ADDRESSING HORIZONTAL INEQUALITIES AS DRIVERS OF CONFLICT IN THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

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Summary

Addressing inequalities is important – not only for economic growth, development and Millennium Development Goal (MDG) achievement – but also from a peace and security perspective. Horizontal inequalities increase the risk of violent conflict, and violence and conflict can worsen inequalities. This paper analyzes how inequalities, violent conflicts, and the relation between them, are holding back development, adding to the arguments for addressing them in the post-2015 framework.

The paper reviews evidence that various inequalities – economic, political, cultural, gender and those related to security, justice and social services – can heighten group grievances and lead to conflict in diverse contexts around the world. For example, access to social services has fuelled inter-group hostility in Kosovo; gender inequality has perpetuated violence against women in Melanesia; political exclusion has underpinned destabilizing protests and violence in Yemen; and unequal security and justice provision has deepened conflict divides in many countries across Africa and South and Central Asia.

This evidence is strong enough for policy makers to take action on inequality – even though more research is needed on particular types of inequality, for example those related to gender, security and justice. There needs to be a focus on strengthening the relations among groups to build confidence and mitigate the divisions that can lead to conflict, violence and underdevelopment. This can be achieved through addressing inequality through inclusion, fairness, responsiveness, accountability to all social groups, and measures to strengthen inter-group relations.

Based on the evidence and analysis presented in this paper, in the post-2015 development framework, policy options to address inequalities include the following:
- Equality can be recognized as one of the guiding principles underpinning the whole framework;
- One or more goals can specifically focus on inequality, for example by type of inequality (social equality, economic equality, political equality), similar to MDG3 on gender equality;
- Inequalities could be integrated as a concern into goals and targets on different sectoral/thematic issues (politics, security, justice, health, education, poverty), through language stressing inclusion, fairness, responsiveness and accountability to all social groups throughout the framework;
- Indicators can be better disaggregated by more categories to show attainment of development benefits by different groups within society, and an inequality measure could be added for each indicator; and
- Progress towards goals can be weighted to ensure that progress on inequality scores higher.

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Biographical notes

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I.   Introduction

1.   There are increasing concerns about persistent and often rising inequalities. These concerns reflect their detrimental effects on economic growth, development and the Millennium Development Goals. The negative impact of inequalities on the likelihood of violent conflict often receives much less attention.

2.   This paper will discuss the reasons why addressing inequalities is also important from a peace and security perspective. It will present evidence of the effect that various types of horizontal inequalities have on violent conflict and suggest ways how this can be accounted for in the post-2015 development framework.

3.   The paper will argue that horizontal inequalities, which will be defined as inequalities among and between groups, raise the risk of violent conflict. Horizontal inequalities can have economic, social, political, cultural, security or justice dimensions, but they are particularly important as drivers of conflict when a number of these dimensions coincide.

4.   Equality has been recognized as an important value in the Millennium Declaration and underlines various human rights treaties. Yet, the time has arrived to devise concrete policies and measures to assess progress in the implementation of those policies.

II.   The concepts

5.   The predominant form of violent conflict has changed dramatically in recent decades, from national armies fighting each other (inter-state wars); to armies fighting for independence, separation or political control (intra-state or civil wars); to various forms of violence, involving non-state actors, such as rebels, gangs and organized crime (World Bank, 2011). There are countless little wars with no front lines, no battlefields, no clear conflict zones and no distinctions between combatants and civilians (Reno, 2011). Violence might involve rag-tag rebels, gangs, organized crime and high homicide rates. In fact, in a number of Central American countries, homicide rates are higher presently than during their civil wars (World Bank, 2011).

6.   Yet violence, in all its forms, threatens people's security and endangers countries' development. We therefore are not merely focused on violent conflict involving states (either intrastate or civil wars), but take a broader view on violence. We use the term "organized violence," defined by the 2011 World Development Report as "the use or threat of physical force by groups", which "includes state actions against other states or against civilians, civil wars, electoral violence between opposing sides, communal conflicts based on regional, ethnic, religious or other group identities or competing economic interests, gang-based violence and

organized crime and international non-state armed movements with ideological aims" (World Bank, 2011, p.xv). Though we may use the term "conflict" or describe different types of violent conflicts and wars, we mean these as part of the greater concept of "violence."

7.   It is unusual for violence to be explicable in terms of any single cause. Drivers of violence can be political, economic, social and environmental. They can include socio-economic inequalities, injustice, joblessness, natural resources management, human rights abuse, political exclusion and corruption. In many cases, it is difficult to define clear causes, drivers or triggers, and different factors are interrelated or might morph into each other and change over time.

8.   While the drivers of violent conflict are varied and complex, the importance of inequalities as a cause of violent conflict has long been recognized, from Aristotle to the United Nations Charter. We will focus on one key type of inequalities, namely "horizontal inequalities," as defined by Frances Stewart to mean "severe inequalities between culturally defined groups" (Stewart, 2002, p.3). These types of inequalities are different from the "normal definition of inequality which lines individuals up vertically and measures inequality over the range of individuals" (Stewart, 2002, p.3). There are several types of horizontal inequalities (HIs). The first is economic, which includes "inequalities in access to, use of and ownership of assets – financial, human, social or natural resources – and inequalities in income levels and employment opportunities"(Stewart, 2010, p.2).The second is social, which consists of inequalities in access to a range of services, such as education, health care and housing (Stewart, 2010). The third type is political, which considers the distribution of political power and access to political participation. Fourth, horizontal inequalities can relate to cultural aspects and disparities in the recognition and standing of different groups' language, religion, customs, norms and practices (Stewart, 2010). Finally, there can be inequalities in access to security and justice.

