Managing Conflict Policy:

Exploring Strategic Complementarity in the Horn of Africa

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CHAPTER 1 Conflict, Rationality, and Hope

We know, comrades, that there is no such thing as chance in history, that however fortuitous its course may seem, there is always a rationality lying hidden behind even the most puzzling outward appearances.

– Mario Vargas Llosa, *The War of the End of the World*

At no time in the last 50 years have the peoples of the Horn of Africa been free from violent political conflict. Several rebellions, civil wars, or interstate wars typically proceed concurrently in one or more of the countries of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, and Djibouti. Although each conflict originated in unique circumstances, all of these conflicts have, over time, become complexly interwoven into a region-wide tapestry of conflict in which puzzling patterns of behavior recur in different guises at different times and places. The particular issues being contended and the identity of the combatants change in convoluted ways, and yet, somehow, conflicts in the Horn exhibit a striking regularity in the compounding of misery upon misery.

Over this same period of time, a global network of national governments, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) has emerged to cope with the consequences of violent political conflicts. This *global conflict policy network* includes the full array of diplomatic, economic, cultural, and peacekeeping agencies associated with the United Nations and regional IGOs as well as an amorphous constellation of NGOs specializing in humanitarian assistance, development, human rights, the promotion of democracy, conflict resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation. Needless to say, the Horn of Africa has given

these organizations plenty of work over the years. This book examines some of the most perplexing problems members of the global conflict policy network have experienced in their extensive but so far mostly ineffective efforts to bring peace, prosperity, and good governance to the long-suffering peoples of this region.

In a blunt appraisal of the difficulties facing humanitarian aid organizations and their inability to learn from past mistakes, Thomas Weiss (2001: 423) denounces as vacuous the term *international community*: "Do not use the term international community unless obfuscation is the objective." His point is that this amorphous term precludes the possibility of assigning responsibility to individual leaders or organizations; nor does it facilitate recognition of the consequences of one's own actions.

The phrase *global conflict policy network* directs attention to a particular array of organizations, each of which is primarily involved in specific aspects of conflict or its resolution. The term *policy network* denotes an increasingly common form of governance in which responsibilities are shared among an interconnected network of organizations rather than being concentrated in a single locus of authority.[1] Policy networks typically include political jurisdictions at overlapping levels of aggregation as well as nonpolitical organizations in the private or voluntary sector. Although *conflict policy* may sound less familiar than trade, environmental, or health policy, making explicit reference to the emerging global conflict policy network may help its members become more self-aware of their complex interdependencies and their need to craft and implement policies in a more strategic fashion.

What the World Can Learn from the Horn

The Horn usually casts a low public profile, but events there have, on occasion, become front-page news throughout the world. Virtually the only time these countries grab the attention of major news outlets is when one or more of them are suffering from terrible famines. Horrific images of human misery dominated news coverage of famines in Ethiopia (1973-74, 1984-85), Sudan (1984-85, 1988-89, 1998), and Somalia during the early 1990s. Other memorable periods of global concern are the ultimately disastrous US and UN peacekeeping mission in Somalia (1992-95), and the ongoing tragedy in the Darfur region of western Sudan. For a brief period in the late 1970s, the Horn became a hot spot of contention between the two superpowers of the Cold War, when the Soviet Union intervened in a massive way to protect a newly established Marxist regime in Ethiopia. At the time of this writing (2006), a small international peacekeeping force has been sent to the Sudan and the recently established International Criminal Court is considering war crimes' trials against leaders of the genocidal campaign in Darfur as well as the leaders of the long-running rebellion in northern Uganda. For most of the time, however, conflicts in this region have developed according to their own logic, largely ignored by the world as a whole. Meanwhile, organizations in the global conflict policy network have toiled away, trying to help as best they can.

Many excellent books have been written detailing the tragedies experienced by the diverse peoples living in this region.[2] This book has a different purpose. I believe that the peoples of the Horn of Africa have an essential lesson for the world as a whole. Despite what you might think, this lesson has little to do with failed states or famines or Islamic extremism.

I seek to fundamentally change the world's image of the Horn of Africa. By drawing the reader's attention to innovative efforts to establish effective forms of governance that lie hidden beneath the surface appearance of chaos, I highlight the hope that invigorates them. Many other scholars and journalists have detailed the devastating consequences of international intervention on humanitarian grounds, and my intention is to locate their critiques within the context of scholarly research literatures on African and comparative politics, international relations and conflict resolution, and public policy and institutional analysis. This broader context highlights how critically important it is for organizational members of the international humanitarian and diplomatic communities to move towards more astute and effective political strategies.

As will be detailed throughout this book, the well-intended actions of extraregional actors have too often contributed towards the perpetuation of war and misery. An oft-quoted line from the classic parody *Dr. Strangelove* tells us that "War is too important to be left to the politicians, for they have neither the time, nor the inclination, for strategic thought." I say that the world's response to conflict is too important to be left to humanitarians, at least until they devote the time needed to hone any latent inclination towards strategic thought.

Only if well-intentioned parties familiarize themselves with the power politics logic of strategic manipulation can they hope to prevail in a context dominated by savvy political leaders steeped in the Machiavellian arts. By subtly subverting international programs to suit their own selfish ends, local actors have demonstrated a practical knowledge or intuitive appreciation of the logic of strategic manipulation. If humanitarians and peacemakers are to prove effective in their self-appointed tasks, they

must take the time to appreciate the subtleties of strategic thought and to sharpen their own dexterity in playing Machiavellian games. My fundamental assertion is that humanitarians and other moral entrepreneurs can no longer afford to treat political naiveté as a virtue.

Rationality, Hope, and Fear

My conclusions are grounded in a coherent explanation for the seemingly chaotic patterns of conflict among the countries of the Horn. I concur wholeheartedly with the sentiment expressed by the novelist Mario Vargas Llosa (1984: 83) in the epigraph that begins this chapter, that there is always an underlying rationality behind the seeming chaos of war. Unlike the character to whom the novelist attributes these words, I make no claims to having identified objective forces of history that unremittingly drive world events towards some ultimate utopia. On the other hand, I do take the term *rationality* quite literally.

My assertion, to be detailed and justified throughout this book, is that the self-seeking behavior of individually rational actors in this region has generated and reinforced a remarkably resilient system of overlapping and concurrent conflicts. Once separate conflicts have been complexly interwoven into a region-wide tapestry of conflict. No one planned it to be this way, but the tools of rational choice theory can help us better understand why it has turned out this way and how it might be changed.

Since this regional system of conflict was formed by rational agents, there is no reason to doubt that this region could be organized in some other fashion, one more supportive of a stable and just peace. Boulding (1962, 1963) identified the dynamic logic underlying systems of deterrent threats and compares their operation to other systems of

interaction. Threat systems have proliferated throughout the Horn and they have been linked together to form a remarkably robust system. The problem now is to construct equally robust systems based on the dynamic logics of mutually beneficial exchange and community building. Some threat systems will inevitably remain, but their operation can be complemented by and subsumed under more productive systems.

To presage my conclusions, the peoples of the Horn are in the midst of a transformation of this region of *protracted social conflict* into a *pluralistic security community* in which communities at all scales of aggregation share stable expectations of peaceful change.[3] As argued in more detail below, to build a sustainable system of community self-governance it is necessary to integrate the unique contributions of all types of political jurisdictions (Hooghe and Marks 2001, 2003) at every level of aggregation (McKinnon and Nechyba 1997) as well as partner organizations from the private and voluntary sectors (Salamon 1987, 1995) in order to satisfy conditions of *polycentric order*.[4]

Achieving such a transformation is by no means an easy task, yet I am confident of the peoples' ability to do so, especially if they receive, for a change, genuinely supportive assistance from outside the region. This book is ultimately a positive one, full of hope for a better future in the Horn and throughout the continent of Africa.

As a political scientist trained in the study of international conflict, I must confess that my initial fascination with this region was driven by my astonishment at the incredible variety of conflicts in this region. This region has been plagued by interstate wars, civil wars, military coups, revolutions, international interventions, peacekeeping operations, and state failure, all of which link up with each other in endless variety.

Rebellions last for decades, despite the absence of the diamonds or other easily lootable communities that have sustained long-term conflicts in other parts of the world.[5]

Over time, I came to realize that the real story here was one of hope. Despite these many conflicts, peoples in different areas of the Horn have managed to establish and maintain viable zones of peace, where their disputes are resolved with little if any violence. My research brought me a deeper appreciation of the dedication with which individuals in this region pursued peace in the middle of unyielding chaos. Their efforts are remarkably creative and innovative, but too often they fell short because of inadequate support from abroad. The peoples of this region have already demonstrated the ingenuity and fortitude requisite for achieving progress towards peace and prosperity. The problem is that members of the global conflict policy network have not done a good enough job of encouraging and reinforcing their efforts.

As I see it, the Horn teaches us that the standard model of state sovereignty is not workable in the presence of pervasive diversity, in both biophysical environment and social practices. The Horn is home to a bewildering array of peoples living in variegated circumstances, and the events surveyed in this volume should convince the reader that any effort to use boundaries to carve this region up into neat little packages called nation-states is doomed to failure. Instead, we need to listen to the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the Horn, and help them craft a complex array of political institutions uniquely relevant to the circumstances in which they find themselves.

This book is intended to bring these efforts to the attention of the broader public and especially those in the scholarly community concerned with international conflict and its resolution, in hopes of eliciting improved strategies of response to the tragedies still

unfolding in this region. Alongside this hope comes fear that the people of this region may be poised to again become embroiled in global cataclysms not of their own making.

In the later half of the 1970s, the countries of the Horn experienced a brief but intense role on the center stage of Cold War politics. Despite its brevity, this era of global power concern left a lingering legacy in the form of easy access to modern weaponry. Innocent people in these countries continue to suffer from the sins of their leaders and their superpower patrons, in much the same way that they still suffer from earlier generations of British, French, and Italian colonialists and their local clients.

Today the Horn threatens to be subsumed within the global war on Islamist terror. Osama bin Laden and his collaborators played a minor role in sabotaging the US intervention in Somalia and the central role in the August 1998 bombings of US embassies in the capitals of Kenya and Tanzania. In retaliation for the latter attacks, the Clinton Administration ordered the destruction of a factory in the capital of Sudan. Subsequent investigations demolished the faulty intelligence upon which this attack was justified, and the focus of the war on terror shifted elsewhere.

Still, the Horn remains susceptible to infection with the anti-terrorism virus. United States military forces operate out of a base in the former French colony of Djibouti in order to more effectively intervene in the sensitive and strategic regions surrounding the Horn. The hugely influential report of the 9/11 Commission (2004: 366) places the "Horn of Africa, including Somalia and extending southwest into Kenya," among their list of likely answers to their hypothetical question: "If you were a terrorist leader today, where would you locate your base?"[6] The self-professed Islamic Republic of the Sudan suffers pressure from many fronts, especially from evangelical Christian

organizations with close ties to the administration of President George W. Bush. Once again, the countries and peoples of the Horn may become embroiled in a global struggle with no direct relevance to their own plight, to the detriment of their own, more pressing concerns. I can only hope this book will help make that tragic outcome less likely to occur, even if only in some small way.

Compound Dilemmas and Unintended Consequences

This book exemplifies a relatively new way of looking at violent conflict as an outgrowth of rational processes of political change. My effort to understand the puzzling persistence of political violence in the Horn of Africa has been shaped by one fundamental premise: the people involved in these conflicts are just as rational as anyone else.

In all stages of the conflict process, from times of peace to active rebellion through negotiations to post-conflict reconstruction, participants are assumed to be *rational* in the sense that they pursue their own goals in as effective a manner as possible. Instances of political violence may begin as instrumental and purposeful, but once unleashed, violence can morph out of anyone's control. Similar disjunctures between intentions and results characterize all varieties of rational choice, especially when large numbers of strategic actors are involved.

Whenever the members of a group of rational individuals realize that they confront a shared problem of collective action, they can jointly devise solutions that sometimes make things better and sometimes worse. Then they respond in turn to the new dilemmas generated by their efforts to resolve earlier ones. Throughout the sequence of compounded dilemmas most relevant to this study, government officials, rebel leaders,

and local groups all respond in creative ways to their ever-changing opportunities and constraints.

For reasons to be detailed in subsequent chapters, conflict persists because enough people have been convinced that participating in these violent activities is the best way to pursue their own self-interest, as well as the interests of whatever communities they hold most dear. It is far too facile for outside observers to dismiss conflicts, in this or any part of the world, as being due to ancient hatreds or inbred antagonisms towards other peoples. There has to be logic behind their behavior. Nor can we lay all of the blame on the actions of a few unusually unsavory leaders, for no one person can sustain a war without being able to convince others to participate. If we are ever to help stop these wars, we have to first understand why *rational* people choose political violence as a means to their particular ends. Only then can we help the people most directly involved to craft better institutions that can induce the appropriate incentives for these same individuals to pursue their interests in a less destructive manner.

To say that conflict is grounded in rationality does not mean that the consequences we observe are exactly the ones sought by the strategic actors in question. If rational choice theory teaches us anything, it is the ubiquity of unintended consequences of self-interested behavior. The point is that once the reasons behind specific consequences are fully understood, then efforts can be undertaken to avoid those particular problems in the future. Rational individuals learn from past mistakes, even if it proves difficult to institutionalize that learning at the organizational level.

By coping the best they can with present dilemmas, political leaders in the Horn of Africa have generated a series of concurrent conflicts that churn up ever-more

complicated problems. My task is to uncover the hidden dynamics by which new dilemmas are generated from ones that may seem to have been solved.

Readers will come to recognize the stages of a conflict cycle. It begins whenever someone in a position of political power succumbs to the temptation to exploit that power by passing inordinate costs onto some other members of their community. Conditions of inequality, marginalization, injustice, or repression generate imperatives for violent resistance, yet the rebel organizations intended to redress these grievances in turn generate still more misery. Humanitarians and other external parties do their best to help relieve the suffering, but they act in ways that can be exploited by clever combatants. Conflicts diffuse across borders, involve new groups, and introduce additional factions into the mix. When peace talks end with the formation of a new regime based on a broader coalition, post-conflict rulers soon succumb to the same temptations of power and make the recurrence of conflict all but inevitable.

There are ways to escape from this endless succession of dilemmas, to shift their collective experience to a less noteworthy sequence of collective problems and responses in which violence plays a more subdued role. It is my contention that the peoples of the Horn of Africa are in the process of moving themselves towards a new equilibrium in which persistent political violence will no longer be common. If we as outside observers are to be of any assistance in that process of system transformation, we need to develop a deeper understanding of the true nature of the underlying problems.

For example, we need to realize that political violence typically persists precisely because some clever strategic actors have learned how to extract advantages from its continuation. Some enjoy ill-gotten gains from illegal activities that would be more

difficult in times of peace and stability. Individuals especially suited to the use of coercion may not be able to match their current position of authority or entitlement if they were forced to live within the rule of law. Conversely, those leaders who honestly believe that violence is presently the most effective way to pursue their legitimate political ends might be convinced to substitute more peaceful options.

In the analysis to follow, we work to disentangle the behavior of people with different motivations. For now, the crucial point to realize is that resolving an ongoing conflict is not simply a matter of finding a mutually acceptable solution for the issues that initially divided the parties into warring camps. Doing so is certainly essential, but it is also necessary to counteract incentives that incline some actors towards the continued utilization of violence.

The longer a conflict persists, the more effectively individuals devise ways to prosper from it. Not everyone benefits from war, and many will strive to bring the fighting to an end. Still, even if the victims far outnumber the beneficiaries, it takes only a few clever people on the margins, who have found ways to exploit disorder for their own purposes, to prevent the group as a whole from realizing the mutual gains that would be their reward for resolving the underlying dispute.

Missing Institutions and Strategic Complementarities

Persistent conflicts in the countries of the Horn evidence fundamental failures of governance. Yet, it is also the case that the world's inability to help is itself grounded in institutional failures. My argument, in sum, is that the fundamental reason for the recurrent shortcomings of external intervention in the Horn of Africa, as in other regions of protracted conflict, is the absence of certain kinds of supportive institutions. In other

words, the global conflict policy network is incomplete in that critical institutional components are missing.

My analysis draws upon a generalization of standard evaluations of the relative strengths and weaknesses of private, public, and voluntary modes of organization. Each type of organization makes unique contributions towards governance, as well as suffering characteristic limitations (often labeled as "failures"). Effective governance requires a mutually supportive network of contributions from all sectors.

A fundamental premise of public policy is that governments exist primarily to facilitate the smooth operation of the economy. The basic presumption is that since market exchange is an efficient way to organize the production and allocation of private goods, governments should intervene only when private markets are unable to cope (see, for example, Weimer and Vining 1989: chapter 3). Thus, governments should be responsible for providing public goods (such as national defense), which would be underprovided by private markets. Another responsibility of government is to provide the legal framework within which economic exchange occurs, to limit the exercise of private coercion, and to ensure that contracts can be enforced and disputes resolved at a relatively low cost.

This "market failure" model is commonly used to determine the circumstances under which government intervention is most appropriate. Yet, there is much more to public policy than the study of firms, markets, and governments. Unique contributions are made by voluntary associations, community-based organizations, cooperatives, and other forms of organization that are generally assigned to civil society.

An additional supplement to pure market forces is provided by the existence of nonprofit producers, especially of goods for which quality information is difficult to obtain before purchase. For such products, the option of purchasing it from an organization with a reputation for motivations beyond base profit can be especially attractive. Other voluntary associations make useful contributions to the smooth operation of markets, notably in the area of voluntary codes of good conduct and other forms of socialization and self-regulation by professional associations. Furthermore, community values can set effective limits against the expansion of market exchange into undesired or sensitive areas of human interaction, notably drugs and prostitution. Conversely, if markets are allowed a totally free reign, then anything and anybody can become a commodity. In sum, markets operate best if they are situated within a supportive context of public and voluntary organizations. In similar fashion, free markets facilitate the smooth operation of processes grounded in the public or voluntary sectors (see Hanisch and McGinnis 2005).

In a fully effective system of network governance, organizations from each sector compensate for the "failures" of other sectors. Persistent failures of governance provide compelling evidence that something is missing, either some type of organization or a particular form of mutually supportive connection between organizations in different sectors. This focus on missing institutions generalizes the widespread predilection among economists to attribute inefficiencies to missing markets, followed by detailed recommendations concerning which particular form of commodity or information needs to become more widely available via market exchange. When it comes to failures of governance, the missing institutions need not be market-like. Since effective governance

requires mutual reinforcement among the roles of complementary organizations from all sectors of the public economy, governance failures might indicate shortcomings in any one of the sectors or in missing connections among them.

Of course, in practice, it may prove very difficult to identify exactly what is missing in any particular case. Generalizations are difficult to implement, for each case of governance reform requires the crafting of institutional arrangements that comport with the strengths and deficiencies of the existing institutions. In any event, I use this search for missing institutions as the point of departure for my analysis of persistent conflicts in the Horn of Africa.

Critics of global conflict policy need to cast their nets more widely than the formal public sector. Any effort to craft governance regimes that rely entirely upon national governments or intergovernmental treaties is certain to fail. International treaties and the organizations they construct can play important, even pivotal roles in the establishment of new global regimes of cooperative management, and yet private, voluntary, and even community-like organizations each have their own unique contributions to the mix (see McGinnis and Ostrom 2006).

The key insight of network governance theory is that no one sector can achieve its full potential without support of all other sectors. Efficient markets require secure property rights, voluntary self-regulation, and limits on commodification or exploitation. Accountable governments require empowered citizenry, voluntary watchdogs, and private sources of power. Voluntary associations cannot operate in an institutional vacuum, but they are essential in filling the gaps left by formal organizations in the

official political economy. Finally, sustainable communities require means of resolving disputes peacefully, reasonable exit options, and at least minimal economic rationality.

Integrating Comparative, International, and Policy Perspectives

This book is intentionally eclectic. In order to address my questions regarding dilemmas of global response to conflict, I have immersed myself in research literatures on the Horn of Africa and comparative politics, conflict resolution and international relations, global governance and theories of public policy. I draw important insights from each of these literatures, and to each I contribute towards an increased openness to new perspectives.

From the literature on African politics and cultures, I draw the fascinating details of the substance of conflicts in this region. Comparative research on neopatrimonial regimes helps locate these details in the context of general theories of governance. Researchers in this tradition highlight, in a constructive fashion, the unique attributes of each situation, and yet my inclination remains to search for generalities and persistent patterns that recur in diverse forms in different sets of circumstances.

From the international relations literature, I draw a deep appreciation of systemic dynamics that manifest themselves in diverse situations. As I read more deeply into conflicts in each of the countries of the Horn of Africa, I found myself returning to similar themes as well as noticing subtle interconnections among these supposedly separate conflicts. By the end of my research, I was convinced that the Horn countries inhabit a system of regional conflict, and a primary task of this book is to convey my understanding of these complexities to the reader.

The international relations literature has its own limitations, especially in its overwhelming fixation on the concept of sovereignty. I remain unmoved by unceasing debates among realists, neorealists, liberal institutionalists, neoliberals, and other schools of thought concerning the ultimate source of foreign policies and international outcomes. My attention was drawn instead to theories of public policy, few of which have been applied at the global level.

I draw upon both the substantive and theoretical literatures of public policy. Substantively, I have read accounts of the operation of such supposedly distinct sectors of the global public economy as conflict resolution, development, humanitarian aid, peacekeeping, and human rights. For theoretical insights, I have turned to a variegated collection of studies of policy networks and polycentric governance. In my understanding, governance networks consist of overlapping and reinforcing connections among public, private, voluntary, and community-based sectors. I have reached the conclusion that standard conceptions of sovereignty have come to the end of their useful life and should be replaced by acceptance of the complexities inherent in the multifaceted networks of governance that exist in virtually all viable polities.

Most analysts of humanitarian aid have drawn their conclusions from a combination of personal experience and extensive interviews with those directly involved in some of the many aspects of this line of work. Many of these works are outstanding in their clarity and moral power, and my research could not have been completed without their contributions. I have been fortunate to discuss my ideas informally with a few practitioners in the delivery of humanitarian and development assistance, but the bulk of my research involved reading widely in the secondary literatures related to this topic. I

immersed myself in a diverse array of research literatures on humanitarian aid, conflict resolution, resource management, public policy, politics of the Horn of Africa, and international cooperation in general. This book is my effort to interpret these literatures in the light of my own academic training in international relations, public policy, and game theory.

