

Temporality of Place: Reframing Approaches to Internal Displacement

By Sarah E. Freeman

Millions of internally displaced people (IDPs) remain trapped in situations of protracted displacement, unable to return to their homes and left without ‘durable solutions.’ Without a binding global mandate for IDPs, a relatively new focus within the international community, how do organisations respond to protracted IDP situations and are such approaches effective? This paper explores these questions, demonstrating how the model for IDP responses replicates historical trends in refugee policy and ultimately fails to address the complexity unique to IDP populations as a result. To do so, the article traces the construction and use of the ‘relief-development continuum’ within refugee policy over time and outlines how that continuum is reproduced in situations of internal displacement. My analysis suggests that the assistance structure in place for IDPs perpetuates a division between emergency response and development that prevents the long-term needs of such populations from being addressed.

Introduction

Many scholars have highlighted that internally displaced persons (IDPs) are often dependent on aid, unable to return to their homes, left in the hands of governments who may lack the capacity and/or will to assist adequately, and trapped in a debilitated and economically stagnant society due to regional conflict and protracted displacement (Cohen and Deng 1998; Ferris, Mooney and Stark 2012; Ferris and Halff 2011; Cohen 2009; UNHCR and Brookings 2007). Already almost tripling the number of refugees in the world today (IDMC 2014), IDPs have become a new focus for the international community in the past decade. As the nature of conflict today becomes increasingly intrastate and wrought with civilian casualties, IDPs displaced by such conflict—the focus of this paper—are a major population of concern within the field of forced migration and could soon become the principal population to be served by international aid structures.

Yet, despite this refocus toward internal displacement, there is still no global, legally binding framework for IDPs and very little consensus as to when internal displacement ‘ends.’ In not crossing an international border, IDPs remain the responsibility of their home country, with no legal mandate for protection by international actors (in contrast to the protection of refugees under the 1951 Convention). How is the international community, therefore, responding to IDPs displaced by armed conflict? How do existing responses change over time, as the nature of displacement becomes protracted¹ in many cases? Is a new model required to adequately address the unique needs of IDPs?

In this paper, I argue that the way in which the assistance structure for conflict-induced IDP populations is conceptualised perpetuates a division between emergency response and long-term development that has been identified in refugee policy for decades. In contrast to refugee situations, within the context of internal displacement, humanitarian aid cannot act on the periphery of states, nor can it avoid being tied to the state within which displacement occurs. IDPs are often confined within the conflict that they are trying to escape, creating an unattractive donor landscape and complex set of needs on the ground. The current framework for response, which treats IDPs as a strictly humanitarian problem, masks such a nuanced reality, leaving the long-term needs of IDPs in protracted situations unaddressed.

To demonstrate this, I outline how international responses to IDPs mimic models of refugee assistance and fail to take into account the complexity unique to IDP populations. I trace both the construction and use of the ‘relief-development continuum’ within refugee policy over time. I demonstrate how this temporal paradigm not only fails—and will continue to fail—to address the long-term needs of IDPs, but also, how it reproduces a bifurcated assistance structure within situations of internal displacement. I will critique the framing and consequent discourse that inform the way in which assistance is structured. In addition, I will highlight the problematic implications of this discourse within such complex contexts and on the individuals within them. As a case study, I explore the

¹The definition of ‘protracted’ in the context of IDP situations should be understood as such: ‘Protracted IDP situations are those in which: 1) the process for finding durable solutions is stalled, and/or 2) IDPs are marginalised as a consequence of violations or a lack of protection of human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights’ (UNHCR and Brookings 2007: 2).

cluster approach in Northern Uganda—one of four roll-out countries for IDP response—where I conducted personal interviews with UNHCR and UNOCHA field staff in 2011.

Throughout this paper, the terms ‘relief’, ‘emergency response’, and ‘humanitarian assistance’ are all used to signify short-term responses to conflict and complex emergencies. ‘Development’ here is used to describe more long-term organisational responses, typically implemented in ‘post-conflict’ settings. How these phases (fail to) overlap and attempts to integrate the two in both theory and practice are the subject of this paper. In addition, I use the term ‘continuum’ in both a theoretical and historical sense. Theoretically, the continuum aims to link emergency response, rehabilitation, and long-term development within one continuous process, mirroring the trajectory from war to peace. In practice, however, such a continuum—as I trace in this paper—fails to be continuous at all; it remains bifurcated, relief on one end and development on the other.

