

From relief to redevelopment: Towards a rights-based approach in global humanitarian aid

By: Azril Mohd Amin

'If rich countries continue with business as usual, responding generously to the current disaster but failing to address the dire underlying situation of the world's poor, the world will repeatedly confront the tragic arithmetic of life and death.'

Jeffrey D Sachs (Director of the Earth Institute) with reference to the recent Tsunami

This paper focuses on humanitarian relief or assistance, as opposed to humanitarian intervention (in response to war zones and human rights abuses in its most extreme - military intervention). In its traditional form 'humanitarian relief' is confined to the provision of material aid including food, water, medical care and shelter designed to give immediate aid to those suffering in humanitarian crises, whether through natural or political disasters.(1) A rights-based approach to development sets the achievement of human rights as an objective of development. It uses human rights thinking (seen in the legal structures of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1966 Covenants) as the basis for development policy.(2)

The paper will look at the historical development of these ideologies in order to understand not only how but why it occurred. It will concentrate on the inadequacies of the traditional approach to humanitarian relief, leading to an argument for a more rights-based development approach that considers poverty alleviation as a key component. The concerns of a rights-based approach are seen to overlap with the priorities of poverty reduction. It will critically assess the shift in thinking and ask what is the way forward.

Jeffrey Sachs' quote implies that the rich countries have a moral imperative to combat world poverty, in order to prevent the 'silent tsunamis of 30,000 children dying from poverty related illnesses every week. Poverty is defined by the UNDP as meaning 'the denial of choices and opportunities for a tolerable life'.(3) The World Bank has set the poverty line as those living on \$2 or less per day. 2,800 million people constituting 46% of humanity who live below this line. In the past two decades the gap between rich and poor has doubled. The poorest fifth of the world receive less than 1.4% of global income while the richest fifth receive 85%. Each year one third of all human deaths are due to poverty related causes. This data about the lives and deaths of the global poor is indisputable.(4) Thomas Pogge suggests that we need to ask ourselves some hard moral questions. How can half the world's population live in severe poverty when there have been such increases in economic and technological progress as well as supposed enlightened moral norms seen in international laws? Why do citizens in the affluent Western states not find it morally troubling that there are such inequalities?(5) These derive from a strand of human nature that finds sharing profoundly difficult as well as a tendency to emphasise the 'otherness' of strangers. Inequalities, whether on a global or local basis, also fuel another strand of human nature, the desire to give. A reason for this strong impulse according to the philosopher Robert Philips is: 'The virtue of charity is. . . central to the moral life because only through giving love is the self fulfilled.'(6)

Donors give to those they perceive as less fortunate than themselves, whether it is a Victorian land owner giving food to his workers, or a large Northern charity giving food aid to the poor in a famine situation. The reasoning behind this 'giving' can differ, however. This initial 'dualism of mindset' that Slim refers to as 'plaguing the Western mind' is instructive.(7) There is an ongoing debate between humanitarianism based on charity and that based on rights. Some philanthropists give to the poor because it is morally right and their duty to do so, as these strangers are less fortunate than themselves. Others give because they feel that suffering of others is morally or politically wrong, because they believe people have equal rights. They have politicised humanitarian action by taking on the political philosophy of rights.(8) Both give and both have the common aim of alleviating suffering but which is more effective?

Charitable or philanthropic ideology has underpinned humanitarianism as a concept throughout history across different cultures and religions. In Europe the Swiss Henri Dunant, after witnessing the horrors of the Battle of Solferino in 1854, initiated the Geneva Convention that formed the basis of International humanitarian law as well as establishing the International Red Cross. Its underlying principles were humanity, impartiality, neutrality and universality i.e. universal apolitical relief in conflict situations.(9) Meaning in practice relief was solely concerned with the preservation of human life.

Human rights ideology was borne out of the very political philosophies of the European Enlightenment, such as Paine and 'The Rights of Man' (1791) which influenced greatly the revolutions in North America and France. People have written down lists and principles and laws of both these ideologies but it was not until after the Second World War that there was real international debate, that led to law making to prevent and protect people from future wars and atrocities.(10) It is here we see there was some debate around the overlap between these two principles. Geoffrey Best tells an intriguing story of the 'missing preamble' (Best 1994).(11) The international humanitarian law (IHL) was developed in Geneva under the auspices and principles of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) manifested in the 1949 Geneva Convention. This occurred at the same time as the development of Human Rights Law (HRL) at the United Nations in New York. These two bodies emerged from two different roots; HRL from the

political tradition of the "rights of man" and IHL from the military tradition of chivalry and the "laws of war". The UN was the institution of peace and did not want to involve itself in the laws of war as this may imply it felt war was acceptable.(12)