Using Game Theory to Improve Global Conflict Policy

Despite its appealing moniker, game theory is a highly technical and cross-disciplinary field of study. From its origins in economics, mathematics, operations research, and political science, game theory has expanded to include important contributions from other social scientists, policy analysts, philosophers and logicians, computer science, and biologists. Although not initially welcomed by mainstream economists, the awarding of two recent Nobel prizes to a total of five game theorists (Nash, Harsanyi, Selten, Schelling, and Aumann) signifies its hard-won position as generator of core theoretical insights.

Throughout this book, I use a series of simple game models to highlight the underlying sources of the most important of the unintended consequences of rational action within the context of a regional system of concurrent conflicts, and to point towards more effective modes of reform. Game theory is a powerful analytical tool that helps us uncover tendencies and consequences that are not otherwise apparent. Different aspects of game theory have been applied, with varying levels of rigor, to each of the substantive areas relevant to this topic.

Game theory has a special affinity with economics and military strategy, but the concept of a *game* is relevant for all kinds of interactions in which multiple actors

individually make choices that jointly determine outcomes for them all. Economists are well-known for their relentless insistence on the ability of rational individuals to pursue their selfish interests in all circumstances. Game theorists extend this same relentlessness to all forms of human interaction.

In the lexicon of game theory, a *strategy* is a plan that specifies the actions a player will take in all possible circumstances of that game. Analysts identify *equilibria* in which all actors have selected a strategy that maximizes their own interest in that game, as they perceive it at the time, and based on all information available to them as they make and implement their decisions. Each actor makes decisions separately, but the overall outcome is determined jointly through the interactions among their choices. If any actor can improve his or her expected outcome by adopting a different strategy, then equilibrium has not yet been achieved.

I use simple game models to help readers see the common thread of a logical structure of decision that runs throughout the conflict process from the formation of rebel organizations through stages of fighting, negotiations, implementation, and post-conflict developments. My research builds on previous efforts to model each of these stages in isolation, but I am especially concerned with understanding how the outcome of games in one stage of the process set the conditions under which later interactions occur.

For example, the way in which a rebel organization is constructed may affect its choices among alternative methods of fighting or negotiating. Furthermore, many of the issues that need to be decided during peace talks will have been generated during the process of fighting itself. When third parties suggest a peaceful solution, new factions may arise that prefer to continue to fight. Signatories to a peace agreement become, in

effect, the new coalition government, whose actions may or may not trigger another iteration of the whole conflict cycle. Extensive programs of post-conflict reconciliation may prove essential in ending this cycle of regime establishment and violent rebellion, yet there is no reason to presume that everyone would welcome that result.

Games played during one stage of the conflict cycle generate the problems that define the games played in later stages. Although the actors primarily embroiled in this process must respond to each new crisis as it develops, those seeking to influence the sequence of events must adopt a wider perspective. Direct intervention may change an immediate result, but the most effective form of intervention would be to change the incentives the primary actors face and thereby transform the overall nature of the process. To evaluate the effects of a proposed intervention, policy analysts must look beyond the current situation and try to understand its effects on subsequent games.

Reformers must be just as relentless as the actors themselves in tracing out all the possible configurations of choices and consequences. Too often, outside parties make strategic mistakes and pursue policies with misplaced priorities and disastrous consequences. Grievous harm can be done to the victims of violent political conflict when outside forces intervene in an inappropriate manner. My task in this book is to help such parties become more sophisticated in their understanding of the politics of intervention in political conflict.

The strategic miscues and resultant dilemmas detailed here are, unfortunately, found in all parts of the world. This book, however, is restricted to examples from the Horn of Africa. Since so many types of international organizations have attempted to help improve the conditions facing people in these countries, all of the important strategic

miscues and dilemmas have been clearly manifested in one form or another at some point in these conflicts. Restricting attention to examples from a single region also has the effect of highlighting the aggregate consequences that derive from past failures at productive intervention. As I show throughout this book, many types of intervention were not just ineffective but also positively destructive, in the sense of helping those responsible for the violence to continue to enjoy the gains they obtained in that fashion. Surely we can select more effective strategies than that.

So central is game theory to the argument of this book that I have borrowed an otherwise quite technical term, strategic complementarity, in its subtitle. In the literature on game theory, *strategic complementarity* (*SC*) occurs when an increase in one player's action monotonically increases the marginal return of another player's action (Topkins 1998; Vives 2005a, 2005b). This concept is especially relevant for situations in which the benefits of using a particular type of technology increase as the number of users increases. Such network externalities arise whenever policy analysts examine the adoption of common standards, and similar types of positive feedback can occur in many other circumstances.

Among the runaway effects most relevant to the current project are rapid increases in both the numbers of refugees fleeing conflict and the humanitarian aid organizations scrambling to help them, desultory wars with ever-changing factions, and the selling off of assets after a series of problems that ultimately trigger famine conditions. Also, as shown in the technical appendix, strategic complementarity in the production of public goods can generate vastly different kinds of political regimes.

Strategic complementarities abound in the operation of systems of network governance. As is well known, by generating compelling incentives towards increased productivity, efficient markets can generate sustained economic growth. Yet, these incentives will be undermined if property rights are not secure, or if any of the other essential contributions from public, voluntary, or community sectors go missing. To get the incentives right, some institutional arrangement must be devised that enables participants to take full advantage of all available strategic complementarities.

In exactly the same way, interventions from external parties can greatly affect the incentives facing combatants. My argument, in short, is that external interventions have too often augmented participants' incentives to engage in further conflict. In some especially pernicious cases, to be detailed in subsequent chapters, increased interventions actually induce further complexification and intensification of the existing conflicts.

Meanwhile, other political entrepreneurs, both local and global in their scale of operations, have implemented programs that, with the proper scaffolding of cross-sector supporting institutions, might have exactly the opposite effect. The most promising of these institutional innovations are discussed in chapter 12, but the reader will encounter instances of cleverness and creativity in all chapters. The problem is that many of these innovations go unrecognized as such because they do not fit easily within standard categories of thought. That is why it is so essential to take a broader perspective, to clarify the cross-cutting effects of strategic choices made by diverse organizations, political and otherwise, in different countries and at different stages of the conflict process.

By showing how a few simple game models can provide insights towards better understanding of the behavior of participants in regional conflicts in Africa and of the international organizations seeking to ameliorate the consequence of those conflicts, I hope to demonstrate that we need to transcend traditional cross-disciplinary and subdisciplinary boundaries. Although my primary audience is fellow academics, I also hope this book can help scholars, humanitarian organizations, diplomats, peacemakers, and concerned citizens throughout the world play the political games they happen to be playing in a more effective manner.

This book introduces basic concepts and tools of game theory that may prove useful to humanitarians and peacemakers striving to overcome dilemmas generated by the unintended consequences of their previous interventions. Very little technical language is used in this book, which is meant to be fully accessible to general readers. I introduce only the bare minimum of terminology needed to get my points across to all readers. (Technical details are relegated to an appendix.)

As I see it, the advantage of casting such a broad net lies in the area of bringing to bear new perspectives on long-standing policy problems. I feel that I have been able to see new connections between seemingly disparate themes, and my hope is that my synthesis will have the effect of inspiring others to pursue their own insights with renewed vigor. My guiding inspiration has been to present issues of humanitarian relief and peacebuilding in one of the world's poorest regions as being worthy of treatment using tools of analytical and conceptual sophistication more commonly applied to more prestigious topics of economic growth, electoral competition, and war.

Organization of the Book

After this introductory chapter, the next chapter sets the stage with brief overviews of the many conflicts in this region. The following two chapters introduce readers to the wide array of international organizations that try to help resolve these conflicts or at least ameliorate their detrimental effects. Chapters 5-7 detail the problems entailed in the direct interactions between governments and rebel organizations. Chapters 8-11 direct the reader's attention to the often surprising effects of the intervention into conflicts in this region by humanitarian aid organizations, diplomats and other peacemakers, peacekeeping forces, and other types of international or transnational organizations. Chapter 12 highlights those recent developments that are most conducive to the achievement of peace, while chapter 13 concludes with a series of suggestions towards the design of an improved set of strategies for the global response to regional conflict.

Chapter 2 outlines the magnitude of the problems faced by those seeking to transform the Horn of Africa into a more peaceful system. This chapter surveys the many political conflicts that have raged within each country in the last five decades. It will, of course, be necessary to step further back in time, especially to the colonial era, in order to understand the historical foundations of the problems of governance in each of these countries.

Chapter 3 details my analytic perspective, based on the basic principles of the widely influential tradition of rational choice theory. I pay particular attention to instances of *social dilemmas*—situations of strategic interaction in which the self-interested motivations of each actor lead to undesirable outcomes. Although these

outcomes may be unintended, the techniques of game theory and related tools enable us to uncover the underlying structure of these problems. I place particular emphasis on the importance of allowing the subjects of rational choice theory the capacity to creatively recast the conditions of their own existence—to change the rules of the games they find themselves playing. Unfortunately, sensitivity to the boundless human capacity for creative reconstitution of their own relationships has too often been missing in previous applications of rational choice theory to the study of social dilemmas.

Chapter 4 begins the analysis with the seemingly simple case of famine relief. Shorn of the complexities imposed by violent conflict, dilemmas inherent in external assistance stand in sharp contrast. A simple two-player game model is used to illustrate the basic problem, which resembles the Samaritan's Dilemma game investigated by previous researchers of international development assistance. Supportive interventions by other actors are shown to be the most effective way out of this dilemma, although humanitarian relief agencies can, to some extent, improve the outcome by their own implementation of a more sophisticated strategy. This chapter concludes with a restatement of the fundamental role that relief must play in any sustainable governance regime, especially for those peoples displaced by ongoing conflicts.

Chapters 5-7 examine the strategic situation as experienced by the major combatants in these struggles: the governing authorities and the leaders of the rebel organizations seeking to wrest power from them. Each chapter focuses on particularly important dilemmas that these actors face on a regular basis.

Chapter 5 investigates the dynamic logics of winning and wielding power in the post-colonial context. Leaders face tradeoffs between expanding their base of support and

narrowing it, in order to deliver more compelling rewards to those groups whose support is most critical. The model of regime formation and change underlying this analysis is detailed in the appendix, while its implications in the specific context of the Horn are examined in the body of the text.

The second half of chapter 5 moves to the point of view of those political entrepreneurs seeking to mobilize support for rebellion by tapping into the political grievances felt by oppressed or marginalized groups. These *rebel entrepreneurs* are pulled in different directions as they respond to the funding opportunities made available by group grievances, the support of external patrons, and the use of force for personal gain. Their construction of different *types* of rebel organizations may lead to different patterns of fighting, but most of the civil wars we examine have been fought in a desultory and nondecisive manner that transfers most of the costs of war to innocent civilians. Chapter 6 explores the rational basis of desultory combat.

Chapter 7 examines a frequently recurring phenomenon that I label *reciprocal destabilization*. I use the well-known Prisoner's Dilemma game to show the conditions under which the leaders of two neighboring states support rebels fighting each other's government, even if both leaders could benefit from implementing an agreement to stop this mutual destabilization. This pattern is one of the most striking findings to emerge from my analysis of this conflict system.

The next three chapters look at different aspects of the global response to these conflicts, focusing on humanitarian assistance, peace negotiations, the implementation of peace accords, and post-conflict reconciliation. Each chapter reviews dilemmas that arise from the typical choices of well-intentioned actors.

Chapter 8 begins by recognizing that the desperate plight of large numbers of refugees and other displaced peoples has inspired a tremendous amount of effort orchestrated by *humanitarian aid organizations* (*HAOs*). The international governmental and nongovernmental organizations engaged in these activities are described, with particular attention to the incentives that such agencies face to provide assistance in order to continue to attract resources to their own organizations. Unfortunately, these good intentions produce disturbingly tragic results. International organizations act to ameliorate the life-threatening conditions confronting refugees and internally displaced peoples, but clever combatants find ways of diverting these resources into funding their own military campaigns or otherwise serving their own political purposes. This chapter concludes with some promising instances in which HAOs have become more adept at strategic planning and implementation.

Chapter 9 details the dilemmas that emerge when warring parties first start to talk peace. Combatants contemplating negotiations face significant transaction costs, and third-party intermediaries can offer crucial assistance in helping the parties devise some means to reconstruct a new political order out of the current chaos. However, many negotiations prove fruitless, and formal agreements routinely fail to be implemented. Simple game models demonstrate conditions under which some combatants have an incentive to participate in peace negotiations under false pretenses. In short, by exerting pressure for talks to begin, third parties create for themselves the additional problem of distinguishing between honest and duplicitous negotiators. This problem has been especially noticeable during a long series of ineffectual negotiations to establish a new government in Somalia, which has led some critics to dismiss diplomacy as the

equivalent of a camel that leaders from this pastoral culture know all too well how to milk, relentlessly and yet in a sustainable fashion.

Chapters 10 and 11 investigate the challenges and the opportunities posed by the implementation of peace agreements. My basic point is that if the fundamental structure of the political system remains in place, then a future repetition of conflict is virtually assured. If all that changes is the identity of the person or groups enjoying the position of centralized power, then other, still-excluded groups will eventually organize to redress their grievances. In this sense, many peace agreements have an implicit expiration date, in the sense that the peace will evaporate after the period of time necessary for these newly aggrieved groups to organize an effective resistance. Unfortunately, this is exactly the type of peace agreement that serves as the focus for the vast majority of diplomatic efforts. Just stopping the fighting is sufficiently difficult in many cases to justify delaying any effort at more fundamental reform. Chapter 10 concludes with a critique of several peace agreements that have either already failed or have not yet proven their sustainability.

Chapter 12 reviews a series of innovative recent developments that provide, I conclude, a basis for hope for better results in the future. A few of these changes reflect strategic innovations on the part of humanitarian and other international organizations, but the most important sources for hope are local. This chapter is the hopeful center of this book, as it highlights instances of local reconciliation that may ultimately unravel the tapestry of conflict in this region. Many challenges remain, especially to scale these successes up to the national and regional levels, but the first step is for analysts to recognize what the people themselves already accomplished.

Finally, chapter 13 summarizes lessons for reform of the international institutions involved in policies regarding violent political conflict. I highlight four simple principles.

First, external parties should *listen to the locals*, in the sense of focusing on the actual nature of local problems rather than interpreting ongoing conflicts through the prism of their own global agendas or ideologies. In addition, innovative solutions implemented by local peoples should be recognized as such, and their potential usefulness examined in a supportive manner. It is particularly important that the members of the network of global conflict policy organizations remain open to the possibility of learning from the successes thus far achieved by people in this region, rather than presuming that external observers have all the answers.

Second, external parties should *expect exploitation,* since some clever local actors will surely act to exploit any intervention they may undertake, no matter how well-intentioned. Care must be taken to foresee the likely political consequences of proposed interventions and to plan for adjustments in order to compensate for the adverse consequences that will almost certainly emerge later.

Third, organizations involved in global conflict policy must effectively *institutionalize incentives* by setting up regular procedures that reinforce the effects of particular reforms. Since new disputes will surely arise, the primary actors must continue to face incentives that guide them towards the routine use of more peaceful patterns of dispute resolution. Too often the international community rushes aid in response to a current emergency, but then loses all interest after a short period of time. A better strategy would be to send fewer resources on a more regular basis, and especially to remain involved in ways that are supportive of local efforts to craft innovative solutions

to their own problems. It is especially important to incorporate the ability of other types of organizations to provide a sufficiently supportive framework, to fill in the institutional gaps in the current system.

My fourth point may prove the most controversial, as I strongly recommend that policy analysts learn to *respect religions' roles*. Throughout my work on this project, I have been confronted by the unmistakable imprint of faith traditions on the activities of many components of global conflict policy. Yes, religion can intensify political conflict, but I found it remarkable that the most innovate and effective programs, especially at the local level, are so often led by individuals deeply inspired by their faith and implemented by faith-based organizations of some type. Although a systematic evaluation of the balance of positive and negative influences of religion upon this particular regional conflict system lies beyond the scope of the present work, I conclude with some specific suggestions for future research and policy innovation.

Clearly, much work remains to achieve a stable peace in the Horn of Africa. Those of us living elsewhere can do a better job of providing effective support, rather than repeating past missteps. Ultimately, however, this transformative task must be undertaken and realized by the people themselves. I have every confidence in their ability to do so, should more members of the global conflict policy network learn the right lessons from Machiavelli and modern game theorists. My fervent hope is that this book can assist, in some small manner, towards that end.

Notes to Chapter 1

[1] On advocacy networks and policy networks in general, see Sabatier (1999), Keck and Sikkink (1988), and Goldsmith and Eggers (2004).

[2] See the Suggested Readings for comments on several categories of historical, journalistic, or fictional overviews. Many other sources are cited throughout this book.

[3] Each of these technical terms will be explained more fully below; briefly, their original sources are Azar (1985), Deutsch et al. (1957), and V. Ostrom, Tiebout, and Warren (1961), respectively.

[4] In the US case, the requisite policy networks are easiest to identify in urban centers that lack a consolidated governance structure but instead rely on cross-linkages among a diverse array of public, private, and voluntary organizations (Oakerson 1999; V. Ostrom, Bish, and E. Ostrom 1988). Yet, network governance is a much more general phenomenon (see Hanisch and McGinnis 2005).

[5] See the contributions in Berdal and Malone (2000), especially Collier (2000), and the extended discussions in Kaldor (1999) and Reno (1998).

[6] See also the USIP (2004) report on the Horn's potential role in global terrorism.

CHAPTER 3 Conflict Institutions and Response Networks

I ask the reader's indulgence for another brief hypothetical exercise. Imagine yourself as an official of an international organization tasked to improve conditions in a country that is experiencing an extended bout of violent political conflict. You have a limited set of resources available to you that you can allocate towards the pursuit of specific goals. However, you don't have enough resources to do everything that needs to be done, and this scarcity forces you to choose your priorities carefully.

One obvious goal would be to minimize the current level of suffering. But what if recognition of these costs is precisely what is needed for the parties to become willing to engage in serious negotiations? By lowering the costs of war, you might diminish the intensity of their search for peace, and as a consequence the parties may keep fighting. In the short term you save lives, but at the cost of more lives over the intermediate term.

Suppose instead that you are able to exert pressure on the combatants to stop fighting, even if they remain unable to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution. In this way, you minimize the duration of the war and, thereby, save the additional lives that may have been lost under the first scenario. However, if the dispute that first triggered the conflict remains unresolved, then it is reasonable to presume that, once your attention is diverted elsewhere, the parties might resume their fighting in an effort to finally solve their problem, once and for all. Perhaps this next war will cost even more lives, after the parties have had time to regroup and to gather additional resources. In this scenario, by acting to minimize the duration of the current war, you may have served to increase the likelihood of a recurrence of that conflict.

In short, you face a *dilemma*, a situation that requires you to choose between two options that both result in disagreeable outcomes. In this book, we examine a daunting array of dilemmas, none of which are easy to solve. We revisit these scenarios in the next chapter, in a more elaborate model of the choices facing humanitarian aid organizations responding to the human misery generated by famine or war.

When rational actors interact with each other, they routinely find themselves facing dilemmas of one kind or another. The analysis presented here draws upon an elaborate body of research in which scholars from many scholarly disciplines have examined the sources of such dilemmas as well as their possible solutions.

Throughout this book, I use simple models of rational choice to explain why the well-intentioned interventions of global actors into ongoing conflicts in the Horn of Africa have so frequently resulted in surprisingly negative consequences. Each chapter investigates the one or two models most relevant to the unintended consequences observed during periods of fighting, negotiating, and implementation of post-conflict reconciliation. This chapter clarifies my rationale for relying on game models and on rational choice theory.

Institutional Analysis and the Organization of Coercion

My work builds on the *institutional analysis* approach to the study of politics, governance, and public policy as developed by Vincent Ostrom, Elinor Ostrom, and their many colleagues and collaborators at Indiana University's Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis (E. Ostrom 1990, 2005; McGinnis 1999a, 1999b, 2000b). In turn, institutional analysis fits within the broader tradition of *modern political economy*, a multidisciplinary body of research on rational choice theory, game theory, public choice,

social choice, transaction cost economics, constitutional political economy, rational choice institutionalism, and related methods developed by political scientists, policy analysts, economists, and other social scientists.[1]

Modern political economy treats rationality as the core component of human choice in all areas of endeavor. Individuals are presumed to pursue their own self-interest to the best of their abilities. If a choice situation is sufficiently consequential, a rational actor will carefully evaluate the costs and benefits of alternative plans of action before selecting the plan that offers a prospect for the highest expected net benefit. In this evaluation process, rational actors make efficient use of all available information. However, since information-gathering and processing is costly, rational choices are often made on the basis of incomplete information.

One of the common misperceptions about the rational choice approach is that institutions designed in this manner must always operate in an efficient manner (Pierson 2000). Given limitations of human cognition, no group of individuals can foresee all of the consequences of their actions. Institutions typically have unforeseen effects. Indeed, one of the key insights of rational choice institutionalism concerns the ubiquity of unintended consequences of institutional design and all other forms of strategic choice. But the analysis does not stop here. Instead, institutional analysts next turn to consider the likely responses of creative individuals, as they pursue their own advantage within these changed institutional contexts, and as they jointly maneuver to modify these institutions.

This sequence of institutional innovation and reaction to their intended and unintended consequences is endless, but this sequence of design and reform operates according to an underlying logic that can be studied in an abstract fashion. The

fundamental goal of institutional analysis is to bring some order to this never-ending process, to predict what types of consequences and reactions are likely to follow from different institutional forms. Of course, we analysts are similarly constrained by the limitations of human cognition, which means that our knowledge of any set of institutions can never be complete (E. Ostrom 2005). Still, careful and sustained institutional analysis can generate useful improvements in our understanding of the institutional contexts within which we all operate.

Tensions between individual self-interest and collective goals can be ameliorated (but never entirely eliminated) through the careful design of institutional mechanisms of social choice, rule-making, monitoring, and dispute resolution. Yet, any solution to one particular dilemma of collective action necessarily generates additional dilemmas in its wake. Research has made it clear that there can be no single, perfect solution to fundamental dilemmas of collective action. Still, there are better or worse responses, ones that are more or less appropriate to a given set of circumstances. By helping us diagnose the types of problems that are most likely to emerge in any given setting, institutional analysis helps unravel the complex sequences of strategic reactions to institutional innovations that emerge as groups confront ever-changing policy problems.