Trends in Refugee Policy

The traditional paradigm for IDP protection and assistance has been adapted from refugee crisis response models, and constitutes an extension of the well-established UNHCR mandate for refugee assistance. As posited by Jeff Crisp (2001) and Joanna Macrae (1999), despite varied and decade-long attempts to link relief and development to better assist refugees, frameworks developed in the past often failed in practice.

The concept of ‘clean aid’: a division solidified

The concept of ‘clean aid’ provides the foundation of logic upon which the patterns of aid for refugee assistance have been built. Such logic provides one explanation for why the relief-development continuum remains broken and also speaks to why the phenomenon repeats itself in situations of internal displacement. What I call ‘clean aid’ can be interpreted, most simply, as mechanisms of assistance that attempt to avoid contributing to conflict and/or human rights abuses. In situations of displacement as a result of armed conflict, ‘clean aid’ denotes the support of programmes that are self-contained, often isolated entities, that allow agencies to avoid the (often corrupt) state and other armed actors in an attempt to prevent contributing to human rights violations, corruption, and the propulsion of conflict.

Refugee assistance during the 1970s and early 1980s was shaped by this phenomenon, taking the form of self-contained refugee settlements, and to a more limited degree repatriation programmes, which allowed aid to be funnelled to visible entities independent of the host country (Harrell-Bond 1986; Crisp 2001; Duffield 1994). UNHCR did not become involved in reintegration activities, nor was it encouraged to do so by donors, until the 1990s (Crisp 2001).

Towards the end of and following the Cold War, however, there was a greater willingness by and acceptance of the West’s involvement in other states’ affairs and a softening of traditional understandings of sovereignty (Clapham 1996; Macrae 1999). Cross-border operations increased, allowing agencies to directly engage in conflict zones and opening the humanitarian space substantially (Duffield 1994). As a result, the late 1980s and 1990s witnessed a growth of humanitarian presence and interventions. Simultaneously, funding for development declined significantly while relief aid had been on the rise since the 1980s (Duffield 1994), demonstrating the tendency for donors to shy away from the greater economic conditionalities of development and push towards ‘clean aid.’

After the Cold War, however, political support for the aid enterprise as a whole saw a sharp decline. Aid for refugee programming was no longer self-evident to donors with the significant rise in the rate of refugee returns in the 1990s. Although relief was favoured both politically and economically, the operational limitations and likelihood of conflict propulsion by relief agencies acting in war torn contexts were also apparent, especially with the expansion of cross-border interventions (Macrae 1999; Harrell-Bond 1986).

Linkage as a solution: creation of the ‘continuum model’

The idea that assistance can play a role in the *prevention* of conflict, mainly through the linkage of relief and development, became the new justification for the continuation of aid for refugee assistance. Conflict was seen as a ‘transitory setback’ (Duffield 1994) in the larger development process, with underdevelopment considered the primary driver of conflict itself (Duffield 1994; Duffield 1999; Ross et al. 1994; Macrae 1999; Buchanan-Smith and Maxwell 1994). If assistance can tackle underdevelopment from the start by laying the foundation for development efforts, so the story goes, then future conflict can be prevented.

Within this model, relief is delivered *during* conflict on the assumption that there is no sufficient state structure to provide services for affected populations. Development only enters *post*-conflict, after the re-institution of a legitimate state structure and peace. Such a model ties relief and development together temporally, using the level of violence and the sovereignty of a state (judged by the international community) as a marker for when each phase of assistance should be implemented. Within the context of refugee

policy, a successful relief-development continuum has been posited since the 1980s as a solution to protracted displacement (Betts 2004). This still provides the conceptual model upon which structures of aid for displaced populations are built.

Nevertheless, attempts to implement hybrid models integrating development approaches into relief programming from the start failed and continue to fail due to a division in funding structures. In the late 1970s and 1980s, UNHCR promoted what they called the 'refugee aid and development approach.' This strategy aimed for a quicker path towards 'self-sufficiency' through the implementation of development-oriented relief programmes. Whereas the former model focused on self-contained entities, 'refugee aid and development' placed emphasis on refugees and host communities in refugee-populated areas (Crisp 2001). Despite the good intentions of integrating development mechanisms into relief programming, mirroring the relief development continuum, the programme largely failed due to a lack of funding and donor interest (Crisp 2001; Loescher 2001). Thus, UNHCR was left in need of a new approach to attract support for its programmes. This resulted in a new framing of refugee policy that coincided with similar shifts in international aid.