However it realised the values these two bodies had in common. The Preamble of IV Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians originally was to have a clause "explicitly proclaiming it to be a human rights instrument and in particular a protection of basic minimal human rights". All agreed apart from the countries working with the Holy See. They felt the Preamble should relate the universal human rights' principles to God as the "divine source of human charity". The newly formed atheist Communist bloc was not in agreement. The ensuing stalemate led to the dropping of the whole Preamble and so the opportunity to recognise international humanitarian law within the wider body of human rights was lost.(13) If the philosophical overlap between rights and humanitarianism was clear why did the philanthropists rather than the rights-based model prevail? It was mainly through the ICRC policy and particularly through the Cold War as we shall see.

Alongside these was the development of international humanitarian assistance borne out of a need to assist displaced refugees. Then in 1944 Bretton Woods was established not only to help reconstruct Europe but also to facilitate development in poorer countries. These bodies became truly international post-1945 with UNICEF and WHO in 1946 and the International Refugee Organisation in 1947. International humanitarian assistance is linked to the previous two ideologies; to the IHL through its work with the Red Cross and to HRL through Article 25 of UDHR that recognises the "right to food, clothing, housing and medical care".(14)

The development of the Cold War effectively led to the entrenchment of this separation of these ideologies. The Cold War restricted the activities of relief agencies. In order to operate the consent and co operation of governments was required. In many cases restrictions were onerous and humanitarianism was in effect straightjacketed. The human rights agenda was perceived by authoritarian regimes on both sides of the political spectrum as too subversive. So the humanitarians distanced themselves from any political human rights interpretation of humanitarian action in many of the world's wars and disasters between 1945 and 1989.(15)

The Red Cross was particularly firm on this, as well as being protectionist of IHL, keeping it as a matter between it and states. Right up until the 1990's there was a mystique, giving the impression IHL was "ICRC law".(16) Therefore, instead of becoming politically sophisticated, NGO's and humanitarian philosophy fell back on the paternalistic ideology of philanthropy. They used their neutrality to gain access to a number of conflicts, such as the Biafran revolt in Nigeria 1967-70, the murder of Cambodians by Pol Pot from 1975-79 and many others. As the scale of humanitarian disasters increased, the Red Cross progressively extended its relief work beyond the original context of interstate war into humanitarian crisis in general. However it insisted its principles of neutrality and impartiality were maintained and this was shared by the wider humanitarian community of NGO's.

The central issue is whether humanitarian aid can be given under the auspices of a power structure committing abuses of human rights, without also giving undue assistance to that authority. Any involvement of international NGO's in a political emergency brings benefits to all parties. I would concur with Alex de Waal's view:

"The search for a completely neutral humanitarian space is ultimately futile."(17)

Providing material assistance can lead to food and medicine going directly to the controlling combatant party. This can result in relief aid actually prolonging war by feeding armies that could not otherwise remain in the field. Roads, ports and airports are kept open for humanitarian traffic that would otherwise be closed, so also allowing military movement, as seen in the Biafran revolt.(18) Here the Nigerian Government imposed blockades around Biafra effectively cutting off food supplies to the Igbo people brought by the international relief effort, so that up to three million people died of starvation. The food aid fed the troops and in effect prolonged the disaster.(19) Humanitarians began to question the virtue of neutrality.

Disenchanted new groups such as Médecins sans Frontières (formed by defectors from the ICRC led by Bernard Kouchner) argued that humanitarian assistance should be directed towards victims of human wrongs, rather than to all on the basis of need. Humanitarians should take political stands rather than maintain the more traditional approach. There was criticism of humanitarian insistence for using the ICRC principles of neutrality and independence, to maintain an apolitical stance, in order to gain access to all victims in a disaster, especially in civil war situations.(20)

McCrae feels neutrality is unethical. She cites the Red Cross' silence at the Nazi atrocities in the Second World War as a huge failure(21). Fiona Terry describes the "paradox" of good aid contributing to bad outcomes. She feels humanitarian relief agencies have an emotional need to see their activities as delivering hope and to blame everyone but themselves for the imperfect world they leave behind. She says: "they depend on the narrative that their activities are the difference between life and death, and any honest assessment of the consequences might rough up the story". The other side of the argument is that humanitarians make the practical assumption that conflict and disaster are inevitable therefore temporary relief is the best you can offer(22). So Rieff feels traditional humanitarianism is dead as the community has deluded itself that it can do more than provide temporary relief by attaching itself to

utopian ideals of rights. Therefore humanitarianism is worse off for it. He feels it should return to modest and achievable goals and all it can do is offer help.(23) I disagree with this pessimistic view and feel we must work toward more permanent solutions.

