



Security: The missing bottom of the Millennium Development Goals?

Prospects for inclusion in the post-MDG development framework

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The negotiation of the post-Millennium Development Goal (MDG) framework offers the opportunity to develop targets that reflect a more nuanced understanding of the challenge of development. A number of areas are being considered for inclusion in the post-2015 framework, on the basis of their causal or correlated relationship with development. One area in which significant work has been undertaken since the MDGs were agreed in 2000 has been in relation to the role that insecurity or violence plays in constraining development and, concomitantly, the enabling role that peace and stability play in promoting it. This paper examines the arguments and proposals for including a security-related target in the post-MDG framework. First, the basis for the proposals will be examined, setting out how security and development are correlated. Second, the proposals within the policy literature on how security could be included in the post-2015 framework will be set out, highlighting at least five schools of thought on how this might be done. Third, some of the key constituencies either pushing for or likely to support a security-related target are examined, before finally addressing some of the challenges around developing such a goal, with its attendant targets and indicators. While there appears to be a growing community of support for the inclusion of security as part of the new development framework, the manner in which this is to be done remains varied and inconsistent across this community. As a result, it is as yet unclear whether security is a credible potential goal for inclusion in the new framework.

Definitions

A number of different terms are used when discussing security-related issues that have important implications for the scope of what is and is not included. Most frequently, conflict is used to describe the kind of insecurity that holds back development. This was more accurate throughout the 1990s when civil wars (in which combatants fought for control of territory or the state apparatus) were the primary form of insecurity in many low income countries. However, more recently, other forms of insecurity have also emerged or been increasingly recognised, such as criminal and domestic violence, while the boundaries between various types of violence are seen to be increased overlapping (Krause et al 2011).

As a result, speaking about 'conflict' no longer fully reflects the multitude of insecurities facing countries. Others have referred to 'fragility,' hinting at challenges unique to states with low capacity and extant challenges to their administrative and/or territorial control. However, the lack of consensus around what the term fragility means, as well as its limited applicability to a sub-set of low income countries, makes it difficult to take forward as a clear reference for insecurity. More useful, perhaps, is the term 'armed violence' to denote insecurity. This term refers to a broader category of insecurity ranging from conflict to crime, recognizing that 'simple distinctions between different types of armed violence may have meaning in rhetoric, but they are becoming practically and analytically irrelevant. Therefore, the concept of armed violence adopts a collective meaning and takes into account multiple forms of physical force between individuals' (Gilgen et al 2010: 7). At the same time, armed violence does not become so broad as to render the concept of insecurity meaningless, as might be the case were a human security definition adopted. While human security is a helpful bridge between development and security debates, understanding insecurity through this lens here would lead to a number of the current MDG targets (such as health and education) falling within the remit. Human security is sufficiently broad that it blurs into human development. Instead, armed violence allows us to consider the pertinence and challenges of including a security-related target in the post-2015 framework, without becoming so broad as to become indistinguishable from other MDG targets. This interpretation of insecurity allows the inclusion of some of the most prevalent threats that people face in many parts of the world but also draws a line at the point that these threats come under the remit of other targets.

The security-development relationship

The relationship between security and development was, in relation the MDGs debate, at first somewhat anecdotal, with the recognition that fragile states were the most off-track to achieving the MDGs (World Bank 2008: 22). Indeed, the Millennium Project noted in 2005 that: 'of the 34 poor countries farthest from reaching the Goals, 22 are in or emerging from conflict' (2005: 183). These seeming correlations between insecurity and a lack of progress towards the MDGs thus tapped into ongoing research on quantitative measures of how insecurity (primarily understood as 'conflict') limited opportunities for development. As Gilgen et al note:

The international community has become increasingly aware of the causes and negative consequences of armed violence. Mounting evidence of this has come to light through the work of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Bank, the World Health Organisations (WHO, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development (GD) and a host of regional and local initiatives (2010: 5).

The Millennium Project claims that the 'statistical relationships between poverty and violent conflict are very strong' and that a 'country with a civil war within its borders typically has only one-third the per capita income of a country with similar characteristics but at peace' (2005: 42). Similarly, Paul Collier explains that the risk of a country in the 'bottom billion' falling into civil war is one in six (the same level of risk involved in playing Russian roulette) (Collier 2008: 32). These correlations go beyond just conflict-related violence as well, with one report suggesting that if homicide rates in the Caribbean were reduced by one third, the region's per capita economic growth could double (World Bank and UNODC 2007). Most recently, the Global Burden of Armed Violence report from the Geneva Declaration found that: 'Lethal violence is strongly associated with negative development outcomes in various ways and is accompanied by low levels of overall achievement of the Millennium Development Goals' (Krause et al 2011: 2).

Other estimates focused on the costs of conflict – with the Geneva Declaration estimating the opportunity costs of conflict in Africa between 1990 and 2005 at USD \$300 billion, representing approximately 15 per cent of Africa's GDP and roughly the same amount of international aid granted to the continent during the same period (2008: 14). Yet while this suggests that insecurity and underdevelopment are frequently coexistent, it does not necessarily suggest a causal connection (Denney 2011). For instance, does conflict cause poverty or does poverty make societies more susceptible to conflict (Millennium Project 2005: 42)? It is suggested that the answer is both – and this cyclical nature is the basis of 'poverty and conflict traps' (Collier 2008; World Bank 2011; Humphreys and Varshney 2004: 12). This argument seemingly gets around the difficulty of deciding what causes what, but it does not assist in proving *causality* in either direction – it merely highlights that *correlation* is apparent in both directions, with the cyclical relationship making it difficult to identify entry points to the process.

Nevertheless, the ample statistics demonstrating that insecure countries are often also poor countries (and vice versa) led to calls for the need to address violence and conflict in order to achieve the MDGs. The 2005 UNDP Human Development Report stated that 'violent conflict is one of the surest and fastest routes to the bottom of the HDI table – and one of the strongest indicators for a protracted stay there (UNDP2005). The United Nations Secretary General echoed this claiming that 'we will not enjoy development without security [and] we will not enjoy security without development ... Unless these causes are advanced, none will succeed' (UNSG 2005). Many organisations and commentators began pointing to the need to address insecurity in order to ensure progress towards the MDGs (UNODC 2008; Geneva Declaration 2008: 13-14; Wordofa 2010: 94; Leckie 2009:15; Hoff 2009: 160; Asiedu 2008:20). At a Wilton Park conference on Conflict Prevention and Development Cooperation in Africa in 2007, the conference report noted that 'donor countries have identified conflicts and "state fragility" as critical obstacles to the achievement of the

Millennium Development Goals' (Fukuda-Parr and Picciotto 2007: 21). Research commissioned as a result of the Wilton Park conference found that 'the MDGs could benefit from being assessed in a framework that takes armed violence strongly into account' (Turner et al 2005: 8). In further recognition of the need to address the challenge of insecurity in order to achieve the MDGs, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) encouraged the MDG Review Summit to 'call for MDG accelerators and an accelerator support strategy that focuses on achieving the MDGs in fragile and conflict-affected countries and regions by 2015' (OECD INCAF 2010: 4). Most recently, the World Bank 2011 World Development Report also highlighted security as an important pre-requisite to development, stating that:

insecurity not only remains, it has become a primary development challenge of our time. One-and-a-half billion people live in areas affected by fragility, conflict, or large-scale, organized criminal violence, and no low-income fragile or conflict-affected country has yet to achieve a single United Nations Millennium Development Goal (World Bank 2011: 1).

