Education during conflict: Comparing Northern Ireland, Sudan and Tajikistan

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A presentation made at the DSAI's Education Group Seminar, entitled 'Education and Violent Conflict – Lessons Learned from Ireland and Africa', held at the Kimmage Development Studies Centre, Dublin

2nd October 2015

Research Question

➢ What impact can the provision of social services have on conflict transformation and conflict management during civil wars?

Defining social services

➢ Social services understood to include education, health services, housing, social welfare provision etc

➢ Includes both state and non-state providers (churches, NGOs etc)

➢ Regardless of means of financing (private / public, national or international)

Theoretical Underpinnings

➢ Draws from the work of US political sociologist Charles Tilly and his collaborators

➢ Focus on actors and causal mechanisms

➢ Actors as brokers

➢ Key mechanisms for the purpose of this study include ideas of opportunity hoarding, exploitation and adaptation

Theoretical Underpinnings

➢ During civil wars, insurgents work to create and maintain exclusive or dominant access to valuable resources to further their aims

➢ Often act as 'gatekeepers' to extract resources or gains from resources

➢ Opportunity hoarding = defines the limits of who benefits from a resource

➢ Exploitation = the process of extracting benefits

➢ Adaptation = the ways in which people and institutions adapt to conflict situations, including processes of opportunity hoarding and exploitation

Theoretical Underpinning

➢ Resources usually considered might include control over

    ➢ Natural resources (hard woods, diamond etc)

    ➢ Certain trades (illicit drugs trade, smuggling)

    ➢ Territory (protection rackets, taxation)

    ➢ People (forced labour, forced conscription)

    ➢ Food (crops or from food aid distributions)

➢ Social services a further resource to be considered

Comparative Framework

Conflict	Capacity of Social Service System	Scope Conditions		Contribution to Conflict Management / Transformation
		Autonomy of Services	Insurgent Type	
Northern Ireland	High	High	Protection Racket	Yes
Tajikistan	Medium	High	Protection Racket	Yes
Southern Sudan	Low	High	Protection Racket	Yes

Capacity and Autonomy

➢ Capacity related to degree of penetration of social service system and financing base

➢ Autonomy of social service systems from the belligerents – related to context specific factors in each case

Insurgent Types

Resource Extraction Method	Degree of Reliance on Local Populations	
	Low	High
Steady State	Rentier Insurgencies	Protection Rackets
Hit and Run	Roving Bandits	Press Gangs

Northern Ireland

➢ Two routes to conflict transformation

➢ Path 1: High capacity social service system addressed most of the social grievances that existed with respect to services at the outset of the troubles (housing, education, healthcare)

➢ Path 2: Presence of social service system provided an opportunity structure that facilitated the development of Sinn Féin (establishment of advice centres, engagement with community development groups, tenants associations etc) as a broker between local populations and the social service system

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Northern Ireland

➢ Limits to brokerage

  ➢ Education a notable exception to patterns of brokerage in nationalist communities

  ➢ Highlights ability of a pre-existing broker in education – in this case institutions of the Catholic Church – to resist pressure from a competing broker

➢ Part of the adaptation process during the conflict at macro level

➢ Also adaptations at local / micro level

Southern Sudan

Southern Sudan

➢ Background
  ➢ Civil war from 1983 – 2005
  ➢ Sudan People's Liberation Army the main anti-government protagonist
  ➢ Establishment of Operation Lifeline Sudan in 1989 to facilitate service provision throughout southern Sudan
  ➢ Loss of Ethiopian support to the SPLA in 1991
  ➢ Attempts by SPLA to develop own service system (e.g. SPLA schools) failed in the 1990s

➢ Low capacity of social services precluded Path 1 to conflict management / conflict transformation

Southern Sudan

- Operation Lifeline Sudan created two sets of related incentives
  - Facilitated the growth of SPLA civil administrative structures at the local level
  - Provided the SPLA with an international platform for easier engagement with the international community
- SPLA as broker between social service system and local populations (Path 2)

Southern Sudan

Limits to brokerage

➢ Again, education a notable exception to processes of brokerage

➢ Attempts by SPLA to establish their own schools failed, in part due to opposition from aid organizations

➢ Education system largely run or supported by church and other aid organizations throughout the conflict