Fox believes there is a universal right to relief aid and that entering into the political arena means justifying leaving individuals without aid for political reasons. Nick Stockton from Oxfam would call them 'undeserving victims'.(24) However, this is where we see the overlap between the two. A needs-based approach can find no moral justification to disperse different amounts of aid to different people facing the same disaster. A rights-based approach argues it is impossible to justify withholding aid in favour of a political purpose because it violates the right to relief.(25)

These practitioners not only criticise the neutrality of the traditional humanitarian approach but also the paternalistic act of 'giving' itself. Slim cites as an example the patronising and paternalistic stance of the media coverage and fund raising that portrays the poor as passive black faced victims in need of our generosity. He feels this is a continuance of a 'colonial gaze'. There is a perception in the West through the very act of giving of the 'otherness' of these victims, that different coloured people don't endure disaster 'like us'.(26) Manji refers to the condescending lyrics of benefit songs and specifically mentions the patronising portrayal of Africans in programmes such as Comic Relief. One of the programme's founders has become frustrated that the militant UK disability lobby objected so strongly to the portrayal of the disabled as victims that it could no longer use such coverage, although it continued to do so for the poor of Africa. Slim feels that:

'the scales have not yet fallen from most western eyes to see the equality that exists between people.'

He also describes how the act of giving can maintain the status quo. Like the class-based Victorian philanthropists, who however unintentionally, maintained the social status quo, by trying to help the poor but not changing the underlying social structures. Karl Marx, however, felt it was a very political move by the bourgeois to keep the working classes in their place. In the same way humanitarians can be seen as maintaining the unchanging position of the world's poor by failing to address the underlying causes. (27)

McCrae argues that geopolitical changes, with the end of the Cold War in the late 1980's, began the shift towards the reunification of humanitarian aid and politics i.e. human rights.(28) Rights-based language was not entirely new as it was perpetuated as a defining feature of the resistance and liberation movement in developing countries. In Latin America, for example, with the development of popular movements they framed rights for social justice in their struggle for land and livelihoods. The anti-colonial movements in Africa placed their demands for self-rule in terms of the everyday constraints the colonial administrations imposed on their liberty as defined by their fundamental rights. This increasingly radicalised many humanitarians working in the area. (29)

The essence of a rights-based approach is that rights dignify the individual. It removes the 'helpless victim' status by allowing them to demand their rights, so empowering them to fight for justice and social change. This is the politicisation of humanitarianism. It bestows a sense of 'duty' on institutions and governments to help the poor realise these rights. Although they will still receive aid from above (from donor governments and NGOs), it will empower them to actively claim their rights from below. When they are combined grounding humanitarianism in the moral, political and legal framework of HRL they are linked directly to justice not floating in some generic act of kindness.(30) The human rights lawyer Helena Kennedy feels that HRL means that rights have been 'brought down from the mountain and given to the people';

The end of the Cold War also resulted in the political disengagement of major powers. This often left development and humanitarian actors the only representatives of Western powers in countries that had become strategically unimportant. Developmentalism and humanitarian assistance were expected to fill the space left by the withdrawal of diplomacy. This led to a political coherence between the two and to closer cooperation between non-state humanitarian organisations and state-led development programmes, in a bid to find more permanent solutions to the disasters seen in the Cold War.(31) With the beginnings of this shift it was possible to move to encompassing the indivisibility of civil and political, economic social and cultural rights and from there to move to developmental concerns as there was less contestation over the status of rights particularly after the Vienna Conference in 1993. (32)

In the 1980's and 90's the ideologies of the Cold War were replaced by neoliberal economic theories with the rolling back of the State and reliance on the 'free market' to deliver human wellbeing. This has generally put economic interests above human welfare, further marginalising the poor. This can be seen through the now well documented failures of structural adjustment policies (SAP's) orchestrated by institutions such as the World Bank and IMF. The developing nations had borrowed from private banks in 1970's as oil prices rose and their industrialisation stopped. They couldn't repay their debt and a debt crisis ensued. The solution to which were SAP's. These were imposed to ensure debt repayment and restructuring using the 'trickle down' theory. The end result required poor countries to reduce spending on essentials like health, education and development, while debt repayments were made the priority.