In this perspective, all politics consists of strategic interactions occurring within particular institutional contexts. Individuals pursue their own self-interest to the best of their abilities, with the options available to them and the ways in which they perceive their own interests profoundly shaped by the institutions that surround them. As used here, the term “institution” includes the shared strategies, norms, and rules out of which formal organizations are constructed and informal practices sustained (see Crawford and

Ostrom 2005). Much as any formal organization involves complex linkages among its component parts, this approach conceptualizes informal institutions as networks of interacting expectations, strategies, norms and rules, with individuals playing essential roles in the design and maintenance of each of these components. To take an important example, social capital is produced in informal networks of social connections, shared beliefs, reciprocity and other normative expectations, habitual practices, and procedures to monitor and sanction the behavior of other members of that group. In turn, the level of informal social capital in a society can profoundly affect the aggregate consequences of the interactions of formal organizations.

Constitutional Order and Network Governance

Institutions are created by human communities to facilitate desired forms of behavior and to discourage undesirable behaviors. Institutions established by one group of people at one point in time may have long-lasting effects in shaping the incentives faced by those same individuals at later times as well as the interests of generations yet unborn. Thus, it is essential to look beyond the written text of formal constitutions to understand the underlying social, political, and economic order that constitutes all human societies. This perspective leads naturally to a broad and inclusive view of constitutional order and governance.

Although originally developed to characterize the nature of governance in metropolitan areas in the United States (V. Ostrom, Tiebout, and Warren 1961), *polycentricity* is a general concept that encapsulates a distinctive way of looking at political, social, and economic order (McGinnis 1999a, 1999b, 2000b). A sharp contrast is drawn against the standard view of sovereignty as connoting a single source of political

power and authority with exclusive responsibility for selecting and implementing public policy. Attention is drawn instead to complex networks of interaction among public, private, and voluntary organizations, each of which makes unique contributions to the governance of society.

Similar concepts of network governance have been applied to certain aspects of international relations. Especially relevant is the tradition of research on multilevel governance in the European Union (Hooghe and Marks 2001, 2003). Among those scholars investigating changing relationships between public authority and private power at the global level, I have found most useful the analyses of Chayes and Chayes (1995) on compliance and self-regulation and Reinicke (1998) on global public policy. Witte, Reinicke, and Benner (2000) examine trisectoral networks at the global level, but without quite so explicit a recognition of the need for complementarity in their overall operation. In addition, much of this work derives its inspiration from challenges driven by recent intensification of economic globalization (Hart and Prakash 1999).

Networks of global policy regimes have been around a long time, and it is a mistake to view them primarily as responses to globalization. There has certainly been an increase in the number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) active in global politics and especially the density of interconnections among different NGOs and among NGOs, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and national governments. Still, the basic logic of policy networks is familiar territory to analysts of public policy.

Dilemmas of Agent-Principal Relations

Ubiquitous tensions between agents and ordinary members of organizations follow certain patterns. An *agent* is an actor selected to act in the name of some *principal*

actor(s), which may be an individual or a collectivity. Just as lawyers act as agents for their clients, elected political leaders act as the agents of the constituency that elected them. Any formal organization defines many such agents and attaches explicitly defined roles and normative expectations for their behavior.

The basic problem is one of aligning the interests of agent and principal. The principal delegates authority to the agent in hopes of making decisions more effectively, at lower cost in transaction, or to take advantage of the specialized knowledge or expertise of that agent. The agent makes a commitment to help in that regard, yet the agent remains well-placed to take advantage of the principal's trust. Agents with restricted access to specialized knowledge have a particular advantage, since the principals may not be able to completely understand that information even if it were to be made available. As individuals, all agents face incentives to shirk from their responsibilities. Agent behavior is partially shaped by the imperatives of these collectively-defined role expectations, but we cannot neglect the all-too-human incentives to take advantage of one's position of authority or access to unique resources.

Game theory is a mode of analysis particularly suited to the study of the problems of coordination implied by strategic interactions between agents of different organizations as well as the agents within a single organization that are pursuing related but not identical goals. Institutional analysis draws attention to the configuration of rules, norms, and role expectations that are built into any agent-principal relationship. The typical economic model of agency focuses on the terms of the contract and especially the relative access of the two sides to information regarding the quality of the agent's performance. More generally, other factors need to be taken into consideration.

As detailed in chapter 5, rebel leaders act as agents of the constituent groups whose interests they espouse. Of course, rebel leaders have considerable decisional latitude concerning the way in which they pursue their rebellion. In particular, their ready access to weapons of coercion gives rebels, both leaders and individual soldiers, many opportunities to shirk by exploiting their ability to grab control of resources or to force people to obey their will. As we shall see, the agent-principal relationship is particularly problematic for the case of coercive organizations.

I stress this point because my analysis is founded in the fundamental principles of methodological individualism. To say an organization (or any other collectivity) acts or decides is, strictly speaking, inappropriate within this tradition. The precise formulation is to say that individual agents act in the name of that organization. These agents have been assigned specific responsibilities or capabilities as defined in the appropriate network of rules, norms, and expectations specified in the formal and informal constitution of that organization.

Agents in the Global Conflict Policy Network

Use of this simplified representation of collective behavior becomes especially problematic when it is applied to something like the international community as a whole. There is no well-defined organization of that name, and no single agents have been assigned the responsibility to act in its name. The Secretary-General of the United Nations can be said to be the closest analogue to an agent of an international community, but it is important to realize just how self-serving a claim to this responsibility can be. There are many instances in which the Secretary-General does not have the authority to

speak for the Security Council or any other component of the United Nations, which as a large formal organization encompasses agents pursuing widely divergent agendas.

If the term international community means anything at all, it points towards a motley collection of an incredibly diverse array of governments, IGOs, NGOs, and informal groupings that express concern about and take actions that affect world affairs. Each component organization is primarily concerned with particular aspects of world affairs. Each component organization defines its own agents, tasked to monitor and effect changes in specialized areas. In addition, there are agents of composite organizations, formed from the conjuncture of distinct organizations. In practice, then, the international community must be seen as a complex network of interacting organizations and agents pursuing a diverse array of common and particular interests.

In this book, I shift attention to a more manageable concept, the *global conflict policy network*. By this, I mean to include all the major organizational actors involved in activities directly related to the world's collective reaction to local or regional conflicts. Relevant activities include diplomacy, peacekeeping, military intervention, humanitarian assistance, development, human rights advocacy, promotion of democracy, and post-conflict economic reconstruction and social reconciliation.

The particular capabilities and priorities of different types of organizations are detailed in the chapters that follow. For now, it is useful to realize that each of these organizations pursues interests beyond the ones that we are primarily concerned with here. It has long been recognized that any military intervention by a Great Power in an ongoing conflict has been inspired, to a significant degree, to that Power's own national interest as perceived by its own leaders. Even those countries that provide troops for UN

peacekeeping missions have their own private reasons for doing so, including such mundane matters as obtaining funds to pay their salaries (Myers 1999). Humanitarian organizations that seek to relieve the suffering of the victims of war must also find some way to raise sufficient money to carry out their activities, and this concern can affect their decisions concerning where they focus their activities. After all, no one organization can be involved in all aspects of all humanitarian emergencies, so each must also choose on what and where to specialize. In addition, those humanitarian aid agencies associated with particular religious denominations or movements must decide the extent to which their practical activities should be kept consistent with the overall mission of their chosen religion.

In sum, agents of all the organizations involved in the global conflict policy network are motivated by multiple goals. They share the overall goal of helping the parties currently engulfed in conflict, but they pursue conflicting priorities. Each has something important to contribute, but no one can provide all the answers. There is no reasonable prospect that all of them can be incorporated into a single organization, nor even can we expect representatives of all of the relevant organizations to even sit down at the same table. Instead, our task, as summarized in the concluding chapter, is to help them craft an effective strategy of coordination that enables them to make effective use of their complementary strengths and capabilities. But in order to do so, they must first understand the capabilities and choices confronting the primary actors in this drama.

Choices Involved in Rebellion and Its Resolution

To make this discussion of rational choice theory a bit more concrete, it is worth examining in some detail the nature of the choices that government officials, rebel

entrepreneurs, fighters, community leaders, and ordinary people have to make. Subsequent chapters develop a series of simple models, each focused on particular dilemmas in effect at distinct stages of the conflict process, from the pre-conflict organizing stage through the fighting and negotiation stages and culminating in post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation. This section provides a broad overview of the full array of choice situations.

The Organization of Coercion

The organizations of most interest here are unusual in that they are designed and operated by specialists in the production and application of physical violence, threats, and other forms of coercion. For such *coercive organizations,* it is particularly difficult for principals to constrain the behavior of agents supposedly acting on their behalf. After all, the rebels, from the leaders on down to individual soldiers, have weapons at their disposal. These weapons can be put to use for either public or private purposes. In brief, "men with guns" have a distinct advantage over those without them.

This ready access to instruments of violence complicates any institutional analysis of coercive organizations. We cannot assume that well-armed individuals automatically follow the rules or obey the decisions of persons in a position of authority within that organization. But then, neither can we assume that unarmed people in ordinary circumstances always follow the rules or even the promptings of their conscience. All human behavior is driven by deep imperatives of self-interest, as constructed by and channeled through relevant rules, norms, and shared understandings. These same principles can contribute to our understanding of the behavior of the leaders and individual members of coercive organizations.

The same analytical framework relates to the study of rebellion because individuals engaged in acts of politically inspired violence are following what they consider to be compelling norms of behavior. These norms were instilled in them by individuals fulfilling what they, in turn, saw as legitimate roles of leadership, acting according to a set of norms and rules of behavior considered as legitimate within their own cultural context. A key aspect of this norm installation process was the dissemination of shared meanings to such terms as "innocent civilians" versus "legitimate military target." In all, this regional conflict system as a whole is a complex, dynamic institution, sustained by a reinforcing configuration of norms, rules, and roles.

Each formal organization designates individual or collective agents authorized to act on behalf of that organization and its constituents. These agents are expected to pursue the goals shared in common by members of that organization, but they typically also have sufficient leeway (or slack) to pursue their own self-interest as well. Constituents' ability to constrain the self-serving behavior of agents varies widely, and is specifically determined by the details of that organization's institutional structure. In recognition of the inevitable divergence of interest between principals and their agents, economic theorists and legal scholars have generated a large body of literature on the optimal design and implementation of legal contracts.[2]

Stages of the Conflict Cycle

The four major stages of the conflict cycle are illustrated in figure 3.1. The basic cycle of ordinary politics to fighting, to talking, to post-conflict reconstruction, is arrayed around the edge of that figure using darker lines. Dashed lines are used to indicate the points at which different components of the global conflict policy network can potentially

intervene in any given conflict process. Later in this chapter, we review these points of intervention, but it is important to remember that the original impetus for the conflict cycle lies among the primary actors.

(Figure 3.1 about here)

As conceptualized here, a conflict process potentially begins whenever a new governing regime is first formed. All political leaders require the support of at least some constituent groups, although the scope of that support varies widely between autocratic and democratic regimes. In any type of polity, leaders can generate support by delivering public goods and/or by the distribution of private benefits to their supporters. Public goods are consumed in common by all members of a community, whereas the recipients of private goods enjoy more exclusive benefits.

Since any regime has a limited amount of resources that can be devoted to the delivery of public goods or the distribution of private benefits, it necessarily faces trade-offs. In addition, leaders must choose how broadly they construe the nature of the public they claim to serve, as well as selecting to whom they should distribute valued private goods. The pain of these trade-offs can be ameliorated by securing additional resources from external sources, but the basic choice remains in effect. Different types of regimes exhibit dramatically different mixtures of public and private benefits, but none can ignore either. Democratic regimes must deliver sufficient public goods to secure reelection, but they also routinely distribute resources in favor of their core supporters. Even the most autocratic regime must provide some degree of security to its people, unless it wants to allocate all of its resources to the task of merely holding onto power.

In times of *ordinary politics*, adjustments are routinely made to the distribution of benefits in order to reflect changing distributions of bargaining power, as manifested, say, in the results of elections. Such processes can be incredibly complex, and yet, for current purposes, it suffices to assume that some such arrangement is achieved in the form of an equilibrium regime that will exhibit regular properties and consequences.

The mere existence of a public authority with the ability to enforce collective decisions serves as an invitation to groups of narrow interests to obtain influence over those policies. Concentrated groups of actors who share close connections and ties to influential positions in society are especially likely to be able to capture a disproportionate share of the benefits (Olson 1965). There is a natural tendency for the benefits of government policies to be progressively restricted to smaller groups, unless there is some mechanism in place to prevent this from happening. Furthermore, well-positioned groups that achieve hegemonic control over all aspects of government power can impose their vision of society and trample the interests and even the basic security of victim groups.

This theme of the "capture" of the state by social groups resonates throughout the institutional literature in political science and economics. This concern is based on the ability of monopolists to take advantage of their position by introducing distortions in either price or quantity. Public choice scholars are most concerned about the costs associated with *rent-seeking*, in which some group seeks to influence public policy so as to give itself a monopoly power over some segment of the economy.[3] The group then enjoys the benefits of artificially created monopoly rents, while the resulting costs in terms of foregone economic growth are shared by the society as a whole.

Not all constituent groups have equal success in mobilizing to protect their own interests. Consider, for example, the natural advantages enjoyed by small, concentrated groups over the interests of large and diffuse or latent groups. Competitive rent-seeking is a direct and natural consequence of these systematic differences in the costs of collective action faced by different groups. Overall, public goods will be underprovided, and the private benefits of government largesse will tend to be concentrated in the hands of a narrow support coalition. Those left outside that coalition nurture grievances against the governing regime, and previously marginalized groups will remain so. Both offer fertile soil for entrepreneurs seeking to organize a rebellion.

Successful rent-seeking has direct consequences on other societal groups, who will, by comparison, suffer significant costs. When these costs fall on particular groups in an especially concentrated fashion, that group becomes much more likely to realize the conditions necessary for them to engage in collective action to protect their interest. In this way, a concentration of grievances can help to trigger rebellion.

Eventually, some subset of these aggrieved or marginalized groups will mobilize to claim what they consider to be a fair portion of the government largesse, or to establish their own separate system of political power. The regime much decide: should these claims be accommodated or not? If the regime chooses accommodation, a new equilibrium will eventually be attained. If not, then the aggrieved groups face the choice of forming a rebel organization in hopes of forcing the regime to take account of their claims.

Transition from ordinary politics to the fighting stage requires that some actors complete the step of organizing for rebellion. To do so, political entrepreneurs mobilize

support by tapping into political grievances felt by many groups in these societies. As shown in chapter 5, each rebel entrepreneur must select the "cause" that serves as the foundation for rebellion, and this choice can make it more or less difficult to take full advantage of opportunities for external support. Different combinations of reliance upon constituents, external patrons, and criminal opportunities have the effect of constructing different *types* of rebel organizations, each of which tends to implement different types of military campaigns and political programs.

Once formed, rebel organizations contend with government forces in the *fighting stage*. Here, the combatants face choices concerning the intensity and targets of their military operations and propaganda campaigns. These choices have real consequences for the people of that country, who may be forced to leave their homes. Given the tight resource constraints characteristic of the Horn of Africa, the equilibrium value of violence remains low, but external assistance (including exactions from humanitarian organizations) can sustain low-level conflict indefinitely. Humanitarians, in turn, must choose how to respond to these expropriations.

Combatants also have an option to engage in peace talks, either directly or through third-party intermediaries. Third parties shape the nature of interactions in the *talking stage* of a conflict process by providing access to alternative forums of dispute resolution. As noted in figure 3.1, participation in peace talks may or may not occur simultaneously with continued fighting. Indeed, it is often the case that combatants continue fighting while they talk peace, each seeking success on the battlefield in order to improve their bargaining position.

Meanwhile, some entrepreneurs manage to find ways to benefit from continued unrest through criminal activities or by intensifying the fears of their followers. The longer a war continues, the more likely is the emergence of leaders capable of exploiting chaos for their own gain. Those who benefit from war may also benefit from participation in peace talks, as long as these talks remain unsuccessful. One of the most difficult dilemmas facing third parties in this stage is identifying which leaders are negotiating in good faith and which are secretly sabotaging efforts to arrive at an effective agreement.

To exit the talking stages, a peace agreement must be signed and its terms implemented. This transition is often long and involved. Constitutional reform may be necessary in order to ensure the continued participation of formerly marginalized groups. Reform of this magnitude is an extraordinary accomplishment, and it may require the provision of security guarantees from external actors.

In the absence of substantial transformations in constitutional order and in societal relations, this cycle of violence and negotiation may simply be repeated. After all, the leaders of the new regime face exactly the same incentives to award disproportionate benefits to their core supporters. Constitutional provisions can make a recurrence of rebellion less likely. In particular, transparency, opposition parties, and other effective constraints can make it difficult for subsequent rulers to impose excessive costs on any potentially mobilizable segment of that community.

But constitutional constraints may fail if intergroup animosities remain high. Since intense emotions are necessarily aroused in rebellions, analysis of post-conflict reconciliation requires integration of psychological factors beyond cost-benefit

calculations. Still, appropriate incentives must be put in place so former combatants will not find it in their interest to resume their careers as specialists in coercion.

Since each component of the reconciliation process is difficult to implement, this *post-conflict stage* typically signifies at best an incomplete realization of full reconciliation and reform. All polities remain potentially vulnerable to rebellion. A particularly effective trigger for future rebellion is for the new regime to retrench and contract the scope of societal groups that directly benefit from their policies. Yet, some such contraction is virtually inevitable, for as the relevant parties engage in the normal give-and-take of political competition, they no longer act in the same expansive and collegial way that characterizes the process of implementing peace. The parties must eventually turn from constitutional reconstruction to the mundane work of politics in ordinary times. Even so, the magnitude of any subsequent retrenchment can be dramatically lowered by integrating former combatants back into local societies and by establishing institutional safeguards against future abuses of power.

Creativity and Collective Action

Events in each stage of the conflict process turn critically upon the capacity of actors to creatively reconstitute the nature of their own relationships with each other. Movement from one stage to another requires that the relevant actors successfully overcome certain dilemmas of collective action. As shown in figure 3.1, interested third parties can help them at each point along the way, but the primary responsibility, and the primary locus of creative response, lies with the parties directly involved.

Formation of a rebel organization is an especially difficult task, since those groups most in need of a revolution are precisely those who already suffer from

significant disadvantages in organizing themselves for collective action. If they were perfectly endowed with facilitating factors, they would probably have been able to capture control over those aspects of policies of most direct concern to themselves. As it is, they are forced to try to overturn the regime and impose their desired policies more directly.

However, even concentrated grievances cannot be automatically transformed into rebel organizations. Instead, some entrepreneurial leadership is required. Entrepreneurs seeking to organize a rebellion can seek out support from domestic groups and from external patrons. Since there may be several aggrieved groups, patrons, or criminal networks, there may be many such entrepreneurs competing for leadership in the coercive sector. Those leaders who are particularly adept at combining resources from multiple sources are most likely to prosper in the long run.

Making an initial foray into peace talks can also be especially tricky. Conditions of war-fighting make all forms of cooperation very difficult to arrange. Combatants naturally develop suspicions of each other's motives in the unfolding of their struggle. This is why third-party intermediaries play such an important role in catalyzing a transition to the talking stage. As shown in figure 3.1, third parties facilitate the peaceful resolution of disputes by offering alternative institutional forums and generally acting to lower the transaction costs entailed in any effort to bring warring parties together.

Third parties can help in several ways. First, they can help solve the practical problem of establishing channels of communication between warring parties and especially in bringing representatives of these parties together in some physical location. Second, external parties may provide positive inducements to the primary combatants to

participate in the negotiations. Third, external intermediaries can help facilitate the parties' search for a solution by suggesting a set of terms around which their expectations might start to converge. This coordination problem lies at the heart of the bargaining process, and imputes much of the costs involved in such matters. Fourth, external intermediaries may go beyond merely suggesting a compromise position and suggest a more creative or integrative solution. Creative problem-solving is a time and effort intensive problem, and external assistance can be crucial.

Successful movement from a situation of civil war to peace requires coordinated action. Peacemaking is a classic problem of collective action. A long-lasting conflict situation can be said to have achieved a state of equilibrium. Some clever individuals will emerge to extract as much advantage from the situation as is possible, given their own preferences and constraints. Other individuals continue to suffer, but their efforts to move the situation to one of peace must cope, in some fashion, with those participants whose interests lie in the perpetuation of conflict. Once peace has been established, there may still be some individuals who choose the path of violence, since no human society can ever be totally free from crime. The essential difference between equilibria of civil peace and civil war is that, in the former state, no legitimate political actors routinely employ violent means.

In effect, participants are engaged in the process of forming a *peace coalition* with sufficient capacity to establish new conditions for rule. Each peace coalition remains tenuous, as hostilities may resume at any time. Membership in the coalition expands and contracts throughout the negotiating process according to a dynamic logic quite similar to

that faced by all regimes. New factions may arise, especially among those combatant forces least satisfied with the substance of the terms being negotiated.

External actors can help smooth the transition to the post-conflict stage by providing security guarantees that ameliorate any continuing fears harbored by one side or the other. In some difficult cases, the parties request peacekeeping forces that are typically dispatched by the UN or regional IGOs. Increasingly, peace operations have been instituted in advance of explicit agreements as a reflection of impatience with the slow progress towards peace thus far achieved by the parties themselves. These same organizations can offer longer-term security guarantees to the signatories of peace agreements, as well as financial or logistical assistance with economic reconstruction.

Once a stable group of partners for peace has been established, attention shifts to the difficult challenges that still lie ahead. Construction of an appropriate set of institutions that serves to reinforce the parties' initial inclination to cooperation is likely to prove an essential step in the sustainability of any post-reconciliation political order. Parties to the conflict will continue to harbor strong animosities towards each other if religious, political, or educational institutions act to reinforce memories of past atrocities committed by the other side. As long as different segments of society see each other as potential enemies, there remains the danger that some political entrepreneur will devise a way to generate sufficient support to overcome constitutional restraints that would otherwise prevent the destruction of the still-offending party on the other side. This is where the need for reconciliation comes in. Only if past grievances are discussed in the open, and some kind of mutual healing takes place, will a new sense of community have

developed. In that case, it is extremely difficult for any government leaders to get away with the level of repression that could inspire armed rebellion.

