The UN and post-crisis aid: Towards a more political economy

Bruce D. Jones

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Summary

This paper reviews certain aspects of the post-crisis problem, as seen from within the UN. It outlines the wide variety in cases that fall within post-crisis policy, and suggests a basis for categorisation, which is crucial for a more systematic learning process. Secondly, it explores the shift in UN responses to post-crisis, emphasising the growing involvement of the UN Security Council and the political departments of the UN in the direct management of post-crisis assistance. This has important implications for the roles of the humanitarian and development actors. Finally, the paper outlines new challenges relating to quasi-legitimate political authorities, learning processes and the relationship with the World Bank

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Introduction[1]

One of the starkest realities faced by UN actors engaged in the multi-faceted business of conflict management – be it in the humanitarian, development, or political dimensions of war – is the fact that several of the worst humanitarian crises of the past decade have come in the wake of the collapse of UN-sponsored or facilitated peace agreements.[2] The worst fighting in Angola followed the collapse of the Lusaka Protocols; agreement between Indonesia, Portugal and the UN over East Timor did not forestall violence and crisis resulting from the elections; and most dramatically, the Rwandan genocide occurred during UN efforts to implement the Arusha Accords.[3]

These few catastrophic episodes highlight a wider problem, namely consolidating peace and maintaining stability in the wake of conflict and crisis. As a large number of civil wars have ended in the 1990s, so the international community has increasingly been occupied with this challenge. In its ambitious version, this is referred to as "rebuilding post-conflict societies". More minimally, the challenge is to ensure political stability and lay the ground for economic and social recovery.

Within the UN, post-crisis assistance has historically been managed jointly (some would say dis-jointly) by humanitarian and development actors. This joint effort has been framed in policy terms as a challenge of the transition between relief and development. This problematique of relief-to-development partially shapes UN policy in a diverse set of countries, from Kosovo to Congo-Brazzaville. Furthermore, the problematique covers a wide range of specific operational challenges, ranging from social reintegration of returning refugees to demobilisation of ex-combatants.

As a result, the relief-development issue has generated a myriad of distinct but overlapping policy processes. These processes have often been captured by institutional competition and politics. Because the problematique is insufficiently articulated, and because there are enormous institutional stakes vested in their outcomes, these policy processes have obfuscated as much as they have clarified.

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[1] This paper was written while the author was a visiting scholar at the Chr. Michelsen Institute, as a contribution to the CMI project "Between emergency and development". Until May 2000, Bruce Jones was responsible for policy issues related to strategic co-ordination and post-conflict peacebuilding in the UN's Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs, New York. He was also a member of the UN's Advance Mission in Kosovo, and was involved in the design of the UN's transitional authority in East Timor. The views expressed in this paper are those of the author alone. They are not necessarily those of the United Nations.

[2] Stephen Stedman, Don Rothschild and Elizabeth Cousens, "Introduction." in Stephen Stedman, Don Rothschild and Elizabeth Cousens, eds., *Peace Implementation: Themes, Issues, Challenges* (Forthcoming, 2001). The phenomenon is of course not limited to the UN; for example, the worst violence in Kosovo followed the collapse of the NATO-brokered Rambouillet Accords.

[3] On the collapse of the Lusaka protocols, see Virginia Page Fortna and Stephen Stedman, "Implementing Lusaka", draft paper for Stedman et al, *Peace Implementation*; on East Timor, see *Report of the Secretary-General on the UN Assistance Mission to East Timor*, (New York: UN, 1999); on Rwanda, see Bruce D. Jones, "Civil War, the Peace Process, and Genocide in Rwanda" in Robert O. Matthews and Taisier Ali (eds.) *Civil Wars in Africa: Roots and Resolution* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1999), pp. 52-87.

Nevertheless, a certain trend can be discerned in the UN's responses to post-crisis situations. With growing recognition of the *political* causes of the recurrent relapse of seemingly post-crises cases back into acute crisis, there has been a conceptual shift towards a policy framework which places greater emphasis on political stabilisation in post-conflict settings, a framework partially captured by the UN-term "peacebuilding". This shift towards peacebuilding as a policy framework has significant political and institutional ramifications. Most significantly, the result has been an extension of the UN's political involvement in post-crisis settings.