Indeed, the relationship between security and development became such a mainstay of development policy that a 'nexus' was claimed to exist between the two (for critique of this, see Duffield 2001). The security-development nexus, and the literature that had built up in support of it, led to programming changes, such as the use of security sector reform as a 'security-first' approach in the UK, in which security was explicitly prioritized on the basis that it was an essential precondition for development (Denney 2011). It also led to an increased focus on 'fragile states,' in which state capacity was severely limited by (among other challenges) poor security conditions (Cammack et al 2006). Statebuilding interventions were thus instigated in such contexts to both improve basic security and, connectedly, ensure sufficient state capacity to support this.

Yet while questions about the precise relationship between security and development remain (Denney 2011; Diprose 2008), there is certainly at least anecdotal evidence demonstrating how insecurity undermines the achievement of certain MDGs (Nyuydine 200). For instance, Anatole Ayissi highlights how, in Liberia:

violence against women ... has an adverse impact on the MDGs in at least two ways: first it affects MDG 3 ("promote gender equality and empower women") and efforts to combat violence against women; second, it has a direct impact on food security, which is one of the targets of MDG 1 and a major problem in Liberia today. Women are the backbone of agriculture in Liberia: they account for more than half of the agricultural labour force and for more than 60% of the country's agricultural production. The spread of assault and rape in rural areas, which is where farming takes place, forces women to flee to the relative safety of urban centres. Two direct consequences of such terrorization are a slump in agricultural production and increasing poverty among women (Ayissi 2008: 23).

Similarly, Dereje Wordofa explains how violence impedes progress towards MDG 2 on achieving universal primary education:

Violent conflict destroys education infrastructure, reduces spending on schools and teachers, and prevents children from attending classes. Schools are often targets for groups hostile to government because of their association with state authority. During the Mozambique civil war (1976-1992), almost half of primary schools had been closed or destroyed by 1989. Because of insecurity and instability, parents are reluctant to send their children to schools when there are security risks. Therefore, it becomes obvious that security and stability are fundamental to ... achieving the MDGs (Wordofa 2010: 101).

On this basis then, it is clear that armed violence is *at least* an impediment to achieving the MDGs and *may* be an impediment to achieving broader development (although the latter has proved difficult to causally demonstrate) (Gilgen et al 2010: 4). Perhaps more importantly, there is also evidence that insecurity is a priority of the poor themselves. The World Bank's Voice of the Poor

study (2000) drew upon responses from 60,000 people across 60 countries and revealed that security was consistently pointed to as a priority for exiting from poverty. This alone should trigger conversations at the international level about how security-related targets might be built into the post-MDG development framework.

Finally, the Millennium Declaration itself makes reference to the correlated relationship between security and development, emphasising the critical role of peace, security and disarmament for human well-being and poverty eradication (Millennium Project 2005: 183). In it, signatory states pledge to 'spare no effort to free our peoples from the scourge of war, whether within or between States' (Millennium Declaration 2000). However the manner in which the MDGs developed meant that the themes of peace and security were not translated into goals themselves. Yet their inclusion within the Millennium Declaration has prompted many to see a focus on security as a natural progression from the already recognized relationship between security and the MDGs. On the basis of this relationship, proposals for including security-related themes into the post-MDG framework have emerged.

Proposals to include security in the post-MDG framework

While a number of organisations and states are pushing for the relationship between security and development to be integrated into the post-2015 development framework, there is no clear consensus on how best to do this. Indeed, while many vaunt the virtues of taking security into account, it is not always clear how they intend for this to be done. From the policy literature, however, at least five proposals are apparent that each includes 'security' in a different way. These proposals are set out below. This list is by no means exhaustive – it is clear that there are many processes underway in which security-related themes are advocated as part of the post-MDGs process. Yet the five set out below represent the clearest attempts to influence the post-2015 agenda to date.

1. Post-MDGs to be conflict-sensitive

This is the minimalist option of the three proposals to incorporate a security component into the post-2015 development framework. It does not (in most of its articulations) require any specific goal on armed violence. Rather, it would involve the integration of a kind of 'do no harm' principle into the new framework, ensuring that when development partners and recipient governments implement policies for the attainment of MDG-like targets they take into account how this might impact conflict triggers within the country or region. This proposal emerges from the fact that 'the design of poverty reduction strategies has rarely addressed ... risk factors or ... the systemic social dysfunctions that underlie conflict proneness' (Fukuda-Parr and Picciotto 2007: 10). Moreover, conflict insensitivity in aid practices has been recognized as a key factor in exacerbating conflict in the past (Humphreys and Varshney 2004: 1; Fukuda-Parr and Picciotto 2007: 12). Making the post-2015 framework conflict-sensitive would not reorient the focus of the existing MDGs but would ensure that programming in these areas was aware of its unintended impacts. This approach has been advocated by the United Nations Secretary General, who suggested that, in this approach:

programming is more indirect and ... is sensitive to the specific risks, resilience factors, and outcomes of armed violence, particularly among high-risk groups. The primary objectives of indirect interventions are conventional development objectives, such as reducing poverty, improving education outcomes, or improving governance, but when made sensitive to the consideration of armed violence prevention, these interventions can take advantage of opportunities to reduce risks and enhance resilience (UNSG 2009: 15).

It is hard to argue with this approach, given that it pushes for little change other than making current interventions more attune to context, politics and conflict. In this sense, the proposal is about increasing the impact of current MDG strategies, rather than developing a new area of programming

or development goal in relation to armed-violence. Most proposals in this category simply push for current interventions to achieve the MDGs to incorporate conflict analysis and to 'be harmonised with other security imperatives' (Fukuda-Parr and Picciotto 2007: 10). This means that conflict-sensitivity approaches are more about interventions to achieve the goals, rather than about the goals themselves. Other than building incentives into the post-2015 framework for countries to ensure that strategies to achieve the new goals are conflict-sensitive, it seems that this approach is more about how countries implement the new framework once it's been agreed, rather than about the development of the new framework itself.

Humphreys and Varshney (2004: 34) explain how such a conflict-sensitive approach to the MDGs could be operationalized:

Even if not aimed directly at conflict prevention or resolution, project managers need to be trained to be aware of the implications of their projects on fighting factions, politicised communities and the dynamics of conflicts in their areas and to report these effects as part of standard reporting on project implementation. For this, development agencies need to increase the numbers of their personnel with direct knowledge and experience of conflict zones. Recently conflict analysis and assessment tools for development project managers have been developed for exactly these purposes. A reasonable expectation is that all development projects receiving international funding but operating in conflict zones should be required to file regular **peace and conflict impact assessments**.

Some see the conflict-sensitive approach as requiring more rigorous application, involving 'behavioural indicators that reveal whether the implementation of the MDG strategies is contributing to violent conflict' (Humphreys and Varshney 2004: 25). If this more rigorous approach were adopted, it would still not require new areas of programming, so much as additional skills to support existing areas of programming.