Yet, even parties once reconciled may later find new reasons to hate and fear each other. Thus, there remains an important role for external monitoring of the behavior of national governments towards their own people. Despite a long legacy in international law that denied the existence of any restraints on the domestic acts of sovereign governments, contemporary governments can no longer expect to repress their own people without at least someone taking notice. An energetic array of human rights organizations publicizes abuses by government officials and by those seeking to overthrow governments. In some cases, these abuses have been sufficient to trigger the application of international sanctions. Although this system of monitoring and sanctioning is by no means complete or applied in a consistent manner, it has added an important new element to the mix.

Components of the Global Conflict Policy Network

Figures 3.1 and 3.2 illustrate the many ways in which members of the global conflict policy network can help parties make successful transitions between stages of the conflict cycle, as well as affecting outcomes within each stage. In peacetime, national and IGO-based development agencies provide tangible economic assistance to government officials, as do contracts with multinational corporations engaged in primary resource extraction and other endeavors. Political leaders can also draw upon competing methods of governance and sources of legitimacy as advocated and demonstrated by other countries.

During the fighting, combatants obtain weapons from global or regional patrons and from a flourishing trade in arms. Many IGOs and NGOs supply relief aid to refugees and other victims of conflict. Recently, a few NGOs have made important contributions to the area of peacemaking, especially in sponsoring unofficial contacts between ordinary people from the warring factions. Even so, the United Nations and other diplomatic forums dominate activities regarding conflict resolution, ranging from facilitation to mediation to arbitration and, in rare circumstances, to adjudication by the World Court.

Once an agreement has been reached, international organizations can help local officials write new constitutions and design and implement new electoral laws. Reconciliation between warring parties is typically handled by local actors, with religious leaders of many faiths playing crucial leadership roles. The recent addition of the International Criminal Court and regional war crimes tribunals has added a judicial dimension to the post-conflict stage. However, such trials need to be carefully aligned so as to not disrupt the beneficial effects of societal efforts at reconciliation between the previously warring parties.

Assistance in holding elections and monitoring their fairness has been a growth industry of late, involving governments, IGOs, NGOs, and a few prominent individuals. Finally, human rights organizations play a crucial role in monitoring the activities of the new regimes so as to warn the global conflict policy network about abuses that might soon inspire additional rounds of rebellion.

With all this activity, it may be reasonable to expect a certain lack of efficiency in their overall effect. Figure 3.2 expands the center of the preceding figure in order to identify the range of organizations that fall under the purview of the global conflict policy

network. Each type of organization is located near their most characteristic forms of intervention in different stages of the conflict cycle. Some organizations intervene in multiple ways, especially the Great Powers and IGOs located in the center of that figure.

(Figure 3.2 about here)

I have not tried to indicate the many ways in which these different types of organizations are linked together. The most important sources of tensions between different types of organizations are discussed in subsequent chapters. Each of these types of organizations faces dilemmas that call out for improvements in the quality of their strategic response. Before examining these dilemmas, we need to turn first to the game models used in this analysis.

Modeling Embedded Dilemmas of Collective Action

The ubiquity of agent-principal relations gives us analytical leverage in the challenging task of using simple game models to better understand the dynamic operation of an overwhelmingly complex network of organizations responding to an ever-changing tapestry of concurrent conflicts in the Horn. Game models work best when they are simple. To use game models effectively, an analyst has to pick and choose which aspects of a complex phenomenon are most critical in setting the range of choice and the likely consequences of their choices.

With that in mind, consider figure 3.3. Three levels of separable political competition are identified, with the primary actors being governments and rebel organizations (ROs) at the national level, societal groups at the local level, and Great Powers or regional powers at the level of the global or regional system.

(Figure 3.3 about here)

Each conflict is affected by other interlinked games. Of particular importance are principal-agent games, which cross two levels of conflict. Global or regional powers may serve as a "patron" of a regional "client," in the sense that the former allows the latter access to advanced weapons or military assistance in exchange for its support in global or regional diplomatic, ideological, or other disputes (McGinnis 1985, 1990). The other critical agent-principal problem concerns the nature of the relationship between government or rebel leaders (as agents) and constituent or support groups (as principals). As noted earlier, coercive organizations present particularly difficult dilemmas regarding the control of agent behavior.

Although games between agents and principals cross the three primary levels of conflict, each level retains its own dynamic logic. Each can be understood as a game unto itself, in which the capabilities of the actors in any one game are shaped by the outcome of those agent-principal games in which that actor is engaged.

Along the central column of figure 3.3 are arrayed generic members of the global conflict policy network. As shown, each type tends to interact with a distinct set of conflict actors. Those conflict-resolution organizations (or third-party intermediaries in general) that help resolve disputes between combatants typically have little direct contact with local groups. (Some IGOs and national governments themselves often serve as third-party intermediaries, but in this figure that complication is not shown.) Conversely, organizations engaged in local reconciliation among warring groups and in other aspects of peace-building are less likely to engage the government or rebel leaders directly. There is no widely accepted label for this kind of intervention, but the term "peace and justice organization" seems an appropriate appellation.

Humanitarian aid organizations are uniquely located to interact both with the combatant leaders and with local peoples. As will be detailed more fully in subsequent chapters, the initial humanitarian impulse focuses on the delivery of emergency assistance to people endangered by natural disasters, famine, or conflict. Yet to gain access to them, humanitarian aid organizations (HAOs) usually have to make some arrangements with the relevant government officials or rebel leaders. These arrangements typically involve the diversion of at least some resources into the hands of the relevant officials, and so in that way the HAOs are sending resources to the combatants as well as their victims. The strategic dilemmas facing HAOs remain a central concern throughout subsequent chapters.

Many further complications are left out of figure 3.3. For example, HAOs receive funding from national governments and IGOs as well as from private donations. This puts HAOs in still another set of strategic dilemmas, as discussed in chapters 4 and 8. However, this figure should suffice to structure the logic of presentation followed in all subsequent chapters. Each chapter includes an examination of one or more of the particular interactions illustrated in figure 3-3: conflict games, agent-principal relationships, or exchanges between third parties and the primary actors. Yet, each game needs to be put in context to take account of strategic complementarities that can change the primary actors' incentives.

This network of interlocking games is too complex to examine in its entirety. Each simple component game remains susceptible to analysis and to the generation of clear implications, but the overall system defies capture in a single model. Furthermore, the propensity of entrepreneurs to creatively redesign their own games makes it

impossible to encompass this dynamic network of embedded games in any single model, no matter how comprehensive. Breaking an incomprehensible system up into smaller and more easily understandable components has the additional benefit of comparing the likely consequences of interventions of different types at different points in the process. This facilitates a strategic selection of those locations and modes of intervention that should prove most effective in the dynamic unraveling of this regional tapestry of conflict and its eventual reconstruction.

For me, game models are particularly useful in identifying the underlying structures of dilemmas that recur in widely different forms in different empirical contexts. Game theory helps us see the common elements, thereby clarifying why specific problems prove so difficult to resolve. The point is not to prove theorems, but rather to use the tools of mathematical modeling to help uncover tendencies and consequences that are not immediately apparent when the model is first specified. In this book, each model is presented in a general, qualitative format to avoid conveying an inappropriate sense of misplaced precision.[4] My analysis of each game model focuses on identifying these equilibrium tendencies and counterintentional outcomes.

This book identifies about a dozen separate dilemma games, each of which provides a simplified presentation of a strategic interaction that implies potential equilibrium outcomes that are at least initially, or counterintuitive, or at least counterintentional, from the point of view of the participants themselves. Some games are direct instances of classic games familiar in the research literature while others are more specific or unique to this empirical context. I have limited myself to relatively simple

games in order to highlight the potential capacity of the relevant actors to change the nature of the games they are playing.

My intention has been to highlight a toolbox of models likely to be useful to humanitarians and peacemakers planning their interventions into ongoing situations of violent political conflict. Interplay between strategic interaction and creative reconstruction needs to remain front and center in the plans devised by external parties seeking better outcomes. Too often, intervention takes the form of imposing new outcomes. For the situations examined here, it is more realistic for third parties to realize that the most they can do is to affect the conditions under which the people themselves act. Ultimately, outcomes remain under the control of the primary actors on the ground, but their incentives can be shaped in ways that promote more beneficial outcomes.

Allow me to switch metaphors, as a further twist on my earlier portrayal of this conflict tapestry as a living being. Each game model represents a certain kind of interaction among the component actors in this ever-evolving play. Each actor is, in turn, the site of an internal strategic interaction in which the interests and capabilities of agents are shaped by their relationship with all relevant principals (or stakeholders). Each intraorganizational agent-principal game and each interorganizational interaction game constitute molecules of the aggregate conflict system. The tapestry pattern exhibited by the agglomeration of molecule games is generated by the complex interplay of consciously planned and unintended consequences of these strategic interactions.

To change this tapestry's pattern from one of war to peace requires a fundamental reorientation of the molecules or of their mode of interconnection. In previous collaborative research on rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, John

Williams and I used a similar image to explain the initial formation of the rivalry and its slow transformation into their more complex and hard-to-categorize relationship in the post-Cold War era.

> Transformation into or out of a rivalry system can be seen as a form of phase change, like a liquid changing into a solid. It took time for the compound dilemmas of rivalry to dissolve and recrystallize into a new shape. . . . During the era of superpower rivalry, the blooming, buzzing confusion that is the natural state of domestic and international politics crystallized into a relatively stable and predictable form. Over a period of four decades this rivalry system aligned domestic and international forces into a clearly recognizable pattern. A series of massively surprising events eventually triggered a phase transition back to the normal level of complexity. (McGinnis and Williams 2001: 118, 129)

In effect, we argued that rivalry and ordinary politics constituted two alternative equilibrium solutions to the game of U.S.-Russian relations. At some hard to specify point in time, the dramatic reforms instituted by Gorbachev transformed the nature of their relationship and brought a final end to the Cold War.

In a similar vein, this book endeavors to provide a coherent explanation of the major component games that have sustained a robust system of concurrent conflicts in the Horn of Africa for at least five decades. Yet, my hope is that this region is already in the process of being transformed. The future remains uncertain, and it will almost certainly be more difficult to understand. For once a dynamic system has been fundamentally shocked to a new equilibrium region, the old categories of thought are no longer quite so

useful. In the meantime, outside observers should step back and allow time for the participants to create a new pattern woven from the same old threads.

Notes to Chapter 3

[1] For recent overviews of different areas of the research literatures on modern political economy, see Bickers and Williams (2001), Eggertsson (1990, 2005), Mueller (1997, 2003), Shepsle and Bonchek (1997), Sabatier (1999), Scharpf (1997).

[2] Social choice theorists have raised even more fundamental doubts about the foundations of public policy (see Riker 1982). Arrow's Theorem and related results have demonstrated the logical inconsistency inherent in claims that the general will can ever be implemented via majority voting or indeed any otherwise desirable mechanism of social choice. Aggregation problems bedevil any effort to arrive at a profile of public policies that society as a whole will prefer; indeed, the very meaning of the preferences of a collectivity is undermined by this body of research. For this reason, I emphasize the potential divergence of interests between the leaders of a rebellion (seen as agents) and their constituencies (or principals). Individual agents can have well-defined preferences, but the interests of their constituent groups remain problematic and subject to significant redefinition. Agent incentives are profoundly shaped by the roles assigned them within formal organizations or other elaborate institutional arrangements. Although I allow for the interests of agents and constituency groups to change, these changes must themselves be explainable in terms of the rational action of some other actors.

[3] To take an especially influential example, Stigler (1971) demonstrates that industrial sectors subjected to government regulation (intended to further the public interest) use various means to capture these regulators and convince them to implement regulations that actually improve the relative position of the firms already operating in that sector.

[4] The use of sophisticated mathematical models has become a prominent part of the methodological tool-kit employed by political scientists. As a consequence, the term "model" has come to be applied only to fully articulated formal models complete with mathematical statements of assumptions, theorems, and propositions. These methods have their place, and I have employed them in my own research. Still, there remains a role for more informal models, in which assumptions and consequences are expressed in ordinary, and yet precise, language. This broader sense of modeling is epitomized in the classic text by Lave and March (1975); see also McGinnis (1991b).

CHAPTER 4 Dilemmas of Humanitarian Aid

Persistent governance failure has made the Horn one of the world's leading centers of the emerging phenomenon of complex humanitarian emergencies, or CHEs. The United States Mission to the United Nations (1997, 1) defines *complex humanitarian emergencies* as "situations in which armed conflict, governmental repression, and/or natural disasters cause at least 300,000 civilians to depend on international humanitarian assistance." Weiss and Collins (1996, 4) offer additional details on the complexity of CHEs.

> A complex emergency combines internal conflicts with large-scale displacements of people and fragile or failing economic, political, and social institutions. Other symptoms include noncombatant death, starvation, or malnutrition; disease and mental illness; random and systematic violence against noncombatants; infrastructure collapse; widespread lawlessness; and interrupted food production and trade.

CHEs combine the standard problems of the provision of food, shelter, medical supplies, and sanitary services in conditions of an "ordinary" emergency with broader problems induced by the breakdown of political and economic infrastructures. For reasons detailed later in this chapter, even famines in nonconflict zones can be traced to instances of governance failure. As a consequence, global responses to both conflict and famine share a remarkable number of dilemmas in common.

Dimensions of Global Response

This chapter examines the response of the global conflict policy network to famines, conflicts, and complex humanitarian emergencies in the Horn of Africa. The CHE phenomenon became widely recognized as a global problem in the 1990s, when the end of the Cold War was followed not by global peace but by the outbreak of numerous small-scale conflicts in all regions of the world.[1]

A typical humanitarian mission delivers food, shelter, and medical supplies to refugee camps located within the territory of a neighboring country or similar settlements within their home country. Technically, the term "refugee" in international law refers only to people who have left their country of origin. Given widespread norms of sovereignty, international humanitarian aid organizations, whether themselves governmental or nongovernmental, have been reluctant to interfere in the relationship between a government and its citizens/subjects. Yet, so many people displaced by conflict or famine have been unable, or willing, to exit their own country's territory, that a new category of "internally displaced peoples" (IDPs) has been introduced to cover those who do not fit the international legal definition of a refugee. IDPs tend to remain in areas under the control of government or rebel forces, and indeed many refugee camps are overseen by these same forces. Efforts by organizations in the global conflict network to protect IDPs have led to the bitterest confrontations between donors and governments (as detailed in chapter 8).

The scope of the problem is immense but difficult to quantify. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC 1998) estimates a total of 37 million refugees or IDPs in 1997. The United States Mission to the United Nations

(1997) estimates that more than seven billion dollars was spent on global humanitarian assistance during 1995, of which some two billion was from private contributions.

Although only one or two wars or domestic conflicts are covered in major media outlets at any one given time, some 15–20 such conflicts typically proceed concurrently. Each of the countries of the Greater Horn of Africa, with the exception of Kenya and Djibouti, is consistently included in the inventory of complex humanitarian emergencies on the Relief Web, a very useful website maintained by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (previously the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs). The Relief Web site (http://www.reliefweb.int) provides links to media updates and official reports for complex emergencies (and natural disasters) occurring in all regions of the world. This website also posts announcements and reports from the many intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that are involved in all of these relief efforts.

Humanitarian emergencies are nothing new, and CHEs can be seen as merely the latest manifestation of the age-old problem of refugees. Since the establishment of the Red Cross Movement in the mid-nineteenth century, a diverse array of international governmental and nongovernmental organizations has emerged to provide relief services to peoples whose lives have been disrupted by natural disasters, famines, and ongoing wars or domestic conflicts.[2]

Types of Humanitarian Aid Organizations

Table 4.1 lists the major humanitarian aid organizations involved, in one form or another, in the global response to conflicts in the Horn of Africa. This table includes a diverse array of organizations. Most are nongovernmental organizations, but several

intergovernmental organizations and the agencies of national governments in the developed world are also important conduits of assistance to peoples in this region. This list of organizations is only a sample of the complexly networked system of organizations that constitute the humanitarian sector of public economy at the global level.

(Table 4.1 about here)

Different terms have been used to describe the aggregate collection of humanitarian aid organizations, from neutral terms like "international relief network" (Kent 1987) and "international humanitarian regime" (Suhrke 2002) to more value-laden appellations like "disaster relief industry" or "humanitarian international" (de Waal 1997). This last term has connotations of an international conspiracy motivated by an invidious political ideology. That seems unfair, given the lack of central planning or control that characterizes this conglomeration of public, private, and voluntary organizations.

Figure 4.1 is a schematic representation of typical connections among the major type of organizational actors involved in humanitarian aid.[3] Global responsibility for different aspects of humanitarian relief has been assigned, in an ad hoc and historically contingent fashion, to several agencies of the United Nations. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible for managing refugee camps for people who have been driven from their homeland by ongoing conflicts, except for Palestinian refugees, whose plight dates back to before the establishment of the UNHCR.[4] The United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) has a remit focused on the special needs of children, and is involved in extensive programs of humanitarian relief, development, and education. The World Food Program (WFP)

coordinates the distribution of food aid to victims of humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters. Yet, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) retains primary responsibility for setting global standards and for the provision of agricultural development. The World Health Organization (WHO) is also involved in all aspects of relief and development related to health care. Other agencies could be mentioned, but this brief overview of the most relevant organizational entities within the UN system conveys a clear sense of the complexity of the institutional response to humanitarian emergencies.

(Figure 4.1 about here)

Coordination of the programs of these agencies has been problematic ever since the establishment of the United Nations. Before that time, refugee problems generated during the Second World War were successfully managed in an ad hoc fashion. After that war ended, there was some effort to revive the International Relief Union that had been active, albeit only fitfully so, during the interwar period. However, none of the major powers wanted to give up effective control over decisions concerning where their own donations would go, especially not as the Cold War became established. Over the years, each of the relevant UN agencies expanded their programs whenever possible in their search for organizational identity and, especially, access to more secure resources.

In 1972, the office of UN Disaster Relief Coordinator was established, but this position never had much authority. By 1992, the time was set for establishment of a Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), but this department faced exactly the same limitations. Eventually, DHA was downgraded to an Office for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which has no pretensions beyond minimal coordination of information flow. Despite this sorry record of reform, many analysts still include improved coordination by

some UN agency in their reform packages (see, for example, Minear 2002). Yet, the major donor governments have shown no less reluctance to cede effective control over humanitarian operations (Stephenson 2005).

Much of the action in humanitarian aid policy, and virtually all of the practical implementation of relief programs, takes place outside the confines of the United Nations. Nongovernmental organizations have always played and continue to play essential roles in humanitarian relief. A uniquely prominent subnetwork of organizations consists of the Swiss-based International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), which in turn includes national members from most countries of the world. Analysts typically treat the Red Cross Movement as *sui generis*, placing the ICRC and IFRC in a category all to themselves somewhere between governmental and nongovernmental organizations. They are quasi-governmental, both because of their recognized status in international law and the fact that national governments and IGOs provide a high proportion of their funding. The ICRC and IFRC may fall somewhere between the NGO and IGO category, but for purposes of this analysis they are most definitely Humanitarian Aid Organizations (HAOs).[5]

Other prominent HAOs are undeniably nongovernmental organizations, such as Oxfam, Save the Children, CARE, and Médecins sans Frontières (MSF, or Doctors Without Borders). Many humanitarian aid organizations are religious-based, notably Catholic Relief Services, Lutheran World Relief, and World Vision International (the "vision" being nondenominational evangelical Christian in nature). In addition, agencies of several national governments are directly involved in the delivery of humanitarian

relief (US AID, Sweden's SIDA, etc.). Many international NGOs, including faith-based HAOs, receive a high proportion of their funding from national governments and international agencies. Thus, any formal distinction between governmental and nongovernmental must give way to recognition of intermediate cases of hybridized institutional arrangements.

All of these organizational types are included in the category of *humanitarian aid organizations (HAOs)* that form the subject of this chapter. Suhrke (2002) surveys the historical development of the international community of IGOs and NGOs and highlights the following aspects of the international humanitarian regime as a *regime*. "The international humanitarian regime as constituted by the end of the 20th century had

- a wide scope—members addressed problems ranging from humanitarian consequences of man-made to nature-made events;
- flexible jurisdiction—since the objective was to assist individuals in need regardless of their location, the principle that access should not be limited by sovereign jurisdiction was invoked; however, access to conflict areas within states remained variable and often had to be negotiated;
- no common membership screening—…;
- no common monitoring of compliance—… (with codes of conduct for humanitarian organizations);
- uncertain and ad hoc financing—. . . ." (Suhrke 2002, 20, with changes to American English)

In expanding upon this last point, Suhrke (ibid., 20) states that "both the UN agencies and the aid organizations were heavily dependent upon annual allocations and

ad hoc campaigns to raise funds for operational activities. . . . The financial relationship between the major donors and the humanitarian actors was essentially that of a spot contract." Suhrke's comment about spot contracts is worth highlighting because of recent concerns about the extent to which humanitarian aid and development have come to resemble private business. Some corporations have always been involved, albeit indirectly, primarily in transporting supplies from stockpiles to relief camps. If anything, donor control has recently been augmented as donors gravitate towards bilateral or earmarked multilateral programs (Buchanan-Smith and Randel 2002). The result is an increasingly complicated network, but it is far from being uniquely complex, as asserted by Stephenson and Kehler (2004). Such complex cross-sectoral and multilevel systems of governance are actually quite familiar to most analysts of public policy. Sure, it is costly, but it is also desirable in other ways. We return to this issue of the nature of interactions between public, private, and voluntary sectors of the international humanitarian aid regime in later chapters.

Financial Flows

As shown in figure 4.1, national governments of Western liberal democracies underpin the entire structure of humanitarian relief. Government agencies contract with international and local HAOs to implement their programs. In addition, money spent by UN agencies originated from national contributions to the UN budget or to special funds set up for the purpose of emergency relief. HAOs certainly attract significant levels of donations from private individuals, but patterns of individual and corporate donations are configured by the tax advantages enacted by these governments.

The magnitude of humanitarian assistance is notoriously difficult to measure. Definitions vary widely and data are provided on a spotty basis. For my discussion of the scale of the humanitarian enterprise, I rely heavily on reports by the London-based Development Initiatives program, especially the 2003 edition of their report on *Global Humanitarian Assistance* (Randel and German 2003). Given the many caveats included in that report, I feel justified in further rounding off and simplifying their estimated figures.[6]

For the year 2001, they estimate the total size of humanitarian assistance to be of the magnitude of ten billion dollars (2003, 1, 17). However, this figure includes some $4 billion on post-conflict peace activities, which I would prefer to attribute to other components of the global conflict policy network. By my definition, then, global humanitarian assistance works out to around six billion dollars a year.

