possess limited capacity to cope with the damaging losses (Markakis, 2004).The introduction of a modern state system, brought through colonialism and the Ethiopian state expansion at the end of the nineteenth

century, introduced catastrophic challenges to Somali pastoralists. The restriction on movement, trade regulation, and territorial demarcation imposed by the modern state administrations impaired the indigenous survival mechanisms of pastoralists and further pushing them into poverty. By the mid- twentieth century, Lockyer (2006) argues that there was no sign of development in the region. It was a flat and dry pastoral land that had remained virtually void of any form of economic, infrastructural, or social development.

Setting Region 5 in the national context shows that it is one of the most impoverished regional states of Ethiopia. A study by Deressa et al (2008), concluded that the region is at the lowest level of regional development in Ethiopia. The study also revealed that the region had the lowest proportion of healthcare services, food markets, primary and secondary schools, and access to modern farm supplies. Although livestock ownership is the highest in the country, it is met with the lowest provision of veterinary services nationwide.

The Central Emergency Response Fund [CERF] (2010) identifies Region 5 as one of the least developed regions of Ethiopia in terms of access to essential services and food security. The area is also comparatively prone to outbreaks of measles, meningitis, and viral hemorrhagic fevers due to lack of health care services. Malnutrition accounts for eight percent of all mortalities while deaths during childbirths constitute twenty-three percent of all mortalities in the region.

One of the striking features of Region 5 is the extreme lack of social services available to its people. These services are often under-resourced and unevenly distributed. Where there are schools and health clinics, there are often no teachers, books, doctors, or medical supplies. This stands against the rising expectations of how people can live and what they are entitled to receive from the region. The presence of unfulfilled needs means a gap between social expectations and reality that leads to social frustration and increases the possibility of armed conflict (CHF, 2006).

Many studies support the notion that Region 5 is a relatively underdeveloped part of Ethiopia. A report on the distribution of manufacturing industries by regional states points out that Region 5 accounts for only 0.52 percent of the total number of large and medium scale industries in the country. This number can be compared with Region 1 and Region 3 which comprise of 12.5 and 8.7 percents respectively, for the same category of manufacturing industries (CSA, 2009). Regional inequalities are not only limited to the manufacturing sector. The 2004 Welfare Monitoring Survey of Ethiopia marked Region 5 for its lowest level of primary school enrollment (38 percent) in the country. A stark disparity is also noted in immunization coverage for DPT,[20] BCG,[21] and Measles which stands at 17 percent for Region 5. This can be compared with 87 percent for Region 1 and 74 percent for the national average.[22] Access to information which is

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[20] Diptheria, Pertussis and Tetanus Vaccine
[21] Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (Tuberculosis)
[22] The data refers to children under the age of 5.

measured by household ownership of radio sets[23] once again finds its lowest proportion

in Region 5. Only 48.3 percent of households in the region own radio sets. The

percentage shows significant increase for other regional states of Ethiopia (69.2 percent

for Region 4 and 85 percent for Region 14) (CSA, 2004).

All the above indicators point to the unfair share of material and non-material

resources between Region 5 and other regions of Ethiopia. It is one of the main reasons

that have placed the region in a chronic state of poverty. It is also a major source of

social grievance in the region that has mobilized citizens to rebel against the

government. The complexity of such inequalities arises from the fact that regional states

in Ethiopia are also ethnically carved territories. Therefore, the socio-economic

inequality between regions also represents inequality along identity lines. Brown (2005)

argues that the broad coincidence of cultural or ethnic differences with severe economic,

political, or social inequalities can be a significant cause of violent conflicts. Such

inequalities, also termed as horizontal inequalities, are potent sources of armed conflict

in Region 5.