9.   Acknowledging the important role that inequalities can play in driving conflict, many have attempted to measure indicators to better understand propensity toward violence. There is consensus that countries with lower aggregate economic development have higher likelihood of violence. Yet there is less agreement on how domestic distribution of wealth, resources and access to services is linked to conflict. Because again, the ability to measure indicators of this is difficult. Especially challenging is mapping domestic inequalities against group identities and divisions. It is this intersection of inequalities and group identities (i.e., horizontal inequalities) that is often crucial to consider when devising development policies. Mitigating horizontal inequalities can be an important step in precluding violence.

III.   Horizontal Inequalities and Drivers of Violence: Quantitative Research

1. Economic Inequalities

10.   The empirical work on the causes of violent conflicts was for some time dominated by the greed vs. grievance debate. Paul Collier (2007) argued that greed has been the most important driver of civil wars and that there is little evidence that grievances such as political or economic repression correlate to civil wars and that it is important for states to make rebellion less feasible. Frances Stewart, on the other hand, placed greater emphasis on states becoming more successful at winning the trust and confidence of society through addressing inequalities and grievances. This debate was cast too simplistically. It is now widely accepted in the global policy community that violent conflicts are driven by a variety of factors, which often interact with each other (Keen, 2012; World Bank, 2011).

11.   Stewart claims that disparities across culturally-defined groups within society – horizontal inequalities – can fuel resentment and violent conflict. She takes inspiration from Ted Gurr, who writes that when major political or economic grievances in society overlap with social identities, violence is more likely (Gurr, 1993). Her argument is supported by empirical evidence. She analyzes nine country cases and has found that when "ethnic identities coincide with economic/social ones, social instability of one sort of [sic] another is likely" (Stewart, 2002, p.32).

12.   The empirical work that finds no relationship between economic inequalities and conflict focus on vertical, rather than horizontal inequalities. The Institute for Economics and Peace (2011) finds that levels of peace are not correlated with the pre-eminent measure of income inequality, the Gini coefficient. In his earlier research, Collier analyzed proxy measures of domestic inequality such as income inequality and disparities of land ownership and concluded that they have no effect on the likelihood of conflict (Collier, 2002, p.97). Rather than considering inequalities as motivations for rebellion, Collier placed more emphasis on the conditions that make rebellion "financially and militarily viable," or what sustains the conflict (Collier, 2003). According to Collier, "If economic agendas are driving conflict, then it is likely that some groups are benefiting from conflict and that these groups therefore have some interest in initiating and sustaining it" (Collier, 2000, p.91). It should be noted, however, that Collier has begun to expand his perspective on drivers of conflict. In fact, his most recent book on civil wars expands his focus from economic factors to include issues of security, politics, and state institutions (Jones & Elgin-Cossart, 2011). Others have softened the contours of the "greed versus grievance" debate as well. Fearon has "found that 'greed' explanations are not sufficient to explain civil wars or patterns of under-development" (ibid).

13.   Some recent econometric research has indicated a correlation between high degrees of socio-economic horizontal inequalities in particular and elevated risk of violent conflict. Variables showing this relationship include average household assets (Østby, 2008) and wealth

levels (Cederman, Wimmer & Min, 2010). A report by the Geneva Declaration also asserts that countries that register severe social and economic inequalities face a greater probability of tipping into, or facing a current conflict (Geneva Declaration, 2010, p.20) and that these risks are amplified in contexts affected by low levels of economic development and religious polarization (ibid, p.20). The Institute for Economics and Peace finds that levels of peace are correlated with the inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2011, pp. 18,20,22).

14.   Graham Brown has investigated [political and] economic horizontal inequalities (HIs) together. His earlier work considered HIs in the case of Aceh, Indonesia, where he found serious differences of occupation levels, educational attainment and land holdings across ethnic groups and considered the relationship with separatist conflict there (Brown, 2005). He subsequently investigated separatist conflicts in 31 countries in Europe, North and South America and parts of Asia and concluded that as a region's GDP per capita varies from the national average, the likelihood of separatist violence increases (Brown, 2010).

15.   In addition, there is evidence that economic shocks can increase a country's likelihood of violence. Shocks may abruptly impact the distribution of economic wealth and resources and upset entrenched patterns of such distribution, thereby increasing inequalities and rendering a country more vulnerable (Blattman & Miguel, 2010, p.25). Indeed, there is some evidence on the role of inequality in underpinning some of the causal relationships at play. Citing work by Richard Auty, Indra de Soysa, Terry Lynn Karl, James Fearon, Michael Ross, and Jakob Svensson, the Center on International Cooperation (CIC) at New York University concludes that "motives [for participating in violence] can also be economic: if marginal groups are blocked … incentives exist to challenge the existing order – amplified when the state has significant natural resources" (Jones & Elgin-Cossart, 2011, p.6).

2. Inequalities in Access to Social Services

16.   Social horizontal inequalities are also important to consider in the context of conflict. For example, recent econometric research has pointed to a correlation between variance in child mortality rates across groups and conflict (Mancini, 2008).