Manji describes how the SAP's positioned the lending agencies to determine both the goals of development and the means of achieving them. It legitimised their direct intervention in the political decision making. Examples of some of

these policies are the liberation of the economy and resource extraction /export orientation of open free markets. Trade agreements such as GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) reduced the trade barriers for companies. As barriers to entering local markets are removed large scale manufacturers edge small businesses out of the market. The local economies suffer when company profits are channelled out of the country rather than being reinvested locally. Free trade agreements do little to enhance the trading positions and commodity prices of these poor countries. It ultimately opens them up to exploitation of their economies and workers rights. Privatisation was encouraged with reduced protection of domestic industries and high unemployment. The regulations and standards were reduced to be attractive to foreign investors. This led in effect to poor countries exporting more in order to raise money to pay off their debts, while import costs rose.

Joseph Stiglitz, former head of the 'World Bank', was forced to resign due to criticisms he made of the IMF and World Bank. Authors such as Susan George and J.W. Smith have greatly criticised these policies and more recently the World Bank has reluctantly admitted to their failures at the Bretton Woods Project 2000 'an internal World Bank report has concluded that the poor are better off without structural adjustment';(33)

These policies lowered the standard of living in poor countries and so increased poverty. In 1995 the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen reviewed the global social agenda in the post Cold War era and vowed to eradicate world poverty. So began a 'heyday' of political interest in humanitarian causes with the rise of the 'new' humanitarians.

Although Manji complains that this 'heyday' led to a proliferation of NGO's that in effect 'depolicitised' poverty. They came in as relief and development 'experts' and began to fill the gap left by the disasters of the structural adjustment. However they tried to find ways of coping with what they found rather than addressing the underlying issues. The discourse of development was framed not in the language of rights and justice (that had dominated the popular mobilisation and struggles for basic rights against the colonial yoke) but in a vocabulary of charity, technical expertise, neutrality and paternalism. (34) Indeed they have continued to become such an integral component of the political economy of underdevelopment that they are now part of a system which contributes to the reproduction of impoverishment. For example, 40% of the education system in Kenya is funded by NGO's rather than their government. (35)

The marriage of the two ideologies can be seen practically in projects such as the 1997 Interagency Standard Committee (36) and The Sphere Project 2000 (37) has developed the 'Humanitarian Charter' showing the increasingly common causes of humanitarianism, human rights as well as rights-based development. It translates rights into specific agency and government duty. This could be seen as a second attempt at the missing Geneva Preamble that Best investigated (38).

There has been much debate around the shift to a more rights-based approach. HRL on its own, however, is not enough as it is criticised for being too utopian. Norman Geras feels:

'the theory of rights must be able to leave the paper and show itself to work on the ground.' (39)

Another criticism is that human rights are a Western construct. They are perceived by many cultural relativists such as Donnelly as a new form of colonialism. (40) Rights-based aid is seen as aiming to transform people, institutions and societies in the image of the West. The universality of rights is a question beyond the scope of this paper. More important here is the criticism that rights talk can be co-opted for political interest, so making aid 'conditional'. It is used to further Western governments' and private institutions' own domestic or international agendas. It creates another form of colonial imperialism while hiding behind humanitarian rights language to maintain the moral high ground without changing practice in any meaningful way. (41) Fox suggests that just as the old colonialists invoked a civilising mission the new humanitarians are doing the same. In this way conditional humanitarian aid is becoming yet another tool available to Western governments to control developing countries. Those groups that comply with the Western version of human rights will receive aid; those that reject Western values will be left to their fate. Uvin describes this as all 'fluff and power'. (42) If aid is judged on how it can contribute and protect human rights it will be conditional. Slim does accept that this is a problem, but feels that it can be rectified if humanitarian agencies are clearer about what is meant by the rights of victims. (43) I would stress increased transparency from donors, government and institutions is imperative. Whether the ideology of rights is a blessing or a curse depends on who is controlling it and to what ends.

It is clearly still not perfect and the international community must be self critical from the outset and beware that as rights move into development that it is a dynamic process. If humanitarianism has taken on the concept of human rights, so too has development.

There is a parallel process redefining poverty and development by the UN, Western governments and NGO's — in which human rights provide a countervailing force to challenge power that causes so much poverty.(44) Historically human rights (the territory of lawyers and activists) had remained separate from development (field of economists). Mary Robinson argued that the entry into the UN of the newly independent Southern nations in the 1960's and 70's spurred the attempt to bridge this gap leading ultimately to the Declaration on the Right to Development in 1986. (45)

This marked a milestone in a decade of struggles by the Third World countries within the UN to produce a package of reforms that would be fair to poorer countries. It stresses the collective obligation of all states to create a just and

equitable international environment for the realisation of the right to development as well as the collective duty of all states to eliminate the barriers to this such as fair trade and debt burden.(46) For these reasons it was not popular with the Western states. They saw it as the imposition of one sided obligations, for what they felt should be the voluntary field of development assistance. However, it politicised the right to development as a demand from those living in poverty. The UN General Assembly 1991 resolution 46/182 has been called the founding instrument of the UN's humanitarian role as it calls for a continuum from relief to rehabilitation and development. (47) The concerns of a rights-based approach can be seen to overlap with the priorities of poverty reduction. These include the holistic approach, emphasis on performance targets, and accountability and the idea of international partnership.