Continuum revisited: A 'new aid orthodoxy'

The decline of political support for aid more broadly—previously used as a tool to underpin political interests—following the Cold War, placed the international aid community on the defensive. The consequent 'new aid orthodoxy' (Macrae 1999, 2001) was constructed on the premise that a comprehensive plan for relief would prevent future conflict from occurring in that region, relying on the assumption that conflict is a hazard derived primarily from 'underdevelopment' (Macrae 2001; Buchanan-Smith and Maxwell 1994; Duffield 1994; Duffield 1999; Seaman 1994; Ross et al. 1994). Such an orthodoxy was adopted by donors, the UN, and NGOs in the late 1990s and utilised two key tenets: 'first, that aid can and should play a role in the management of conflict; second, that it can achieve this by applying more developmental approaches to the delivery of aid in conflict-affected areas' (Macrae 2001: 154). This hybrid approach represented a break from the 'clean aid' paradigm and, consequently, proved difficult to fund successfully.

Changes in refugee policy reflected this 'new aid orthodoxy,' and once again tried to bridge the gap between short-term and long-term assistance. In the mid-1990s, UNHCR expanded its scope beyond its traditional focus on refugee assistance and became a much more broad-based humanitarian agency. Policy was reoriented toward reintegration of refugees to foster sustainable development and, consequently, conflict prevention, reflecting a broader 'aid as peacebuilder' narrative (Crisp 2001; Macrae 1999). The new programme had some successes: increased voluntary repatriation, stronger human rights protections, and greater incentives for and support of livelihood formation. On the whole, however, such programmes neither fulfilled expectations of sustainability nor provided a bridge to rehabilitation and development (UNHCR 1997).

Theories of international crisis response typically categorise the gaps in the continuum in the following ways: lack of coordination and differing mandates (institutional); influence of donor funding (financial); and lack of community participation in such programmes (Crisp 2001; Macrae 1999; Jackson 1990). As described here, there have been many efforts to address such gaps, yet improvements primarily focus on coordination. Managerial adjustments and technocratic analysis only engage the issue on the surface level, however; the underlying assumption that the relief-development divide can be bridged by addressing technocratic failures of coordination and communication fails to address the deeper disjunction between the two phases (Macrae 1999, 2001).

The 'post-conflict' problem

In the late 1990s, UNHCR once again reoriented its policy, abandoning 'returnee aid and development' and replacing it with the 'Brookings Process' (UNHCR 2010). Another attempt to bridge the gap between relief and development by the agency, the Brookings approach aimed to facilitate coordination and increase funding by framing aid and development as 'post-conflict reintegration' (UNHCR 2000; Crisp 2001). The 'post-conflict' label is misleading, however, as conflict is rarely over in these situations. Moreover, the assumption upon which this label rests—that a political transition is possible and results in a sovereign state with legitimate authority and recognised to be competent by the international community—is often not realistic (Macrae 1999; Moore 2000). Despite many states' inability or lack of will to adequately protect their own displaced citizens, UNHCR 'must [still] adhere to the principle of unconditional respect for national sovereignty, and assume that the state will be the legitimate and competent body for reintegration planning' (Macrae 1999: 15).

Whilst trying to bring new life to the continuum, the Brookings Process did the opposite. By emphasising the 'post-conflict' nature of assistance, the temporal division between the two phases was only reinforced, creating a conflict/post-conflict binary that required two distinct phases of assistance: relief and development. Moreover, the sharp division in donor support for each phase further prevented a bridging

of the relief-development divide. Although the term ‘post-conflict’ can aptly describe certain select contexts, it generally obscures the more complex nature of conflict on the ground and can be used as an excuse by the international community to relinquish their responsibilities (Moore 2000). Use of the term, rather than providing incentive to bridge the phases as intended, strengthens the distinction and temporal difference between them based on overly simplistic measures of conflict. Such usage not only has the potential to solidify an assistance structure built within a problematic discursive framework, but also (in simply identifying a division), reaffirms a bifurcated continuum inadequate for the contexts in which it is applied.