It is unlikely that much additional work would be needed for incorporating conflict-sensitivity into the post-2015 framework. Few would be likely to oppose the incorporation of conflict-sensitivity into interventions to achieve the goals, given the already widespread acceptance of this principle. The focus on 'conflict' rather than violence more broadly, however, does potentially limit the scope of this approach in building a security focus into the post-2015 framework. Moreover, while existing interventions would undoubtedly benefit from paying greater attention to conflict triggers, a conflict-sensitive approach would not engage with security-related issues through direct programming. Thus, while it is less controversial it is likely also less effectual in ensuring that insecurity is taken comprehensively into account in the post-MDG framework.

2. Post-MDGs to be framed as human security goals

A more expansive option proposed by some is that the new development framework should be framed through the lens of human security. In such proposals, human security is understood as freedom from fear and freedom from want, as set out in the 1993 UNDP Human Development Report. Critically, this understanding of security broadened the notion of threats from military threats emanating from one state against another, to an individual or human-centred understanding of security, with threats emerging from a diverse list of factors, such as environmental degradation, migration flows, infectious disease, poverty, lack of basic services (such as water, healthcare and education), as well as the more conventional threats of violence (UNDP 1994). A group of researchers at the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) have argued that human security offers an appropriate theoretical framework for the post-MDGs to be developed (Köhler et al 2011). Such a framework is necessary, they argue, because 'one of the reasons the MDGs are advancing slowly is precisely because an open and visionary discussion of specific policy paths has been lacking' (Köhler et al 2011: 4). They argue that human security will assist in overcoming such shortcomings by giving the post-2015 development framework 'a clear conceptual basis, making it more explicitly policy-oriented and taking a bolder, more openly progressive policy stance' (Köhler et al 2011: 2). Because

human security takes a broad understanding of the multitude of needs and wants necessary for 'securitability,' it provides a joined-up and policy-relevant framework through which action can be prompted (Köhler et al 2011: 10-11).

Others have noted that a human security approach also allows room for the diversity of threats facing communities in different contexts. Ademola Abass notes that:

Different parts of the world experience different forms of threats to their security. In most Western societies, for example, issues such as financial market fluctuations, developing global patent right systems, or a sudden decline in share value constitute serious threats to human security ... By threats to human security in Africa we are concerned with such dehumanizing conditions as violent conflicts, the pandemic HIV/AIDS, proliferation of arms and small weapons, endless streams of refugees and internally displaced peoples, forced labour, exponential violence against women, the "curse" of natural resources, environmental degradation, abject poverty, corruption, the lack of basic health care, terrorism, and the rape of constitutionalism and the rule of law (Abass 2010: 10).

While it is commendable that human security provides such an adaptable understanding of threats, this also makes it a more amorphous concept, which could be problematic if it is to provide the conceptual basis for the new development framework. Given the breadth human security, it is perhaps unsurprising that some states and commentators suggest that the MDGs themselves are the ultimate articulation of human security goals (Akram-Lodhi 2009: 74). Indeed UN Secretary General Kofi Annan referenced human security in the 2000 UN Millennium Report:

Human security can no longer be understood in purely military terms. Rather, it must encompass economic development, social justice, environmental protection, democratization, disarmament and respect for human rights and the rule of law (cited in Leckie 2009: 17).

This similarity with the current MDGs is precisely one of the proposal's downfall. The current formulation of the MDGs *is* a human security approach, even if it is not always expressly cast in this light. Other than making this explicit, it is not clear that a human security framing would alter much within the current MDGs, let alone address some of the gaps that the MDGs are accused of having. As a result, it is unclear what the added value would be of a human security framing. Köhler et al (2011) argue that making the human security focus of the MDGs more explicit will increase the policy-relevance of the MDGs. While it is true that the MDGs might have lacked, to date, a clear and coherent framework for policy uptake, it is not altogether certain that human security is an appropriate framing to do so post-2015. Human security is quite an old policy moment, which had its heyday in the early-1990s. Countries such as Canada, Japan and Norway led on efforts to promote it as the new security framework of the post-Cold War world, but even this support base has weakened with Canada's conservative government no longer adhering to or promoting a human security approach.

This proposal, similar to the conflict sensitivity proposal above, seems unlikely to spur new action. The MDGs are already an encapsulation of the human security agenda and although they may not be specifically framed this way, the Millennium Declaration certainly is. Furthermore, it is questionable to what extent the framing of the new goals will influence their implementation. If the intention is to build a real focus into the post-2015 framework on insecurity and armed violence, a much stronger proposal is likely needed. That being said, some have suggested that the new development goals could do with a clearer theoretical framework, to avoid being simply a laundry list of various constituencies' pet interests. If this is the case, it is unclear whether human security, as a grounding concept, has enough political weight to become the overarching framework. It would certainly have to compete with other more established or fashionable theoretical frameworks – such as human development or sustainable development. Key constituencies that might push for the human security framework are set out later in this paper.

3. Post-MDGs to include a target on armed violence reduction

The most expansive proposal for incorporating security into the post-2015 development framework to date is to include a target on armed violence reduction. There are two main proposals that fall into this category, the first of which involves a number of stakeholders and processes that have, together, pushed the armed violence agenda. This proposal began with the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development in 2006 and has subsequently been supported by ongoing diplomatic efforts by the Geneva Declaration, the UN Secretary General, the OECD INCAF and the Oslo Conference on Armed Violence. A second proposal for the 'Bellagio Goals' comes from the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

Armed violence is broadly defined in the proposals to include conflict-related violence, inter-communal and collective violence, criminal or economically motivated violence, as well as sexual and gender-based violence and interpersonal violence that results in loss, injury, death and or/psychological harm (Geneva Declaration 2008: 9; UNSG 2009: 5). The breadth of this definition takes into account that insecurity can manifest differently in different contexts. For instance, in Liberia rape is now the most prevalent crime in the country (Ayissi 2008: 22) and armed violence is able to take this important form of insecurity into account. Of course, it is important that the line is drawn somewhere, as part of the benefit of the armed violence proposals is that they have a specificity that the proposals on human security and conflict-sensitivity, for instance, do not. This quality of the armed violence proposals ensures that the category is not so broad that it becomes a catch all and potentially an amorphous as a policy tool. Understanding insecurity as being from violence – but a broad understanding of what violence can entail – strikes a balance between being specific enough to be translated into policy, yet broad enough to capture the many forms that insecurity can take.

Both sets of armed violence proposals emerge from the recognition that armed violence is not only a problem in and of itself (claiming over 740,000 lives each year), but is also the cause of numerous knock-on problems (UNSG 2009). For every person killed as a result of armed violence, many others are made increasingly insecure by the socio-economic impacts on households and communities (Gilgen et al 2010: 5). As the UN Secretary General notes:

Armed violence also has wider negative economic effects throughout society. It destroys lives and prosperity, undermines the potential for local and foreign investment, and contributes to the loss of vital skills for societies when human capital migrates away. It contributes to excessive and unproductive expenditures on policing and security services (UNSG 2009: 8).