We can see this in practice with multilateral agencies such as the UNDP and UNICEF which have moved to a rights-based approach to development. The UNDP went explicitly rights-based in 2000 and used Amartya Sen's overarching concept of 'human freedom' to draw the development project into the political, philosophical and legal world of human rights. (48) In September 2000 world leaders distilled the development goals agreed at world summits in the 1990's into key goals and targets into The Millennium Declaration. Based on the declaration, the UN, World Bank and IMF and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) came up with 8 concise goals. The Millennium Development Goals are to be achieved (retrospectively) from 1990 to 2015. They include among others, halving extreme poverty and hunger, developing a global partnership for development, with targets for aid, trade and debt relief. (49)

In 1998 Julia Hausermann led the British government to a rights-based theory of development through the bilateral agency of DFID (the Department for International Development) where it explicitly understands progress towards international development targets as dependent on the realisation of the human rights of poor people. Hausermann argues that what is distinctive about a human rights approach to development is that it works by setting out a vision of what 'ought' to be, providing a normative framework to orient development cooperation. In doing so it brings an ethical and moral dimension to development assistance, one that by implication has been lacking.(50) Interestingly the right to development is missing from the vocabulary of DFID's rights-based approach. It makes it clear that it does not ground its approach to development assistance in the Declaration and its assistance is based on moral not legal obligation to alleviate poverty.(51) DFID is also careful to emphasise the obligations of the national recipient governments but is vaguer about its own human rights obligations that it may have to people in countries where DFID gives development assistance. Piron notes that the rights-based approach is being used to tone down the reference to human rights as this is perceived as too political for some governments. The same criticisms have been levelled at multinational agencies such as the World Bank and transnational companies. (52)

However NGO's such as ACTION AID seem to be committed to integrating rights into its work on fighting poverty. It defines poor people as those 'suffering the injustice of the denial of basic human rights that should give them voice and citizenship'. It has also been bold in attributing poverty to unequal power relations. Its policies centre around strengthening the poor and their organisations to claim rights and working with governments, donors and private sector on creating enabling policies for poverty reduction.(53)

The main criticism of the shift to using a rights-based approach in development is the purloining of that rights language by Western states to maintain their economic and developmental advantage as discussed previously. Talking rights and reading Sen makes little more than an 'improved discourse' which may not be of much use to people enduring poverty around the world. (54) Slim feels rights talk is different in different mouths. If it is heard from a slum dweller living in poverty they are words of courage demanding radical change. Rights are 'standard bearers around which people rally from below', as opposed to pious rhetorical fluff when spoken from above. So that rights talk has the ability to politicise development between the 'muddy low ground and the moral high ground'. (55) Uvin feels policies of good governance, increased transparency and accountability by institutions like the World Bank, are simply being repackaged in rights language seeming to have the moral high ground. He believes rights talk has engendered very little revolutionary analysis of the structures of poverty or serious consideration of the demands these same human rights make on powerful countries to change their ways. (56) Manji agrees and feels the incorporation of rights into development has shifted the emphasis from rights (the language of social empowerment) so weakening its call for justice and therefore depoliticising poverty. (57) This may well be true; I think, however, that the very fact Western powers continue to talk a discourse of rights may increasingly make them accountable to those rights.

Slim argues there are those using human rights in a prophetic way down in the 'mud'. NGO's like Action Aid can challenge Western power, they 'straddle the middle ground', where they are using the talk in a slightly different way to mainstream power. (58) They and those from below can take the real struggle of rights to the heart of policy making in governments, corporations and public opinion. He feels that there are those, in these institutions who do want to change the world in pursuit of human rights.