From a historic perspective, Region 5 has been one Ethiopian frontier where the

introduction of modern statehood has minimally impacted service delivery and

institutional capacity (Hagmann & Kahlif, 2006). The state of socioeconomic welfare of

the region has been low not only in the absolute sense but also relative to the national

average. Ostby (2006) underlines that those societies with high regional inequalities

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[23] Radio is the major source of information for the majority of the population in
Ethiopia.

carry a higher risk of civil war than societies without such inequalities. Ostby adds that members of the disadvantaged group or region are likely to feel frustration and antagonism especially when their deprivation is the result of structural exploitation and discrimination. The national imbalance or the inter-regional inequality in socio-economic welfare between Region 5 and other parts of Ethiopia is the major source of social frustration and conflict in the region. As Lederach (1997) posited, what is often understood as "content" or "substance" of a conflict is this structural dimension which highlights the underlying causes of conflict (p.83).

Region 5 fares worse than most other regions of Ethiopia across multiple socio-economic indicators (see table 2). It has remained a periphery state throughout most of its modern history, causing frustration and ill-will of its people towards the government (Hagmann, 2007). According to Nicol, Arsano, & Raisin (2000), the legacy of tension between the central state and the periphery coupled with state authority over the control of resources meant that the state often became the focus of conflict. This was especially true where resource allocation was perceived to be relatively uneven. However, the shift from grievances of deprivation and inequality to collective violence did not occur without the role played by rebel movements and other political actors.

Table 2

Poverty Indicators: Region 5 Versus the National Average (2005)

Poverty Indicator	Region 5	National Average
Percentage of population with no formal education		
Male	82	52
Female	89	67
Percentage of women with access to antenatal care	7.4	46.3
Percentage of women who were protected against neonatal Tetanus through Tetanus toxoid injection	9.1	38.9
Percentage of population with healthcare facility located more than a mile away	82.7	53.3
Percentage of children age 12-23 months who received BCG, DPT , Polio and Measles vaccines	8.1	67.2
Percentage of children under 5 years classified as malnourished according to anthropometric indices (height for age, weigh for height and age)	30.3	17.8
Percentage of population aged 15-49 with comprehensive knowledge about HIV-AIDS	50	93.3
Prevalence of Anemia in children aged 6-59 months	85.6	50.4

Note: Ethiopia, Demographic and Health Survey: 2005 by CSA. Copyright 2006 by Central Statistics Agency. Public Data.

The Role of Rebel Groups in Mobilizing for Organized Conflict

During the past five decades, organized conflicts in Region 5 have played out as an interconnected web of interstate and intrastate conflicts involving both state and non-state actors. Armed rebel groups like the OLF, WSLF, and ONLF have carried out their missions as grassroots movements by recruiting from the historically marginalized population of Region 5. Although the support from the neighboring state of Somalia was significant during the high time of the Cold War, Africa Watch Report [AWR] (1991) argues that it was the frustrated and alienated people of Region 5 who formed the major fighting force of armed opposition movements. These groups have effectively rallied the region's population against successive Ethiopian governments in response to the prevailing and anticipated horizontal inequalities. They have harnessed the social frustration resulting from these inequalities to mobilize mass support around their cause.

As stated in the previous paragraphs, Region 5 is one of the most underserved regions of Ethiopia. The various socio-economic data (CSA, 2004, 2009) testify the impoverishment and the relative deprivation of the region. The social frustration and resentment that generates from these conditions have helped the ONLF and other rebel groups to initiate grassroots insurgencies at various times. Holzer (2010) argues that the ONLF has been able to build on the local grievances of four million ethnic Somalis in Ethiopia's most underdeveloped territory. In the same manner, Mohamoud (2009) points out that the economic misery and the lack of basic government services are some of the systemic problems that give the ONLF its needed recruits. Mohamoud also confirms that

there is a genuine anger and feeling of hopelessness among the region's citizens concerning their economic well-being.

According to Stewart and Brown (2007), rebel groups need genuine social, economic, or political grievances for mass mobilization. In addition to this, a common history, language, culture, or religion is generally required to generate felt identities powerful enough to mobilize people for conflict. The Somali cultural identity has inevitably provided the foundation for mobilizing its members for political action. It has equipped rebel groups with the basis for gathering mass support. Menzel (2006) points out that the feeling of deprivation can be harnessed and directed towards the strengthening of the group identity and used to manifest resistance and change. During the last fifty years, rebel groups in Region 5 have created a structural linkage between poverty of the region and the social identity of its people. In simple words, rebel groups have framed the poverty and exclusion of the region through the cultural (ethnic) identity of its people. This has helped in mobilizing civilians for collective violence.