Armed violence can also cause displacement and destruction of infrastructure, making people less able or willing to invest in their future. Further, as communities lose confidence in the state security services mandated to protect them and their property, people are also more likely to resort to informal security measures, including self defence groups, local gangs and vigilantism (Geneva Declaration 2008: 15). This can further erode peaceful societies and heighten internal divisions within a country. Addressing armed violence thus not only aims to reduce the number of people killed or wounded as a direct result, but also aims to alleviate a broader set of societal problems and ensure that government spending is directed appropriately towards social and productive sectors that can contribute to citizen wellbeing. In this sense, addressing armed violence can be seen as potentially 'catalytic,' offering the possibility of alleviating a multitude of development hurdles through one focus area. This impact, if successfully demonstrated, could make the inclusion of an armed violence reduction target appealing to those formulating the new development framework.

The Geneva Declaration

The primary proposal for an armed violence target can be found in the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, signed in 2006 and now endorsed by over 100 members. The Geneva Declaration (GD) commits to ‘achieve, by 2015, measurable reductions in the global burden of armed violence and tangible improvements in human security worldwide’ (Geneva Declaration 2008: 30). Importantly, at least initially it was not intended for the GD proposed goals, targets and indicators to be included as part of the MDG process. Rather, the aim was to develop a tandem process which would be complementary to the MDGs (Gilgen et al 2010: 4). This was partly due to the fact that the MDG process was seen as ‘far too advanced for these kinds of armed violence measurements to be usefully or practically integrated into the MDG monitoring and assessments’ (Gilgen et al 2010: 2). However, given the opening up of the post-MDG agenda in 2015, it seems that the GD is emerging (with the support of other voices such as the OECD INCAF, the Bellagio Goals (see below) and the UN Secretary General) as a potential stakeholder in this process. Indeed, INCAF worked alongside the GD to develop guidance on armed violence reduction and recommended that ‘the MDG Review Summit ... call for MDG accelerators and an accelerator support strategy that focus on achieving the MDGs in fragile and conflict-affected countries and regions’ in part through addressing armed violence (INCAF 2010: 4). The GD’s efforts led to a UNGA resolution on ‘Promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed violence,’ passed in 2008. This resolution stressed ‘the need for a coherent and integrated approach to the prevention of armed violence, with a view to achieving sustainable peace and development’ and requested the Secretary General to ‘seek the views of Member States on the interrelation between armed violence and development; (UNGA 2008). In order to operationalize the Declaration goals, the GD identified the need to develop indicators, goals and targets for measuring progress in reducing armed violence and integrating armed violence reduction programmes into development work more broadly (Geneva Declaration 2008: 33). A proposal developed in 2010 is set out in Figure 2, later in this paper.

UN Secretary General

Following on from the request made in the 2008 UNGA resolution, in 2009, the UN Secretary General’s report on ‘Promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed violence,’ highlighted perhaps the clearest indication to date that armed violence was firmly on the post-MDG agenda. In it, the Secretary General drew reference to the Millennium Declaration, which included a chapter on ‘peace and security’ that was never operationalised into the MDGs. Upon requesting member states’ views on the relationship between armed violence and development, several submissions ‘drew attention to the negative impact of armed violence on the prospects of achieving the Millennium Development Goals ... which reinforces the need to bring the issue of armed violence into the Millennium Development Goal review process’ (UNSG 2009: 13). As a result, the UNSG report proposed that:

The Millennium Development Goal Review Process, starting in 2010, provides an opportunity to consider the reduction of armed violence as an important requisite to meeting the Millennium Development Goals, in particular through the development and endorsement of a set of goals, targets and indicators to achieve measurable reductions in armed violence and tangible improvements in human security. Developing measurable goals of armed violence towards 2015 will offer the opportunity to integrate security-related themes into the possible follow-up of the Millennium Development Goals. (UNSG 2009: 19).

The Oslo Conference

Building on the Geneva Declaration and the UN Secretary General’s report, the Oslo Conference on Armed Violence sought to influence the General Assembly High Level Plenary Meeting on the MDGs in New York in September 2010. The aim was to:

generate international momentum to ensure that commitments to armed violence reduction and prevention are included in the High Level Plenary Meeting on the MDGs, and reflected in subsequent MDG and developmental strategies through to 2015 (Oslo Conference 2010).

A background paper for the Conference set out three goals:

1. To reduce the number of people physically harmed by armed violence
2. To reduce the number of people and groups affected by armed violence
3. To strengthen institutional responses to prevent and reduce armed violence

Eight indicators were also proposed as a basis for discussion to monitor progress towards achieving these goals.

The Conference was organised by the Norwegian government and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and resulted in the following commitments for the more than 60 endorsing states:

- Support, where appropriate, the inclusion of armed violence reduction and prevention in the Outcome Document of the High Level Plenary Meeting on the MDGs and in subsequent MDG achievement strategies through to 2015;
- Measure and monitor the incidence and impact of armed violence at national and sub-national levels in a transparent way, and develop a set of targets and indicators to assess progress in efforts to achieve measurable reductions in armed violence;
- Enhance the potential of development to reduce and prevent armed violence by integrating armed violence prevention and reduction strategies into international, regional, national and sub-national development plans, programmes and assistance strategies.

It is not clear how successfully the Conference was able to influence the UNGA High Level Plenary Meeting.

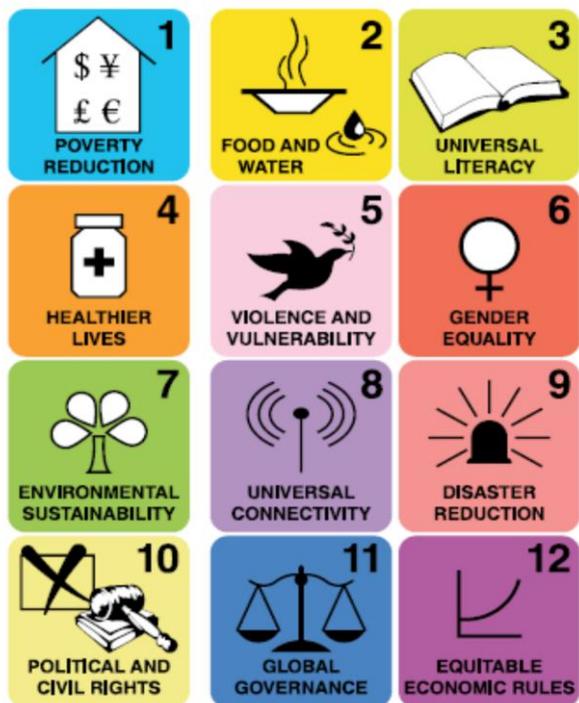
OECD International Network on Conflict and Fragility

From 2009, the OECD INCAF has become increasingly involved in research related to armed violence, building on the work done through the Geneva Declaration and Oslo Conference. The INCAF website states that their work 'helps the international community understand the causes and dynamics of armed violence and provides expertise and recommendations to help reduce the incidence of armed conflict' (OECD 2012). While their work on armed violence has been more research, rather than advocacy, focused, INCAF is a clear supporter of the need to incorporate the armed violence challenges faced, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected settings, into development frameworks.