So what then is the way forward? In order to have any effective impact on poverty then the problems with debt burden and free trade must be addressed as well as the delivery and quantity of aid. The aim is 0.7% of the richer countries' GNP. Only Denmark, Sweden, Netherlands and Luxembourg have, however, reached this target. Britain, France and Finland have committed to get there by 2015. But the US contributes the lowest percentage of its GNP - just 0.15% even though it is the wealthiest country. (59) We have discussed the changing approach to aid delivery. To move forward means producing analysis and making connections between global power structures and

poverty. We need to liberate human rights from their accommodation with power. (60) We must abolish development as a neo-colonial programme and replace it with a common political project that recognises everyone's rights as equals and judges behaviour of all on the basis of how they realise or violate their rights. As Cornwall and Musebi suggest, we must be critical of the 'rhetorical flirtation' with rights that is evident in the international development community. We must not continually base our relationship with the majority of the world on our own economic hegemony. (61) Accountability and obligation also need addressing. Both donor and recipient governments at present have only a loose diplomatic accountability, rather than clear legal obligations. Obligation lies primarily with the state to ensure the aid is issued in a way that respects their citizen's rights. The funding government should also have an obligation to monitor the recipient government's disbursement. Singer suggests some form of negotiated contract between both donors and recipients with obligations on both sides (62). There needs to be more clarity all round on these issues.

Perhaps the ultimate step forward is a major shift in attitude. Pierre Sané's view is that poverty will only cease when it is recognised as a violation of human rights and is abolished. This would demand true equality from those that are violating the human rights of almost half the globe, by the very act of living such affluent lifestyles.(63) Western society should feel shame that it chooses not act to abolish poverty despite the economic, technological and communication advances that mean the world is richer now than at any time in its history. Therefore we have no 'moral high ground'. Alex De Waal feels that this culpability and guilt extends into the criminal sphere.(64) We need to make fundamental economic lifestyle changes that could allow for a narrowing of the appalling gap that exists at present.

However Pogge feels there is hope in previous movements such as the moral mobilisation to abolish the slave trade.(65) It is often the moral conviction of the citizens that alters politics. Therefore we need the solidarity of the mobilisation of people as discussed by Chomsky from both rich and poor countries to demand change at global governmental levels.(66)

In conclusion I have demonstrated the changing ideology behind the delivery of aid in its attempt to alleviate poverty. This change is necessary in order to tackle with real commitment the poverty that Sachs refers to, and so avoids the weekly 'silent' tsunamis. I do feel that humanitarian aid has its place; of course we can not ignore the immediate suffering of people as seen in the tsunami, and other disasters. However we live in a very political world and we therefore need to be aware of what context the aid is being delivered in. By adding rights we are allowing poor people to demand for themselves what the rich world has in abundance. However we need to ensure through increased transparency and monitoring that this is not merely another western form of colonial hegemony.

We need to continue reassessing, learning from our mistakes and rethinking the way forward. Humanitarianism has short term needs-based objectives of saving lives, which although laudable, is merely a band-aid over a gaping wound that will eventually reopen if the underlying issues are not addressed. This is best summarised in the three pronged attack of the 'Make Poverty History' launched this year.(67) Firstly their aim is to abolish debt. The G7 meeting in January seemed positive but actions speak louder than words. Let's hope Gordon Brown can persuade the G8 in Scotland in July to work toward a real 100% debt relief. In countries such as Sri Lanka and Indonesia hit by the recent tsunami over 50% of their GNP was being spent on debt repayments.(68) How are they to recover from disaster and continue with their development programmes under those conditions? The second aim is to establish fair trade, a more complicated problem and one the richer governments will find harder to agree to, but it is crucial in order to allow their economies the chance to develop. International trade is worth \$10 trillion a minute, but poor countries only account for 0.4% of this trade.(69) This must be addressed. Thirdly more and better quality aid, as focussed on in this paper, with more transparency and accountability in equal measure from both donors and recipients, to avoid the criticism that corrupt governments misappropriate the aid. Manji describes the relationship between rights development and poverty to be a complex one which is true, but it is up to all of us and our governments to be brave. Sachs asks for more aid as does Gordon Brown in his Marshall Plan for Africa.

The incredibly generous public response to the recent tsunami embarrassed governments into increasing their contribution to the relief effort. The public will is there. Now we need a change in public mind set through our media, education and government policy to portray those living in poverty as rights holders, dignified individuals, caught in an unfair situation and that we have a duty to contribute to change through action not just words. Governments should be brave and act on this will – a poverty tax, France has suggested a tax on fuel with the proceeds going to poverty reduction. However I feel we need to be honest and call it a 'poverty reduction' tax, I agree with Sané we should carry some of the burden for this situation at a personal level. In the words of Nelson Mandela at the launch of the Make Poverty History campaign in Trafalgar Square on February 3rd 2005 'poverty is a man made construct, like slavery and apartheid. As long as poverty, injustice and gross inequality exists in our world, none of us can truly rest.'