Yet, the ‘relief-development continuum’ remains a pervasive model upon which the evolution of refugee assistance programmes has been built since the 1970s. The model maintains that relief, delivered in response to emergency situations, transitions to rehabilitation and then to development as time goes on. As Macrae posits, such temporal shifts in aid corresponded to a shifting political situation, marked by a transition from war to interim government to peace and elections in the late 1980s and 1990s (Macrae 1999). Today, the same continuum exists, although it has been reconceptualised as a transition from conflict to post-conflict, driven by the use of the term ‘post-conflict’ as rhetoric to attract donor funding for more hybrid models in the 1990s. The shift from conflict to post-conflict relies on a declaration that the conflict is over by the international community or government of the state itself, whether violence has ended or not. The term ‘post-conflict’ is then employed to make it seem as though peace has been restored, that donors no longer have the opportunity to become implicated in conflict. Conflict, however, has taken on much broader definitions within the past decade. Arguably, in many situations of protracted displacement, conflict is not over; it has just changed in nature and scope.

IDPs: Reproducing the ‘Relief-Development Continuum’

The tendency for protracted IDP situations to be viewed from a relief-oriented perspective, reifying the relief-development binary and preventing long-term needs from being addressed, is evident within the structure of IDP assistance itself. Within conflict-induced IDP and refugee situations, the cluster approach was created in 2005 and launched in 2006, ‘to strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies by ensuring that there is predictable leadership and accountability in all the main sectors or areas of humanitarian response’ (IASC 2006b: 2; Morris 2006). The cluster approach was implemented in four ‘roll-out countries’ (DRC, Liberia, Somalia, and Uganda) in order to test the success of this new assistance structure on the ground (IASC 2006).

Although the cluster approach was designed as strictly a humanitarian structure, it does attempt to integrate transitional elements into responses to IDPs. In addition to the existence of an Early Recovery Cluster, ‘Sector leads are responsible for ensuring the necessary shift in programming as priorities move from emergency relief to longer-term recovery and development. All sectoral groups should include early recovery strategies’ (IASC 2006b: 7). An emphasis on early recovery will, in theory, set the stage for a successful transition to long-term solutions (UNHCR 2010). In Northern Uganda, however, although such an approach improved agency coordination and the delivery of emergency services, it remained a strictly *humanitarian* mechanism and failed to facilitate adequate transition in practice.

In Northern Uganda, the humanitarian response or ‘emergency phase’ of assistance was coordinated using this new cluster approach. In order to facilitate the coordination and monitoring of hundreds of NGOs and international organisations in the North, six primary clusters were activated to cover different sectors of assistance: governance, infrastructure and livelihoods; education; food security, agriculture, livelihoods; health, nutrition and HIV/AIDS; protection and camp coordination, which included the human rights and rule of law and child protection sub-clusters; and water and sanitation (Uganda Humanitarian Clusters 2011; Steets and Grunewald 2010). Although the cluster approach was not immediately integrated into the national structure, in the North, each cluster was eventually co-led by a governmental technical department head and one agency that acted as a cluster co-lead (Steets and Grunewald 2010; UNOCHA, interview, 18 April 2011). During the emergency phase, most organisations within each cluster focused on either the distribution of basic necessities—food, water, and non-food items to those living in the camps—or the protection and security of displaced individuals.

Inter-cluster coordination was overseen by UNOCHA. During the conflict, the agency was responsible for the coordination of humanitarian affairs (including repatriation, return protection concerns, and ensuring the provision of basic services and security for the Northern population), humanitarian financing, information management, and disaster preparedness and response (UNOCHA, interview, 18 April 2011). UNHCR was the UN cluster lead for protection and camp management in Gulu, as soon as the organisation arrived in 2006. The cluster approach was then synergised with the government structure already in place, to try and avoid the existence of two parallel systems for humanitarian coordination and assistance for IDPs (UNHCR, interview, 26 April 2011).

Despite better coordinating humanitarian efforts in the region, such an approach only addresses part of the larger picture. The cluster approach itself is designed 'for IDPs during conflict-generated emergencies' (IASC 2006: 3), suggesting that once the 'emergency' is over, the approach will phase out. The task of addressing the long-term needs of IDPs is left to the host government and development actors once the 'emergency' subsides or the 'post-conflict' label is applied. As a strictly humanitarian approach, it is still situated within one pole of the relief-development binary, essentially facilitating the failure of the continuum model through its construction.

This is supported by the cluster approach's seeming incompatibility with protracted displacement. Discussions from an expert seminar on protracted IDP situations held in 2007, hosted by UNHCR and the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, highlights the disconnect that exists between theory and practice:

With full recognition of the role and responsibility of host Government, humanitarian and development agencies also have important roles to play. In the context of the humanitarian reform implementation, *participants questioned how protracted situations relate to the cluster approach, especially as protracted situations are rarely seen as humanitarian emergencies* (UNHCR and Brookings 2007: 3; emphasis mine).

