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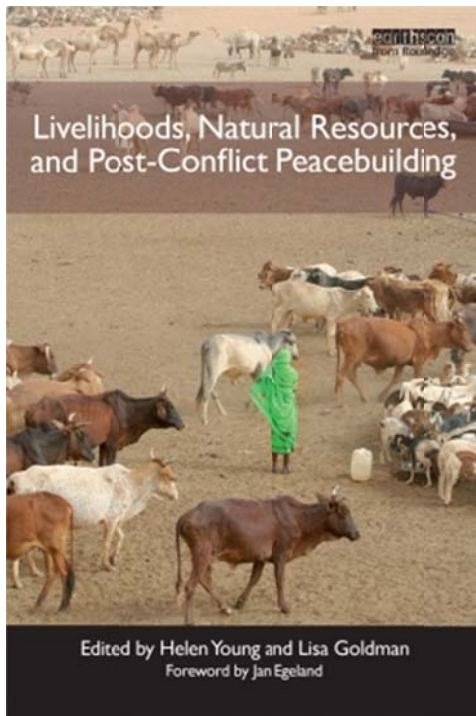
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Part 3: The Institutional and Policy Context

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PART 3

The institutional and policy context

Introduction

In the immediate aftermath of conflict, governance institutions that were affected by conflict are rebuilt, and new institutions are established to oversee recovery and develop policy frameworks that can help prevent a relapse to violence. Often, new or rehabilitated governance institutions must address the roots of conflict, including disputes over access to and use of natural resources. Because decisions regarding natural resource management affect livelihoods and economic opportunities for conflict-affected communities, such decisions are central to recovery and the achievement of lasting peace. Thus, policies developed in the post-conflict period must establish an effective framework for resource management and address existing disputes over natural resources, while helping to ensure equitable rights of access to and use of such resources.

The immediate aftermath of conflict provides a crucial opportunity to reform the laws and institutions governing natural resources. The five chapters in part 3 demonstrate how the development and reform of institutions and policies governing natural resources can promote rural livelihoods and strengthen local economies; they also demonstrate the ways in which ineffective institutions and policies can undermine stability, perpetuate unsustainable exploitation of natural resources, and, in some circumstances, contribute to future conflict.

In the immediate post-conflict period, policies that promote sustainable resource management—particularly when those policies are influenced by an occupying force—are often viewed as incompatible with the need to rebuild economic capacity and livelihoods. In “Fisheries Policies and the Problem of Instituting Sustainable Management: The Case of Occupied Japan,” Harry N. Scheiber and Benjamin Jones examine programs implemented after World War II that were designed to reestablish Japan’s commercial fishing sector.

The Allies believed that strengthening the fisheries sector would provide jobs, generate income, and ensure food security for conflicted-affected populations, but efforts to reform the relevant institutions and policies (in particular, to make the fisheries sector more sustainable) proved difficult to implement in the face of strong production pressure. The chapter highlights the critical importance of integrating sustainable resource management into the policies and institutions governing livelihood-related natural resources. Indeed, sustainable management must be identified and promoted as a policy norm during the initial stages of institutional redevelopment. The failure of the Japanese government and occupying forces to do so in post-war Japan substantially undermined new policies designed to achieve sustainability within the commercial fishing industry.

More recent conflicts, including those in Iraq and Afghanistan, also illustrate the difficulty of rebuilding institutions and policy frameworks in the aftermath of violent conflict—as well as the importance of incorporating sustainable resource management into the redevelopment framework during the initial peacebuilding

phase. In “Developing Capacity for Natural Resource Management in Afghanistan: Process, Challenges, and Lessons Learned by UNEP,” Belinda Bowling and Asif Zaidi review initiatives implemented in Afghanistan to strengthen environmental governance, which had been devastated by decades of violent conflict. In 2003, following the initial entry of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and allied forces into Afghanistan, the newly formed Afghan government requested the assistance of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to reform natural resource policies and practices. Using its *Natural Resources for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding: A Toolkit for Analysis and Programming*, UNEP encouraged a community-based approach to natural resource management and assisted Afghan officials in adopting strategies to resolve disputes over natural resource access. Bowling and Zaidi emphasize that to guarantee the effective implementation of such an environmental framework, environmental policies must be robustly enforced, and overlapping institutional mandates must be clarified.

In their efforts to build and reform institutions and policies governing natural resources, peacebuilding actors must consider approaches that strengthen community resilience to future environmental and social stresses. In “Building Resilience in Rural Livelihood Systems as an Investment in Conflict Prevention,” Blake D. Ratner explains how initiatives designed to restore the capacity of resource production systems can be integrated into post-conflict recovery plans, as a means of preventing conflict recurrence. Using Cambodia as an example, Ratner demonstrates the importance of capacity building and effective natural resource management in supporting rural livelihoods and bolstering local economies. To assess the success of recovery programs in post-conflict situations, the author proposes evaluating the extent to which programs address rights of access to natural resources, access to decision-making institutions, and the capacity of governing systems to ensure fair results in the resolution of disputes.

In post-conflict situations where local populations rely heavily on natural resources to provide both basic necessities and livelihood opportunities, recovery programs that rebuild and strengthen local resource management systems can provide entry points for conflict resolution and peacebuilding on a much larger scale. In Mindanao, Philippines, a significant portion of the population relies on agriculture and fisheries for livelihoods and food security; as a result, conflicts on the island have generally revolved around access to land and its accompanying resources.

In “Improving Natural Resource Governance and Building Peace and Stability in Mindanao, Philippines,” Cynthia Brady, Oliver Agoncillo, Maria Zita Butardo-Toribio, Buenaventura Dolom, and Casimiro V. Olvida analyze post-conflict efforts to strengthen resource management institutions and policies in Mindanao, following the 1996 peace accord. To promote peacebuilding, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and its partners have assisted conflict-affected communities to build institutional capacity and improve natural resource management. The authors underscore the benefits of linking environmental governance objectives with broader peacebuilding goals, and identify

lessons that may inform the development and implementation of integrated recovery plans in other post-conflict situations. These include bringing peace advocates and excombatants into the resource management process and integrating peacebuilding and conflict-mitigation indicators into resource management frameworks.

In the absence of effective institutions and policies to manage natural resources, products derived from natural resources can be used to finance ongoing conflict. In Somalia, long periods of violent conflict have disrupted traditional livelihood systems and diminished economic opportunities. As a result, even those who are not actively engaged as armed combatants may derive their livelihoods from the conflict economy—and may therefore have a vested interest in propagating the conflict. In “Commerce in the Chaos: Bananas, Charcoal, Fisheries, and Conflict in Somalia,” Christian Webersik and Alec Crawford explore how livelihood resources in Somalia—in particular, banana cultivation, charcoal production, and the fishing industry—have supported the country’s conflict economy and provided an important source of funding for continuing conflict. At the same time, the authors suggest that the sustainable production and use of these natural resources offers a potential source of nonconflict income, as well as a valuable asset for funding post-conflict recovery. To prevent natural resources from becoming a means of financing conflict, the authors argue that the international community should adopt trade policies that increase transparency in the trade of conflict resources. Most important, peacebuilding should emphasize the creation of alternative livelihood opportunities.

Taken together, the chapters in part 3 examine effective strategies for encouraging economic growth and livelihood creation through institution building, capacity building, and policy development. Transitioning away from a conflict economy often requires considerable policy reform and broad institutional change; it is thus essential to incorporate sustainable natural resource management policies and regulatory authority into broader governance structures. The failure to articulate sustainable approaches and policies during initial recovery may reduce the effectiveness of reform measures to come.