This paper reviews certain aspects of the post-crisis problem, as seen from within the UN.[4] It outlines the wide variation in cases and elements that fall within post-crisis policy, noting some efforts at classification of that variation and suggesting a basis for more detailed categorisation. Then it explores the shift in UN responses to post-crisis, emphasising the growing involvement of the Security Council and UN political departments in the direct management of post-conflict assistance. Finally, it outlines a number of challenges faced by the UN in attempting to develop a more effective approach to the post-crisis situations.

Nature and Aspects of the Problem

There are literally dozens – possibly hundreds – of official UN documents, lessons-learned studies, policy statements and reports relating to what is variously known as the relief-development continuum, transitional assistance, relief-development linkages, post-conflict reconstruction, or, most recently, the relief-development gap. A quick perusal of any one of these documents will reveal two things: that they refer to an astonishing range of specific operational problems; and that the problem is considered in a range of cases across the globe with very diverse features. Arguably, one part of the explanation for limited policy progress on post-crisis issues within the UN, and elsewhere, has been the failure to unpack the problem into its constituent parts or to pay sufficient attention to context.

Context

The variation in context of post-crisis situations is geographical, political, economic, and organisational. Significant differences between cases include: the nature of the conflict and the settlement; the *degree* of settlement; the degree of economic collapse within the state; the economic vitality of the region; the existence or not of a powerful patron to the government; whether or not the international community has mounted a political or military response to the situation; and others. Some of these differences are in the nature of the conflict and the settlement, others are in the nature

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[4] Until April 2000, I was responsible for post-conflict policy in the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Thus, much of what is discussed in this paper as actions of "the UN" are actually actions or policy decisions in which I was directly involved. This is true also of much of what are described as weaknesses or mistakes by the UN. These were often mine, at least in part. One further note: at points in the text, I am quite critical of the UN. Academic writers on the UN talk about the role of the faceless bureaucrat. I am very familiar with the faces involved. Indeed, in working at the UN, I have seen what most outsiders coming into the UN find: that notwithstanding all of the problems, the core of the UN is composed by a small number of intelligent, dedicated, and principled staff members. Thankfully, one of the defining characteristics of this core staff of the UN is that they are relentlessly self-critical. I have been privileged to work with them over the past two years, and hope that any criticisms expressed or implied in this text will be taken in the constructive, self-critical vein they are intended.

of the international response. They combine to create radically different post-conflict settings. A few examples of the different situations considered to be part of the post-crisis problematique illustrate something of the breadth of situations being addressed.

Compare the nature of the post-conflict situation in just two contexts: East Timor and Guatemala. The former saw a short period of acute violence following a quarter century of gestating, low-level conflict between an occupying state and a rebel force; the collapse of the state during the post-electoral violence; and the departure of the Indonesian state machinery and many of its local supporters to West Timor or Indonesia. Guatemala on the other hand experienced one of the longest running civil wars of the post-World War II era, a war between a relatively capable state and a small group of rebels (several thousand strong); no collapse of the state; a political settlement between the two sides leading to full disarmament of the rebels; elections and the revival, however uncertain, of constitutional politics.

Then consider the differences in the nature of the international response to two other post-conflict settings: Kosovo and Congo-Brazzaville. In the former, the international community has a military presence of over 35,000 troops; has pledged over $2 billion for reconstruction; is represented by over 300 international and non-governmental organisations; has almost total legal and juridical authority for a transitional period; and is operating in a context where the various European powers and the United States see direct security, political and economic interests. In the later, in a region of Africa that has never been central to the interests of the major powers, the international community has no UN political presence, no peacekeeping presence, a handful of UN and non-governmental humanitarian agencies, and a minimal UN development presence. The differences in international capacity to meet the post-conflict challenge in these two cases, are vast.

Important differences exist even when one compares countries on the same continent with similar levels of pre-war economic development, such as Rwanda and Liberia. Both were characterised by medium length conflicts, by situations in which one party to the conflict ended up with a virtual monopoly on power, by a high degree of ethnic fracture and tension, and are now weak states in the early stages of recovery from full collapse at the peak of conflict. Yet in Rwanda, the situation is one where the government achieved power through military victory, where society has been rent by a massive genocide, and where the army is still engaged in active regional conflict. In Liberia, the government achieved power through elections, albeit marred by heavy-handed persuasion tactics, and is no longer actively engaged in military conflict (though it supports the RUF in neighbouring Sierra Leone). Further, Rwanda continues to enjoy a fairly high degree of international attention, resulting in very significant financial flows to Rwanda both through humanitarian channels and bilateral assistance channels. Liberia on the other hand receives almost no money through humanitarian channels and minimal bilateral assistance.