Armed dissident movements have also successfully politicized the Somali ethnic identity by revising its shared history and creating a new form of group consciousness. One of the ways this was carried out was by trying to build a historic continuity of the Somali and Ethiopian hostility dating back to the sixteenth century religious wars between the Adal Sultanate[24] and the Ethiopian Christian Empire (Hagmann,

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[24] The Adal Sultanate was a medieval multi-ethnic Muslim kingdom located in the Horn of Africa. It included part of what is today Region 5, Region 2 (Afar), Somaliland, and Djibouti.

2007). Rebels have frequently activated shared historical memories of victimization and humiliation for the collective group. Volkan (1998) identifies such collective memories as "chosen trauma." It is an effective way of bringing a social group together for common action including violence. While these efforts have brought the social cohesion needed for political mobilization, they have also transformed the Somali cultural identity into a political identity.

Summary

For the greater part of its modern history, Region 5 has been one of the poorest and the most marginalized regions of Ethiopia. The socio-economic development in the region reflects a stark difference when compared to other regions of Ethiopia. The relative impoverishment of the region is a strong source of grievance among its people. Here, the inhabitants perceive the region's deprivation at the level of their collective identity. Politicians and rebel groups have been able to capitalize this shared sense of grievance to mobilize people for violence.

From Conflict to Poverty: Region 5

One of the concepts that study the impact of conflict on poverty is the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA). According to this framework, a livelihood is sustainable if it can maintain its capabilities and assets (human, economic, physical, natural, and social capitals) for now and future generations to come. What people can do and how this results in a sustainable outcome like food security can be subjected to various external influences, one of which is armed conflict. Conflict can deplete and distort the human, physical, economic, social, and natural capitals of a nation at multiple layers, including the household, local, and national levels (FAO, 2010).

Conflict impacts on poverty through a range of direct and indirect factors. Some of the direct costs of conflict include the toll on human lives, the physical injury and psychological trauma incurred on survivors, the mass displacement of civilians, and the destruction of productive assets and physical infrastructures. The indirect consequences of conflict refer to the effects on the survival and welfare of people due to collapsing health care systems, low school enrollments, food insecurity, social disorder, and diversion of resources from development programs to violence. The combined direct and indirect repercussions of conflict can destroy and reduce the human, physical, economic, social, and natural capitals of a nation at various levels.

Region 5 is one of the most conflict ridden and poverty stricken provinces of Ethiopia. Decades of war and violent conflict has diminished the region's human, physical, economic, social, and natural capitals and impoverished its inhabitants. The

region has been devoid of meaningful socio-economic development for the entire part of

its modern history. It remains an underserved region with the lowest level of human

development in the country. The region's literacy rate of 22 percent for males and only

9.8 percent among females is an indicator of its low level of human development (CSA,

2006). Derressa et al (2008) also point out that Region 5 has the lowest literacy rate, the

least access to health care services, and the lowest life expectancy nationwide. For years,

the persistence of hunger and malnutrition has affected millions in the region. In the last

decade alone, a million people a year (25 percent of the total population) were food aid

beneficiaries (ibid).

According to a United Nation's [UN] (2007) report, the poor development of

Region 5 must be seen against the backdrop of the long-standing civil war between the

Ethiopian government and rebels in the region. On the other hand, it is worth noting that

the poverty in the region cannot be tied to a single conflict episode but to the sum impact

of the various conflicts that have occurred over the centuries. Accounting for each

conflict of the past is beyond the scope of this study. However, it is important to

acknowledge that most of the violent conflicts fought in the region possessed two

important features that have contributed to the poverty in the region. These are:

1.   Armed conflicts in the region have often deliberately targeted the socio-

       economic base of households. The destruction of human, physical, economic, social,

       and natural capitals, which are essential for the survival of households, has created

       widespread poverty in the region.