17.   Østby has investigated the potential association between inequalities in terms of years of education and onset of conflict. For countries "with low levels of horizontal social inequality (5th percentile), the probability of onset of civil conflict in any given year is 1.75%," but if inequality in terms of years of education increases from the 5th to the 95th percentile, "the probability of conflict more than doubles, to 3.7%," holding all other variables constant (Østby, 2008).

18.   In asserting that poor inter-group relations slow a state from overcoming fragility, Kaplan also draws attention to the impact of ethnic division in compounding underdevelopment and inequality. According to Kaplan (2009), "unstable environments encourage polities to split along the most profound cleavages" (pp.467-468). He thus notes studies showing that racial and ethnic divisions reduce incentives for people to be generous to others through social welfare, and undermine support for government spending on all types of public goods. For example, he observes that in sub-Saharan Africa, the least ethnically divided societies spend five times more per capita than the most divided societies on HIV prevention and treatment (ibid, pp.466-472).

3. *Political Inequalities*

19.   Attempts have been made to relate political inequalities to conflict. Lars-Erik Cederman and colleagues analyzed 124 ethnic conflicts occurring between 1946 and 2005. They test hypotheses connecting ethnic groups' access to power and conflict. Their results show that "the frequency of conflict increases roughly with the degree of exclusion. Excluded groups are much more likely to experience a rebellion in their name (0.66 percent) compared with groups in power (0.23 percent)" (Cederman et.al., 2010). They consider "excluded groups" and income levels and find that "excluded groups across all income levels are three times more likely to initiate conflict against the state as compared with included groups that enjoy representation at the center" (Cederman et.al, 2010). Andreas Wimmer, Cederman and Brian Min have demonstrated that countries in which political exclusion between groups is high, the risk of conflict increases (Wimmer, Cederman & Min, 2009).

20.   IEP also observes that "some nations have well-functioning governments without the presence of effective democratic institutions. However, in spite of these outliers … the top ten most peaceful nations in the GPI are all well-functioning democracies while most of the bottom ten nations are authoritarian regimes or failed states' (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2011).

21.   In terms of arguments and evidence that link political inequality to conflict, the OECD recognizes that "in some cases fragility reflects the degree to which the political settlement is exclusionary and/or privileges certain groups and interests over others" (OECD, 2011). A useful overview of current knowledge in this area is offered by CIC, which emphasizes three points: that settlements that lead to democratic systems are not the only stable option – and many studies show that early movement to democratic systems is risky; that, nonetheless, since the end of the Cold War, all countries that have lastingly exited from violence – with the exception of Angola – have done so by adopting an inclusive political settlement; and that authoritarian systems have a shelf-life. Thus a sustained inability to address the political demands of a

population or to administer justice in an accessible, even-handed way, ultimately stokes up popular pressures that are hard to contain (Jones & Elgin-Cossart, 2011, pp.31-32, 35).

22.   Keen further notes how "econometric analysis suggests that politically and economically inclusive government tends to reduce the risk of conflict" and draws attention to research illustrating that "ethnic mobilization and participation of indigenous groups in mainstream politics (notably in Ecuador and Bolivia) tended to discourage outright rebellion (in contrast to Guatemala and Peru, where indigenous groups were largely excluded from formal politics)" (Keen, 2012, p.761).

23.   A further aspect of the links between conflict and inequality that should not be overlooked is the role of violence, conflict and fragility in exacerbating inequalities of different kinds. For example, the OECD and Paffenholz suggest the role of violence in exacerbating political exclusion: for the OECD, one consequence of conflict and violence is that "political voice and social accountability from the bottom up is often severely undermined" (OECD, 2011, pp. 31-32,35).

24.   There seems to be a strong link between the political exclusion of certain groups within society and violent conflict that warrants further research.

4. Cultural Inequalities

25.   The potential for inequalities of different kinds to worsen inter-group relations is also significant in that intergroup relations have been found to be correlated with levels of peace/conflict. The Institute for Economics and Peace provides evidence on the importance of inter-group relations. It finds that levels of peace are correlated with ISS's measures of both Intergroup Cohesion and Interpersonal Safety and Trust.[i] The OECD also adds that unequal gender relations are a structural risk factor for armed violence (OECD, 2009, p.35).

26.   A range of evidence helps to substantiate the link between gender inequality, conflict and violence (Caprioli, 2000; Caprioli, 2005; Melander, 2005). The Institute for Economics and Peace finds that levels of peace are correlated with three indices measuring countries' levels of gender equality: ISS's measure of gender equality, the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index as well as the EIU's gender inequality measure. Another recent study found that levels of gender inequality, measured by inequities in family law (including marriage, divorce, custody and inheritance) are strongly correlated with conflict and instability. Comparing gender inequality with other factors which are more conventionally thought of as associated with conflict, including levels of democracy (Freedom House index) and levels of income (GDP per capita), this study found that "by far the best predictor of state peacefulness in this analytic set is actually level of inequity in family law and practice" (Hudson, Ballif-Spanvill, Caprioli & Emmett, 2012, p.113).

27.   A paper entitled 'Women, gender and peacebuilding: do contributions add up?' by CDA Collaborative Learning Projects provides some qualitative research findings that begin to explain in part how these quantitative correlations between gender inequality and conflict could work in practice. The paper notes the following examples of ways in which women's organizations had been found to be contributing to peace: counteracting the divides that can be fuelled by inequality ("bridging differences in religion, ethnicity, class and urban and rural divides for the larger cause of peace"); putting pressure on leaders concerning peace negotiations, with significant cumulative effects on the behavior of the parties; leading and guiding overall civil society efforts to consolidate peace and address drivers of conflict; making symbolic statements that send powerful cultural messages in favor of peace; and shifting the conversation to place neglected issues that could be key to peace on the agenda (and keeping them on the agenda in post-conflict reconstruction) (CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2011, pp.3-9).