Of this 6 billion total, around 4.6 billion comes from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member states, a bit less than half a billion from non-OECD states, and some 1 billion in voluntary donations from the public.[7] This latter figure is especially prone to error, given the lack of any common reporting mechanism outside of official OECD sources.[8]

The authors also trace how this money flows through IGOs and NGOs before it gets to the recipients, but they admit the numbers don't quite match up. They report expenditures of $3.2 billion by UN agencies and $700 million by the quasi-governmental ICRC, IFRC, and International Organisation for Migration (IOM). Finally, OECD countries reported some $1 billion in bilateral aid.

Buchanan-Smith and Randel (2002, 3) stress recent increases in the relative proportion of humanitarian aid given in the form of bilateral aid and earmarked multilateral aid. Associated with these trends are increased use of NGOs as contractors, and as high as 60–70 percent of official US government humanitarian assistance goes through NGOs. Randel and German (2003) express similar concerns. Of the total OECD humanitarian aid going to countries in sub-Saharan Africa, fully half is bilateral in form and only about a third goes through UN agencies (ibid., 29–30). Clearly, major donors are reluctant to give up control over where their money goes, which certainly hampers the establishment of any sort of regularized system. The CAP process is routinely bypassed and even its pledges are rarely fulfilled.

When it comes to recipients of humanitarian aid, the countries of the Horn of Africa are among the most frequent beneficiaries. Randel and German (ibid., 32–33) report summary data on total OECD humanitarian aid for the period 1995–2001. Roughly, Sudan received some $700 million, Ethiopia $600 million, and Somalia a bit less than $300 million. This suggests an approximate upper bound of some $2 billion to the Greater Horn of Africa countries for this six-year period. This works out to about one-third of a billion dollars each year, on average. Roughly, that's a bit less than 10 percent of the global total for OECD funding for humanitarian causes. Clearly, the Horn is a major player on the recipient side of the global humanitarian sector.

Countries placed higher in the recipient list than Sudan or Ethiopia tend to be places where the US or NATO has intervened directly. Military humanitarianism is definitely expensive. Thomas Weiss (1999, 92) estimates the short-lived US and UN peacekeeping intervention in Somalia to have cost around $3 billion dollars. This intense

burst of activity cost donors about as much as the average five-year total for all the countries of the Horn. Other less extensive peacekeeping operations cost considerably less, but remain expensive compared to standard humanitarian operations.

Finally, the scale of humanitarian aid can be put in context by comparing it to development assistance. Randel and German (2003, 1) report that humanitarian aid by OECD countries during 1999–2001 ran about 10 percent of their total Official Development Assistance (ODA).[9]

Two-Level Games Played by HAOs

Humanitarian aid organizations engage in a distinctive form of collective action. Specifically, HAOs operate concurrently in two separable arenas of social-political-economic interactions. The first arena is in the field, where HAOs engage in the operational delivery of essential supplies and public services to needy people. The second arena of interaction concerns the funding of these services. In effect, the HAO serves as the conduit through which resources are transferred from donors to recipients, who typically don't have any direct contact.

For purposes of the current analysis, HAOs are best understood as voluntary transfer organizations (VTOs), which may take on a private, public, or nongovernmental organizational form. As shown by the diverse organizations included in table 4.1, the category of humanitarian voluntary transfer organizations cuts across the standard distinction between governmental and nongovernmental organizations.[10] Even those HAOs that are government agencies or IGOs operate under the same basic separation of donor and recipient. Agents of governmental or intergovernmental HAOs choose where to spend their funds for humanitarian assistance. These funds originate in compulsory

taxes, fees, or assessments on individuals, corporations, or IGO members, but agents retain considerable discretion over the allocation of these funds.

In humanitarian aid operations, the people who receive the services are distinct from those who fund these activities in the first place. This makes nongovernmental HAOs a special case of NGOs, for many NGOs are concerned with achieving improvements in the quality of life for their own donors and participants.

A distinction between "operational" and "advocacy" organizations is often made in the NGO literature (see Princen and Finger 1994). Advocacy NGOs specialize in lobbying and participation in international conferences. The United Nations has granted consultative status to well over a thousand NGOs, and OCHA works closely with three broad consortiums of NGOs: InterAction, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), and the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR), the last two of which are based in Geneva. Most analyses of NGOs in the international relations literature have remained focused on their participation in international conferences. In this analysis, I focus on those organizations that are most directly concerned with providing relief services to people on the ground.

Operational services include provision of emergency relief, arranging for protection from violence, providing assistance for long-term development, and gathering and publicizing information about the actions of local authorities. Some of these activities bleed over into the realms of competence of organizations specializing in economic development, human rights, and conflict resolution. All of these activities are, in the big scheme of things, interrelated, but this analysis is focused on the humanitarian core of external interventions.

Before proceeding with this analytical task, one more caveat is in order. Virtually all authors who examine the activities of humanitarian aid organizations or peacekeeping forces claim that the increasing scope of their activities signals the birth of a new era of global governance in which the United Nations and NGOs jointly provide the impetus for an impending transformation to a truly new world order (although most analysts now avoid using that particular phrase). I make no pretensions to be able to discern or plan the future structure of global governance writ large. All I know is that nongovernmental HAOs have played absolutely critical roles in the global response to conflict in the Horn of Africa.

The Scramble for Funding

Table 4.2 lists the basic set of activities in the operational and donor arenas (including advocacy). Obviously, these two audiences receive very different goods. With respect to field operations, basic services include the provision of emergency food supplies, shelter, medical supplies, and sanitary services. Protection is typically provided by peacekeeping forces acting in conjunction with the humanitarian aid organizations. Supplying needed goods to people in remote areas typically requires that these organizations address daunting logistical challenges. (As discussed below, obtaining the cooperation of military forces is often essential.)

(Table 4.2 about here)

To survive, an HAO must demonstrate success in both the operational and funding arenas, but the funding arena is ultimately more critical. As a consequence, the research literature on NGOs is a vital source of concepts and categories for the analysis of HAOs and other voluntary transfer organizations.

It is very difficult to state any generalizations that apply to all nongovernmental HAOs. Many specialize on particular regions and beneficiaries, or concentrate their efforts on specific service sectors, such as water supply or emergency medical care, but the largest run a bewildering variety of programs in different countries around the world. Many combine emergency relief with support for longer-term development projects, and yet the contrasting demands of these two activities often lead to tensions within or between organizations, as will be seen in chapter 8.

One generalization about HAOs is that they exhibit behavior common to any formal organization, despite the irony inherent in any effort to regularize response to unpredictable disasters. That is, agents of all HAOs seek increased resources and must select among emerging funding and programmatic opportunities in ways that may reinforce, expand, or undermine its current self-defined mission or assigned mandate. And, internal differences of opinion concerning what that mission should be regularly generate disputes and occasionally the formation of alternative organizations.

Any institutional analysis of HAOs must begin by clarifying the "nature of the goods" that humanitarian organizations provide to recipients in the field and to donors in the funding game. To raise funds, HAOs must provide donors with something in exchange for their donations. These benefits are intangible, but nonetheless real and meaningful to a donor. By donating their time, money, effort, or other scarce resources, donors demonstrate a willingness to pay for a sense of satisfaction or to reinforce an inner sense of themselves as being "good" or "moral" people. HAO entrepreneurs must find some way to consummate this mutually beneficial exchange of tangible resources for

intangible satisfaction. How they do so is a matter that lies primarily outside the scope of this analysis. Minimal success at fund-raising is essential if an organization is to survive.

The number of deaths that have already occurred, or that may occur soon if something is not done, provides a particularly important impetus for action on the part of humanitarian aid organizations. It is not immediately apparent why donors would be sufficiently concerned about people who may live halfway around the world to make donations of tangible resources, but it is clear that multiple incentives are relevant for different actors. Private corporations may be primarily interested in tax breaks for charitable donations and governments may seek to support local farm prices by encouraging foreign exports. Thus, there is a tendency for different HAOs to carve out distinctive niches in this multitudinous donor market, with some catering to the interests of governments or corporations and others concentrating on appeals to the public.

In recent years, HAOs (and related development organizations) have come to be increasingly dependent on governmental donations, with many becoming, in effect, subcontractors for the delivery of public welfare services to people in other countries, in much the same way that domestic nonprofits have come to place an increasing role in the public service sector (Salamon, 1987, 1994, 1995). There are also some interesting interactions between individual preferences and the humanitarian policies of democratic governments.

Seiglie (1997) models donations as being driven by the preferences of the median voter in a democratic society. He assumes that each individual is motivated by self-interest and by a measure of altruism, both for kith and kin and for individuals in other lands. He uses the overall level of welfare in recipient countries as a component in

individual utility functions, but the number of deaths seems a more plausible representation of a factor that might trigger sympathy and induce an interest in making donations. After all, many parts of the world languish in poverty without receiving much attention from the public. It may even be the sheer number of deaths is not enough to capture public notice, for several wars (in southern Sudan, most noticeably) have gone on for several decades without making much of an impression on Western publics. What makes a complex humanitarian emergency newsworthy may well be a dramatic or surprising increase in the number of fatalities, either directly from conflict or from the associated famine and starvation. So, the magnitude of changes in deaths may be as important as their sheer magnitude.

To attract contributions from individual citizens, HAOs use media coverage and advertising campaigns to draw public attention to ongoing emergencies. To attract governmental funding, humanitarian and development organizations have to provide some assessment of their past activities, to demonstrate their effectiveness as a service provider. Some HAOs also engage in the direct monitoring of activities by parties in the field, by publicizing and drawing attention to human rights abuses or other questionable activities of local authorities. Other HAOs avoid these activities entirely, as they strive to maintain an attitude of neutrality.

Humanitarianism has never been totally isolated from politics, despite pretensions to the contrary. Stoddard (2003a, 2003b) offers a useful typology of different approaches to the politics of humanitarianism based on their origins in alternative historical strands of inspiration. He first separates those HAOs initially inspired by religion, and then, like most social scientists, directs his attention away from faith-based organizations to the

more familiar realm of secular organizations. Here he introduces a useful distinction between Dunantist and Wilsonian brands of secular humanitarianism.[11] The former is the core tradition of impartiality, neutrality, and independence from any political agenda that dates back to the establishment of the Red Cross by Dunant. Those in the Wilsonian strand embrace some particular political agenda. Specifically, he means to refer to the many NGOs that gleefully support US efforts to promote democracy abroad (see Melia 2005; Sisk 2001, 208–18). More generally, this strand could be taken to include HAOs seeking to implement visions of justice that might not comport with US policies.

Recent actions in the global war on terror, especially by the US, have sharpened tensions between these two variants of humanitarianism. Whereas writings from the 1990s express concern about their aid inadvertently contributing to the perpetuation of warfare, writings in this first decade of the twenty-first century focus instead on concerns about appearing to support US policy. Vaux (2001) uses Oxfam's uncomfortably close association with NATO actions in Kosovo as an especially effective opening chapter for his examination of these moral quandaries.

Niche Analysis of HAOs

Organizations come into the operational realm of humanitarian relief from several different directions. Their current mix of operations is likely to be shaped by their original activities and missions. Path-dependency goes a long way towards explaining their different mixes of activities. On the other hand, two organizations might have arrived at pretty much the same mix of activities via alternative routes.

Organizations grow by accretion, by incorporating new services within an existing organization. Organizational change may also involve the splitting off of some

activities and services to new organizations. One of the central questions in new institutional economics or transaction costs economics is to understand where firms draw the lines between operations that they undertake within their own organizations and operations that are left outside the organization itself. When a firm integrates vertically, it incorporates the stages of raw material extraction, production, and marketing into a single organizational structure. Coase (1937) and Williamson (1975, 1985, 1996) have directed analytical attention to the conditions under which such integration makes economic sense, that is, the conditions under which incorporation of these activities within an overarching organization is more efficient than relying on market exchange.

I apply these same principles to the strategic choices made by the managers of HAOs. However, Williamson's analysis relies on the discipline of market competition to produce at least a tendency towards some sort of correspondence between the nature of transaction costs in a given sector of the economy and the form of governance found there.[12] Since there is not the same intensity of selection in the humanitarian market, it is important to not attempt to apply concepts from the field of transaction costs economics too literally.

The nondistribution restraint is an important component of the legal definition of nonprofits in the United States. Since nonprofits are unable to distribute any of their gains to a group of shareholders, some other way to limit the opportunistic behavior of agents must be found. Still, the need for an NGO to attract sufficient funds to keep its operations running acts as a binding constraint.

The operational activities of humanitarian relief overlap to a considerable degree with the activities of organizations offering development assistance. Development of

local infrastructure, establishing communication and transportation links to market centers, providing secure access to clean water, offering advice on crop management, etc., all of these activities are relevant to both relief and development. So, it is not surprising that development organizations like Oxfam are also involved in humanitarian assistance. Different organizations locate themselves at different points on the "relief to development continuum" often discussed in the literature.

The connection to human rights monitoring is more problematic. By reporting on human rights abuses, an HAO might be forced to break off relations with the local political and military leaders that control the territory where refugee camps are established. In some circumstances, then, such activities directly conflict with their core mission of the provision of emergency relief. From a longer-term perspective, however, by allowing human rights abuses to go unreported, HAOs become complicit in a way that seems to violate the whole idea of helping the victims of conflict. Again, different HAOs stake out different positions on this continuum, with MSF and the Red Cross standing at opposite ends.

Discovery and Exploitation of New HAO Niches

The history of Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) demonstrates how the multiple components of humanitarian goals can lead to tensions that result in organizational disaggregation. In short, MSF moved to occupy a niche separate from that of the Red Cross. Although top Red Cross officials are very concerned to maintain an attitude of neutrality (necessary to fulfill that organization's unique role), many field operatives were deeply disturbed by actions taken by the combatants. There is a natural tension here, for the medical professionals are concerned with mitigating the suffering caused by

actions taken in the name of national security by governmental authorities. In MSF, these tensions are alleviated by encouraging members to sound off against abuses of power or violations of human rights on the part of any of the combatants (see MSF 1997).

Yet, MSF itself has gone through considerable internal controversy. In 1990, some MSF officials left the organization to found a new organization, Médecins du Monde. This new organization has adopted a much lower public profile than MSF itself. Just as MSF looks like the Red Cross but without a close connection to governments, Médecins du Monde is MSF without close ties to or heavy reliance on major news media organizations (Weiss and Collins 1996, 39; Brauman 1993, 209).

There was also another reason why a niche existed outside the standard definition of the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Both of these organizations were very attuned to the constraints of sovereignty. As more and more intense conflicts occurred not between recognized governments but rather within the territorial boundaries of a single recognized state, it became necessary to arrange for negotiations between governmental authorities and the leaders of rebel or insurgent groups. As some of these conflicts lasted year after year, rebel groups established virtual control over some parts of the territory. Thus, governments and rebel groups discovered many of the same common needs as originally went into the origins of the Red Cross, yet the Red Cross itself found it difficult to respond without undermining the very nature of sovereignty.

The expansion of the humanitarian system beyond its original confines of state-to-state relations was inherent in the nature of the organizations that were set up to respond to humanitarian emergencies. Although government leaders might see a clear distinction

between refugees who had crossed a national boundary and those who were "internally displaced," from the point of view of humanitarian organizations and their private sponsors, this difference was immaterial. Because of these pressures to extend the operation of HAOs beyond the government-sanctioned range of activities, government-approved ICRC activities came to be supplemented by MSF and other organizations less directly tied to national governments. The case of Ethiopia was especially important in this regard, as assistance began to be given to people under the de facto jurisdiction of separatist movements.

In effect, the humanitarian response system acted to undermine the very concept of sovereignty that undergirds the contemporary system of global governance (see Borton 1993; Mills 1996). Whatever its implications for the overall pattern of global governance, the sources of this change remain an interesting question.

A further complication is that in many of these conflicts, the two sides of combatants were unwilling to countenance any such common interest. Instead, it was much more likely that both sides saw an advantage in creating as much pain and disruption as possible for those people who supported the other side in the conflict. One of the most disturbing characteristics of warfare in the contemporary era is the extent to which noncombatants are directly targeted by the warring factions. Yet, there remains an audience, in the world as a whole, very much concerned with the terrible effects of war. So, organizations can garner contributions from the public and use these resources to address the suffering of war. Humanitarian aid organizations need to deal with those local government officials or rebel leaders whose forces control access to refugees in need of assistance.

Humanitarian Aid in Context

Clearly, the HAO category encompasses great diversity in organizational mission, structure, and practice. So why do I insist on using an even more broader category of conflict policy?

I do so to offset the inertia of treating humanitarian space as somehow distinct from the political and economic arenas in which conflicts are resolved, peace is built, economies are developed, and communities are healed. All this is part of the same process, even though each particular organization implements a more constrained specialization. We have many excellent analyses or critiques of the viewpoints of particular organizations or subsectors, but our understanding of the conflict policy network as a whole remains incomplete.

In addition, it is difficult to study humanitarian assistance without locating it within the context of the much larger array of organizations engaged in development assistance. Many HAOs face internal tensions between their respective emphasis on short-term relief vs. long-term development and capacity-building. Overall, understanding has been hampered by the distinct origins of HAOs in an avowedly apolitical tradition.

In his dated but still trenchant examination of the "international relief network," Kent (1987) decries the continued effect of the Euro-centered origins of today's HAO network. He highlights two major lessons drawn from the experience of responding to European wars that have proven particularly misleading in the context of less-developed countries. First, humanitarians tended to assume that a quick response capacity was sufficient, since humanitarian emergences are likely to emerge rapidly, either in the form

of an unpredictable natural disaster or an easily identifiable transition from a state of war to one of peace. Second, they became used to dealing with governments whose capacity for coping for humanitarian disasters was only temporarily overwhelmed. Once the crisis was past, it was easy to transfer responsibility to public officials.

In today's world, neither condition holds. Crises persist for long periods of time, festering in an uneasy twilight between war and peace. And crises are frequent precisely because of the lack of government capacity and the absence of a developed economic infrastructure. Kent (1987) identifies vulnerability as the key trigger, and argues that government policies too often make some of their citizens even more vulnerable to humanitarian emergencies. Today's crises can no longer be treated as discrete events that can be easily isolated from ordinary life.

Remarkably, exactly the same conclusion had already been reached by many scholars of famine. Even without the complicating factor of political violence, famine is itself a manifestation of missing institutions in the political realm.

Famine Relief and the Samaritan's Dilemma

To conclude this chapter, I discuss in this section a simple model of one of the recurring dilemmas facing humanitarian aid organizations. This model closely resembles the Samaritan's Dilemma first described by Buchanan (1977) and recently applied to good effect in an outstanding institutional analysis of international development assistance (Gibson et al. 2005). For purposes of illustration, I present a simplified version based on terms specifically relevant to humanitarian assistance to the victims of famines. It turns out that there is a remarkably close connection between famine relief and the delivery of aid to refugees from ongoing conflict (see also McGinnis 2000a).

The Surprising Complexity of Famine Relief

The connection to famine arises because many pastoral peoples still live in the Horn of Africa. As population grows near agricultural areas, pastoralists tend to push to remain in areas susceptible to droughts. But drought is nothing new. Indeed, large areas of the Horn of Africa are subject to frequent droughts and to irregular and spotty rainfall even in the best of times. As a consequence, peoples living in this area have developed effective mechanisms to cope with the resulting scarcity of water and vegetation. Pastoral peoples the world over cope with irregular rainfall by moving their herds towards areas of more rainfall and by engaging in extensive exchange relationships with other groups. These *coping strategies* enable these communities to survive periodic droughts.[13] Even though some members may suffer death, the community as a whole lives on.

Although famines do appear to have become more frequent in recent decades, this change need not have been caused by any major change in weather patterns or population levels. Instead, policies enacted by national governments have tended to undermine the coping strategies developed by pastoralist peoples in previous centuries. Special damage has been done by governments' efforts to limit the ability of pastoralists to move across national boundaries or between administrative districts in their own country. In short, droughts don't cause famine, bad policy does (Sen 1981).

The study of famine has a long pedigree.[14] The conventional view is that famine is a simple phenomenon. That is, famines occur when food supplies drop precipitously due to extreme weather conditions or intense conflict, or a combination of both.[15] International food aid can only help save lives and, if conflict was a major contributor to

the problem, then the interposition of neutral peacekeeping forces between the combatants can help restore order or enforce a ceasefire.

None of these conventional assertions holds up under closer scrutiny. Famine is best understood not as a "discrete event" (Currey 1992) but rather as the natural outgrowth of long processes of economic and political change. In the most influential recent work in the area of famine research, Nobel-prize winning economist Amartya Sen (1981) demonstrates that famines can occur even when the overall level of food remains constant. If their resource endowments and legal rights do not "entitle" some groups to earn enough income to purchase sufficient food to survive, then large numbers of people can starve in the midst of plenty. Although Sen admits that "food availability decline" has occurred in some famines, he demonstrates that it is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for the occurrence of famine.

Sen's entitlement approach directs attention to the broader political and economic context that makes some groups vulnerable to famine. Drèze and Sen (1989) state that some economic actors benefit directly from the occurrence of famine. Merchants, for example, can profit from the high food prices that typically occur during famines. Radical critics of international humanitarian organizations claim that famines may result from the conscious efforts of policymakers to repress certain groups.[16] Predatory rulers, for example, may try to prevent groups opposed to their regime from receiving any food aid. In a disturbing number of conflicts, both governments and insurgent forces employ scorched earth policies to deny resources to their opponents, even attacking refugee camps and food distribution areas (Macrae and Zwi 1992, 1994).

Food is both a weapon of war and a resource essential to the operation of war. (Soldiers have to eat, too.) A significant portion of food aid is confiscated by local forces, which means that food aid intended to relieve the suffering of innocent civilians displaced from their homes may, in some circumstances, prolong the fighting.[17] By cementing relationships with government officials, humanitarian aid organizations may enhance the legitimacy of predatory regimes (African Rights 1994; de Waal 1997; Maren 1997).