Regardless of this lingering question, the approach continues to be applied to protracted situations on the ground. Although it was initiated in response to armed conflict in an emergency setting in Northern Uganda the cluster approach remained intact until 2010, once many of the remaining IDPs had already become protracted by definition.

Despite the mechanism's emphasis on early recovery throughout all aspects of implementation, this was not the case in Northern Uganda. UNOCHA noted that, although humanitarian programming should have long-term sustainability in mind every step of the way, early recovery as such did not happen on the ground; it was skipped altogether and development efforts started too late, leaving a significant gap in services (UNOCHA, interview, 18 April 2011). The IASC Cluster Approach Evaluation for Uganda (2010) also identified a notable gap in recovery services, stating that the 'Early Recovery Cluster...largely ceased to operate in 2008' (Steets and Grunewald 2010: 25-6), two years before the cluster approach itself phased out. With the development phase left largely uncoordinated, the institutional aid structure was indeed strictly *humanitarian* in nature, siloed within one end of the relief-development continuum. Such an emergency-oriented response was also applied to a protracted situation, falling short of addressing the long-term needs of the remaining IDPs in the region.

Complexities of Internal Displacement

The cluster approach was designed to set the stage for a successful transition from relief to early recovery to development in situations of internal displacement, yet such a seamless transition remains perpetually divided in practice. The current model posits a linear relationship between relief, rehabilitation, and development – mirroring the linear relationship between conflict and post-conflict, peace and war. It assumes that there is a direct correlation between conflict, displacement, and needs – that displacement ends when conflict is declared over. Such assumptions no longer hold in situations of internal displacement, due to the complexity and changing nature of conflict and questionable 'end' of such situations.

Rather than having a resolute finish, conflict can be understood as a continuous phenomenon. As Mary Kaldor (2007: 117) notes, 'Just as it is difficult to distinguish between the political and the economic, public and private, military and civil, it is increasingly difficult to distinguish between war and peace.' For IDPs, there is a perpetuation of conflict *beyond* visibility. Once 'conflict' is declared over, the displaced and the conflict that persists are rendered invisible. Whereas refugees re-cross an international border to signify an end (not *the* end) to conflict, IDPs never leave the confines of that conflict to begin with, making such distinctions more difficult to determine. As Roberta Cohen notes, 'Even in countries where conflicts are formally over, continuing animosities among individuals or groups may jeopardise return processes and impede an end to displacement' (Cohen 2003: 21). Conflict extends beyond visibility, transforming over time and creating varied needs within and amongst particular groups. This requires a more comprehensive approach.

The period of displacement of IDPs varies tremendously: short-term, protracted, and permanent situations can all occur within one community depending on individual experience. This varying reality on the ground is complicated by the fact that, within forced migration theory, the question 'when does internal displacement end?' still remains unanswered. Not only is there no clear solution to this question, but there is also no consensus as to how to make such a determination (Mooney 2002; Forced Migration Review 2003). This fact prompts the question: how is it possible to prescribe a temporal conflict/post-conflict binary for assistance onto a situation that is not only incredibly varied but also so difficult to determine?

The erratic process that currently exists for determining when displacement ends is partially due to the descriptive (rather than legal) nature of the definition of IDPs provided by the *Guiding Principles*, as well as the fact that there is no cessation clause determining when the *Principles* no longer apply (Mooney 2002). As the *Guiding Principles* state: ‘displacement shall last no longer than required by the circumstances’ (UN Commission on Human Rights 1998: 7). Yet, what defines those circumstances, and more importantly, who defines them? Any attempt to determine when internal displacement ends ‘occurs on an ad hoc and arbitrary case-by-case basis, if at all, and on the basis of criteria that differ from one actor to another’ (Mooney 2002: 5-6). The fact that there are such varying points at which displacement is deemed to ‘end’ for IDPs is indicative of how various the needs of individuals can be within each context. The needs of those displaced for a period of months, years, or decades—some often living in the same community—cannot be adequately addressed using a seemingly universal model.

This is not to suggest that refugee situations do not come with their own challenges and complexities, or are apolitical in nature. As Jennifer Hyndman aptly states, ‘Human displacement does not occur in neutral spaces, reducible to particular places and void of political meaning’ (Hyndman 2000: 20). Refugee and IDP situations often have similar causes and consequences, are protracted in nature, and are contained within equally dangerous and varying contexts. Yet, there remain distinct differences. Whereas refugees can be repatriated or resettled to a third country—signalling an end to conflict—IDPs do not cross a border and must rely on reintegration within their home country. In addition, solutions for IDPs are driven by the state whether or not it has contributed to the displacement itself, while international actors drive refugee solutions (UNHCR and Brookings 2007).