28.   Using data from Demographic and Health Surveys (administered by the U.S. Agency for International Development), Gudrun Østby analyzes health, education and household asset information from women in more than 70 developing countries, 39 countries of which include ethnic affiliation. She tests whether explanatory variables such as household asset ownership compared to ethnicity and household assets taken together are related to onset of civil conflict. Østby finds no evidence of a relationship between a simple measure of household assets and conflict. However, when household assets and ethnicity are taken together (i.e., measured as a horizontal economic inequality), such inequality does show a positive relationship to conflict (Østby, 2008).

IV.   Qualitative Case Studies: How Inequalities Look in Practice

1. Political Inequalities

29.   In terms of qualitative examples of the role of political inequalities in driving conflict, Sudan and South Sudan are cases in point. The core issue of marginalization of the periphery by a centrally controlled state underpinned the four decades of civil war that followed after Sudanese independence – and continues to underpin violence in both countries. Saferworld's work in South Sudan has shown over a number of years how grievances related to unequal or unfair governance and feelings of marginalization have fuelled inter-communal violence. Saferworld participatory conflict analysis in Warrap, Jonglei and Unity States (Saferworld, 2011 c,d,e; 2012a) in 2011-12 showed that feelings of political marginalization run deep in in all three states and are fuelling conflict in each context in different ways (Saferworld, 2012a). Following the inter-ethnic conflict in Jonglei, which claimed hundreds of lives in December 2011, the Murle demanded a state of their own, to be carved out of Jonglei state, directly as a result of a

lack of representation in the state government, which in turn they saw as contributing to a lack of service delivery and resulting violence. In all three states, dissatisfaction with political processes and state governments has created an environment of uncertainty that has made it relatively easy to mobilize people to violence.

30.   A further illustration is provided by recent participatory conflict analysis by Saferworld in Yemen, in which the political exclusion of certain groups from decision-making and the concentration of power in the hands of the elite were identified as key drivers of violence in 2011. The public feeling underpinning the violent unrest in Yemen was exemplified by a young male interviewee from Aden: "I am not out to protest against the president, I am out to protest against exclusion, and I am fully aware that I could face similar exclusion under other parties" (Saferworld, 2011f, p.6). Similarly, those interviewed argued that exclusionary processes continue to exist between competing grassroots coalitions vying for influence and voice within the protest movement itself. Political exclusion is thus a key issue that will continue to pose challenges for the future in Yemen (ibid).

2. Inequalities in Social Service Provision

31.   Inequalities in social service provision are linked to political factors and viewed by many as a significant driver of conflict. A survey cited by the World Bank is suggestive of the causal relationship between insufficient services, inequality and violence: citizens in all six countries surveyed named poverty/poor education and justice/inequality/corruption as the two primary drivers of conflict (World Bank, 2011, p.9). There are numerous qualitative examples of inequalities in service provision fuelling conflict. For example, a participatory conflict analysis by Saferworld in Kosovo in 2007 found that electricity provision was perceived as a driver of conflict: scheduled and unscheduled power cuts, uneven distribution of electricity throughout Kosovo and difficulties paying electricity bills were causing resentment and frustration, often directed against other communities rather than the Kosovo Energy Corporation (KEK). The research identified the clear risk that differences in energy provision for different communities could contribute to resentment between them. Analysis by International Crisis Group also illustrates how Yemen's political transition provides an illustration of how inequality in access to fair, accountable social service delivery between Southern and Northern Yemenis can drive unrest and conflict (International Crisis Group, 2012).

32.   A seminal conflict analysis of Sri Lanka by Jonathan Goodhand in 2005 described how key factors that have underpinned decades of violence in Sri Lanka include institutionalized systems of patronage and nepotism that have undermined the state's ability to mediate between the interests of different ethnic, religious and political groups (Goodhand & Klem, 2005). Saferworld (2010b) research on conflict sensitivity in Sri Lanka in 2010 highlighted the persistence of concerns over fair access to employment, land and land permits, and services

such as education and health. In the Eastern Province, for example, services were perceived by the public to be unevenly allocated towards different communities, with interviewees and focus group participants providing numerous examples of the impacts of unequal distribution to their respective communities of services (such as health and education), resources (including land) and economic opportunities. Many examples of local civil servants providing resources and economic development or employment opportunities to their own communities were cited during the research. Nepotism was also considered to be prevalent, with examples given of friends and family members of those in decision-making positions benefiting. Such discrimination heightened a sense of grievance within and tension between communities who were concerned about its potential to fuel renewed violence.

33.   Qualitative research by Saferworld in Bentiu, the capital of Unity State in South Sudan in 2011, provided a further example of how inequality in access to services can fuel conflict. In a situation of chronic poverty (average consumption rates between US$25-30 per capita per month), very little infrastructure and few health or education services were in place for communities, following years of lucrative oil production in the surrounding area. Many stakeholders noted concerns over the use of oil revenues. In their view, although a proportion of these were intended to contribute to community development under the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, very little has been done to develop social services in spite of the State's oil wealth. The result has been significant public anger. Illustrating the risks of such disaffection turning to further conflict in Unity State, in October 2011, 75 people died in renewed clashes in Mayom county of Unity State, between government and rebel forces (Saferworld, 2012b, p.96).