The powerful economic and political interests that benefit from famine can be expected to resist relief efforts and to manipulate them to serve their own purposes. Anyone who intervenes in such a conflict may find it impossible to maintain neutrality. For if access to food is an important aspect of military operations, then improving one group's access to food will necessarily hurt the relative power position of opposing groups. As a consequence, peacekeeping forces may face determined resistance by local groups, a problem shown most clearly in the case of Somalia (Clarke and Herbst 1997; Maren 1997).[18]

Because of the frequent recurrence of famines, humanitarian relief operations play an unusually important role in this region, even in the absence of violent political conflict. The consequences of well-intentioned humanitarian aid can, in some circumstances, prove devastating to local populations. When humanitarian agencies flood a disaster zone with free food, they undermine the productive incentives of local farmers and thereby disrupt the economy. Effects may also be felt in the public sector. Radical critics of the international humanitarian aid system assert that repressive governments use the availability of aid as an excuse to not provide even basic public services to their own

people. Governments and rebel forces alike manipulate refugee flows to encourage additional aid programs, from which they then divert resources that can be used to finance continued conflict.

When national governments impose policies, they seldom consider the effects these changes might have on these coping strategies. Nor have external donors been much concerned with this problem, at least not until recent years. In the heady days of modernization theory, experts were united in recommending that pastoral peoples settle down into agriculturalists. Subsequent difficulties with these policies have convinced many experts that doing so is to deny the appropriate fit between environmental conditions and the pastoralist lifestyle.

Thus, government policies, often funded by well-intended donors, have undermined the ability of local pastoralists to cope with the inevitable occurrence of drought. This makes the magnitude of famines larger, making the need for the delivery of emergency humanitarian assistance even more pressing. Even more enlightened donors may be frustrated when they try to convince the recipient governments to undertake policies that would help pastoralists cope with famine.

Because of the magnitude and length of these refugee assistance programs, and because of the appallingly low level of economic development, these programs over time came to play a major role in the political economy of war in this region. A significant portion of humanitarian aid was routinely siphoned off by government forces and rebel leaders for their own purposes. If rulers can be assured that international organizations will respond with humanitarian aid should starvation and disease get out of hand in their

own country, then they have precious little reason to take the policy actions that might help prevent famines in the first place (de Waal 1997).

Building the Samaritan's Dilemma

A game model known as the *Samaritan's Dilemma* nicely encapsulates the structure that produces these tragic results. In our version, the game begins long before a famine takes place. Government officials may plan for future problems by enacting policies that protect peoples most exposed to the danger of droughts, perhaps by instituting some insurance policies or by stockpiling food supplies that can be rushed to areas suffering from a natural emergency. Of course, doing so is costly, and the government has many alternative programs, many of which are considerably more pressing than the prospect of future emergencies in remote regions among peoples with little if any connection to the governing elite. In sum, the government chooses whether or not to undertake needed precautions to make subsequent occurrences of famine less likely.

No matter what policies the government enacts, sooner or later droughts will occur. The immediate response is up to the local peoples who begin to employ their coping strategies. Yet, these strategies will be overwhelmed if the rainfall deficit extends over multiple years. Once people begin leaving the area in a desperate search for food and water, refugee camps will be established to help the starving masses.

The humanitarian aid organizations are the second strategic actor in this little drama. These donor organizations can choose to supply emergency assistance to refugees or internally displaced peoples in need of immediate assistance. Or they may decline to

do so, perhaps because of more pressing needs faced by peoples in other parts of the world.

The problem is that the government has no incentive to accept the costs associated with preventive policies, and it may have insufficient capacity to cope with the emergency once it is underway. On the other hand, the donors have the incentive to provide assistance no matter what. If they don't, more people die, and their contributors seek out competing organizations that do provide this assistance. The reality of this dilemma can be highlighted by translating this story into the form of a simple game model.

The sequence of play is illustrated in the game tree (or game in extensive form) shown in figure 4.2. The government moves first, by selecting whether or not to invest in preventive policies. Eventually, a crisis breaks out that calls for a response by humanitarians. To make this analysis tractable, this network is represented by a single actor (HAO) who can choose whether or not to provide assistance. In any practical application, more detailed considerations concerning the level and modality of aid would have to be considered, but these complications need not detain us at this point.

(Figure 4.2 about here)

In sum, each actor has two alternatives from which to choose that combine to produce four possible outcomes, which are summarized on the right-hand side of figure 4.2. At this point, we need to assign to these outcomes preference orderings that reflect the interests of each actor. For purposes of illustration, I follow a few conventions throughout this text.

First, each actor's most preferred outcome is assigned a value of 10. There is no natural unit for a rational actor's utility, which is an intrinsically unmeasurable representation of the level of satisfaction conveyed to that actor by the occurrence of that outcome. Technically speaking, the preference ordering is the fundamental concept, and utility values are constructed so as to be consistent with this ordering, in the sense that options chosen by an actor are associated with higher levels of utility (see von Neumann and Morgenstern 1944). The specific values are arbitrary.

Zero utility is also an arbitrary number. To say that an outcome is associated with zero utility does not mean that it provides no satisfaction at all, but instead simply means that the actor in question would choose that outcome over any outcome that is associated with a smaller utility. Thus, zero is preferred to negative values of utility. For consistency, I use zero to connote the value of the status quo before the players begin this particular game. In this case, that status quo occurs before a humanitarian crisis has developed and even before the government decides whether or not to invest in preventive policies.

Each player views some outcomes in this game as less desirable than the status quo ex ante. In particular, the HAOs suffer costs if they observe a famine that is allowed to run rampant without any aid, as denoted by the bottom outcome in figure 4.2. Reasons for this perception are examined in more detail in chapter 6, but for now it suffices to realize that HAOs were established precisely because some people are willing to donate money or other tangible resources in the hopes of relieving the suffering of others. HAOs are presumed to prefer fewer deaths, but they also derive some utility from participating in the rescue effort. (Their actions may, for example, make it easier to elicit additional

donations for their use in subsequent emergencies, or resources that the agents of the HAO may divert for their own personal use.) Thus, an HAO would most prefer the outcome at the top, where few people die because the government was prepared and the HAOs provided whatever assistance was needed. Thus, this outcome is assigned a payoff of 10 in figure 4.2.

The other two outcomes need to be assigned numbers between 10 and –5, and it seems appropriate to assign them relatively similar values intermediate between these extremes. For fewer people die from the famine if either the government was prepared ahead of time or if the HAOs are able to rush needed levels of supplies. I have assigned a value of 6 to the former outcome, slightly larger than the 4 assigned to the latter one. The specific numbers do not affect the subsequent analysis, but their relative value is meant to reflect the likelihood that government preparation ahead of time is likely to save more lives than waiting until after the crisis is underway, and that this consideration would outweigh any intrinsic values to the HAOs for participating in the response. Since there will certainly be comparable emergencies elsewhere in the world, the HAOs can realize this intrinsic satisfaction in other ways.

The government's preference ordering remains to be determined. We begin by assuming that the government basically has no incentive to provide any meaningful level of public services to those people most susceptible to the onset of famine. The government's attention is diverted elsewhere, especially to the crowded urban centers. Once a crisis occurs, the government prefers receiving aid to not receiving aid. This means that the government's most preferred outcome is one where the HAOs bear the cost of responding to the crisis, and their least favored outcome is the one where the

government bears all of this cost. These extremes are assigned the same values of 10 and –5, but it is important to realize that there is no automatic presumption that a 10 for one player is directly comparable to a 10 for another player. The key question concerns the ordering, not the relative magnitudes.

Again, the values assigned to the intermediate outcomes are not critical. For a government that assigns a low priority to the welfare of drought-threatened peoples, the opportunity costs of investing in preventive policies are likely to be higher than the value of whatever diversions they could make from resources donated by the HAOs. This implies that the government prefers the bottom outcome to the top outcome, because the former entails excessive opportunity costs.[19] In sum, the recipient government always prefers aid to no aid as well as low effort to high effort; the number of people who die is immaterial.

This preference ordering may seem overly cynical, but it turns out to have accurate implications for the behavior of many governments in the Horn region. (We'll revisit this preference ordering later in this section.) At this point, the tools of game theory can be employed to ascertain the likely outcome of this strategic situation. This turns out to be a particularly simple game to analyze. No matter what the government chooses, the HAOs prefer to provide assistance, since they prefer a payoff of 10 to 6 and 4 to –5. As a consequence, the government is effectively choosing between the (2,10) and (10,4) outcome, and the latter clearly wins. The only rational equilibrium for this game is (10,4), in which many people die but the government is able to divert significant levels of resources from the aid provided by the international humanitarian network.

The power of this dilemma is even more overwhelming. Figure 4.3 shows this same game in what is known as strategic (or normal) form. The choices available to each player are collected into strategies that specify the actions each will take in all circumstances of the game. In this case, each player has only two strategies, since each gets to make only one choice in the sequence of decisions illustrated in the extensive game form. The payoffs from each outcome are listed in each cell with, by convention, the row player's payoffs before the comma and the column player's payoff afterwards. Since the government chooses which row, we can compare the possible outcomes that arise depending on which column the HAOs choose. In this game, the government always prefers the bottom row, since 10 beats 2 and 7 beats –5. Thus, both players have a dominant strategy, and there is no way out of this dilemma.

(Figure 4.3 about here)

It is known as the Samaritan's Dilemma because the well-intended donors would prefer an outcome where fewer people die, which can only be achieved if the government puts forth some meaningful effort to prevent emergencies, but the HAO's own interests require them to provide assistance no matter what. The recipient government benefits from receiving emergency aid (from which it is diverting some proportion for its own use), but it also prefers to not undergo the costs of reforming itself or delivering improved public service to its own people. As a consequence, the government has no incentive to prepare, since they know that the donors will come to their rescue. The equilibrium outcome, in sum, has emergency assistance being provided to people under the control of a government that remains irresponsive to their needs.

Efforts to Escape This Dilemma

This game model helps direct our attention to exactly what changes need to be enacted in the underlying nature of the interaction in order to induce the players to select a different outcome. What options are available to HAOs to try to induce more responsible behavior on the part of the recipient governments? In brief, they would have to change the payoffs experienced by the government in such a way that the government will prefer to invest in famine prevention.

One possibility might be for the HAO to bear the entire cost of the prevention program. However, that would be prohibitively expensive, especially when we remember that HAOs have limited resources at their disposal and that they face similar problems of emergency response in all regions of the world.

As mentioned earlier, similar versions of the Samaritan's Dilemma game have been applied to the behavior of development assistance organizations. In those analyses, the authors have recommended that the donors make their aid conditional on the behavior of the government. This requires that the donors make a credible commitment to not provide any more assistance if the government misbehaves. In this model, that would mean the donors would have to choose no aid at the lower choice node in figure 4.2. But the donors prefer to give aid even in this circumstance, and so they would have to commit themselves ahead of time to not doing what they would prefer to do should an emergency arise. This problem of making commitments credible is one of the predominant themes in the game theory literature that has helped clarify the magnitude of this surprisingly ubiquitous problem.

For HAOs, any such commitment is especially difficult because of the decentralized nature of the international humanitarian network. For if one HAO is able to resist the temptation to help the victims of a recalcitrant government, there are likely to be other HAOs willing to jump in. Indeed, we see examples of exactly this sequence of events in the Horn of Africa. In the 1980s, MSF became distressed by the way in which the Ethiopian government of Mengistu was using international assistance to save the lives of peoples displaced by his own policies. In effect, Mengistu forced some peoples away from their homes in order to use the land for other purposes, and international aid organizations facilitated this land grab by providing needed supplies to the victims. MSF made a big deal of their withdrawal from operations in Ethiopia, which has since been a shining example of the long-standing commitment to human rights that was later rewarded by their being selected to receive a Nobel Peace Prize. Yet, this media event did not help the displaced peoples in Ethiopia, as other HAOs rushed to fill in the gaps as the Mengistu government continued to implement its abusive policies. This can hardly be said to be a viable solution to this dilemma.

There is more to this story, and more innovative institutional responses by humanitarian organizations are evaluated in chapter 8. Ultimately, the most effective way to escape from this dilemma is a fundamental transformation of relationship between the government officials in power in the recipient country as agents of their constituent principals. In a democratic regime, for example, leaders that preside over a massive loss of life that could have been prevented by enacting a few reforms would reasonably expect to lose their position of power. Since they realize this danger ahead of time, their preference ordering would be quite different.

Specifically, a government sensitive to the number of deaths would assign progressively lower values to the outcomes as listed in figure 4.2 (which are ordered with the number of deaths increasing from top to bottom). International donors might also promise significant rewards from economic investments that would be forthcoming only if the government continues to provide for the needs of its own population.

If some combination of a changed attitude among the members of the governing regime improved accountably mechanisms to punish rulers for patently poor policies, and long-term commitment of international donors can be sustained, then the payoff values now listed as 10 and 7 would be reduced to less than 2 and –5, respectively. Under these circumstances, the government would have a dominant strategy to invest in famine protection. The equilibrium outcome would then be one in which the government prepares ahead of time and the HAOs respond when necessary.

It seems so simple, but in practical terms it would require a truly fundamental transformation in the nature of that political regime. This is exactly the scale of reform that will be necessary for the peoples of the Horn to extract themselves from their current predicament. The challenge is to come up with a credible plan for intervention that is consistent with the limited resources available for this purpose. Many more dimensions of this challenge remain to be explicated in succeeding chapters before we can return to this broader question of crafting a feasible and credible plan of action in the face of the Samaritan's Dilemma.

Notes to Chapter 4

[1] Actually, there is little evidence that the number of armed conflicts demonstrably increased after the end of the Cold War (Wallensteen and Sollenberg 1995). However, it is clear that media attention increasingly focused on conflicts that would probably have been widely ignored during the Cold War.

[2] Information on a wide array of HAOs can be found in Geoghegan and Allen (1997) and Gorman (1994).

[3] This figure is a simplification of figures found in Borton (1993) and Stephenson (2005). For reasons detailed in the text, I do not follow their lead in placing Red Cross movement organizations in their own separate boxes, but instead include them with other humanitarian aid organizations.

[4] UNRWA continues to have jurisdiction over Palestinian refugee camps.

[5] I do not find the hybrid nature of these organizations quite so problematic, given my willingness to encourage hybridization and cross-fertilization across sectors and organizational forms. Thus, I use the term Humanitarian Aid Organization (HAO) to encompass all organizations primarily involved in the allocation and implementation of humanitarian assistance to peoples affected by conflict or natural disasters. Among the HAOs are IGO agencies, NGOs, and any hybridized entities such as those in the Red Cross network.

[6] One of the caveats concerns the yearly variation in spending, especially to particular countries. Still, the year 2001 seems to present a somewhat average value, at least for the system before the complications entailed in the extensive operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

[7] The UN OCHA records data in its Financial Tracking System (FTS), but this only includes funds considered within the CAPs. In a meeting in Stockholm in 2003, a Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) system was endorsed and is being implemented to collect financial flow data in a more systematic manner, but many bugs remain to be worked out.

[8] The authors based the low end of their NGO estimate (which they list as ranging between $700 million and $1.5 billion) on case studies of 18 international NGOs in 2001, but they admit that other important NGOs are left out.

[9] Of the $4 billion a year spent on such post-conflict reconstruction activities as human rights, election monitoring, and rehabilitation assistance they note that less than 10 percent would be considered part of ODA (Randel and German 2003, 17).

[10] The terms nongovernmental organization (NGO), nonprofits, and private voluntary organizations (PVOs) are used interchangeably in the literature. All of these labels are negative in tone, emphasizing that the organizations in question neither pursue profits nor do they carry either the authority or the coercive capacity of governments. A positive definition of their nature is difficult to develop. For example, Gordenker and Weiss (1995, 360) offer the following definition of NGOs, with particular reference to NGOs involved in the process of global governance, writ large. They define an NGO as "a private citizen's organization, separate from government but active on social issues, not profit making, and transnational in scope." Even this definition contains at least two negatives.

[11] Stoddard's interpretation of competing traditions of humanitarian policy can be usefully compared to that of Mead (2001), who identifies three alternative traditions to Wilsonianism in the history of US foreign policy.

[12] Lake (1996, 1997, 1999) applies this same logic to the question of the nature of governance in different sectors of the international political economy or the international security system. In McGinnis (1999b) I discuss a different application of many of these same theoretical principles.

[13] For research on coping strategies, see Allen (1996), Corbett (1988), Davies (1993, 1996), and Rahmato (1991).

[14] See Drèze and Sen (1989, 3) for citations to the historical literature on famine. The modern scholarly literature on famine crosses many disciplinary boundaries: physical and biological sciences (Mellor and Gavian 1987), social sciences and policy analysis (Torry 1984; Currey 1992), anthropology (Shipton 1990), economics (Osmani 1995; Ravallion 1997), demography (Osmani 1996), and public health (Yip 1997). A useful collection of approaches from diverse disciplines with particular reference to applications in Africa is von Braun, Tekly, and Webb (1998).

[15] Systematic analyses of the relationship between war and famine are rare, perhaps because it seems obvious that famines are more intense when accompanied by war. Examples of quantitative analysis and comparative case studies include Reyna (1991), Deng and Minear (1992), and Berry and Downing (1993).

[16] For radical critiques of Sen's entitlement approach, see Basu (1986), Kula (1988), de Waal (1990), Watts (1991), Swift (1993), Keen (1994); more sympathetic critiques and

extensions include Ravallion (1987, 1997) and Osmani (1995). Needless to say, the balance in this debate shifted dramatically in favor of the latter side once Sen was selected to receive the 1998 Nobel Prize in Economics!

[17] For example, Smillie (1995, 104) asserts that international humanitarian aid to Biafra prolonged that war by 18 months.

[18] The term "peacekeeping" is used here to refer to the full range of peace operations; see Diehl (1993) and Diehl, Druckman, and Wall (1998) for more detailed analyses of different types of peace operations.

[19] As long as maintaining the current policy is worth more to the government than is the amount of aid it can divert for its own purpose, the preference order would be as given above (which is different from the game matrix in Gibson et al. 2005). Even if the donors can make the aid offer sufficiently attractive to reverse this preference, the overall equilibrium outcome remains unchanged.

CHAPTER 8 Why Humanitarians Should Read Machiavelli

Desultory warfare generates large numbers of displaced peoples. International humanitarian aid organizations have long been engaged in operations to deliver essential supplies to those refugees who cross a national border in their efforts to escape conflict. Rebel forces often cross these same borders, and both rebel leaders and government officials have proven adept at extracting resources from these humanitarian operations and diverting these resources for their own purposes. Similar diversion occurs when the aid is intended for the victims of famines, which are in turn made more likely by the prevalence of conflict and poor governance (McGinnis 2000a).

Rebellions disrupt normal patterns of social, political, and economic interaction, and war itself has become a way of life for people in many areas of the contemporary world. What is perhaps most disturbing is that these disasters are truly man-made. Governments and insurgent forces often find it in their interest to disrupt the lives of as many people as possible. Rebel forces incite widespread unrest in order to deepen the public's dissatisfaction with the capacity of governmental authorities. These authorities, in turn, seek to undermine the resources of those segments of the populations under the control of rebel forces. All sides manipulate access to food and other essential supplies as a tool of war. Since some proportion of food aid is diverted by local specialists in coercion, external aid may actually provide combatants with the resources they need to continue their fight. It is not simply a matter of feeding the troops, because excess supplies can be sold on the market to provide the money needed to finance military operations.

When describing the situation in southern Sudan, Vaux (2001, 82) nicely encapsulates this dilemma. As he tells it:

> Lives depended as much on possessing a gun as on having food. Any kind of external assistance poured into this crucible of conflict could be converted into guns; it therefore became impossible to separate humanitarian aid from the war itself. Although aid agencies may not have been keen to admit it, providing a few sacks of food was virtually the same as providing a Kalashnikov rifle. They could be exchanged for each other within hours of delivery.

The consequences of well-intentioned humanitarian aid can, in some circumstances, prove devastating to local populations. When humanitarian agencies flood a disaster zone with free food, they undermine the productive incentives of local farmers and disrupt the economy. Effects may also be felt in the public sector. By cementing relationships with government officials, humanitarian aid organizations may enhance the legitimacy of predatory regimes. Governments and rebel forces alike manipulate refugee flows to encourage additional aid programs from which they then divert resources that can be used to finance continued conflict.

One of the more intriguing aspects of humanitarian response to complex emergencies is the extent to which UN agencies and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) take over many of the functions traditionally assigned to governments (see Natsios 1995; Weiss and Collins 1996; Thomas Weiss 1998; Chopra 1998).

Because of their growing participation in governance, today's humanitarians must become more familiar with the political logic of Machiavellism. They already have to

deal with some pretty ruthless characters on a routine basis, and it would help to understand the mindset of those who control access to their intended clients. Balancing competing and even contradictory goals is a standard task of governance, whereas many humanitarians remain more comfortable insisting on their own special concerns.

Machiavelli remains a master at forcing his readers to confront the situation as it is, with no preconceived notions or rose-colored glasses. Few of Machiavelli's specific policy recommendations are likely to prove relevant to today's humanitarians, for they rarely have access to the degree of power that he presumed to be under the purview of either a prince or the leaders of a republic. Still, Machiavelli stands as an exemplar of the practical matching of needs and opportunities, a skill that today's humanitarians have had to develop on their own. In particular, once humanitarianism fades over into governance, agents of humanitarian aid organizations (HAOs) and other components of the global conflict policy network desperately need the insights provided by Machiavelli and by those political scientists who have come after him.

Problematic Relationships

Agents of humanitarian aid organizations routinely experience dilemmas in their interactions with donors, recipients, and partner organizations. This section highlights one dilemma from each of these three areas. We first look at some of the perversity introduced into the system by continued heavy reliance on food aid from the world's major agricultural producers. Then we explore reasons why host governments and other local officials may seek the perpetuation of refugee camps in their vicinity. Finally, we turn to the especially problematic nature of HAO relations with the military forces sent to protect them as they deliver humanitarian aid.

Humanitarians and Food Aid

Preceding chapters have documented the prevalence of the Machiavellian logic of *realpolitik* in practice by the government and rebel leaders with whom HAOs must negotiate to gain access to refugees and internally displaced peoples (IDPs). Yet, Machiavellianism pervades the donor side as well, even if its taint is more subtle and subdued than on the battlefield.

Consider the case of food aid, which has always been the primary component of emergency relief. As evaluated by Randel and German (2003, 38–43), about half of all food aid is distributed in the form of emergency relief. They report increases in total relief food aid to a total of 5.6 million tons in 2001. In-kind contributions of food cover about half of the pledges fulfilled under the consolidated appeals process (CAP), which translates to some $2 billion in 2001.