Confusingly, the label "relief-to-development" linkages is also applied to contexts where localised, long-running emergencies persist in relatively stable settings. In such contexts as Sri Lanka and Uganda, a significant challenge for the aid community is to sort out the relationship between humanitarian assistance and development aid, especially in relationship to wider strategies of conflict management. Many of the specific features of post-crisis situations (described below)

are prevalent in these protracted emergencies, but there are significant political and institutional differences between these and more narrowly defined post-crisis situations.

Some efforts have been made to develop conceptual categories around these different sets of cases. In particular, Michael Doyle has written on the different "worlds" of peacebuilding. Doyle sees the primary features of the differences between cases in terms of the number of factions, their coherence, and the degree of reconciliation between them.[5] Using these features, Doyle constructs a matrix of cases which can be plotted in terms of the degree of challenge of peacebuilding. Where you have many, incoherent and unreconciled factions (Somalia, Sierra Leone), we should expect that the political challenge of peacebuilding will be considerably more difficult than when there are few, coherent, and reconciled factions (El Salvador, Mozambique). It is notable that many of the cases recorded in UN conventional wisdom as "successes" occurred in cases that, by comparative standards, were relatively straightforward in their post-crisis dynamics.

Doyle's is a very helpful contribution. However, it considers only the political dimension of the situation. Seen in terms of the wider challenge of post-crisis challenges, a wider set of factors is likely to be relevant to policy-making. For example, we should expect that the economic challenge of peacebuilding will be very different in Congo-Brazzaville than in Kosovo; that the social challenge of peacebuilding will be greater in Rwanda than in East Timor; that the military challenge will be greater in Afghanistan than in Guatemala.

Furthermore, while Doyle's model is useful for indicating what degree of international authority and presence is likely to be required for successful peacebuilding, experience shows that the level of the international presence is not a function of need, but primarily of pre-existing political interests and connections. Thus, building the level of international interest into the categories, rather than treating it as a separate feature, is likely to be necessary in terms of policy making. Policy must take into account both the nature of the challenge and the level of available resources, not treat the later as a function of the former. Further work in this direction would constitute a useful contribution both to the literature and to UN policy making.

Recurrent Elements

Of course, the reason that the same conceptual framework is applied to a broad and diverse set of cases is that many of the same problems recur in these cases, irrespective of context. It is to these that we now turn. However, it is important to keep in mind that however similar the recurrent problems appear, the differences in geographical, political, economic and international context matter significantly for the effectiveness of international responses.

Some of the recurrent challenges in post-conflict settings include:

Continued political and military instability. Rare is the post-crisis setting that does not see continued military skirmishes, inter-communal clashes, and significant

[5] Michael Doyle, "Worlds of Peacebuilding", draft paper for Stedman et al., *Peace Implementation.*

political instability. Within the context of peace settlements, parties often retain a capacity for violence as a negotiating tool or to secure political and territorial gains. Some of these resort to force when confronted with acting on commitments made during negotiation – for example UNITA in Angola or the RUF in Sierra Leone. Even when the parties cooperate at the political level, this does not always translate into compliance throughout the ranks. Clashes between groups of demobilising soldiers are frequent occurrences, which threaten political stability even when they do not signal a return to war. Even when one side of the conflict ends up in power, through military victory or other means, opposing parties do not just disappear. Rather, defeated opponents often find haven across a border, from where they continue attacks on their home state – examples include the anti-independence militias in West Timor, and the former Rwandan genocidaires in eastern Zaire. This frequently sparks regional conflict into which is drawn the new, weak government, amplifying the stabilisation challenge. In general terms, then, continued insecurity and military instability is often a significant factor in 'post-crisis' situations.

Quasi-legitimate counterparts. Even in contexts of relative political stability, it is often the case that the UN does not recognise the government as a fully legitimate political partner. Sometimes this is due to the lack of an elected counterpart, such as in Kosovo. Even where the existence of a peace agreement between parties means that the UN can officially work in support of a transitional government, such agreements are usually hampered by fracture, distrust and paralysis within power-sharing governments. Such governments not only have legitimacy problems, but are usually highly ineffective. Thus, post-crisis political counterparts are rarely both legitimate and effective, and are often neither. For UN political and development actors, whose mandates and methodologies emphasise support to a national government, this is a major challenge. (Traditionally, this has been seen as less of a challenge for UN humanitarian actors, whose programmes are designed to work directly in support of war-affected populations, and are therefore less concerned by the nature of authority. A later section of this paper, however, will present arguments for rethinking this conception.)