34.   Similar causes have driven the violent conflict in the Niger Delta in Nigeria, which is the main oil producing region, but which lags in social services.

3. Security-Related Inequalities

35.   Further research is needed on how security-related inequalities can drive conflict, but existing evidence suggests that a strong argument can be made about the importance of the security dimension of inequality as a driver of conflict in many contexts. CIC cites studies (by Brown, Puerto Gomez, Christensen, Gleditsch, Fearon and Laitin, Saleyhan, Collier, and Craft), illustrating how security factors can drive violence. For example, "minority groups can fear (or actually experience) persecution or oppression, and turn to arms to redress the situation." This can have cyclical effects due to the "security dilemma", whereby "one group moves to defend themselves from a possible attack by the state or another group, causing the state or the opposing group in turn to move towards violence" (Jones & Elgin-Cossart, 2011).

36.   Many qualitative examples can be cited on how unequal security provision has played a role in violence. Unequal security provision in Kenya has created areas (such as the Kibera slums in Nairobi and Pokot in Northern Kenya) in which groups are formed to provide security for certain groups in the absence of the State. Such groups tend to perpetuate insecurity, usually for their own private benefit. In Pokot, this takes the form of traditional warriors partaking in cattle raiding; and in Kibera vigilante gangs becoming criminal gangs in urban Kenya. Furthermore, in periods of political instability, such groups have been mobilized by political elites as conflict actors. The post-election violence in Kenya cannot be understood without reference to their role.

37.   In 2010, in post-war Sri Lanka, qualitative research by Saferworld in Eastern Province found that perceived inequalities in how security was provided to different groups had left a legacy of tensions and deficits of trust that continued to pose a risk of sudden outbursts of violence and retaliation. Amid the general climate of fear and with trust in security providers still nascent, interviewees described the reluctance to report incidents through formal channels, and how even small incidents could quickly flare up into inter-communal violence, drawing in armed actors. Qualitative research by Saferworld in 2011 examining border disputes in the Western Balkans from a people's perspective provides a further useful illustration: over a decade since the NATO intervention, perceptions among local communities of unequal treatment of the different ethnic groups by security providers and border authorities at the border/boundary between Kosovo and South Serbia still have the potential to precipitate deadly violence, as illustrated by the violence that killed a policeman in Northern Kosovo in July 2011 (Saferworld, 2011b).

4. *Justice-Related Inequalities*

38.   Inequality in the justice sector as a driver of conflict also requires further research. CIC believes justice to be an important part of peaceful recovery. At the same time it finds that: "the lack of rigorous work on the justice components of recovery results in confusion" (Jones & Elgin-Cossart, 2011). Nonetheless, justice-related inequality is widely acknowledged as a significant challenge. The OECD lists the following inequality-related justice sector issues as structural risk factors for armed violence: impunity in the judicial system; an ineffective criminal justice system; social, political and economic inequalities and exclusion; and weak, biased or problematic governance, corruption and under-governed spaces (OECD, 2009, p.35). UNDP provides a very similar list (UNDP, 2011, p.4)**.** In a multi-country survey, belief in the cause/revenge/injustice was the third most stated reason why young people join rebel movements or gangs. In five out of six countries surveyed, respondents also named injustice/inequality/corruption as the primary driver of conflict (World Bank, 2011, p.9). The *World Development Report 2011* adds that "stresses" in the justice sector can be internal

(ethnic, religious, or regional competition, real or perceived discrimination, human rights abuses) or external (perceived global inequality and injustice in the treatment of ethnic or religious groups) (World Bank, 2011, p.7).

39.   There are numerous qualitative examples of how justice-related inequalities can fuel conflict and violence. Control over the justice system by a particular political, social or ethnic elite has been linked to instability and violence in contexts as diverse as Guinea, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan, and Zimbabwe (Freedom House, 2012; Amnesty International, 2012; International Crisis Group, 2006; Human Rights Watch, 2009; Forum 18, 2005). According to Conciliation Resources, impunity for abuses suffered by the Acholi minority in Northern Uganda risks sustaining the grievances that fuelled the creation of the Lord's Resistance Army (Conciliation Resources, 2011). In Nigeria, perceptions of injustice by Ogoni and Ijaw Delta minorities has fuelled deep grievances and cycles of violence (UNEP, 2011). Research by Saferworld in South Sudan also illustrates how unequal access to justice among certain groups imposed by socio-economic inequality or severe underdevelopment can impact on conflict and violence. Individuals in remote and/or particularly impoverished areas of the country may need to travel miles to get to the nearest court. This is compounded by a general lack of judges, court houses and other infrastructure and the public's lack of knowledge of the law and their rights under it. This absence of formal justice effectively forces communities to provide for their own security and justice. When crimes occur or disputes arise, this often results in significant interpersonal and inter-communal conflict (Saferworld, 2011a).

5. *Gender Inequalities*

40.   Although violence against women is (with some exceptions) not usually "organized", its pervasive nature, the targeting of a specific social group and the widespread failure of states to prevent and respond to it arguably make it systemic, placing it within the scope of "organized violence" considered in this paper. There is considerable evidence that gender inequality – in the form of social, economic, legal and political inequalities – is a root cause of violence against women (UK DfID, 2012; UN Women, 2012). A recent study by Lori Heise found that the discriminatory attitudes toward women and girls which underlie gender inequality are the most consistent predictor of the use of violence by men against women and girls (Heise, 2011).