The Bellagio Goals

A group of international experts assembled by the Center for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has developed a proposal for 12 post-2015 goals (see diagram 1), including on 'violence and vulnerability'. This goal is presented in a number of different ways within various conference reports. The security-related goal is variously referred to as: 'security for ensuring freedom from violence'; 'improve human security'; 'reduce violence: protecting citizens ... from violence and the threat of violence'; and 'violence and vulnerability' (CIGI 2011: 10; 11; 17; 20). Despite the variation in terminology, the proposed target focuses on freedom from violence and the fear of violence, recognizing the importance of this for the right of poor people to live in dignity (CIGI 2011: 12; 17). In terms of developing indicators for a target, the conference report lists the datasets held by Minority Rights International, the Global Peace Index and the Mo Ibrahim Index (among others) as potential sources of useful data (CIGI 2011: 12; 17). The Group plans to continue the promotion of its 12

Diagram 1:
Bellagio Group Proposal for the Post-2015 Goals
 Post-2015 Goals



CIGI (2011: 20)

proposed goals within the UN Secretary General’s High Level Panel on Global Sustainability; ECOSOC’s Committee on Development Policy; the G20 Development Working Group; and the International Federation of the Red Cross’ General Assembly, as well as through governments and regional consultations. In April 2012, the group met with the OECD to further discuss their proposed targets. While the ‘security for ensuring freedom of violence’ goal remains, a recent conference report notes that the scope and definition of this goal ‘will prove difficult’ (Carin and Bates-Earner 2012: 14).

4. UN System Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda

Also promoting an explicit security-related goal are coalitions of UN agencies, most visibly the UN System Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda (‘the Task Team’), but this takes a much broader approach that the armed violence reduction

proposals set out above. In September 2011, the UN Secretary General appointed the Task Team, made up of over 50 senior experts appointed by the Principals of UN system entities and other international organisations. The Task Team was requested to define the vision for the post-2015 UN development agenda. In its report in May 2012, the Task Team included a proposal for peace and security to be included in the post-MDG framework. Their report recommends that:

An agenda format based on concrete end goals and targets, one of the key strengths of the MDG framework should be retained, but reorganized along four key dimensions of a more holistic approach: (1) inclusive social development; (2) inclusive economic development; (3) environmental sustainability; and (4) peace and security. This focused approach is consistent with the principles of the Millennium Declaration which set out a vision of freedom from want and fear for present and future generations and builds on the three pillars of sustainable development (UN System Task Team 2012: i).

Cutting across the four proposed dimensions are three fundamental principles: human rights, equality and sustainability. The report goes on to note that one of the failings of the MDGs has been the exclusion of peace and security issues (among others, including, relatedly, the rule of law and governance) (UN System Task Team 2012: 7). It recognises that one fifth of the world’s population lives in countries affected by violence, political conflict, insecurity or societal fragility, and that this insecurity constitutes an obstacle to development (UN System Task Team 2012: 17-18). Its proposal to address this in the post-2015 framework links security (that is, a reduction of violence) with issues of equality, justice, employment, natural resource management, political inclusion and transparency in a ‘multidimensional approach where development, human rights, peace, security and the rule of law are interrelated dimensions of well-being’ (UN System Task Team 2012: 18). The peace and security dimension should strengthen cultures of peace and tolerance and build state capacities, especially in fragile states (UN System Task Team 2012: 32).

This proposal is mirrored in a related Task Team report, compiled by the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), which called for a ‘comprehensive approach’ to fundamental values such as peace, security, development, human rights, democracy and good governance (PBSO 2012: 3). While clearly advocating for a multidimensional approach to security that recognises its interrelatedness with other dimensions of human wellbeing, the concrete proposals made are not entirely clear. In one place the report suggests that a specific target on violence (potentially measured through armed violence reduction indicators on intentional homicide and battle deaths) should be included (PBSO 2012: 3; 9). In another it states that development, human rights, peace and security ‘should be viewed as interrelated dimensions of one goal whether called development, well-being or human security’ (PBSO 2012: 7). And in a third, it suggests that the post-2015 agenda could be framed along three broad goals, one of which would be peace and security, which would include within it targets on personal security, democracy, political participation or inclusive politics (PSBO 2012: 8).

While firm proposals are clearly still being developed, the Task Team reports can be seen as an attempt to bundle together a number of related concepts – including security, governance, human rights and the rule of law. While this may seem desirable given both the real and presumed connections between these, and other, related goods, it may also risk politicising a security-related goal and thus lessen the likelihood of its inclusion in the post-2015 framework. Connecting a reduction of armed violence to things like human rights and governance, as the Task Team reports do (Task Team 2012: 31-32; PBSO 2012: 3) may make sense conceptually, but may not be a wise political strategy in getting security taken seriously within the post-MDG framework.

5. The g7+ and the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals

The g7+ Group of Fragile and Conflict-Affected States are emerging as key advocates of the need to incorporate security concerns into the post-MDG framework, gaining traction within the OECD, the World Bank and the UN system. The g7+ was formed by aid recipient countries part of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS) – a forum where development partners and recipient countries come together to share in a dialogue about how to improve aid and statebuilding efforts. Recipient countries within the IDPS saw a benefit in having their own closed door dialogue without development partners to share experiences, learn from each other and consolidate advocacy positions. The g7+ was officially established in April 2010 on the sidelines of an IDPS meeting in Dili, Timor-Leste. The group now has 18 self-selected members and is chaired by the H.E. Emilia Pires, Minister of Finance from Timor-Leste.

The g7+ initially continued to work primarily through the IDPS, as well as the Busan Sherpa meetings in the lead up to the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF4). At HLF4, the IDPS building block agreed to pursue a New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, setting out priority areas of focus in fragile states and the process for programming around these priorities. The priority areas of focus are the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs), set out below:

We, the members of “the Dialogue”, agree to use the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs) as an important foundation to enable progress towards the MDGs and to guide our work in fragile and conflict-affected states. The five goals are:

Legitimate Politics - Foster inclusive political settlements and conflict resolution

Security - Establish and strengthen people’s security

Justice - Address injustices and increase people’s access to justice

Economic Foundations - Generate employment and improve livelihoods

Revenues & Services - Manage revenue and build capacity for accountable and fair service delivery (IDPS 2011: 2).

The PSGs are, importantly, considered prerequisites for achieving the MDGs in fragile states. This emerges from the fact that fragile states are so off-track in meeting their MDG commitments that

they require a set of pre-MDG goals in order to get them to the starting line. Of particular interest for this paper, is PSG 2 on security, which recognises the fundamental role that security plays in enabling progress in other MDG areas. The New Deal goes on to note that: ‘We will work towards full consideration of the PSGs in the post-MDG development framework beyond 2015 and, after Busan, towards the consideration of the PSGs by the 2012 United Nations General Assembly and other for a’ (IDPS 2011: 2).

Since HLF4, the g7+ has continued to develop its agenda, holding meetings in New York, Dili, Copenhagen, Paris and Nairobi. Indicators are being developed for each of the PSGs, UN Ambassadors and special representatives are being engaged in New York, and meetings have been held with the UN Peacebuilding Support Office, UNDP and the World Bank. The g7+ have decided not to opt for a UNGA resolution in September 2012, but rather will be holding a side event to increase awareness and support for the New Deal, potentially moving towards a resolution in 2013.