These details comprise an environment in which the ‘relief-development continuum’ model is bound to fail in practice. Although a smooth transition from emergency relief to long-term development—informed and driven by displaced communities rather than donor and agency interests—would, theoretically, provide a more effective and sustainable approach to aid for refugees and IDPs, such a transition fails in practice. The same unsuccessful attempts to link the two phases within refugee policy are now being recreated in a different form in conflict-induced IDP situations, in a context that renders the current continuum perpetually divided.

Implications: the failure of ‘clean aid’

Within this environment ‘clean aid’ is not possible in practice. Because IDPs do not cross an international border, aid—even relief aid—must work within and through (rather than around) states, many of which caused or facilitated the displacement of their own people. IDPs are displaced *within* the conflict that they are trying to escape, creating an additional layer that must be navigated both by the individuals themselves and by the international community. This comprises an environment that donors hesitate to fund. UNHCR’s expenditure on IDP programmes (Pillar 4) in 2012 amounted to only 15% of total programme activities (a 9% decrease since 2011) in comparison to 79% spent on refugee programmes (UNHCR 2012).

Internal displacement is arguably a more systemic version of the ‘hybrid model of assistance’ for refugees. The same reasons why donors were hesitant to fund hybrid models in the 1990s are only expanded and intensified for situations of internal displacement due to the increased complexities described above. ‘Clean aid,’ as such, cannot be ‘clean’ within the context of internal displacement. This results in an emergency-oriented response from the aid community, recreating and solidifying the ‘bifurcated architecture of the aid system’ (Macrae and Harmer 2004), that closely mirrors the same failures that occurred in refugee policy throughout the 1980s and 1990s. As the following sections demonstrate, this distinct binary is conceptualised through temporal notions of responsibility, which only serve to reify an already dichotomous assistance structure.

Temporal notions of responsibility

The conceptual frame through which the break in the continuum is viewed only reinforces the perpetual division between emergency and long-term phases of assistance. Such a frame utilises temporal markers—*when* conflict (and, therefore, it is assumed, displacement) ends—to signal when the emergency or development phases of relief should commence, when the shift in the continuum from relief to development should and will take place. Such a shift is predicated on certain understandings of both conflict and need. Relief should be delivered whilst the conflict is occurring to those directly affected. Development should commence once the conflict is ‘over,’ across the entire affected region, to address the broader needs of the community. There is understood to be a rehabilitation period in between when relief ends and development starts that occurs when peace is being established. This linear relationship between relief, rehabilitation, and development—mirroring the linear relationship between conflict and post-conflict, peace and war—relies on the assumption that there is a direct correlation between conflict, displacement, and needs; the relief-development continuum is dependent upon the temporality of both conflict and displacement.

When within the temporal frame, however, does *responsibility* for such populations shift? The shift in responsibility is based on the following assumption: when conflict ends, so do both displacement and the needs associated with such displacement. This, in turn, influences not only what kind of assistance is put in place, emergency vs. development, but also, who ends up providing such assistance. When conflict is 'active,' the international community responds to those displaced as if it is an emergency situation (which it can be, but is not always); when conflict becomes 'passive' or is 'over,' the majority of humanitarian actors (those responding to the first phase) leave, and the home country is left responsible for those populations that fell through the cracks of the initial phase of response, supported by certain development organisations who enter to fill the organisational void. The relief and development phases not only correspond with, but also, *depend* on the status of conflict in the environment in which they operate. The shift between those phases is equally dependent on the shift from conflict to 'post-conflict.'

The *declaration* of conflict's end, whether accurate or not, determines who is then responsible for the populations affected by such conflict. Although such a declaration by the international community is relevant for both refugee and IDP situations, for the internally displaced that declaration is the sole determinant of how and to what degree individuals receive assistance. Rather than a strictly geographic marker—the re-crossing of an international border by a refugee, removing his or her status as such—as the signal to shift international responsibility, it is the (arbitrary) declaration that conflict, and therefore displacement, ends that is the marker within an IDP context.