Collapsed or drastically constrained states. Quite apart from weakness at the political level, post-conflict societies are often ones in which the state has fully or almost fully collapsed as a result of prolonged conflict. The better cases are ones where the fighting never occurred within the bounds of the capital city, and where as a result some of the administrative machinery of the state was left intact. Even in such cases, however, the state was often constrained to controlling a narrow circle of territory outside the capital city; efforts to expand the state into the countryside or regions constitute a major state-building exercise (an example is Mozambique). The worse cases are those in which the departing regime (and sometimes, less explicably, the arriving regime), lays waste to the physical and economic infrastructure of the state machinery (as occurred in Kosovo, Rwanda, East Timor), meaning that the state building process must proceed from a very low level, if not from scratch. In many cases, also, the human resources of the state have been decimated by years of conflict. The most challenging contexts are those such as Kosovo and East Timor where virtually the entire staff of the state machinery flees the country in the face of a military victory by forces opposing the regime.

Economic collapse. In many wars, conflict and eventual state collapse is accompanied by economic collapse. This can involve the collapse of the currency, collapse of markets, loss of trade relations, withdrawal of international financial systems, destruction of economic infrastructure, and wholesale loss of investment and jobs. In some conflicts, the level of physical damage is much lower than in others, which aids reconstruction, but many conflicts are marred by wholesale destruction of property, often in the final stages of a war. The challenge of economic reconstruction alone is a significant one for post-conflict actors.

Pockets of Assistance. It is usually the case that unlike in either 'normal development situations' or acute crises, post-conflict situations usually demand the simultaneous provision of humanitarian and development assistance. The ending of war does not immediately result in the meeting of humanitarian need; needs continue often for a period of one to two years, especially with returning refugees or resettling internally displaced persons. This creates significant policy challenges for aid actors, who have to reconcile the economic conditions for development with competing humanitarian imperatives.

Nature of the UN Response

If the diversity of contexts, resources and elements of post-crisis situations constitutes a significant degree of complexity, it is almost matched by the diversity of UN actors engaged in post-crisis settings, the number of their roles, and the multiple mechanisms by which their actions are, at least in theory, co-ordinated. It is something of an artificial distinction, but these actors and roles can be explored in terms of three inter-related elements: relief and development assistance; political stabilisation efforts; and co-ordination.

Managing Relief-to-Development Linkages and Transitions

Over much of the past decade, the international aid community has had the primary responsibility for managing international responses in post-conflict settings. As active conflict receded, so, typically, did those charged with managing conflict resolution processes, such as UN mediators or peacekeeping forces. The aid community – humanitarian and development assistance agencies of the UN, their counterparts in the non-governmental organisation (NGO) community, and the major bilateral donors – were then tasked with supporting the reconstruction of political and economic life in so-called war-torn societies.[6]

The relief and development programmes in post-crisis settings are managed by an alphabet soup of UN development and humanitarian actors. They collectively constitute a small part of the wider set of multilateral, non-governmental and bilateral actors engaged in post-crisis aid.

(a) UN Aid Actors

The UN's humanitarian presence in post-crisis settings is essentially identical to its presence during crises. It is led by the 'big three' – the UN High Commissioner for

[6] This was the name given to a major UN research programme which has subsequently become a self-standing initiative – the War-Torn Societies Project of the UN Research Institute for Social Development.

Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF). Additionally, a number of smaller humanitarian agencies, or humanitarian programmes of development agencies, play roles in the provision of assistance to war-affected populations. These include such agencies as the World Health Organisation (WH0) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Additionally, the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) typically has a presence in early post-crisis situations, though is a less significant player than during acute crises.

On the development side, the UN's presence is led by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the main UN development agencies, the WFP, UNICEF, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA). Various UN specialised agencies – such as the FAO, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the UN Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) – play small but not insignificant roles in providing advice and support to emergent governments. Additionally, development policy departments of the UN have recently tried to expand their activities in the post-conflict field. For example, the Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) has sought to provide technical advise on fiscal and economic elements of post-conflict assistance. These efforts have as yet been highly constrained by the centralised, headquarters-based nature of such departments.