Footnotes

1 http://www.soziologie.ch/users/markus/health/docs/5%20Other%20documents/5.18_Human_Rights_and_Humanitarian_Law_and_Principles_in_Eme.pdf

2 ODI Briefing paper 1999 (3) September

- 3 http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/1997/en/pdf/hdr_1997_ch1.pdf
- 4 Thomas Pogge: *World Poverty & Human Rights*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002
- 5 Ibid
- 6 Thomas Weiss, *The Politics of Humanitarian Ideas*, 31 *Security Dialogue* 11/14/2000
- 7 Hugo Slim, *Development in Practice*, volume 10, numbers 3&4, August 2000
- 8 Hugo Slim, *The International Journal of Human Rights*, vol 6, no. 2(2002)pp.1-22
- 9 <http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/iwpList288/E4986214B3F2CF1DC1256B66005B0ED2>
- 10 Hugo Slim, *The International Journal of Human Rights*, vol 6,no.2(2002)pp.1-22
- 11 Hugo Slim, *Development in Practice*, volume 10, numbers 3&4, August 2000
- 12 Ibid
- 13 Ibid
- 14 P Ghandhi: *International Human Rights Documents*. 4th Edition Blackstone 2004
- 15 Thomas Weiss, *The Politics of Humanitarian Ideals* 31 *Security Dialogue* 11 14 (2000)
- 16 <http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/iwpList304/FB6C961A7417341AC1256B66005D0D39>
- 17 R Omaar & A de Waal *African Rights Discussion Paper No.5* November 1994
- 18 Ibid
- 19 <http://www.jha.ac/articles/u036.htm> (Feb 7th 2005)
- 20 Curtis and Pasquier
- 21 J McCrae *Disasters* 2001,25(4):290 -307
- 22 F Terry, “Condemned to Repeat? The Paradox of Humanitarian Action” Ithaca: Cornell University Press 2002
- 23 D Rieff, “A Bed for the night: Humanitarianism in Crisis” New York Simon and Schuster 2002
- 24 F Fox, *New Humanitarianism: Does it provide a moral banner for the 21st Century?* *Disasters*, 2001, 25(4): pp275-289
- 25 H Slim, *Development in Practice*, volume 10, numbers 3&4, August 2000
- 26 Firoze Manji, “The Depoliticisation of Development” in ‘Development and Rights’ Oxford: Oxfam 1998
- 27 Hugo Slim, *The International Journal of Human Rights*, vol 6,no.2(2002)pp.1-22
- 28 J McCrae *Disasters* 2001,25(4):290 -307
- 29 Firoze Manji, “The Depoliticisation of Development” in ‘Development and Rights’ Oxford: Oxfam 1998
- 30 Ibid
- 31 A Cornwall and C Nyamu-Musembi, “Putting the ‘rights-based approach’ to development into perspective” *Third World Quarterly* Vol. 25 No.8 pp1415-1437 2004
- 32 <http://www.globalissues.org/trade/Related/SAP.asp> 13/11/2004
- 33 <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/wssd/agreements/decpartc.htm>
- 34 Firoze Manji, “The Depoliticisation of Development” in ‘Development and Rights’ Oxford: Oxfam 1998
- 35 Alp Ozerdem, *Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit*, University of York, Lecture 26, January 2005
- 36 UN and human rights agencies and NGO’s meeting and working together toward a common goal, respecting an individual’s rights and dignity
- 37 A series of minimum technical standards for disaster relief, which included among others CARE International, ICR Cross and Crescent, Save the Children and Oxfam
- 38 Hugo Slim, *Development in Practice*, volume 10, numbers 3&4, August 2000
- 39 N Geras, “The Contract of Mutual Indifference: Political Philosophy after the Holocaust” Verso 1999
- 40 Jack Donnelly, in C Welch and R Metzger “Human Rights and Development in Africa” State of New York Press 1984 p261-283
- 41 D Chandler, “From Kosovo to Kabul: Human Rights and International Intervention” London: Pluto Press 2002
- 42 P Uvin, *Fletcher Journal of Development Studies*, Volume XVII 2002 p1-11
- 43 Ibid
- 44 Ramsbottom & woodhouse *Humanitarian Intervention in contemporary conflict .A reconceptualisation* :Polity Press;Cambridge p8-32
- 45 P Ghandhi: *International Human Rights Documents*. 4th Edition Blackstone 2004
- 46 A Cornwall and C Nyamu-Musembi, “Putting the ‘rights-based approach’ to development into perspective” *Third World Quarterly* Vol. 25 No.8 pp1415-1437 2004
- 47 R Kent, ODI Blackwell 2004
- 48 A Sen, *Development as Freedom* Oxford: OUP 2000
- 49 <http://www.developmentgoals.org/> (10th February 2005)
- 50 Julia Haussermann, “A Human Rights Approach to Development, Rights and Humanity and DFID” London 1998
- 51 A Cornwall and C Nyamu-Musembi, “Putting the ‘rights-based approach’ to development into perspective” *Third World Quarterly* Vol. 25 No.8 pp1415-1437 2004
- 52 P Uvin, *Fletcher Journal of Development Studies*, Volume XVII 2002 p1-11
- 53 A Cornwall and C Nyamu-Musembi, “Putting the ‘rights-based approach’ to development into perspective” *Third World Quarterly* Vol. 25 No.8 pp1415-1437 2004