2.   Pastoralists in Region 5 inhabit one of the most barren ecosystems in the Horn of

Africa. For centuries, pastoralists have employed effective and efficient coping

strategies that have sustained them in such an environment. Violent conflicts

often block the implementation of these adaptive strategies and reduce the

effective utilization of livelihood capitals, which in turn leads to poverty.

The Effects of Armed Conflicts in Region 5 (1960-2010)

In the last five decades, several armed conflicts have taken place in Region 5 in

the form of interstate wars and intrastate conflicts. These conflicts have played

prominent role in undermining household capitals and pushing them into poverty. As

will be seen in the next section, the military strategies adopted by successive Ethiopian

regimes (1960-2010) were also crucial in impoverishing the region. The following are

some of the effects that armed conflicts have had on the region.

The Human Cost of Conflict

Given the great number of conflicts that took place in the region, there is no

exact figure on the human costs of conflict. On the other hand, it is safe to say that

violence has persistently preyed upon the human capital of the region by killing,

disabling, assaulting, and displacing civilians. Conflict has also impeded the

development of human capital by disrupting the education, health, and food distribution

systems of the region.

Death and Physical and Psychological Injuries

In Region 5, the human casualty of armed conflicts has not been limited to combatants. Civilians have often been victims of indiscriminate killings during insurgency and counterinsurgency operations. However, civilian causality is not only the outcome of direct violence. According to Zwi & Macrae (1994), civilians are threatened not only by bombs and bullets but by the massive social and economic dislocation caused by war. The breakdown or the absence of health and social services in the region, which is partly caused by conflict, also claims many lives. Devreux (2006) states that the poor quality and limited accessibility to health services in the region is demonstrated by the high numbers of preventable deaths due to untreated illness, inadequate immunization coverage, malnutrition and hunger-related diseases, and deaths of mothers and infants during childbirth. In addition to the loss of lives, armed conflict in the region has resulted in mental and physical disablement of civilians.[25]

Mass Displacement of Civilians

One of the defining features of organized conflicts in the region is the involuntary displacement of civilians within and across borders that create internally displaced persons (IDP) and refugees. When people are uprooted from their habitual residence, they leave behind the livelihood capitals they have accumulated over time.

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[25] According to Marshall (2006), far more problematic than conflict-related deaths is the much larger numbers of survivors who are physically and psychologically affected by violence.

According to Cernea (2004), forced displacement can cause impoverishment among the displaced by bringing about landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, food insecurity, increased morbidity, and community breakdown. In addition to these, migration disrupts education, health care, and other social services.

In the last few decades, thousands of civilians in Region 5 have fled their homes in fear of violence and persecution. According to Tareke (2002), successive Ethiopian governments have forcefully and purposefully uprooted rural inhabitants to isolate insurgents (WSLF and ONLF) and deprive them of their local support. To this effect, the forceful relocation of civilians has been used as a military strategy during the decades old civil war. A case in point is the counterinsurgency strategy adopted by the Ethiopian government in 1979 in an attempt to eradicate the WSLF. One aspect of this strategy was to depopulate the conflict zone. This resulted in half a million people crossing into neighboring Somalia as refugees while hundreds of thousands were displaced internally (AWR, 1991). According to Mohamoud Abdi (2007), eighty percent of the region's population was in one way or another affected by this displacement. A similar counterinsurgency method was employed by the successor Ethiopian government in 2007. This time, the operation aimed at weakening ONLF's (breakaway rebel group from WSLF) support base and confining its area of operation. The government depopulated small villages and pastoralist settlements in conflict zones by ordering villagers and nomads to move to designated towns. Many of the villages and settlements were later burned to prevent reentry by the local inhabitant (HRW, 2008a) (See Figure 5).