Throughout this process, the g7+ has garnered significant political support, including from some key figures. The UN Secretary General has expressed his support for the New Deal and PSGs on a number of occasions. In his opening address at HLF4, the Secretary General noted he was:

very encouraged that the g7+ core of conflict-affected countries has been working with OECD donors and the United Nations to develop a “new deal” for more effective engagement ... this new deal is an opportunity to focus much-needed attention on peacebuilding and state building. I urge all to pursue this important work (cited in g7+ 2011).

More recently, in a presentation to the Centre of Strategic and International Studies, the Secretary General’s comments went further, supporting the idea of incorporating the PSGs into the post-MDG framework:

Aid must go beyond traditional projects to support peacebuilding and statebuilding goals such as justice, security, job creation, social services and credible political processes. This is a key element in the so-called “new deal” reached at last year’s Busan conference on aid effectiveness ... We must also consider whether and how to incorporate such goals into the development agenda after 2015, the target date for achieving the MDGs (UNSG 2012).

The g7+ has also built significant political support amongst development partners through the IDPS, with Australia, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States agreeing to partner with seven fragile state pilot countries to implement the New Deal (the g7+ pilots are: Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Timor-Leste). Through g7+ efforts to build support within New York and the UN system, relationships have also been established with the UN Peacebuilding Support Office and UNDP, as well as some initial outreach with the G77 (although the support from some members of the latter is tentative). Finally, a relationship with the World Bank has also been built through the Fragile States Hub and through meetings with the outgoing World Bank President and managing directors during the 2012 Spring Meetings.

Given this outreach and the political support that it has thus far garnered, it is likely that the g7+ will emerge as a key stakeholder in the post-2015 agenda. While g7+ efforts, to date, have focused on getting the PSGs and New Deal socialized within the UN system, emphasis now appears to be shifting towards the post-MDG process. Minister Pires, Chair of the g7+, has been appointed a member of the High Level Panel on Post-Millennium Development Goals, and this position will ensure that the g7+ has a clear voice in debates on the issue. Liberia is also an active g7+ member and President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf’s role as co-Chair of the High Level Panel provides an additional and influential fragile state perspective to the Panel’s considerations. Currently, the g7+ have few interlocutors engaged in the post-MDG process and will require significant capacity and political

support in making the appropriate connections with the relevant forums involved. However, given their ability to quickly build support within the UN and World Bank, for instance, it is likely that support will be forthcoming to facilitate the g7+ goals of including the PSGs in some way in the post-2015 agenda.

It should be noted, however, that it is not yet clear whether the g7+ will push for the PSGs being included as global goals applicable to all states, or whether they will advocate for the recognition of a set of pre-goals that are relevant for fragile states specifically. Either way, it is likely that g7+ proposals will be on the table in some form as the post-MDG debates take off.

The proposals set out above are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and it may be that there is crossover of support with states or organisations backing more than one proposal (for instance, the g7+ may approve of the proposals on armed violence goals as a way of implementing PSG 2 on security and certainly the UN Secretary General has voiced support for multiple proposals). In addition to those actors set out here as supporting specific proposals, below, a number of other actors likely to push for or support the inclusion of security-related themes in the post-2015 framework are discussed.

Key actors supporting security-related themes

Aside from the groups like the g7+, Geneva Declaration, INCAF and the Bellagio Group, discussed above, there are a number of countries who are likely to either push for or support security-related themes within the post-2015 framework. It is not, however, clear that this support will, in all cases, translate into support for a specific armed violence goal, however.

Japan

Japan has led the way, at least in policy if not practice, on institutionalizing human security within the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), particularly under the leadership of Sadako Ogata, the former UN High Commissioner Refugees (Fukuda-Parr and Picciotto 2007: 3). Human security has been adopted within Japan's constitution and JICA continues to publish policy papers on how human security can be integrated into programming (see for instance, JICA 2006). Japan also called for the establishment of the Commission on Human Security, set up in 2003, which Ogata chaired with Amartya Sen (Abass 2010: 4).

Canada and Norway

Canada and Norway have both been key proponents of the human security agenda, although often with a greater focus on humanitarian issues such as landmines, child soldiers and the arms trade (Abass 2010: 2). This focus was first advocated during a bilateral meeting between the foreign ministers of the two countries in 1998 and later reaffirmed at a larger forum in 1999 (Suhrke 1999: 265). Promoting human security has been seen to be a way for these countries to exercise their middle power status through 'soft power' in international settings, such as the UN (Suhrke 1999: 266). As chair of the UN Security Council in February 1999, for instance, Canada used its position to push the human security agenda with a presidential statement on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (UNSC 1999). However, the conservative government in Canada, in power since 2006, has moved away from this agenda and no longer uses the human security concept in policy.

Switzerland

The Swiss have been a key advocate of the Geneva Declaration and have also supported the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, committing to allocate 20 per cent of their ODA to fragile states.

Member states of the g7+

Individual g7+ countries have also made clear that they see security as a development priority. Afghanistan has gone the furthest, agreeing with UNDP country office to include a '9th MDG' on enhancing security. Other g7+ countries, such as Liberia and Sierra Leone, have included security as a priority in their PRS processes as Anatole Ayissi from the UN Office for West Africa explains:

West African states themselves recognise that such situations of conflict of institutional instability impact negatively on their progress toward the MDGs, and post-crisis West African countries are now tending to include peace, security and governance as one of the pillars of their poverty reduction strategies (PRS) and their MDG strategies. Liberia's PRS has four pillars, the very first of which is "consolidating peace and security". In Sierra Leone, too, the first pillar of its PRS in pursuit of the MDGs is "promoting governance, security and peace", followed by promoting inclusive growth and promoting human development. So, although there is no explicit Millennium Development Goal on security and disarmament issues ... [i]t is also clear, from the political action being taken in many crisis-affected states in West Africa, that these states see security and peacebuilding as cross-cutting priority in the attainment of the MDGs (Ayissi 2008: 21-22).

The PSG on security, therefore, is the outcome of a longer held belief in fragile states that security is fundamental to progress in other MDG areas.

United Kingdom

As a development partner committed to piloting the New Deal, the United Kingdom is supportive of the g7+ agenda around the PSGs and their importance as a foundation of working towards the MDGs. The UK has also been at the forefront of security and justice programming and is thus likely to be particularly interested in how these might be integrated into the post-MDG agenda. Furthermore, the UK Department for International Development has instituted quantitative targets of their own through Public Service Agreements in relation to security and justice. Their 2002-2006 PSA sets a target for: 'Improved effectiveness of the UK contribution to conflict prevention and management demonstrated by a reduction in the number of people whose lives are affected by violent conflict and a reduction in potential sources of future conflict, where the UK can make a significant contribution' (cited in Maxwell 2004: 31). More recently, DFID have committed to 'Help ten million women to access justice through the courts, police and legal assistance' by 2015, which is in turn guiding programming at the country level (DFID 2011). This approach suggests that the UK does not see the challenges of quantifiable measurements of the potentially tricky category of security as outweighing the utility or potential value of quantitative goals.

As British Prime Minister, David Cameron, has been selected as one of three co-chairs of the UN High Level Panel on the post-MDG framework, it is likely that the UK will have a strong voice in setting in the agenda for the debate (Wintour 2012). As a result, their relationship with the g7+ and others promoting security-related goals will be important.