- 54 P Uvin, Fletcher Journal of Development Studies, Volume XVII 2002 p1-11
 55 H Slim, Fletcher Journal of Development Studies, Volume XVII 2002 p1-11
 56 P Uvin, Fletcher Journal of Development Studies, Volume XVII 2002 p1-11
 57 Firoze Manji, “The Depoliticisation of Development” in ‘Development and Rights’ Oxford: Oxfam 1998
 58 H Slim, Fletcher Journal of Development Studies, Volume XVII 2002 p1-11
 59 ibid
 60 Firoze Manji, “The Depoliticisation of Development” in ‘Development and Rights’ Oxford: Oxfam 1998
 61 A Cornwall and C Nyamu-Musembi, “Putting the ‘rights-based approach’ to development into perspective” Third World Quarterly Vol. 25 No.8 pp1415-1437 2004
 62 Hans Singer, The New Internationalist no. 285 November 1996 p15
 63 <http://www.globalpolicy.org/soecon/develop/2004/1209sanepoverty.htm>
 64 Alex de Waal The New Internationalist no. 285 November 1996 p14
 65 Thomas Pogge: World Poverty & Human Rights, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002
 66 D Barsamian, “Propaganda and the Public Mind” South End Press 2001
 67 A consortium of Oxfam, Christian aid, Comic relief, Cafod, churches and celebrities that could become the most powerful coalition ever against world poverty
 68 Mark Turner, Financial Times January 18th 2005
 69 <http://www.makepovertyhistory.org/> (15th February 2005)

Works Cited

- 1 Thomas Pogge: World Poverty & Human Rights, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002
 2 Thomas Weiss, The Politics of Humanitarian Ideas, 31 Security Dialogue 11/14/2000
 3 Hugo Slim, Development in Practice, volume 10, numbers 3&4, August 2000
 4 Hugo Slim, The International Journal of Human Rights, vol 6, no. 2(2002)pp.1-22
 5 Ghandhi: International Human Rights Documents. 4th Edition Blackstone 2004
 6 Jack Donnelly, in C Welch and R Metzger “Human Rights and Development in Africa” State of New York Press 1984
 7 Larry Minear, The Humanitarian Enterprise:Dilemas nd Discoveries (Bloomsfield,Conn:Kumarian Press,2002)
 8 David Reiff, A bed for the night:humanitarianism in crisis (New York:Simon & Shuster,2002)
 9 A Cornwall and C Nyamu-Musembi, “Putting the ‘rights-based approach’ to development into perspective” Third World Quarterly Vol. 25 No.8 pp1415-1437 2004
 10 R Omaar & A de Waal African Rights Discussion Paper No.5 November 1994
 11 Fiona Terry, Condemned to repeat? The paradox of the Humanitarian Action (Ithaca:Cornell Univeristy Press,2002)
 12 P. Uvin, Fletcher Journal of Development Studies, Volume XVII 2002
 13 F. Fox, New Humanitarianism: Does it provide a moral banner for the 21st Century? Disasters, 2001, 25(4)
 14 H. Slim, Fletcher Journal of Development Studies, Volume XVII 2002 p1-11
 15 Firoze Manji, “The Depoliticisation of Development” in ‘Development and Rights’ Oxford: Oxfam 1998
 16 Julia Haussermann, “A Human Rights Approach to Development, Rights and Humanity and DFID” London 1998
 17 A Sen, Development as Freedom Oxford:
 18 OUP 2000 D Chandler, “From Kosovo to Kabul: Human Rights and International Intervention” London: Pluto Press 2002
 19 R Kent, ODI Blackwell 2000
 20 Human Rights in Global Response Wilson and Mitchell, Routledge 2003
 21 Ramsbottom and Woodhouse- Humanitarian Intervention in contempory accommodation Polity Cambridge
 22 J Macrae Disasters no 22 309-312 1998
 23 Adrian Wood, Raymond Apthorpe & John Borton – Evaluating International Humanitarian Action:Reflections for Practioners Zed Books
 24 Alex de Waal – Famine Crimes – Politics & Disaster Relief Industry in Africa Indianna James Currey