41.   A qualitative illustration of how gender inequality relates to violence is provided by the research of the Australian National University's *State, Society and Governance in Melanesia* Project. High levels of violence against women occur in the region of Melanesia (Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Papua and Fiji). Examining causes of and policy responses to this violence, ANU notes not only the need for much stronger legal and judicial measures to uphold women's rights, but also attention to the root causes. It asserts the need for a legal and policy environment supportive of women's rights and a culture that

promotes non-violence, empowers individuals to take a public stand against abuse, and fosters relationships based on equity (Eves, 2012).

42.   In addition to being a form of systematic violence in itself, there is a strong correlation between levels of gender-based violence and conflict and instability at the national level. Gender-based violence increases during conflict and is sometimes used as a tactic of war. Case studies confirm that in Algeria, Chechnya, Northeast India, Sierra Leone, and South Sudan, systemic use of sexual violence was a way to dishonor and humiliate not just women, but the entire enemy group (Center for International Cooperation and Security (CICS), 2005), p.20). Violence against women in the aftermath of conflict was seen in El Salvador where an estimated 57 percent of women suffered physical violence at the hands of their partner, (ibid, p.20) and UN Women reported that in the aftermath of the war in Cambodia an estimated 75 percent of women experienced domestic violence (ibid, p.21).

43.   The patriarchal gender roles, which lie at the heart of gender inequality, can also fuel armed conflict within and among communities. Saferworld participatory conflict analysis in South Sudan highlighted that cultural notions of masculinity, in which gun ownership and participation in cattle-raiding are seen as a rite of passage for adolescent boys and key part of being men, are fuelling cycles of violence between communities. This is further exacerbated by early marriage and rising bride prices – practices which are the result of discrimination against women and girls. According to local women's organizations, this phenomenon – perpetuated by women's disempowerment, lack of education and customary marriage practices – in turn perpetuates and deepens conflicts by locking communities into cycles of revenge (Saferworld, 2012a). There is emerging evidence that a high prevalence of violence against women within societies may be a structural cause or enabling factor for armed conflict and instability at the national level (Hudson, Ballif-Spanvill, Caprioli, McDermott & Emmett, 2009). Various possible explanations exist as to why the normalization of violence at the micro level may make violence more likely at the national level (Carpenter, 2006). However, the lack of long-term data on violence against women makes causality difficult to establish, and further research is needed.

44.   While women are undoubtedly negatively-affected by violence, research indicates that at the global level, male homicide rates are roughly double female rates. At the national level in poor settings, the ratio can be even more extreme (Brender & Muggah, 2012). Conflict and violence also impact boys and men in numerous detrimental ways, including through forced military recruitment and underpinning violent concepts of masculinity. Often, sexual violence against men and boys in conflict situations may be overlooked. While it is not always conceptualized as such, gender-based violence against men and boys, including sex-selective massacre, forced recruitment as combatants and sexual violence also increase during times of

conflict (Carpenter, 2006). Because this violence is based on traditional, patriarchal notions of the role of men and boys within societies, it is closely connected with gender inequality.

45.   A number of studies also provide examples of how gender inequality can lead women and girls to become combatants. For example, in a survey of Maoist combatants conducted by Saferworld in Nepal, nearly 20 per cent of female combatants cited the desire to challenge gender inequality and fight for women's rights as their main reason for joining the Maoist rebellion, and nearly 25 per cent joined because of sexual abuse and rape by state security forces (Saferworld, 2010a). Similarly, the report *Red Shoes*, commissioned by the ILO, on girls combatants' experiences during the Liberian civil war, found that the primary reasons girls interviewed during this study gave for taking up arms during were to protect themselves and other women from (particularly sexual) violence, to avenge such violence, and to attain gender equality in a context of deep inequality. The same report notes that although women generally comprise between 10 and 30 per cent of armed forces, surprisingly little research has been done so far on the lives of girl combatants in violent armed conflicts (Transition International, 2012, p.11).

46.   Although the available evidence does suggest strong interrelations between conflict, violence and several different kinds of inequalities, there is a need to explore these further. To do so, measures are needed that enable the examination of inequalities between different kinds of groups and in relation to different types of public good – such as unequal access to security and justice. However, CIC suggests that it will be challenging to improve knowledge of effective approaches to addressing inequality/injustice when available data tends to exclude information on identity groups, and few reliable perception surveys exist. Because some of the most widely used surveys fail to differentiate by identity group "it is difficult to say how just minority or vulnerable groups perceive their treatment to be" (Jones & Elgin-Cossart, 2011).

V.   Incorporating Inequalities into the Post-2015 Framework

47.   A wide-ranging view of contemporary scholarship by Paffenholz concludes that while "inequality, poverty and pressure from globalization and modernization can be a breeding ground for radicalization of societies. Overall the role of a country's government … is the key factor … i.e., it is not inequality or the existence of natural resources as such that might cause armed conflicts, but the way the government deals with these issues"(Paffenholz, 2008, p.17). This underscores the importance of designing the post-2015 framework in a way that not only recognizes the importance of inequalities but also encapsulates a credible policy response to addressing them effectively.