The challenges of including security-related themes in the post-2015 framework

The above proposals highlight that there is significant momentum and support for proposals to include security-related themes within the post-2015 development framework. However, while few would question that addressing insecurity remains a key challenge for improved development outcomes, some important challenges remain in developing useful goals, targets and indicators. Some of these challenges are sketched out below.

What is security?

A critical challenge facing those who want to include a security-related goal within the new development framework is defining what they mean by security. This is difficult because security is

so context specific – what renders people insecure in Europe is importantly distinct from experiences of insecurity in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East or the Asia Pacific (Abass 2010: 10). Thus, developing a global target is challenging. Should the target be about crime rates, battle deaths, instances of coups d'état or perceptions of security, for instance? While there are cases to be made for each of these interpretations of security, the challenge remains in ensuring that the selected understanding is meaningful across a variety of different contexts. If crime rates were chosen as the relevant gauge, this might tell us quite a lot about Latin America, but potentially little about countries where crime is either less of a problem, or where reporting is weak. As Simon Maxwell explains:

We know why targets are useful. They clarify objectives. They rally support. And they provide an instrument with which to reform public services. These are valuable benefits. But we also know why targets post risks: they can encourage a reductionist approach to complex problems... (2004: 30).

Targets tend to simplify complex problems by focusing on what is measurable, rather than necessarily on what's most important (White and Black 2004: 16). One of the most straightforward interpretations of security, for instance, is battle deaths plus homicide. This definition is often less difficult to measure than many other security indicators (as set out below) but it is dubious how much such an indicator can tell us. For example, in many fragile states, homicide is not a common crime – whereas sexual violence and enforcement of property rights can be especially challenging. As a result, measuring how many people are killed in combat or through homicide might provide a skewed understanding of levels of insecurity within a country. The armed violence proposal by the Geneva Declaration (diagram 2) overcomes this challenge to some extent by including a number of indicators in an attempt to capture some of the common aspects of insecurity in many parts of the world. Nonetheless, it is important to recognize that regardless of the choices made about defining security, they will represent a particular understanding that might mask different kinds of insecurity across different contexts. Whatever understanding of security chosen will immediately import 'all the methodological and conceptual problems associated with this particular measure' (Saith 2006: 1172-1173).

In addition, 'security' is not a finite goal in the same way that, for instance, school enrolment is. While it is possible to have 100% of children in school, it is difficult to claim that a population has 100% security. Security goals within a country are constantly evolving. Once battle deaths are reduced, the goal might shift to limiting the instances of coups. In turn, once this security goal is achieved, attention might shift to lowering crime rates – and so on. As a result, security goals are a constantly moving target, which may make their inclusion in any new development framework problematic. For example, Anatole Ayissi discusses how the nature of insecurity plaguing the West African sub-region is constantly evolving and has shifted in the last decade from revolving around natural resources and insurgent conflicts to criminal violence related to drug trade routes from Latin America to Europe (Ayissi 2008: 23). This moving target makes it difficult to develop static global targets both across regions, as well as within them.

How to quantify?

Following on from the challenges of defining security are the challenges of quantifying security. Even if a definition can be agreed upon, measuring progress presents a number of methodological concerns. As Akram-Lodhi points out, the MDGs assume that the goals can be measured, not just described (2009: 74). For example, one common indicator used in security and justice is 'access'. This is the indicator being used by DFID, for instance, in relation to increasing women's access to justice.

But what 'access' means is highly contested. Does it relate to usage rates? Geographic proximity? Affordability? Cultural and linguistic resonance? Or a combination of these? Similarly in relation to

Diagram 2: Goals, Targets and Indicators of Armed Violence – proposal by Geneva Declaration
(Gilgen et al 2010: 10).

Targets	Indicators ²⁵
Goal 1: Reduce the number of people physically harmed from armed violence	
1a. Reduce the number of conflict deaths	1.1. Number of direct conflict deaths 1.2. Number of indirect conflict deaths
1b. Reduce the number of non-conflict violent deaths	1.3. Rates of intentional homicides per 100,000 population 1.4. Rate of extrajudicial killing per 100,000 population
1c. Reduce the number of people with non-fatal injuries caused by armed violence	1.5. Emergency room visits due to violence-related injuries per 100,000 population 1.6. Rate of victimization caused by armed violence per 100,000 population
1d. Reduce sexual and intimate partner violence	1.7. Rate of women subjected to sexual violence 1.8. Rate of women subjected to sexual or physical violence by current or former intimate partner
Goal 2: Reduce the number of people and groups affected by armed violence	
2a. Reduce the number of children associated with armed violence	2.1. Number of children recruited by military forces 2.2. Number of children associated with non-state armed groups 2.3. Number of children associated with gangs
2b. Reduce the number of violence-related refugees and IDPs	2.4. Number of violence-related refugees in a foreign territory 2.5. Number of violence-related IDPs 2.6. Number of violence-related returnees/resettlers
Goal 3: Strengthen institutional responses to prevent and reduce armed violence	
3a. Increase the effectiveness and accountability of justice and security systems	3.1. Percentage change in willingness of persons to report incidents of armed violence (reporting rate) 3.2. Percentage change in public confidence in the ability of justice and security providers to contribute to security and safety effectively and fairly 3.3. Percentage change in real/perceived judicial/criminal impunity (unresolved violent crimes)
3b. Increase national investments in armed violence prevention and reduction programmes and related official development assistance (ODA)	3.4. Formation of national and local strategies for armed violence prevention and reduction 3.5. Creation or strengthening of routine monitoring and surveillance of armed violence in all its forms 3.6. Percentage change in bilateral ODA devoted to direct and indirect armed violence prevention and reduction programmes

something as straightforward as homicide, do you measure by rates of reporting to police, prosecutions or convictions? Each of these depends upon a host of factors that have the potential to influence the data – such as the likelihood or culture of reporting crimes, the institutional capacity of the police and the courts, etc. As Vandemoortele points out, ‘all indicators are imperfect but some are more imperfect than others’ (2008: 222).

Challenges of measurement are particularly striking in fragile environments, where data collection can be especially difficult. First of all, record keeping within the police, courts and prisons (as well as other services) is likely to be poor, making it difficult to use national data for measurement purposes. Furthermore, institutional capacity constraints can make even data that is available of little use. For example, if there is no functioning court system to prosecute individuals or a weak police service to arrest and detain suspected criminals, crime rates are likely to appear artificially low. And finally, there is very often not a culture of reporting crimes in fragile states. This is due in part to cultural taboos, as well as a lack of trust in state institutions (particularly the security

services). As a result, reported crime rates often mask much higher instances of crime that goes unreported. As Ashwani Saith notes:

While the conceptual exercise travels ... from values to indicators, the operational one then has to follow in the reverse direction: starting with numerically specified indicators that are successively combined and aggregated to eventually emerge with an overall quantitative reading on the extent to which the desired values were realized. At the end, it is the practicality and availability of data that sets the real binding constraint on which indicators get used and which not, and often conceptually stronger specifications have to yield to inferior ones for lack of reliable data (2006: 1183-1184).