Lassoole, Region 5: Satellite Image, 03/30/2005

Lassoole, Region 5: Satellite Image, 07/17/2007

Figure 5: Satellite Images of the Village of Lassoole, Region 5 Before and After Burning

Note: Ogaden War Crimes in Ethiopia (HRW, 2008b)

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence constitutes not just a byproduct of conflict but a military tactic implemented to instigate terror and punish civilians in conflict zones. According to Ogaden Human Rights Commission [OHRC] (2006), there were 1,870 reported cases of rape and child molestation in Region 5 between the years 1992-2005. The data is not reflective of the full extent of horror in the region. Most rape victims do not report such crimes to local authorities as they risk reprisal by the perpetrators and for fear of being ostracized by their own community. HRW (2008a) reported that sexual violence has become a widespread crime that is implemented by government forces with complete impunity. The rape of female detainees in military custody regularly occurs and often involves senior military officials, highlighting the systematic aspect of the trend.

Sexual violence is one of the causes of poverty in conflict zones. The physical and psychological damages incurred on the victim account for loss of human capital. According to the British Medical Journal, the effects of rape and sexual torture on survivors are economically, physically, psychologically, and culturally devastating. Survivors can be left with economic deprivation and sexually transmitted diseases (Kivlahan & Ewingman, 2010). In addition to this, sexual violence perpetuates the feminization of poverty. Devereux (2006) points out that the effects of gender-based risks and vulnerabilities in the region are already visible in higher mortality rate and lower life expectancy of females as compared to males. When sexual violence is added on top of these gender based disparities, it pushes more females into poverty.

The Killing and Confiscation of Livestock

In Region 5, where 85.5 percent of the active population is engaged in either pastoralism or agro-pastoralism, livestock forms an integral part of the livelihood system for many households (Cooperazione Internazionale [COOPI], 2003). It represents an important economic capital that can either be used as a saving or can be liquidated into cash. Livestock is also a physical capital that produces its own output, milk, for the market. No less important, livestock forms a key part of the pastoralist's cultural life and social support system which makes it a prime social capital. In the last five decades, this versatile asset of pastoralists has come under attack from successive Ethiopian regimes. This represents not just an assault on the economic or physical capital of pastoralists but also an attack on the pastoralist way of life.

Livestock forms a vital part of pastoralist livelihood and culture and its decimation or expropriation can permanently impoverish its dependents. The confiscation of livestock is not a new phenomenon in the region. Laitin & Samatar (1987) point out that between 1890 and 1897, the Ethiopian Empire under King Menilik II consented to a number of livestock raids in the region. These raids have dispossessed pastoralists more than 100,000 cattle, 200,000 camels, and 600,000 sheep and goats (P.55). According to Markakis (2004), the confiscation of livestock was one of the methods applied by the Empire to secure a modicum of control over pastoralists.

Since the beginning of the civil war in 1960, the confiscation and killing of livestock has taken a different form. It has become an important part of the

government's military strategy to plunder and punish civilians for their assumed ties with insurgents.[26] According to AWR (1991), 200,000 head of livestock was seized by the Ethiopian military in 1971 and 1972 alone. This method has continued in the twenty-first century. The Integrated Regional Information Network [IRIN] (2001) reported on the dire economic consequences of livestock confiscation in the region. The Guardian (2007) also reported on how the confiscation and destruction of livestock by government forces contributes to humanitarian crisis in the region.

Trade Blockade

One of the sectors that have been disrupted with the on-going conflicts in the region is commercial trade. In the last five decades, trade activities in the region have suffered from the destructive and depressing effects of armed conflicts. This has created a shortfall in household income (economic capital) due to loss of employment and market failures.