The United States dominates this activity, offering more than half of relief food aid. This is not the consequence of purely altruistic motives. Instead, US agricultural policy has long encouraged domestic farmers to overproduce, by giving them generous price supports and other incentives. Thus, the availability of food aid for delivery in the form of emergency relief must be seen as a consequence of other, more politically salient policy objectives.

Overreliance on food aid is one of the long-standing critiques of global humanitarian aid. Reformers have called for increased reliance on direct cash transfers, which recipients could use to purchase the locally produced food that is nearly always available even under famine conditions. Yet, distributing cash does not comport with the self-image of humanitarians.

If only by habit, NGOs still rely on food aid for humanitarian emergencies. Perhaps surprising, food aid also plays a major role in long-term development assistance. The reason is simple, in that important donors prefer to make donations in-kind rather than cash. In addition, bulk food aid has low administrative costs and so it helps their bottom line, in terms of proportion of donations used for programs vs. administration. (This is the standard metric used to evaluate NGO performance.) However, US food aid policy has been shaped by the interests of domestic food processors and transportation firms.

Barrett and Maxwell (2005) critically evaluate a long series of arguments that US officials use to explain their reliance on food aid as a tool of foreign policy, labeling each argument a myth. For example, they assert that food aid is not primarily about feeding the hungry, but rather about providing an export valve for the excess production induced by the farm subsidies obtained by agricultural lobbies. Yet, ironically, food aid does not contribute much towards increases in export earnings. They conclude that "Food aid has always been a *product* of support for American farmers, rather than a *source* of support for them" (ibid., 37).

By no means does the US stand alone in its implicitly political approach to humanitarian aid. Smillie and Minear (2003) detail a long list of domestic political factors that shape the level and modalities of each country's foreign assistance. This process is inherently political.

Protracted Refugee Situations

Once established, refugee camps become embroiled in ongoing political struggles. For various reasons, influential political actors develop an interest in continuation of the

status quo. The plight of refugees may be deplorable, but others may find this situation to be a comfortable compromise. Oftentimes, both those who forced the refugees to leave and those who ostensibly welcome them have little interest in finding a permanent solution. Furthermore, HAOs engaged in providing assistance may establish regular routines resistant to easy reform.

Some refugee camps remain in place for remarkably long times, up to several decades in length. Crisp (2005) argues that this problem of "protracted refugee situations" can be attributed, to a great extent, to the shared presumption that all refugees should eventually return to their home to be voluntarily repatriated. Although a sound idea at first glance, one of its direct consequences is the lack of serious attention given to the option of local integration or resettlement.

Host governments typically see refugees as a burden, although they do tend to allow those with useful skills to settle more permanently. Such cherry-picking only adds to the problems of post-conflict reconstruction. In addition, long-established refugee camps often become magnets for internal migration for job-seekers. As a consequence, local entrepreneurs may resist changes in the economic status quo.

Ironically, Africa has a long tradition of hospitality towards exiles that has greatly contributed to its diverse intermingling of peoples (Herbst 2000). Yet, this tradition has been challenged by the onslaught of protracted refugee situations.

The one observation that I found the most surprising in the course of this research was the envy that international aid to refugees can generate among those already living in that same area (Chambers 1993). At first, it seems hard to believe that anyone could envy the position of a refugee. However, in their camps, refugees can receive significant

amounts of foreign aid, whereas the local people, who may face remarkably similar conditions of poverty and deprivation, are ignored.

Crisp (2005) outlines the many problems that protracted refugee situations create for the local economy. Since HAOs rarely, if ever, provide enough resources to sustain all the refugees, they must fend for themselves as best they can. Yet, refugees typically have no legal rights to plant crops or extract other resources from the surrounding community. Nor are they secure from violence, including tensions with local populations. As a consequence, refugees take whatever opportunities they have, including women selling sexual services, and manipulating their access to aid, by such means as recycling through the lines, ration card fraud, split households, or keeping their children malnourished to qualify for more aid, etc. (ibid., 38).

Refugees continue to respond rationally to incentives even while living in camps (Christensen 1982; McGinnis 2000b). This can lead to abuses, as highlighted by Maren's (1997) examples of urban Somalis receiving aid by showing up at the refugee camp when the deliveries were made. Clearly, at least some Somali families had incorporated the receipt of humanitarian assistance into their broader household strategy of income diversification (Evans and Pirzada 1995).

Crisp (2005) advocates "self-reliance pending voluntary return" as a general principle that should guide policy in protracted refugee situations. This goal can be promoted by legal protection, education, and assured access to local resources.

Humanitarians and Peace Operations

Relations between civilian humanitarians and military forces engaged in various types of peacekeeping or peace-enforcing operations have become a touchstone of

tensions within the global conflict policy network as a whole. These forces may have been authorized by the United Nations or a regional intergovernmental organization (IGO), or they may represent the unilateral action of a single government. This close connection between humanitarian aid organizations and military forces is one of the major differences between HAO response to natural disasters and to complex humanitarian emergencies. This section examines the tensions inherent in relationships between such contrasting forms of organization in more detail.

With the exception of Soviet and Cuban intervention in the Ogaden War, external military intervention in the Horn has taken the form of peace operations. Since World War II, organizational members of the global conflict policy network have been involved in an extensive array of peace operations, ranging from traditional peacekeeping operations interposing neutral forces between the combatants to less elaborate interventions intended to protect the delivery of humanitarian supplies and finally to very extensive operations in which external military forces essentially force the parties to stop fighting.

There have been only a few peace operations in the Horn of Africa. Tanzania's invasion of Uganda in 1979 can be charitably interpreted as a mission to remove from power one of the worst mass murderers in the latter half of the twentieth century, Idi Amin. The United Nations Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea (still underway at the time of this writing) stands as a successful example of a more traditional peacekeeping mission in which external parties help separate combatant forces who no longer want to fight each other. The African Union's ongoing peacekeeping mission in Sudan has the potential to

become a wide-ranging, multifunctional operation, but thus far it has been minimal in goals and understaffed.

By far the most familiar peace operation in the Horn involved US and UN intervention in Somalia in the early 1990s. This operation began as an innovation in humanitarian support. When conflicts are so chaotic that HAOs cannot be sure that their aid will reach its intended recipients, HAOs and especially heartrending media reports put pressure on the international community as a whole to take action to protect the delivery of emergency relief.

The initial impetus for this intervention was to help protect the humanitarian aid workers who were distributing essential supplies to people displaced by that conflict and the ensuring lack of agricultural productivity. With respect to this initial goal, this intervention was reasonably successful (see Taya Weiss 2004). Any scent of success was soon superceded by their utter failure to enforce peace among the still-warring factions.

Somali warlords, who had already served as the primary source of protection for some time, exhibited boundless creativity in their efforts to ensure that all aid somehow went through their hands.[1] In a now-classic sequence of mission drift, US forces shifted attention to the attempted capture of one of the leading warlords who happened to be the most effective in these machinations. After eighteen American soldiers were killed in a bungled operation in Mogadishu, the United States and later the United Nations abandoned the Somalis to their fate.

The crux of the problem can be illuminated by comparing the written text of *Black Hawk Down* (Bowden 1999) with the movie later made with the same name. Although most of the book recounted the actions and attitudes of the Americans in

Somalia, interspersed at irregular intervals were short depictions of the conflict as seen from the eyes of local Somalis. These short vignettes are particularly revealing. From the point of view of local citizens, the American soldiers were remarkably dismissive of the cultural sensitivities of the local population and blithely oblivious of the casualties their actions were causing among innocent civilians. On the other hand, the movie was unabashedly gung ho and pro-American. None of these Somali-centered vignettes were transmitted in the movie. By neglecting to cover this side of the conflict, the movie's producers no doubt created a more popularly satisfying movie, but they missed a rare opportunity to help the American public understand how the United States can look to those on the receiving end of US foreign policy.

Humanitarian relief operations often require that volunteers or professional NGO staff members work closely with military units. Walker (1992) lays out the ways in which military organizations can contribute to humanitarian operations, but he concludes by warning of an overreliance on military force. The very different organizational cultures of NGOs and militaries greatly complicate their interactions in the field. It is natural to expect tensions between organizations designed to provide very different forms of collective action.[2]

International peacekeeping forces are, in effect, providing a service both to local people and to the governments and IGOs from which these military forces were drawn. Armies, police forces, and related organizations are, in effect, "producers" of coercion. Although it is seldom seen as such, large-scale coercion is itself a form of collective action. For coercion to be applied effectively, all the standard dilemmas of collective

action must be overcome. In particular, individual participants in coercive activities must be rewarded in some manner, or else they would not expose themselves to danger.

Humanitarian operations present unique challenges to organizations set up to deal with the application of military force. Natsios (1996) discusses the many aspects of complex humanitarian emergencies that are unfamiliar to military commanders. Alberts and Hayes (1995) detail the many ways in which the requirements of peacekeeping or humanitarian operations directly contradict standard tenets of sound military strategy: clear objective, simplicity, unity of command, offensive orientation, concentration of superior force, maintaining an element of surprise and secrecy. None of these characteristics are appropriate or even feasible in the context of peacekeeping operations. For example, secrecy is impossible to maintain in what are necessarily open processes, overwhelming force would be seen as provocative, and the basic orientation of peacekeeping forces is typically defensive. They go on to suggest ways that military commanders might deal with these issues, but it is clear that specialists in coercion are going to have to relearn the way they carry out their operations if they are going to continue to be called upon to carry out peacekeeping or humanitarian assistance operations.

In the Western tradition, analysts tend to think of governments as organizations that provide a certain set of basic services to their citizen/taxpayers, but in much of the developing world a more accurate picture would be one in which the government has only a tangential (and perhaps purely predatory) relationship with the public. In many developing states, the government is primarily dependent on foreign aid or the sales of primary commodities. Few such governments provide much in the way of social services

to their citizens, beyond those necessary to lower the probability that urban residents would support efforts to overthrow the existing regime.

The abortive US intervention in Somalia left a bad after-taste, making the American public extremely reluctant to support any significant assistance to African countries. The reputation of US forces was also hurt, with Osama bin Laden supposedly using this example to convince his followers that the United States would run when confronted directly. This debacle suggests that everyone involved in future peace operations needs to be more strategic in their anticipations of the likely responses of local actors to their well-meaning interventions.

From Relief to Governance and Accountability

For an enterprise that draws its basic inspiration from the widespread and deeply-felt concern for alleviating the sufferings of fellow human beings, international humanitarians have come in for some amazingly harsh criticism.

Alex de Waal is a well-known critic of the ways in which humanitarian intervention provides African governments with an excuse to not have to worry about providing basic social services to their own people (see African Rights 1994; de Waal 1997). These critics also point to the problem that NGOs are not made accountable to the people whom they serve, but are accountable instead to Western governments or Western-dominated IGOs, or to the mass publics in advanced industrialized democracies. They dismiss the international humanitarian community as a "relief elite," a special interest group with privileged access to the news media and intergovernmental organizations (African Rights 1994).

> The greatest harm done by the humanitarian international is to create delusion. Western governments and donating publics are deluded into believing the fairy tale that their aid can solve profound political problems when it cannot. The humanitarians deceive themselves about their own importance. Most significantly, local people ('recipients' or 'beneficiaries') are deluded into believing that salvation can come from other than their own actions. Some tangible material benefits (many fewer than are commonly believed) are delivered, but at the cost of sustaining this tremendous, institutionalized delusion. Meanwhile, the real reasons why people survive and conquer famine are obscured. (de Waal 1997, 221)

More concrete consequences of famine and war include a substantial redistribution of resources from one sector of society to another. As the contributors to Macrae and Zwi (1994) demonstrate, some domestic groups always benefit from famine.

> Humanitarian crises are intentionally created, and powerful political and economic pressures strive to ensure that they are sustained in order to achieve their objectives of cultural genocide and political and economic power. . . . In conflict-related humanitarian crises not only are the means of independent survival blocked, but the means to mitigate the threat are often deliberately denied or manipulated. (ibid., 21)

Although these critiques may seem overly cynical, one potentially devastating effect of humanitarian aid is widely recognized as serious. By flooding a region with free food, the local economy can be undermined. Incentives for local farmers to produce

become almost nonexistent. As a consequence, the local people can become increasingly dependent on the continued provision of external aid. For example, Maren (1997) provides many examples of the negative consequences of food aid on the people of Somalia. He concludes that in most cases, humanitarian actions do more harm (in the long run) than good (for the short term).

Institutional Innovation in Humanitarian Operations

The history of humanitarian intervention in the Horn is instructive in its variation over time. So many humanitarian operations have been underway for so long that the relevant individuals and organizations have had plenty of opportunities to learn from past mistakes. This section recounts a few major innovations in this aspect of global conflict policy.

War has always been a source of innovation in humanitarian organizations. The Red Cross movement began as a privately sponsored effort to help the victims of war. Each new round of war created new challenges that elicited still more responses. In the twentieth century, of course, the pace of innovations in both war and humanitarian organization increased dramatically. As Hearn (2002, 45) states, "The international development NGO community emerged in Europe and the United States from a missionary and humanitarian tradition, and as a response to the enormous needs following World War One and Two."[3] For our purposes, it is important to appreciate the dramatic rise in the number of NGOs in Ethiopia during both major famines, 1973–74 and 1984–85 (Berhanu 2002, 122–23).

Famine in Ethiopia became front-page news in October 1984, but many NGOs had already been active in the area. In 1981, the Emergency Relief Desk (ERD) was

established to coordinate the delivery of humanitarian aid to rebel-held areas in Eritrea and the Tigrayan highlands (Duffield and Prendergast 1994). Christian Aid UK was one of the core members of this consortium. As detailed by Barrow (2001, 73), leaders of this organization came to realize that the aid they provided to victims of the fighting was essential to the guerrilla groups' efforts to implement their informal social contract with their peasant constituents. Since Christian Aid concluded that the success of these rebel organizations was critical to the people's well-being, this NGO essentially gave up all pretense of neutrality.

In 1989, Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) was established in an agreement among the government of Sudan, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), and the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). This operation was the first time a UN-affiliated organization had entered into an explicit agreement with rebel forces to obtain access to displaced peoples in rebel-held areas. Given the longevity of the second round of Sudan's civil war, this program has been in place long enough to attract the attention of several policy analysts (Aboum et al. 1990; Duffield 2002; Efuk 2000; Weiss and Minear 1993; Penz 2004; Prendergast 1997). The consensus view is clear: no matter how successful this program has been in delivering essential supplies to vulnerable populations, the political impact has been to legitimize all parties to this conflict and indirectly sustain the violence. All the while, the aid workers involved in this program have remained vulnerable to arbitrary restrictions on access and even the occasional attack on supply aircraft.

Increasingly frequent abuses of aid workers have inspired some activists to lobby for international legal protection for humanitarian workers by asserting a newly-

discovered inherent right of all to receive humanitarian aid unhindered by political considerations and by implementing training programs to enlighten rebel fighters about their responsibilities under international human rights law. In the long run, these pressures may bear important fruit, but thus far a more demonstrable effect has been the way in which shortcomings inherent to this OLS program have provoked sustained bouts of critical self-reflection.

Each aid organization faces its own dilemmas. Riak (2002) details the dilemma faced by agents of World Vision Sudan when the SPLM required all NGOs to sign a official Memorandum of Understanding. (In effect, this amounted to an international treaty between a rebel organization and nongovernmental organizations.) World Vision objected to the terms of this agreement, which explicitly allowed local military forces to extract some portion of the delivered supplies for their own purposes. World Vision's decision to pull out of this operation in 2000 generated considerable controversy within the organization and among both its natural constituents and other members of the humanitarian aid network. As explained by Riak (ibid., 130–31), other NGOs dismissed World Vision's decision as "prideful" or "arrogant" and Christian activists in the United States decried their placement of political neutrality above the delivery of needed supplies. Debate within the organization centered on the relative importance that should be attached to the traditional emphases of humanitarian neutrality versus a concern to not legitimize repressive rulers.

All humanitarian aid organizations came to realize similar dilemmas. Many observers credit the establishment of a Code of Conduct for HAOs in Disaster Relief in 1994 and other sets of good practices. Walker (2005) outlines the sequence of events that

resulted in the Code of Conduct approved by the Red Cross and many other HAOs. Similar proposals had been put forward in other contexts. Particularly worthy of note is the Mohonk Criteria (Ebersole 1995), which was crafted primarily by representatives of self-consciously religious organizations. Not all HAOs agreed with the compromises between humanitarian neutrality and justice-seeking as summarized in this code. Nor was it possible to enforce these principles even among the signatories.

Since these fine-sounding principles remained abstract, there was also an effort to translate them into a set of more explicit and detailed guidelines. In 1997, major NGO consortia began the Sphere Project, which has since resulted in the codification of the "Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response." Yet even this charter lacks an institutional home, as no organization has been assigned the responsibility of monitoring the behavior of signatories or sanctioning violations.

Thomas Weiss (2001) and van Brabant (2001) point to the many continuing problems with implementation of these lessons. Among the many impediments to successful organizational learning, von Brabant (2001, 189–90) includes pressures for HAOs to accentuate the positive in order to generate continued donor support in the context of harsh competition from other HAOs, a persistent shortage of secure funding, and the near-total absence of any external evaluation of assistance programs or input from recipients into decision-making processes within any single HAO. None of these conditions are conducive to learning at the organizational level, let alone learning at the level of the institutional network as a whole. After distinguishing among learning at the individual, organizational, and institutional level, von Brabant concludes by highlighting

the potential relevance of lessons from the literature on learning organizations in the business field.

Calls for better coordination at the global or regional level also miss the fundamental problem. As I see it, humanitarians need to become much more politically savvy. The fact that so many HAOs now realize that even supposedly disinterested aid necessarily has political implications is promising, and yet the mechanisms needed to reinforce these lessons have yet to be established. The Samaritan's Dilemma retains its power to shape outcomes in a perverse manner.

Reinforcing Local Systems of Domination

A more subtle problem is that provision of food aid may serve to reinforce existing systems of domination. If the food is to be distributed by local power holders or merchants, then the influence of these actors is greatly enhanced. These leaders may also choose to distribute food to their supporters rather than giving it to those who are most in need. Weiss and Collins (1996, 104) note that a more equitable distribution of food typically results when local women are closely involved in the distribution process. As a consequence, many NGOs have come to emphasize the importance of involving women in this and other political decisions. Indeed, the empowerment of local women may turn out to be a major force for change in the typically patriarchal societies in which most of these humanitarian emergencies occur.

Most HAOs have come to emphasize local empowerment over short-term emergency relief, to use emergency relief to supplement rather than to undermine the prospects for long-term sustainable development. Yet, whenever a new emergency hits the world news, many previously uninvolved organizations rush in to respond, to

demonstrate to their donors their effectiveness. This flood of emergency relief is sometimes described as an invasion. In some cases, the activities such organizations engage in are laughable, or even downright dangerous. For example, AmeriCares garnered much positive publicity for creative management when it shipped several crates of the sports drink Gatorade to children suffering from cholera, even though medical experts cautioned that this particular concoction was far too concentrated to give to young children (see Maren 1997, 264–65).

Perhaps the most disturbing consequence of this tendency for the international humanitarian network to respond indiscriminately to breaking situations is that government leaders can count on this occurring. Thus, government leaders are free to adopt policies that are going to impact peoples' lives very negatively, resting secure in the knowledge that somebody else will take care of their people for them. At the deepest level, this situation is a reflection of the general lack of accountability of governments in many parts of the developing world. As long as leaders do not unduly anger external aid givers, they can do pretty much what they want to their own people.

Instances in which African governments or rebel groups have used food as a political weapon are surveyed by Macrae and Zwi (1992). The most blatant example concerns the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia. The scale of the suffering required HAOs to rely on government assistance. They soon came to realize the extent to which Ethiopia's government was using access to food aid as an instrument of their own policy, namely to convince peoples to resettle in communities (originally camps maintained by international HAOs) where they could be more easily monitored and controlled (Vaux 2001, 59). The manipulation went deeper. Earlier agricultural development projects had

failed to improve the lot of local farmers because the Marxist regime increased its extraction from these areas in order to distribute food according to its own policy preferences (ibid., 50).

Maren (1997, 51) summarizes Mengistu's policy as follows: "First you starve them, then attract them to central areas with food, then cart them off to where you want them." It's easy to see why humanitarians would not be comfortable acting as an enabler for such abusive policies.

As this realization makes its way into the conscious understanding of a larger part of the global conflict policy network, especially to potential governmental or private donors, perhaps this tension will prove to be a motor for significant change. Making recipient governments accountable to international donors could certainly help, but a truly revolutionary development would be to enhance the ability of local people to monitor and sanction their own leaders.

In all these ways, humanitarian action is becoming more closely associated with monitoring in the areas of human rights abuses and with organizations whose missions involve the promulgation of democratic principles, election monitoring, empowerment of local civil society, etc. Efforts to hold individual leaders accountable for human rights abuses committed while they were in power are a truly remarkable manifestation of a changing notion of the relationship between international law and domestic politics.

The tension bears some resemblance to the one discussed earlier. As donor interests in helping people disrupted by armed conflict overcame the sovereignty-based distinctions that had guided the original form of the humanitarian system, the activities of HAOs expanded to cover internally displaced people as well as people under the de facto

jurisdiction of nonrecognized authorities. Donor concern with human rights abuses, and especially with any activities resembling genocide or ethnic cleansing, may come to similarly undermine the ability of governmental or other leaders to engage in heinous policies. HAOs may even come to see their role as criticizing governments not for abuses of human rights per se, but rather to publicize ways in which governments fail to provide for the basic human needs of their citizens. If all governments satisfied this simple criterion, then HAOs would be reduced to providing relief for natural disasters, and all pretensions towards humanitarian aid as a form of governance would become moot.

There is, of course, no reason to presume that such a progressive change will be easy or automatic. But if the activities of HAOs can contribute in even a small way towards the establishment of governmental accountability throughout the developing world, then their role in history might turn out to be just as important as even their most intemperate cheerleaders would have us believe.

Towards an Expanded Sense of Responsibility

These problems raise fundamental issues concerning the nature of governance. International relations theorists typically presume that a single organization ("the state") provides all aspects of governance. In reality, however, different governance services are routinely provided by a wide range of formal organizations and informal arrangements at all levels of social aggregation. Consequently, the concept of governance needs to be broken down into its constituent service activities, each of which can be provided by individuals or organizations specializing in the production or provision of that particular service.