Gilgen and others note these challenges, writing in support of the armed violence proposal, recognizing the lack of credible data in many African countries, as well as the problems of low reporting or non-use of services (2010: 16). Yet they point to improvements in data collection to date, and the importance of redoubling these efforts to ensure that the best indicators can be used, rather than relying on less useful indicators simply due to issues of data availability (Gilgen et al 2010: 22).

It is also important not to overstate the challenges of data collection. While it is a critical factor limiting the effectiveness of measurements, particularly in fragile states, the MDG process was a good illustration of how data collection problems can be overcome when there is sufficient political will. If countries decide that a particular issue is sufficiently important to development prospects, new data can be collected. While this will not be without a multitude of methodological challenges, it nonetheless highlights that the data collection problems are not necessarily insurmountable.

Is security too political?

The above challenges point to a higher level consideration of whether security is too political to be a feasible goal for the post-MDG framework? The MDGs represent a relatively uncontroversial agenda of hard-not-to-like goals (Millennium Project 2005: 2). They were the outcome of 'an incremental process of generating a political consensus through world summits and international conferences in the 1990s' (Vandemoortele 2008: 221). As Ashwani Saith puts it, the MDGs:

envelop you in a cloud of soft words and good intentions and moral comfort; they are gentle, there is nothing conflictual about them; they are kind, they offer only good things to the deprived ... no wonder it is the juggernaut of all bandwagons (2007: 1167).

The development of the MDGs themselves highlights the political nature of the process. A proposed goal on reproductive and sexual health, for instance, was initially part of the proposed list of MDGs but ultimately did not make the final cut, given political and cultural sensitivities around it (Vandemoortele 2008: 221). Jacqueline Leckie notes 'this was considered necessary if nations with different religious, cultural or moral views on reproductive security and development were to accept the MDGs (Leckie 2009: 8).

Similarly, it is unclear whether governments are likely to endorse a global framework that sets a clear policy agenda for security issues, traditionally considered a highly sovereign matter not to be interfered with at the international level. Indeed, insecurity can be a highly useful political tool and governments who rely upon this as a tactic of social control are likely to resist any global goal that would require them to change their behaviour. At a bureaucratic level, inclusion of security may bring into the debate a broader set of national stakeholders from foreign and defence ministries (this is particularly so in the case of the United States, for instance). Given the breadth of ministries likely to be involved, as well as the variety of tasks to be undertaken to improve security (many of which are not ODA eligible), it is also important to consider how much influence the aid community has (particularly in isolation) in pushing the security agenda (Geneva Declaration 2008: 23).

Consideration also needs to be given to what interventions to implement a security-related target might look like and whether these would always be developmental in their impact. An imperative to reduce insecurity, for instance, may incentivize governments to crack down on civil unrest or militia groups operating in the country in a way that actually undermines developmental outcomes or personal freedoms. It is therefore important to ensure that well-intentioned efforts to improve development by addressing insecurity do not create perverse incentives given the complicated and highly political nature of security.

As a result, with many other contending themes for inclusion in the post-2015 framework, security may simply be cast aside on the basis of the political challenges involved in gaining agreement. As the Millennium Project notes, 'any targets around security are likely to be controversial' (2005: 2).

Would a global goal add value?

Finally, it should also be considered whether a global level goal on a security-related theme would add value in a way that national level efforts and current advocacy efforts could not? It has already been shown that fragile states have gone ahead and included security-related themes in their PRSPs, for instance, rather than waiting for the MDGs to decree a global goal. Given the challenge already raised about understandings of security being meaningful across very different contexts, what can a global goal offer that would be more effective than allowing states to develop their own, unique, security goals? Indeed, as the World Bank's 2011 World Development Report notes, the MDGs 'move slowly, so they do not provide national reformers or their international partners with rapid feedback loops that can demonstrate areas of progress and identify new or remaining risks' (World Bank 2011: 21). Instead, the World Bank suggests that citizen polling data can be used at the country level to measure 'citizen and human security' (World Bank 2011: 21). A substantial literature and advocacy movement has also built up around armed violence reduction (AVR) strategies (see for instance, OECD 2009; and Krause et al 2011), but interestingly these advocates have not explicitly sought inclusion of a global AVR goal or target in the post-MDG framework.

It is also questionable to what extent the 'goal, target, indicator' format is useful, not just for security-related issues but for all areas of programming. This process tends to lead practitioners to monitor progress on indicators, rather than monitoring the goal itself. Unfortunately, it is not always clear whether the causal path between the indicators and the desired goal are so straightforward. While few would disagree that security is an important foundation for development, not every 'good' can or should necessarily be included as a global goal under the post-MDG framework. Given the challenges set out above, it is important to consider whether increased security (in all its possible manifestations) is best pursued through a global goal.

Conclusion

This paper has set out some of the key proposals for including a security-related theme within the post-MDG framework. Five proposals are apparent from the policy literature, each incorporating aspects of security in a different manner. Of these proposals, the armed violence proposals are the most developed options on the table for including security. They offer a tangible addition to the current list of MDG targets that could clearly lead to policy and programme action. In contrast, the proposals to make the post-MDG framework conflict-sensitive or frame new goals through the lens of human security seem vague and open to interpretation, without a clear policy process that would emerge from them. Proposals emerging from the UN System, which bundle security-related goals together with a number of governance, rule of law and human rights dimensions, may seem attractive but are not necessarily the most politically feasible way of ensuring the inclusion of a security-related goal. The proposals for an armed violence target are more precise and less controversial, clearly articulating a focus on a specific kind of insecurity (which, in practice, triggers a multitude of associated social problems). The g7+ proposal to include the PSGs as either a set of pre-

MDGs, or as part of the post-MDG framework also appears to be an important process to monitor. While the g7+ proposal is not yet fully articulated, the ability of the group to rapidly build support in other international fora, and the support they have received in doing so, suggests that any g7+ bid for the post-MDG agenda will likely find an audience. The armed violence and g7+ proposals are also seem to be those that have found greatest traction to date within the international community, with the OECD, UNDP and Secretary-General, as well as a number of international think tanks and NGOs backing variations on this theme.

However, even with some potentially solid options for inclusion on the table, it is important to consider the challenges of security-related themes and their translation into goals, targets and indicators. These challenges relate to understandings of what is meant by security, the difficulty of measuring and collecting data on agreed understandings, the political sensitivities around security and the value added of global level targets. The ultimate decision on whether or not security-related themes should be included within the post-MDG agenda should be based on whether doing so will lead to improved outcomes.

That being said, if efforts to include security in the post-MDG development framework is less about ensuring that appropriate policy actions are formulated to sustainably (and appropriately) address insecurity, and more about putting security-related issues on the political agenda in order to begin a dialogue, then the post-MDGs might be a useful vehicle for doing so. The UN System Task Team notes the 'historic contribution of the MDG framework in providing a common worldwide cause to address poverty and putting human progress at the forefront of the global development agenda' (2012: 6). It is true that the MDGs have been successful in marshaling significant publicity and support for areas such as maternal health, and it may be the case that something similar could be achieved in relation to security. Nonetheless, the feasibility concerns would remain, as would the challenge of ensuring that any security-related goal or target in fact led to improved policy actions.

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