Livestock is a major physical capital owned by the majority of households in Region 5. It is also the major source of income in the region. Most of the livestock trade in the region takes place in the form of informal cross-border transaction between pastoralists and traders. Livestock is exported to neighboring Somalia, Kenya, and Djibouti where it is re-exported to the Middle-East. The imports of the region, which

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[26] Although the government is implicated in many of the civilian killings and physical destruction in the last five decades, rebel insurgents also played a significant role in destabilizing the region through indiscriminate killings, kidnappings, and planting landmines that destroyed human lives and infrastructures.

mostly include non-perishable food and consumer goods, are also imported unofficially

from neighboring states of Somalia and Djibouti. This form of informal cross-border

trade has been going on for centuries by using traditional trade routes that predate

present state boundaries. These customary routes have served as the lifeline of the region

by connecting it with different ports in Somalia and Djibouti (Devereux, 2006).

In the last five decades, these trade routes have been interrupted by different

forms of conflict in the region. According to Devereux (2006), the orientation of these

corridors is that certain clans control each route, and relations between clans along the

route determine the smooth flow of trade. Therefore, the import-export trade in the

region has always been susceptible to inter-clan conflicts. The other disruption to trade

is caused by the Ethiopian government which considers the cross-border trade as illegal.

Although the government has for a long time tried to regulate this trade, it has also

worked to enforce it as part of its military strategy. For instance in 2007, the government

blocked major trade routes in the region following the onset of its massive

counterinsurgency operation. According to a report by the UN (2007), this dramatically

reduced the flow of commercial goods and services including food into the region.

Similarly, the export of livestock, which is the main source of income in the region, was

significantly reduced. The results were devastating to the region. The same report

indicated that prices of food items increased by an average of 95 percent due to shortage

of supply while livestock prices fell by as much as 33 percent due to over-supply in the

market. This has placed a heavy blow to the economic capital of households through

reduced earnings and high inflation of basic commodities.

Restriction on Mobility

One of the setbacks of the long civil war in the region is the restriction on the movement of civilians. This has often been decreed by the Ethiopian government to isolate insurgent groups and cut them off from their support base (ibid). On the other hand, this strategy has undermined the economic activities of pastoralists which greatly depend on free movement. The environmental vulnerability of the region has always required pastoralists to adopt a periodic mobility pattern in search of seasonally distributed pastures and water points. Therefore, pastoralism is not just an economic activity but also an indigenous coping strategy that helps maintain the balance between pastoralists and their sparse natural environment. The limitation on mobility has greatly compromised the adaptive capacity of pastoralists to their harsh environment. This has in turn strained their productivity. It has also caused ecological damage by off-setting the balance between pastoralists and their delicate environment.

Food as a Weapon

One of the effects of armed conflict in the region is the continuous inability of its inhabitants to produce or procure sufficient food. The region has repeatedly experienced famine in the last six decades. These famines have commonly been associated with the dry weather pattern of the region. On the other hand, Kebbede (1991) argues that while the adverse impact of the natural environment can't be denied, famine susceptibility cannot be explained by dry weather alone. The reasons also lie within the socioeconomic and political factors like poverty and conflict that multiply the brute forces of nature.

The food insecurity in the region is not only the end result of violence but also a conscious instrument of warfare used by successive Ethiopian regimes. According to Macrae and Zwi (1994), the use of food as a weapon involves attacks on the food production and marketing systems, blocking the flow of commercial and relief grain to deficit areas, and the deliberate provisioning or withholding of food. The Ethiopian government has often targeted civilian food production as it is considered the major source of food supply for the local insurgents. On many occasions, the government has diverted or blocked food supplies in food shortage areas to prevent its possible outflow to insurgents. These actions have played important role in directing starvation against the people of Region 5.

According to ARW (1991), the government's military strategy was instrumental in creating the famine of 1973-75 which claimed around 55,000 lives in the region. The same strategy also played a big role during the massive 1983-85 famine. In 2007, the government deliberately blocked food supplies in major conflict zones as part of its counterinsurgency operation. This created a short-term humanitarian crisis in the region. Newsweek (2010) reported that in 2008, the government only distributed 12 percent of the available food aid while diverting the remaining amount. At the time, two million people were affected by the severe food shortage in region**.**

A Tear in the Social Fabric

According to Collier (1998), social capital is the glue that holds societies together, which is essential for economic growth and well-being. Over the years,

pastoralists in Region 5 have established traditional institutions that are crucial in

promoting cooperation and mitigating the effects of poverty. These institutions are broad

and cover areas of conflict resolution, natural resource management, restorative justice,

and transfer of resources. Orero et al (2007) argue that conflict can impact on social

capital by causing displacement, changing household composition, disrupting family

networks, breaking down relationships of trust, and closing off access to wider

institutions of society. In recent years, the pastoral society of Region 5 has witnessed an

institutional breakdown due to the effects of organized and communal conflicts (Gedi,

2006). The long-term effects of armed conflict have created a tear in the social fabric.