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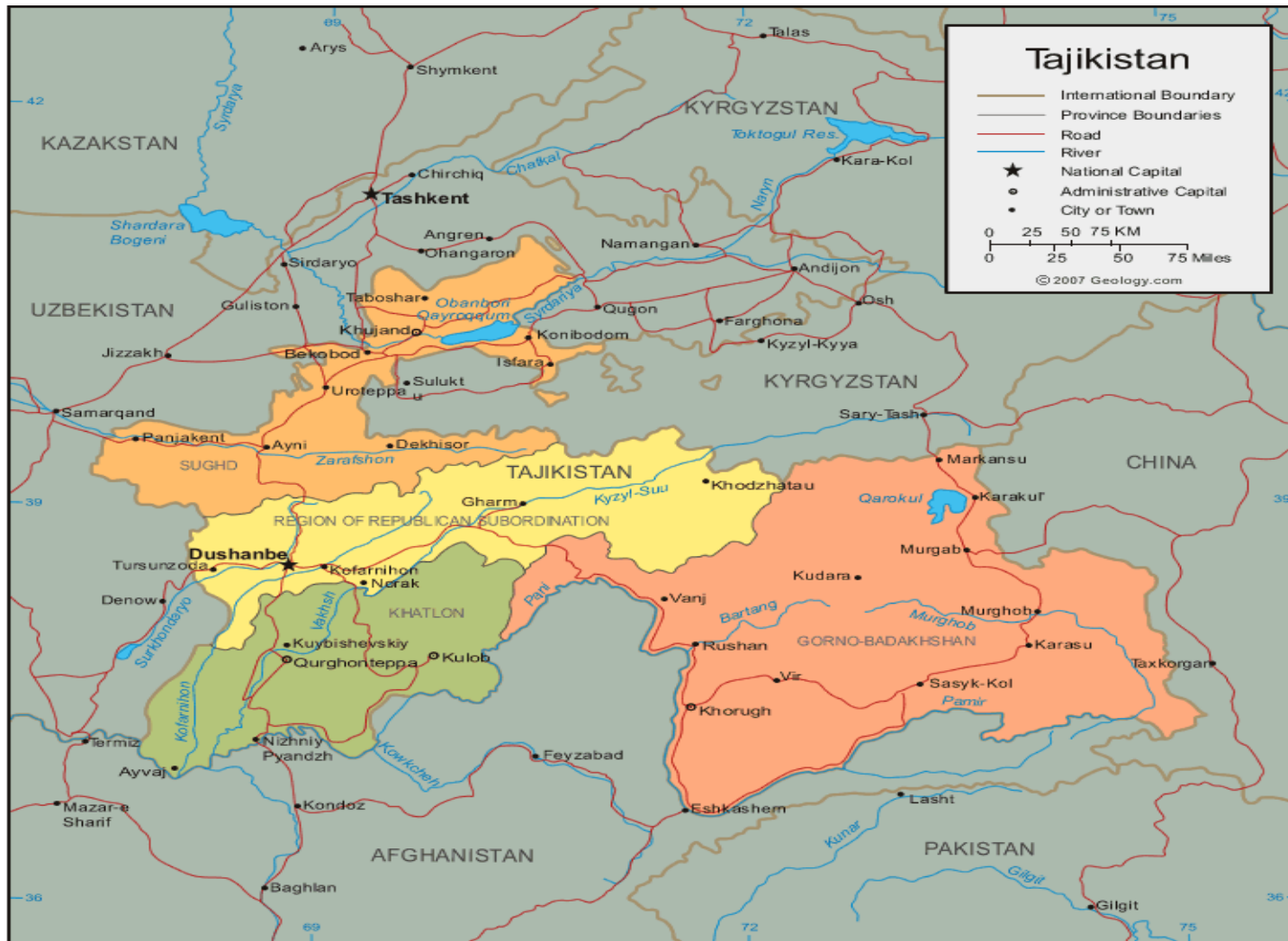
Tajikistan

Tajikistan

> ➢ Background

>> ➢ Post-Soviet civil war (1992-1997) between two broad fronts – the neo-Soviet authoritarians and the United Tajik Opposition
>> ➢ Conflict lasted from 1992 – 1997
>> ➢ Large out-flux of refugees and UTO fighters to northern Afghanistan in late 1992
>> ➢ The Islamic Renaissance Party established itself as the lead group in UTO bases in Northern Afghanistan

Tajikistan

➢ Neither Path 1 nor Path 2 roots to conflict management / conflict transformation occurred.

➢ Instead, social service system facilitated a pro-government peace process that consolidated authoritarian rule

Tajikistan

➢ What makes Tajikistan different?

  ➢ Time – shorter duration of conflict and period of assistance provision.
  ➢ Control – UTO only succeeded in establishing a partial brokerage position in Northern Afghanistan (Kunduz versus Mazar-i-Sharif)
  ➢ Fragmentation – separate peace in the Pamirs, role of the Aga Khan Foundation

Tajikistan

What about education?

➤ Evidence more limited, but similar patterns apparent

➤ Pamirs – maintenance of educational systems autonomous from rebel factions with NGO support

➤ Northern Afghanistan – establishment of schools in refugee camps and provision of education in Pakistan for some students, apparently beyond the control of Tajik insurgents, again with NGO support

Conclusions

➢ Education appears to be a sector that is relatively more robust than other social services with respect to opportunity hoarding and exploitation by insurgents during civil wars

➢ More generally, however, under certain conditions, such processes can contribute to bringing about peace

➢ Service provision creates conditions of possibility; agency still critical

➢ Role of social services pre and post conflict also need to be considered – with respect to both conflict management and conflict transformation

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