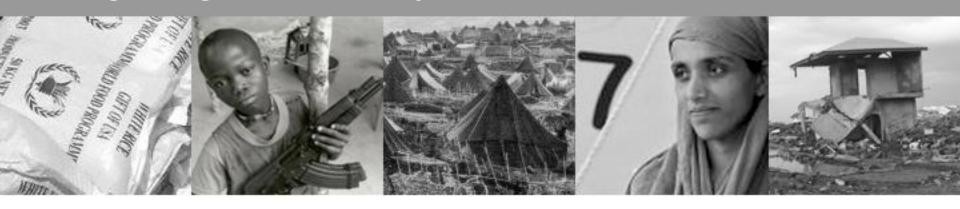# Human Security in Fragile States Conference, 11 September 2014

Dorothea Hilhorst
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IS academy HSFS

- Initiative of Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- Socio-economic recovery in fragile states

- Collaboration with 5 NGOs (Cordaid, ICCO/KIA, NRC, Oxfamnovib, ZoA refugee care) and a number of knowledge institutes (MSM, ISS, UU)

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Concern of the academy

- How do crisis-affected people regain their livelihood?

- How do established and emerging institutions shape people's room for manoeuvre and strategies?

- How do aid interventions tie in with bottom-up recovery efforts and institutional change?

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Character of the academy

- Bringing together people and institutions;

- New and ongoing research

- Primarily investing in people

- Interactive research:

  - Involvement of different knowledge actors at all steps

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Character of the academy

- **Different initiatives all focusing on <u>interaction</u> between:**
  - people's strategies and/ or
  - economic institutions and/or
  - state institutions and/or
  - non-state institutions and/or
  - external aid

Social embeddedness

- **All institutions (Livelihood strategies; economy, state; non-state; aid) are *socially embedded***
  - Human agency: actions of individuals refracted by the social relations within which they function
  - Institutions: the degree to which they are shaped by other institutions

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Examples

- Livelihood strategies shaped by the way in which people interpret and act upon the world around them (memories, taste, habits, power)

- State organised through social networks, regionalism, kinship

- Non-state takes up properties of the state

- Markets ruled by negotiation and trusted clients

- Aid becomes part of society in many ways

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Policy is embedded too

- Policy is also embedded...

- Policy paper shows how policies on economic development on the one hand and peace building on the other continue to have different emphasis, depending on their pedigree

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Where do people find human security?

- Large range of institutions on the ground
- Crisis leads to accelerated institutional change: so-called traditional institutions may change considerably and gain or lose legitimacy
- State may be distant, but nonetheless important: people have strong ideas of what the state should be

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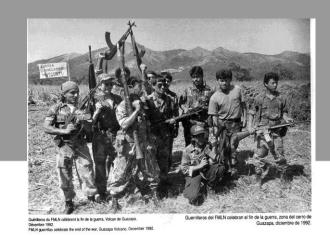
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Legacies of violence: change and continuity

- Organisation of violence may carry over
- Legitimacy may be grounded in war
- Networks and linkages reframed in post-war settings
- What to do with violent actors? Dilemma for peacebuilding and development

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Guérilleros du FMLN célébrent la fin de la guerre, Volcan de Guazapa. Décembre 1992.
FMLN guerrillas celebrate the end of the war, Guazapa Volcano, December 1992.

Guerrilleros del FMLN celebran el fin de la guerra, zona del cerro de Guazapa, diciembre de 1992.

Supporting recovery: mismatches aid and people

- Return is only part of the story of recovery livelihood
- Effects differentiated: patterns of exclusion
- Picking winners? Trickle-down?
- Mismatch often spurred by assumption that people have spare labour
- Organisation of aid tends to widen mismatch

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Entrepreneurship, trade and economic change

- What is entrepreneurship in contexts of fragility?
- Championed yet alienated from aid:
  - Intertwined with politics
  - High levels of informality
  - Middle-level entrepreneurs not reached
- Finding undercurrents of change:

  Women negotiating purdah, Afghanistan

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Hazards and fragility

- Fragility + hazard = devastation
- Challenges for governance and aid
- Aid compartmentalised
- Politicisation of hazards: claim making

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Conclusion

■ Seeking effectiveness, recognising and building on embeddedness

● Socialising diplomats

● Recognising resilience

● Matching aid to social environment

● Re-framing personal interest of elites

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Conclusion

- **Embeddedness: peeling the layers of the onion**

  - Be prepared: actor analysis – power field
  - Much more research required to accompany interventions
  - Finding the way back into more flexible and learning approaches to aid

- **Daunting times**

- **How to become a learning community !**

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Thank you

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