The 'post-conflict' problem with internal displacement

What is happening now in the context of internal displacement is a repetition of the 'post-conflict' phenomenon Macrae critiqued concerning refugee policy in the 1990s. In trying to bring new life to the continuum by emphasising the 'post-conflict' nature of assistance, this time within the context of internal displacement, such an approach only reinforces the conflict-'post-conflict'/relief-development binary. Use of the term, rather than providing incentive to bridge the phases as intended, strengthens the distinction and temporal difference between them based on problematic measures of conflict. Such conflation not only has the potential to solidify an assistance structure built within a faulty discursive framework, but also, in simply identifying a division, renders the continuum perpetually divided in practice.

The term 'post-conflict' is utilised as a political tool that solidifies such a temporal interpretation. Although the term 'post-conflict' can aptly describe certain select contexts, such a label makes two claims: that conflict is 'over,' and that displacement-specific needs no longer exist on the ground after that point. Conflict—defined as such—might have subsided, but is not necessarily over. The application of this label oversimplifies the complex nature and varied meanings of conflict at the micro-level. The scope and complexity of the needs presented by those displaced cannot be adapted to a paradigm that, through its very structure, grossly oversimplifies a more complex reality.

Conclusion

The variance within situations of internal displacement causes a conundrum for the aid community; the same factors that prevented the success of the continuum for refugees—the failure of 'clean aid'—is now inherent within situations of internal displacement. The approach taken to address internal displacement is arguably a more systemic version of the 'hybrid model of assistance' for refugees: the same reasons why donors were hesitant to fund hybrid models in the 1990s are expanded and intensified for situations of internal displacement. Confined within the same location as indefinable and perpetual realms of conflict, responses to IDPs are never apolitical; 'clean aid' cannot be clean in such contexts. The relief-development continuum is still premised on temporal assumptions that fall apart within an IDP context, rendering the linear assumption no longer valid for situations of internal displacement.

The design and implementation of a strictly humanitarian mechanism, the cluster approach, as the only institutional framework for IDPs is evidence of such a phenomenon, demonstrating that internal displacement is still treated as an emergency situation despite the varied and often protracted nature of such displacement on the ground. Such an approach does improve coordination efforts and sector coverage, yet does not provide a foundation to adequately address the long-term needs of the community. The institutional response on the ground in Northern Ugandan supports this claim. IDP assistance structures work within this problematic temporal paradigm, rather than break from it, having recreated the relief-development continuum in a context that sets it up for failure. Such a division remains an obstacle to addressing the long-term needs of IDPs in protracted situations and, as such, perpetuates the continuum model that must be reassessed for aid structures moving forward.

Sarah E. Freeman is an American national who holds a B.A. in Sociology and International Studies from Northwestern University, where she focused on institutional responses to forced displacement. She conducted research on the aid structure in place for conflict-induced internally displaced persons in North-

ern Uganda, and has worked with research institutions and NGOs in the area of forced migration. The views expressed in this article are entirely her own.

References Cited

BETTS, A. (2004) 'International Cooperation and the targeting of development assistance for refugee solutions: Lessons from the 1980s', *UNHCR Working Paper* **107**: 1-22.

BUCHANAN-SMITH, M. and **MAXWELL, S.** (1994) 'Linking relief and development: an introduction and overview', Paper submitted to the workshop *Linking Relief and Development*, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, 28-29 March 1994.

CLAPHAM, C. (1996) *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

COHEN, R. and **DENG, F.M.** (1998) *Masses in Flight: The Global Crisis of Internal Displacement*, Washington D.C., The Brookings Institution.

COHEN, R. (2003) 'The role of protection in ending displacement', *Forced Migration Review* **17**: 21-23.

COHEN, R. (2009) 'Up Close and From the Tower: Two Views of Refugee and Internally Displaced Populations', Brookings Institution. Available here: <<http://www.brookings.edu/research/articles/2009/09/internal-displacement-cohen>> (Accessed 26 April 2014).

CRISP, J. (2001) 'Mind the Gap! UNHCR, humanitarian assistance and the development process', *UNHCR Working Paper* **43**: 1-22.

DUFFIELD, M. (1994) 'Complex Emergencies and the Crisis of Developmentalism', *Institute of Development Studies Bulletin* **25**(4): 1-15.

DUFFIELD, M. (1999) 'Globalization and War Economies: Promoting Order or the Return of History?', *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* **23**(2): 21-38.

FERRIS, E. and **HALFF, K.** (2011) 'Protracted Internal Displacement: Is Local Integration a Solution?' *Forced Migration Review* **38**: 53-54.