The UNDP has played a particularly significant role in this arena, both as the usual in-country co-ordinator of UN activities and as the UN's lead development actors. However, the UNDP's programme for what it refers to as 'countries in special development circumstances' has long been caught between those who see post-conflict settings simply as development challenges under difficult circumstances, those who see them as humanitarian crises with a few additional opportunities, and those who see them as special circumstances that fit neither category. Indeed, as one UN official has argued, UNDP has never even defined what development means in a crisis or immediate post-crisis context. Even the question of who is responsible within UNDP for post-crisis cases has been hotly disputed. On the one hand, the Emergency Response Division was created ostensibly for precisely this challenge; on the other, the various geographical departments claim and are often able to exercise lead roles in shaping the UNDP response. This competition within UNDP both reflects and contributes to a wider uncertainty within the aid community about how to handle post-crisis development programmes.

This uncertainly also reflects the legislative framework within which UN development actors work. This framework is composed primarily of the Economic and Social Council of the UN General Assembly, as well as of the Executive Boards of the various agencies. Typically, policy making in these bodies reflects a careful consensus between OECD states (most of them aid donors) and G77 states (many of them aid recipients). At times, the need to cultivate a consensus with aid recipients has frustrated donor efforts to generate a clearer role for UNDP within the post-crisis arena. Unlike in the international financial institutions, the G77 states carry a lot of power in UN decision making, and among some of these states, greater UNDP involvement in crisis and post-crisis settings is seen as tantamount to interventionism, and is sharply resisted.

(b) Aid Roles

Chronologically, the first task of the UN in post-crisis settings is the continued provision of humanitarian assistance and protection. This involves many of the same tasks as occur in an acute crisis: provision of food aid to those displaced by the crisis; protection of the legal rights of civilians; provision of emergency medical services; and others. A major sphere of humanitarian activity in post-crisis, one where the UN has a prominent role through the UNHCR, is the return and reintegration of refugees. In collaboration with such actors as UNICEF and the ICRC, UNHCR is also playing an increasingly important role vis-à-vis the reintegration of internally displaced persons (indeed, the distinction is the source of increasing controversy).

Many programmes which begin in the humanitarian sphere – such as provision of medical care, basic education, etc – are ones which rightly belong as part of a government or community-led package of social services. In collaboration with NGOs, nascent governments, and bilateral actors, the UN plays a significant role in post-crisis situations in what might be called social reconstruction. The humanitarian dimension of social recovery is the first part of the UN's work to fade out or to diminish to a minor scale. Core social recovery programmes, including reconciliation efforts, continue either through development channels or through a residual humanitarian presence. However, the speed with which such a shift in UN presence occurs depends very greatly on the degree of political and military stability. In fluid, uncertain situations, a major humanitarian presence is prolonged, sometimes for a number of years.

In more stable situations, there is a fairly rapid shift in the UN's work towards economic reconstruction. The economic challenges in post-conflict typically involve: establishment of macro-economic stability; establishing a framework for fiscal policy; restoration of markets; support to community-based development; reconstruction of war-damaged infrastructure; restarting agricultural and industrial activity; and reconstruction of state infrastructure. Within the UN, most efforts in this sphere are directed to supporting the nascent government, or local authorities. Less emphasis is given to support to the private sector or to setting the conditions for international investment. This reflects a deep commitment within the UN to the concept of social as well as economic development. It also reflects the inter-governmental nature of the UN and the prominence among many member states, especially from the G77 but also from Europe, of a philosophy which sees the state playing a significant role in development. This contrast with the more liberal, private-sector oriented philosophy of the international financial institutions.

The UN's role in economic reconstruction is sharply limited in relation to the roles played by other multilateral actors and bilateral actors. The major factor in this regard has been the beginning of a transformation of the World Bank into a development actor with a significant presence in post-conflict settings. In particular, the World Bank has often sought and in many recent cases been given the lead role in donor co-ordination in post-conflict settings, formerly one of the UN's most important roles. Bilateral actors also play a significant role in this regard through their aid programmes. Additionally, the European Community is an increasingly important player in this field. The sums of money that are channelled through such actors dwarf those of the UN in most settings – though in some African contexts in

particular, the sums available to the UNDP represent a significant portion of international assistance.

Another major focus of activity in recent years has been a set of activities that fall under the heading of governance. This includes human rights work, strengthening of electoral systems, development of rule of law institutions including the judiciary, security sector reform, and others. Some of this is old wine in new bottles; the UNDP has been involved in governance work through its national development programmes for many years. But some elements, especially in the security sector, are quite new.

Additionally, under pressure to find areas of comparative advantage, the UNDP has experimented with community-based development programmes using NGOs as partners, as distinct from its normal role in support of government-led economic and social development. In particular spheres, such as education, UN development actors like UNICEF and UNESCO continue to play an important advisory and capacity-building role.