48.   There are several references in normative documents that reinforce the need to address inequalities in the post-2015 development agenda, ranging from moral to legal and from

practical to instrumental. The Millennium Declaration highlighted equality as a fundamental value. Equality is also an important principle guiding international human rights. Human rights treaty commitments oblige States to aim for universal access to at least a basic level of social rights, dismantle discrimination and achieve substantive equality (UN, 2012). The report of the UN system Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda recognized equality as a fundamental principle to guide the new framework.

49.   Inequalities could be addressed in the post-2015 development agenda in different ways. Equality could be a principle, without a specific goal, target or indicator – similar to the Millennium Declaration. It could also be a separate goal with specific targets on, for example, social, gender, economic and political inequalities. Or it could be mainstreamed, where various targets and indicators addressing inequalities are included for each goal in the post-2015 framework (where appropriate).

1. Policy Aspects

50.   A range of studies and policy documents outline a number of options for policymakers considering commitments to address inequalities as a contribution to peacebuilding and violence reduction. In the following paragraphs, we highlight key policy recommendations from a range of multi-country studies and multilateral institutions that promote equality – beginning with general and then looking in turn at social service provision, security, justice and economic opportunities among groups.

51.   General recommendations are provided by Kaplan, who argues for emphasis to be placed on creating more cohesive societies characterized by social equilibria with high levels of cooperation, trust, reciprocity, civic engagement, and collective well-being (Kaplan, 2009, pp.468, 471. The Crisis States Research Centre's multi-country study *Meeting the challenges of Crisis States* likewise points to the experience of "States that have achieved and maintained peace over time, even when they have presided over economic stagnation" and explains that "measures taken to consolidate national identity, institutions of citizenship and inter-community communication" have "insulate[d] them against both external crises and the disruptive and violence provoking characteristics of future economic development" (Putzel & Di John, 2012, p.18).

52.   There is considerable consensus among different policy communities that not only providing social services, but also and crucially ensuring fair access to them among different groups in society, is a key priority for conflict prevention, violence reduction and sustainable peacebuilding. Echoing the *World Development Report 2011* and work by the OECD (2011), CIC and CSRC, the German Development Institute (DIE) states that in the most fragile states rapid socio-economic gains are needed to build confidence (Gravingholt, Ziaja & Kreibaum, 2012;

Putzel & Di John, 2012; Jones & Elgin-Cossart, 2011). DIE particularly emphasizes the state's ability to provide citizens with basic life chances including protection from relatively avoidable disease, basic education and a basic administration. The OECD elaborates on this with the observation that: "Typically, social expectations about what constitutes basic goods and services (in addition to justice and security) include equal access to health, education, water, sanitation, communications and infrastructure" (Gravingholt et. al, 2012; OECD, 2011). UNDP also adds that performing institutions, with the capacity to deliver basic public services are even more critically important during crises (UNDP, 2011). The g7+ affirmed in the Dili Declaration the need to "bring service delivery … closer to citizens …. Our societies cannot develop without basic conditions that allow our citizens a good quality of life …. Education, health, water and sanitation … are fundamental to human and social development" (g7+, 2010).

53.   The crucial importance of fairness in service delivery is strongly emphasized by the g7+: "Effective programs that protect and strengthen the most vulnerable and reach the most remote and inaccessible areas are critical to both sustainability and stability. Aid must be distributed fairly" (g7+, 2010, pp.3-4). Affirming this, the *New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States* prioritizes the need to "build capacity for accountable and fair service delivery" as part of the fifth peacebuilding and statebuilding goal. Kaplan (2009) similarly asserts the importance of promoting national integration by investing in infrastructure, education, and health in poorer areas.

54.   In terms of actions to improve equality in the provision of security, the *World Development Report 2011* asserts the effectiveness of signals to build confidence, such as redeployment of security forces (to demonstrate attention to insecure areas or to publicly replace particular units with a record of distrust or abuse), as well as the involvement of women in security, justice, and economic empowerment programs (World Bank, 2011, pp.17-19).

55.   Among the policy priorities for improving justice systems set out by the OECD, several are concerned with strengthening inclusion and equality: developing fair laws; making courts, prosecution services and informal justice services not only efficient but also fair and accountable; ensuring people can access justice services that uphold the law, human rights and legal processes; and creating laws and bodies to protect human rights especially for marginalized and vulnerable groups (OECD DAC, 2007). The *World Development Report 2011* documents the importance of inequality-related measures to strengthen justice in overcoming conflict, including controlling the capture of rents by particular groups, using social accountability to do so, and removing factors seen as negative, such as discriminatory laws (World Bank, 2011, pp.17-20). Likewise, Kaplan recommends proactively reconciling inter-group wounds, for example through Truth and Reconciliation Commissions and reconciliation programmes (Kaplan, 2009). The *World Development Report 2011* highlights the need to

address inequalities as part of successful efforts to create jobs within transitions out of conflict and fragility. It thus emphasises the peacebuilding benefits of action towards the economic inclusion of marginalized groups through initiatives such as multi-sectoral community empowerment programmes, providing access to finance, and women's economic empowerment and asset expansion (World Bank, 2011, pp.8-9). Kaplan similarly recommends apportioning the profits from natural resources in a fair and transparent manner, ensuring that social spending is impartially distributed, and reducing economic inequities between rival groups (Kaplan, 2009).

56.   In terms of tackling political aspects of inequality, Kaplan's recommendations include prohibiting the formation of political parties based on ethnicity, religion, or region, and maintaining an ethno-regional balance in the political sphere (in cabinets, civil services, legislatures and the military) (Kaplan, 2009).