This has made it difficult to utilize social capital for collective benefit. The social

networks which served as a positive social capital for hundreds of years are now

disappearing.

The Macro-Level Impact of Armed Conflicts in Region 5

In the last fifty years, large scale conflicts fought in Region 5 and in other parts

of Ethiopia have caused substantial cost to the economy of the country. The destruction

of human and physical resources has reduced the level and growth of capital stock in the

country. Protracted conflicts have greatly undermined the overall capacity of the state in

the provision of public services. The persistent insecurity has halted domestic

investment and relocated capital abroad. According to Geda (2004), armed conflicts

have also distorted the composition of national spending by diverting scarce resources

away from non-military sectors like education and health care. For instance, the 1983

Ethiopian state budget allocated twenty-five percent for defense spending while it set aside four percent for healthcare and eleven percent for education. On top of its lion's share, the military had an outstanding debt of 1.1 billion dollars in 1982 (Wubeneh & Abate, 1988). This diversion of expenditure has also diminished spending on economic infrastructures, agriculture, transportation, and other public sectors.

Summary

In the last fifty years, armed conflict has played a critical role in shrinking the human, physical, economic, social, and natural capitals of households and reducing them into poverty. Although poverty is an outcome of most armed conflicts, in Region 5, it is also part of the warfare strategy used deliberately by government forces. Different regimes have employed war techniques that have intentionally impoverished households by destroying their socio-economic base and indigenous way of life. These strategies were placed as a way of diminishing the support base of insurgents. They have however created widespread poverty in the region.

7. Conclusion

Region 5 is one of the most impoverished and insecure regions of Ethiopia. For decades, the region has suffered from a multitude of armed conflicts involving state and non-state actors. Region 5 is also is one of the most impoverished states of Ethiopia with some of the lowest indicators of human development nationwide. The poverty and conflict in the region are in a continuous relationship where one is the cause and effect of the other. One of the challenges of human security in the region is found in this mutually reinforcing relationship between conflict and poverty.

The underlying source of collective violence in the region is strongly linked to the economic, political, and social deprivation faced by its inhabitants. Region 5 is one of the relatively underdeveloped and poverty stricken regions of Ethiopia on several socio-economic indicators. When poverty and inequality coincide with the social identity of a group, they result in a strong sense of grievance which can mobilize the group for violence. This is true of Region 5 where the systematic exclusion of its population has created social frustrations that transform into organized conflicts. The resulting conflict has in turn exacerbated poverty in the region through the direct and indirect loss of human, physical, economic, social, and natural capitals. This poverty-conflict cycle has been an on-going trend in the region for the last five decades.

While the subject on the two-way relationship between poverty and conflict is certainly new, it still represents a growing area of study that is expanding the joint ventures of peace and development. It is also creating an interface of knowledge and

practice between the peacebuilding and development communities. Development is now becoming an integral part of conflict resolution and conflict resolution itself is now a prime component of development programs.

Although poverty and conflict in the region have often been appreciated in their own respects, many in academic circles did not see them as two sides of the same coin. Any approach of attaining human security in the region requires working simultaneously with the two variables. The main objective of this research paper was to analyze the two-way relationship between poverty and conflict in Region 5 and contribute to the pool of knowledge that seeks to develop a comprehensive approach to sustainable peace and development. While this research paper is certainly a jump start in a new path of studying human security in the twenty-first century, its contribution remains minimal considering the complexity and depth of poverty and conflict in the region.

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