(c) Policy

The challenge of managing humanitarian programmes in tandem with both social and economic development is at the core of the relief-development problematique. The manifold challenges involved are well documented elsewhere. These range from the highly technical (different systems for raising and disbursing funds, different recruitment and staff deployment arrangements) to management issues (different planning frameworks, varying timeframes for engagement) to the political (variable degrees of support for emergent regimes) and the conceptual (distinct conceptions of the nature of the post-conflict challenge, different principles on which aid is based, etc.)

Within the UN, efforts to improve policy co-ordination on post-conflict aid, at least at headquarters level, have focused on strengthening UN co-ordination mechanisms, lobbying donors for greater fluidity in their financing regimes, and on early linkage between planning frameworks for humanitarian and development assistance – the UN Consolidated Appeals Programme and the UN Development Assistance Framework, respectively. In the institutional politics which consumes much ostensible policy-making, the prevalent focus has been on the "gap" between relief programming and development action: the charge, specifically, that UN development actors are too slow to start their programmes, leaving relief agencies holding the bag and forced to take on roles (such as housing reconstruction) that they are ill suited, and under-financed, to play.[7] This concern has been emphasised by UNHCR among others. There has also been a great deal of attention paid by the UN to the problems created by the fact that some major donors have very rigid administrative distinctions between relief and development budgets. This makes it difficult (a) to finance transitional programmes in late-crisis situations, or (b) to finance early development programmes in longer-term transitional situations. Indeed, in this, the UN often has common cause with the managers of aid programmes in donor countries, many of

[7] These issues were discussed extensively in the so-called Brookings Process, a series of meetings hosted initially by the Brookings Institution and jointly sponsored by the UNHCR and the World Bank. These issues also inform discussion in the IASC Reference Group on Post-Conflict.

whom also seek more flexible aid budgets, over the opposition of treasury or finance departments.[8]

Less explicit attention has been paid to the different conceptual bases for the two types of assistance. Yet these are significant. Whereas humanitarian assistance is focused on the needs of individuals and seeks to solve short to medium term problems, development aid is more focused on longer-term problems of a national or at least communal nature. Development actors place a far greater emphasis on the state and on government than do humanitarians – a repeated bone of contention between the two communities. In the context of joint learning and policy making efforts across the humanitarian – development chasm, the critical work on forging a conceptual framework which provides guidelines as to what aid is supposed to do has largely been sidelined by an excessive focus on technical and management aspects of the problem.

For example, in Kosovo, after the end of the NATO bombing campaign, the institution responsible for economic reconstruction (the European Commission) came into conflict with UNHCR over strategies for rebuilding housing infrastructure. The humanitarian approach was to provide large quantities of reconstruction supplies directly to refugees in need; the reconstruction approach was to stimulate markets and demand through targeted subsidies and thereby generate economic activity while allowing people to rebuild themselves. The merits of each approach can be debated, but the clash between concepts was significant.

The Kosovo example is also interesting for another feature, which suggests an altogether different conceptual framework for thinking about the problem of transitional aid. Specifically, as humanitarian actors in Kosovo, led by UNHCR, began to think about the need to draw down their programmes and hand over to others, they created co-ordination mechanisms to ensure a smooth transition. This co-ordination mechanism linked the humanitarians not with development actors, but with functional departments of the state. In Kosovo, under UN transitional authority, the UN itself manages the state bureaucracy; this odd fact no doubt facilitated the creation of co-ordination mechanisms in this case. But the significant point is that what emerged spontaneously from Kosovo was a form of 'relief-to-state' transition model. Given that the purpose of humanitarian assistance is to meet the basic, essential needs of people when the state cannot or is unwilling to do so, it surely makes sense to think of the phase out of humanitarian operations coming when the state – not development actors – can take over their programmes. Of course, development action is fundamentally about building the capacity of both state and society, so a connection remains. But rather than thinking about transitions between two different sets of international actors, what Kosovo suggests is the need to think more about the differing but ideally complementary ways in which both humanitarian and development actors can help states fulfil their obligations to their citizens.

Kosovo is not the only instance of this kind of thinking within the humanitarian and development communities. In the major humanitarian agencies, and in the academic

[8] The most comprehensive account to date is Shepard Forman and Patrick Stewart (eds.) *Good Intentions: Pledges of Aid for Post-Conflict Recovery*. (Lynne Reinner, 2000).