FERRIS, E. and **MOONEY, E.** and **STARK, C.** (2012) 'From National Responsibility to Response - Part I: General Conclusions on IDP Protection', TerraNullius, 21 February 2012. Available here: <<http://terraonullius.wordpress.com/2012/02/21/from-national-responsibility-to-response-part-i-general-conclusions-on-idp-protection/>> (Accessed 26 April 2012).

FORCED MIGRATION REVIEW (2003) 'When Does Internal Displacement End?', *FMR* **17**: 1-56.

HARRELL-BOND, B.E. (1986) *Imposing Aid: Emergency Assistance to Refugees*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

HYNDMAN, J. (2000) *Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE (2006) 'IASC Interim Self-Assessment of Implementation of the Cluster Approach in the Field', Circulated at IASC 66th Working Group Meeting, New York, United Nations: 23 November 2006.

INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE (2006b) 'Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response'. 24 November 2006, Available from: <<http://www.refworld.org/docid/460a8ccc2.html>> (Accessed 25 April 2014).

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT MONITORING CENTRE (2014) *Global Overview 2014: People internally displaced by conflict and violence*, Geneva, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. Available from: <<http://www.internal-displacement.org/assets/publications/2014/201405-global-overview-2014-en.pdf>>

JACKSON, R. (1990) *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

KALDOR, M. (2007) *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*, Stanford, Stanford University Press.

LOESCHER, G. (2001) *The UNHCR and World Politics: A Perilous Path*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

MACRAE, J. (1999) 'Aiding peace...and war: UNHCR, returnee reintegration, and the relief-development debate', *UNHCR Working Paper* **14**: 1-38.

MACRAE, J. (2001) *Aiding Recovery? The Crisis of Aid in Chronic Political Emergencies*, London, Zed Books.

MACRAE, J. and **HARMER, A.** (2004) 'Beyond the Continuum: An overview of the changing role of aid policy in protracted crises', *Humanitarian Policy Group Research Briefing* **16**: 1-4.

MOONEY, E. (2002) 'An IDP No More? Exploring the Issue of When Internal Displacement Ends', *Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement*: 1-15.

MOORE, D. (2000) 'Levelling the Playing Fields & Embedding Illusions: 'Post-Conflict' Discourse & Neo-Liberal 'Development' in War-Torn Africa', *Review of African Political Economy* **27**(83): 11-28.

MORRIS, T. (2006) 'UNHCR, IDPs, and clusters', *Forced Migration Review* **25**: 54-55.

ROSS, J. and **MAXWELL S.** and **BUCHANAN-SMITH, M.** (1994) 'Linking Relief and Development: Report on a Workshop Held at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, 28-29 March 1994', *Linking Relief and Development, Conference Report, 28-29 March 1994, Sussex, UK*.

SEAMAN, J. (1994) 'Relief, Rehabilitation and Development: Are the Distinctions Useful?' *IDS Bulletin* **25**(4): 33-36.

STEETS, J. and **GRUNEWALD, F.** (2010) 'IASC Cluster Approach Evaluation, 2nd Phase Country Study, April 2010: Uganda', *Groupe URD and Global Public Policy Institute*, April 2010.

UGANDA HUMANITARIAN CLUSTERS (2011) 'Cluster Approach in Uganda', <<http://ugandaclusters.ug/ugclsapprch.htm>> (Accessed on 6 May 2011).

UN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (1998) 'Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons: Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement', UN Doc. E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, 11 February 1998.

UNHCR (2010) 'Concept Note – Transitional Solutions Initiative UNDP and UNHCR in Collaboration with the World Bank', 10 October 2010. Available from: <<http://www.refworld.org/docid/517511934.html>> (Accessed 26 April 2014).

UNHCR (2012) 'Funding UNHCR's Programmes', *UNHCR Global Report 2012*: 96-120.

UNHCR (2011) Interview with field office in Northern Uganda, 26 April 2011.

UNHCR (2000) 'Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 1999'. Available from: <<http://www.refworld.org/docid/3boof4d40.html>> (Accessed 27 April 2014).

UNHCR (1997) 'Review of UNHCR's phase-out strategies: case studies in countries of origin', 1 February 1997. Available from: <<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/searchpage?search&docid=3ae6bd448&query=CIREFCA>> (Accessed 26 March 2014).

UNHCR and **BROOKINGS-BERN PROJECT ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT** (2007) 'Expert Seminar on Protracted IDP Situations', 1-51 in *Seminar Report, Geneva, Switzerland: 21-22 June 2007*.

UNOCHA (2011) Interview with field office in Northern Uganda, 18 April 2011.