57.   Kaplan particularly advocates addressing inequality and poor inter-group relations through cultural approaches. This can include promoting social and cultural bonds across groups that institutionalize cooperation and that promote reconciliation where there has been a history of inter-group hostility; supporting the study, teaching, and use in television and radio of all major indigenous languages; and cultivating strong "we" feelings through various educational, sports, and cultural programmes (Kaplan, 2009).

58.   In terms of addressing gender inequality as a driver of conflict and violence, policy consensus is set out in UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR). UNSCR 1325 affirms the role of women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, stresses their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security, including in decision-making, and recognizes that this can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. UNSCR 1820 further stresses that sexual violence can significantly exacerbate conflict and impede the restoration of peace and security, and thus affirms that steps to prevent and respond to it can significantly contribute to peace and security.

59.   While there much evidence on the impacts of interventions to increase gender equality and promote women's rights in conflict affected and fragile states, much of it focuses on the impacts on gender relations/women's rights rather than impacts on peacebuilding overall (O'Connell & Harcourt, 2011).

60.   Research by IDS, Womankind and ActionAid on women's roles in peacebuilding in five countries found that where women were able to play an active role in peacebuilding at the local level it results in "greater impact in building peace in the community". The study affirms the importance of women's participation in peacebuilding, promotion of women's rights and equality, improving their access to justice and ensuring safe spaces for their participation in all

peacebuilding processes (IDS, WomenKind & ActionAid, 2012, pp.7-8). DFID's approach to preventing and reducing violence against women and girls (VAWG) also sets out a range of programming options in this area.[ii]

2. *Inequality Metrics*

61.   The current MDGs include already some inequality indicators. For example, there are indicators on the poverty gap and the share of poorest quintile in national consumption (MDG1) and on gender inequality in education and in politics (MDG3). Generally, disaggregating data by gender and rural/urban areas has been encouraged for all indicators as far as possible. The *MDGs Report* has, for example, reported on inequalities in underweight children by rural/urban areas and income quintile in the 2010 report (UN, 2010).

62.   To overcome the paucity of disaggregated data in existing measurement frameworks noted above, civil society organizations have argued that one way to prioritize cross-sectoral progress on inequality within the post-2015 framework would be to ensure any indicators used to measure progress are disaggregated (by sex, age, geography, identity and income), to analyse the fairness of access to resources, services and benefits (Saferworld et.al, 2012, p.7). Examples of quantitative surveys that are disaggregated in this way in conflict-affected and fragile-contexts demonstrate that it is practically possible to extend disaggregation and that costs need not be prohibitive.

63.   The practice to disaggregate could be expanded in the post-2015 framework by including specific indicators for each goal, such as for health targets. Inequalities among groups could be captured in one measure, for example, through the following inequality measure (Hodder & Lee, 1974):

$$I = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{k=0}^{n}(V_k - V)^2 \frac{P_k}{P}}{V}}$$

where
I = Inequality measure
V_k = Value of indicator within subset k (defined by region, income, social group)
V = National mean of indicator
P_k = Population in subset k (defined by region, income, social group)
P = National population

64.   The measure is basically a weighted average of the deviation between the value of a specific indicator within a certain group (whether defined by region, income, identity) and the average value for the country as a whole. The weights are the share of the population of the group in the national population. The inequality measure has a zero value when there is complete equality and a value of 100 when there is complete inequality – similar to the Gini coefficient. The measure can be applied to any indicator, including GDP per capita, child mortality rates, underweight children and pupil-to-teacher ratios.

65.   Progress towards goals can be weighted to ensure that progress on inequality scores higher (Vandemoortele & Delamonica, 2010). This would prevent a singular focus on aggregate progress and encourage pursuit of outcomes for groups who are left behind, including those affected by violent conflict.

VI.   Conclusions

66.   There are important reasons to include inequalities into the post-2015 framework, including the strong evidence that horizontal inequalities are important drivers of violent conflict. There are different ways that that could be accomplished:

- Equality can be recognized as one of the guiding principles underpinning the whole framework;

- One or more goals can specifically focus on inequality, for example by type of inequality (social equality, economic equality, political equality), similar to MDG3 on gender equality;

- Inequalities could be integrated as a concern into goals and targets on different sectoral/thematic issues (politics, security, justice, health, education, poverty), through language that upholds inclusion, fairness, responsiveness and accountability to all social groups throughout the framework;

- Indicators can be better disaggregated by more categories to show attainment of development benefits by different groups within society, and an inequality measure could be added for each indicator; and

- Progress towards goals can be weighted to ensure that progress on inequality scores higher.

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ENDNOTES

[i] ISS's measure of Intergroup Cohesion measures 'relations of cooperation and respect between identity groups in a society'. ISS's measure of Interpersonal Safety and Trust, collates perceptions survey data to examine 'extent to which individuals in society feel they can rely on those whom they have not met before, indicating how easy it is for individuals to form group associations, the cost of social organization, and the likelihood of collective action'. See Institute for Economics and Peace, 'Structures of peace: identifying what leads to peaceful societies' (2011), pp.18, 20, 22.

[ii] DFID stresses four kinds of approach: (1) Empowering women and girls; (2) Changing social norms; (3) Building political will and legal/institutional capacity to prevent and respond; and (4) Providing comprehensive services. See DFID, 'Violence against Women and Girls: A Theory of Change for Tackling Violence against Women and Girls', (2012).