Governance facilitates the operation of a wide variety of exchange and other forms of interactions among the "consumers" of these services. One particularly important effect of governance is to reduce the costs of transactions experienced by individuals or organizations seeking to realize the joint gains from a mutually beneficial exchange. Direct provision of goods and services is one thing, but helping to establish a governance structure that facilitates exchanges among local people is quite another thing entirely.

The detailed structure of governance can be seen in the interactions of HAOs with local or external military forces and with local merchants and global corporations. In a very real sense, governance has to be rebuilt from the ground up, especially in the case of refugee camps.

In complex humanitarian emergencies, the existing governmental infrastructure has broken down. Given the pervasive neglect that national governments have given the production of basic public services, however, a considerably more dangerous effect is disruption of traditional bonds of local community management. These structures cannot easily be recreated in the context of a refugee camp. To a great extent, external aid may undermine existing sources of social capital.

A related critique is the extent to which media coverage of humanitarian emergencies takes on the tenor of a "morality play" in which caring Westerners travel to the ends of the earth to rescue poor helpless natives (see Hammock and Charny 1996; Debrix 1997). Some have even dismissed media coverage as "disaster porn," by drawing attention to the humiliation and dehumanization of victims captured on film in the throes

of agony. Similarly, Duffield (1994, 1996) argues that many campaigns for donations to humanitarian aid programs serve to reinforce racist stereotypes.

These realizations set difficult challenges for humanitarian aid organizations. One observer summarizes the problem as follows:

> Two questions are worth asking: to what extent does the readiness of northern NGOs to intervene in southern theatres, and of donor governments to finance them, detract from local coping mechanisms and from achieving self-reliance (i.e. might it not be possible to use the same monies to generate many more jobs and indigenous institutions in the South)? Can northern NGOs survive the quantum leap in interventionist capacity without 'losing their soul' or at least without fundamental changes in their ethics and culture (i.e. can they remain 'free spirits' or are they destined to become vectors of North-South patterns of dominance and/or of Western rationality)? (Donini 1995, 6)

In response to these problems, HAOs have reflected deeply upon their actions. They have come to see the importance of providing emergency relief in a way that supplements rather than undermines the prospects for long-term sustainable development. Most have begun to foster closer ties to local NGOs to help empower local people through organizations of their own making. Some NGOs have devoted more attention to education of the donor public to try to make more widespread the understanding that long-term development is the key to avoiding more humanitarian emergencies in the future.

The basic connection is really quite simple. War-fighting displaces civilians from their homes, and some international organizations are eager to respond to the plight of refugees. Yet, these organizations must negotiate for access to the refugees with the combatants who displaced them in the first place. Humanitarians must find a way to be more effective advocates of the interests of the victims whose lives they save.

Institutional Innovations in the Nuba Mountains

As Sudan's government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) staggered towards peace at the turn of the millennium, discussions concerning the Nuba Mountains continued on a separate basis and proceeded more smoothly than talks over the central question of southern autonomy. By 2002, a cease-fire was in effect in the Nuba Mountains region, enabling the instigation of post-conflict reconciliation programs. Of particular notice is the Nuba Mountains Programme Advancing Conflict Transformation (NMPACT). As described by Pantuliano (2005, 52), in NMPACT, UN agencies and international NGOs "adopted an approach that focuses on capacity building, sustainable agriculture and market revitalization, alongside conflict transformation and peace-building." NMPACT was described as "a phased, multi-agency, cross-conflict programme aimed at enabling all stakeholders to contribute to a Nuba-led response to addresses the short- and long-term needs of the people of the Nuba Mountains" (ibid., 58).

Participants in NMPACT explicitly sought to avoid the problems experienced in the OLS program. In particular, they avoided any OLS-style separation between operations in regions under the control of government and rebel forces. In many aspects, the contrast was deliberately enhanced:

> The SPLM/A-controlled areas of the Nuba Mountains had not received international assistance since 1988 and hence there was a danger of destabilising the local economy and encouraging a dependency syndrome through the provision of food aid—as had happened in many parts of southern Sudan. Thus, a new approach was designed for NMPACT: food delivery was coupled with programme interventions that focused on nurturing local capacity and enhancing sustainability by strengthening the local food economy. The NMPACT food security approach emphasised capacity building over the provision of external inputs (food aid and infrastructure) from the outset. This was the reverse of the approach employed in southern Sudan under the OLS umbrella, where the focus on capacity building emerged much later. (Pantuliano 2005, 61)

Some specific examples of policies include an increased emphasis on purchasing locally produced food rather than relying solely on imports. Also, under NMPACT, recipient groups are distinguished by their primary mode of livelihood rather than by ethnicity or location in government or rebel-controlled territory. Pantuliano (2005) admits some limitations of this program, notably the too frequent replacement of UN coordinators on the ground and too small a role (thus far) for Nuba civil society organizations. Although it remains too early to evaluate this program in toto, this version of "political humanitarianism" certainly seems like a step in the right direction.

Beyond Principle to Effectiveness

Pantuliano (2005) refers to NMPACT as a "principled approach" because participants have codified their adherence to the foundational principles of humanitarianism. As traditionally articulated, especially by Red Cross organizations

(Forsythe 2005), the fundamental principles are impartiality, neutrality, and independence. Yet, not all HAO activists share equal commitment to these particular principles. Some insist on partiality in the cause of justice, which requires them to publicize instances of human rights abuses that they observe in the process of delivering humanitarian aid. For natural reasons, those so inclined tend to tilt in support of rebel movements and especially in defense of marginalized peoples who suffer at the hands of combatants on any side. Many Horn peoples fall into this category, and so this region has been the scene of some intense disagreements within the HAO fraternity.

Red Cross officials insist on the need to deal with all combatants, no matter how heinous their actions, for they control access to those most in need of relief. This impartial, neutral role has been enshrined in documents of international humanitarian law (IHL). These principles of IHL sometimes conflict with those of the emerging body of human rights law.

The proper role of religion in the delivery of emergency relief and development constitutes another source of disagreement. As noted earlier, this network includes organizations inspired by particular faith traditions and/or associated with specific faith-based organizations as well as others insisting on a purely secular approach. However, given the nature of this work, even the secularly inclined tend to speak in terms of high principle. Their inspiration may be secular, but in practice their behavior can be just as driven as any religious zealot. Given the heightened political profile of religion, potential exists for escalation to even higher levels of intensity of ideological debate.

Harvey and Lind (2005) decry the rising tendency to withhold emergency relief as a means to affect the behavior of government or rebel forces. Aid conditionality has

become a standard component of development assistance programs, but they conclude that relief should not be withheld when it is absolutely necessary. In this sense, then, humanitarians face an even more daunting version of the Samaritan's Dilemma.

Even when the worst excesses of heartless manipulation of food aid are avoided, other dilemmas arise. For example, White (2005) acknowledges that the combatants in the Ethiopia-Eritrea Border War of 1998–2000 did not use access to food aid as a weapon in their struggle. Perhaps one reason is the relatively short duration of this particular war. Even this short time, however, was enough for the threat of famine to emerge, especially in Ethiopia. International response to this crisis was even slower than usual, due to widespread donor disgust at the outbreak of this seemingly pointless war between two of the poorest countries whose leaders had seemed so promising (ibid.). As usual, ordinary people suffered for the mistakes of their leaders and for the concerns of global humanitarians.

Progress towards Peace

Those HAOs participating under the OLS umbrella accepted the practical necessity of negotiating with combatant leaders for continued access to refugees or IDPs. Others have adopted a "rights-based approach," insisting that all peoples have an inherent right to basic human needs, including security against abuses of any kind. This rights-based approach supports a necessarily more intrusive approach.

A compromise of some sorts was reached through a series of repeated negotiations between HAOs and combatants in the Sudanese civil war. Beginning in 1995, OLS members signed agreements with the government of Sudan and major factions of the resistance, beginning with SPLA/M. This "Agreement on Ground Rules"

was an unprecedented recognition of the international legal status of a nonstate actor (Bradbury, Leader, and Mackintosh 2000).

This agreement was originally seen as part of an ongoing process of peace negotiations, but it remained in place even after that particular round of peace talks broke up. Originally, this was intended as a means to implement confidence-building measures (CBMs) among the parties through the establishment of "corridors of tranquility" through which humanitarian convoys could pass unmolested by either side. Signatories also promised to adhere to basic principles of human rights law. In practice, access remained spotty and subject to arbitrary restrictions, and human rights abuses remained prevalent on all sides. Thus, access to refugees came to serve as a touchstone for further tensions (another manifestation of the ubiquity of compounded dilemmas). From an institutional design point of view, an obvious problem with this arrangement was the lack of any forum at which disputes could be discussed or arbitrated.

The government of Sudan was never comfortable with the implied legal recognition of its adversaries and at times reverted to its policies of restricting access to particular areas in order to reexert control over the process. This problem was especially noteworthy in the simmering conflict in the Nuba Mountains region. Although not explicitly included under the OLS mandate, humanitarian aid organizations reacted strongly against a government-imposed boycott of aid deliveries into rebel-held areas. Some withdrew their operations in government-controlled areas, thereby starting a process of negotiation that eventually contributed to the signing of a cease-fire in the Nuba region in 2002. During the end-game of negotiations between the GOS and the

SPLA, agreements on the Nuba Mountains region always seemed to be a step ahead of negotiations on more touchy issues of southern autonomy.

In sum, humanitarian aid organizations, especially those active in the Horn, have been forced to cope with their own loss of innocence. Their motivations remain selfless and noble, but experienced practitioners have come to appreciate that their actions may have unintended and undesirable consequences. Realization is growing that no intervention can be entirely impartial or apolitical, as was envisioned by the pioneers of humanitarian assistance. Even efforts by third parties who only want to see peace established can potentially hurt the interests of local actors who prefer the fighting to continue. Even purely disinterested interventions should expect to generate a political counterreaction. In response, HAOs have become much more strategic in their selection of operational details, especially regarding the nature of their contracts with leaders of local coercive organizations.

This new sophistication bodes well for the future. Unfortunately, the lessons so dearly learned by HAOs have not yet been absorbed by all members of the global conflict policy network. The next chapter moves to the dilemmas facing third-party intermediaries in the process of making peace.

Notes to Chapter 8

[1] Gundel (2003) details the multiple varieties of aid diversion committed by Somali forces.

[2] For further analyses of the increasingly complex patterns of interaction among government officials, military officers, and humanitarian or development aid workers, see Clarke and Herbst (1997), Fleitz (2002), George (2002), Munslow and Brown (1999), and Taya Weiss (2004).

[3] The religious foundation of humanitarian and development organizations remains one of the most essential contributions of religion to global conflict policy. Aspects of the historical background of the transformation of missionary organizations to humanitarian ones are surveyed by Smith (1990).

CHAPTER 13 Reconstituting Global Conflict Policy

By now, the reader should be convinced of the pressing need for extensive reform in the global network of national and international governmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) involved in humanitarian aid, diplomacy, development, human rights advocacy, and related activities. As explained in the introduction, I use the term *global conflict policy network* to encompass the consequences of choices made within this emerging, if still inchoate, network of interacting organizations.[1] Although policy is usually assigned to the actions of governments or other easily identifiable organizations of public authority, policy also emerges from governance networks consisting of a broader array of public, private, and voluntary organizations. Indeed, governance takes place whenever members of a community establish institutional rules and procedures by which the limits of acceptable behavior are determined and collective efforts undertaken in order to move that community as a whole towards more desirable outcomes.

As shown throughout this book, extraregional actors of diverse forms interact in all aspects of a conflict process. The question at hand is this: can these organizations implement a combination of policy choices that can help move this regional conflict system to a new equilibrium? My conclusion is that new institutional arrangements will not suffice, for the critical factor requires a fundamental change in perspective on the part of all components of that network.

The Problem in Summary

Ecological and cultural diversity is a given, and there seems little prospect of enticing the rest of the world to attach a high level of salience to events in the Horn.[2] Even if the world's major donors could be enticed to invest large sums of money in this region, economic development by itself would not solve the problem. Indeed, the prospect of a massive influx of oil revenues in the New Sudan seems to have only given the parties a larger prize to fight over.

Some analysts stress the importance of restricting the flow of arms into this region. The practical difficulties of such an effort are massive, and it would address a symptom rather than the underlying cause. If parties still find control over political power to be a very lucrative prospect, then they will find some way to obtain the weapons they need to gain power.[3]

In my view, the nature of the state emerges from this analysis as the cornerstone upon which any sustainable transformation must be constructed. The fragility of the state (seen by all involved as a precious prize worth capturing and defending at any expense) is the central pivot around which this system revolves. Take that condition out of the mix and the region-wide tapestry of interlocking dilemmas should unravel. Tensions would certainly remain and conflicts will eventually emerge, but they won't be enmeshed within an institutional context that pushes them towards desultory violence.

The key challenge is to make the state both less precious (in terms of personal aggrandizement) and more flexible (in terms of giving access to multiple modes of dispute resolution). It is worth recapitulating the major steps of my argument that led me to this conclusion.

To begin with, ecological and cultural challenges required the diverse peoples of the Horn to develop complex ways of interacting with each other. When modern states were imposed via the colonial project, they were insufficiently grounded in the local peoples and instead remained dependent on foreign assistance. Fragile post-colonial states could distribute governance benefits to only a small proportion of their population. The resulting grievances made rebellions commonplace.

In addition, erosion of traditional coping mechanisms employed by pastoralist peoples undermined their ability to survive recurrent droughts, making famine a common occurrence. Realization of suffering on such a wide scale moved Western populations to provide humanitarian assistance programs, many of them of long duration. Given the low resource base of this very underdeveloped region, even meager programs became an attractive target for expropriation by rebel forces and by state officials.

The pattern of reciprocal destabilization gained strength from the ready availability of assistance provided to people living in refugee camps. Any pair of states facing rebel movements may be tempted to support each other's rebels, if only to undermine the ability of their neighboring government to provide sanctuary to rebel forces. (It may also be useful to get the rebel forces to fight against each other, and thereby divert their attention from their goal of overthrowing the current regimes.) But this temptation is greatly heightened if the level of assistance going to refugee camps is seen as a significant source of revenue. Since such aid can easily be diverted via corrupt government officials, they have an incentive to make sure that these refugee camps remain in place. Thus, at least some elements of a government may have an interest in stirring up trouble in their neighbors in order to ensure a steady supply of new refugees

and to discourage current refugees from returning home. In this way, a general tendency towards reciprocal destabilization can be greatly augmented and even institutionalized as an essential ingredient in this war economy.

The equilibrium level of fighting that can be sustained in this manner is low, enabling the conflict to drag on for decades. As long as some resources continue to enter the system, and as long as conflict is not too destructive, this system may endlessly cycle through numerous iterations of concurrent conflicts.

Additional support was provided, inadvertently, by the intermittent interventions of the Great Powers, who, for their own reasons, occasionally found it worthwhile to support a government under siege or to provide assistance to a rebel group. But their heart was never really in it, because when push comes to shove, they didn't see anything in this region as all that important in the grand scale of things. This led to a pattern of supposedly proxy forces being able to disentangle themselves from their erstwhile masters who weren't really all that interested in controlling them anyway. More substantially, over time we see a drastic accumulation in the level of arms available to parties in this region.

Indeterminate negotiations and partial peace agreements proved to be but variations on the well-worn theme of the stilted state-building typical of post-colonial African regimes. Negotiators co-opt rebel leaders, welcoming them into the governing coalition or otherwise enabling them to benefit materially from fuller participation in the political process. This process of inclusion can't go on indefinitely given the limited resources available to governments in this brutally poor region, and so the result is partial incorporation of some groups and further fragmentation of rebel movements.

Many negotiations in this region are ones in which the participants have been forced to meet under pressure from their respective patrons. Even if the clients are reluctant to engage in serious negotiations, they are likely to go through the motions in order to ameliorate their patrons' concerns. Patron pressure for negotiations is also easy to explain. They provide resources to their "clients" for their own reasons, but the clients typically take those resources and use them in a way that best suits their own interests. Patrons may come to realize their mutual interest in lowering the level of their involvement in this conflict, especially as danger rises that they may have to become more directly involved.

These limitations on cross-level resource transfer help explain the tendency of conflicts to endure (or fester) for long periods of time at relatively low levels of intensity. If interests between patron and clients were really tight, then some kind of closure might be forthcoming, but as it stands, the fundamental disjuncture between the interests of actors at different levels of aggregation (in this particular conflict system) produces instead a persistent pattern of desultory fighting. At the same time, peaceful resolution is also not in the cards, not as long as combatants enjoy easy access to resources from above or below.

When I first began to do research on conflicts in the Horn of Africa, all of this seemed so surprising and the terrible consequences of well-intentioned interventions were so frequently counterintuitive. Now I must confess that I find it difficult to remember just how surprising or puzzling it all seemed back then. I have come to appreciate the remarkable resilience of this active tapestry of regional conflict, to a point where each of these stylized facts seems to be a perfectly reasonable consequence of its underlying

dynamics. Perfectly rational choices made by leaders seeking to best achieve their interests routinely generate dilemmas that external observers find difficult to see, let alone resolve. After taking the mystery out of how these sad patterns of events are generated, it is now time to move to the question of whether better results can be obtained by significantly modifying those dynamics. Once the system is better understood, the possible sources of change should also become more clearly understood, along with the difficulties necessarily associated with any effort at meaningful reform.

Building on Local Capabilities

Despite all this suffering, reasons for hope are clearly discernable to those who have the eyes to see. Ironically, hope derives from this region's very lack of importance to the rest of the world. The world's major powers show concern for events in this region on a sporadic basis, and their interventions have been short-term and half-hearted at best. Global inattention has provided the people of this region an opportunity to begin to devise their own solutions built upon their own traditions. The most promising example is the level of stability achieved in the self-proclaimed but, as yet, unrecognized republic of Somaliland. Peace and reconciliation conferences between local groups in the southern Sudan may also provide the foundation for building peace from the ground up, removing from the choice set of national leaders any remaining opportunity to exploit interethnic animosities.

Because of widespread failings of governance in this region, peoples of the Horn of Africa have been forced to fall back upon their own cultural traditions as the only viable basis for their own halting efforts to establish (or reestablish) effective forms of democratic self-governance. These peoples now face the daunting challenge of using

their own traditions to establish a secure foundation for self-governance in the presence of external pressure to adopt institutional arrangements originally designed to operate in quite different cultural contexts.

Even these promising local beginnings will lead nowhere unless some way can be found to reinforce their effects at other levels. Global conflict policymakers need to concentrate their attention on building a supportive context within which local communities can interact with each other, especially cutting across national boundaries. Robust institutions for communication and dispute resolution need to be established and maintained at the regional level.

Ultimately, any effective unraveling of the regional conflict tapestry requires as a prerequisite a fundamental reconceptualization of the nature of governance in the region as a whole. The institutions of national government must be recast so as to reduce the potential harm that can be done when a power-hungry individual or hegemonically inclined group seizes power. The stakes of winning or losing elections must be reduced so that no group fears their very elimination should their opponents capture a few more votes. Rather than forcing all localities to obey general regulations, national governmental officials should give local communities sufficient room to maneuver as they endeavor to address their own problems in ways that seem most appropriate to the people most directly affected.

The implication of this call for a new approach to governance can perhaps best be explained by considering the question of national borders. Nothing I am saying should be misconstrued as advocacy of a wholesale redrawing of boundaries on the African continent. I do believe that boundary changes should be a part of the mix of possible

responses, when appropriate, but as part of a more general reconsideration of the jurisdictional boundaries in general. It seems to me that the cases of allowing Eritrea to become a separate state and giving Somaliland enough room to maneuver to establish its own de facto governing authority demonstrates the usefulness of this option. Ironically, however, both of these boundary revisions are based on previous colonial units.

It's not the national boundaries that need to be adjusted, but rather the meanings analysts and practitioners attach to borders. I hope to speed movement towards a fundamental reconceptualization of the nature of governance in Africa to a version in which national boundaries play a significantly less prominent role than in the contemporary system. What is needed, in my view, is a more systematic approach to governance that makes it easier for local communities to work together, whether or not they belong to the same "state" or "district."

A similar configuration of complementary reform at the local, national, regional, and international levels is needed in other regions of the developing world as well. It is ironic that the countries of the Horn of Africa should serve as a laboratory for such a widespread and fundamental reconceptualization of the modern state. Few regions of the world have been so weakly integrated into the emerging network of globalization. Nation-building remains a daunting problem in many countries of the developing world, but it takes on a special degree of difficulty in this extraordinarily poor region.

The Sudan presents the strongest argument in the world against the universal application of the standard Hobbesian notion of unitary sovereignty. Any effort to cram such a large number of incredibly diverse peoples into the straitjacket of a single nation-

state is doomed to fail. Only a multilayered and flexible system of polycentric governance can have any reasonable hope of bringing peace to this uniquely diverse land.

Ethiopia presents a problem of comparable magnitude. As discussed earlier, Ethiopia's current experiment with "ethnic federalism" has only served to expose the limitations inherent in an exclusively ethnic approach.

Regimes of all kinds have been tried in this region, from imperial monarchy (Halie Selassie's Ethiopia) to Marxist-Leninist (Mengistu's Ethiopia) to Islamic republic (Bashir's Sudan), from relatively mild military rule (Nimiri's Sudan and Siad Barre's Somalia) to incredibly brutal dictatorship (Idi Amin's Uganda), from single-party states (Kenya, Eritrea) to brief episodes of multiparty parliamentary democracies (Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, and Djibouti) to a peculiarly centralized version of federalism (Ethiopia's current "ethnic federalism"). So far, nothing has worked very well.

The greatest irony lies in the surprisingly hopeful experience of Somaliland. Somalia had long been held out as the one shining example of a homogeneous people with an opportunity to craft a unitary nation-state of the classic form. Yet, this effort collapsed into complete anarchy in a decade-long morass of interclan warfare after which even the best efforts of international diplomats have failed to recreate a viable national government. Meanwhile, far from the attention of the powers-that-be, the peoples of Somaliland managed to cobble together an unusual form of governance, one more attuned to the cultural traditions of the peoples living there. The irony lies in the fact that even this modicum of success could not have been achieved under the full glare of international attention. Local people need space to craft their own solutions, and the global conflict policy network must learn to help in a more indirect manner.

Time Horizons and Multilevel Governance

Most of the individuals whose creativity contributed to the construction of this robust system had nothing of the kind in mind. Instead, each was trying to cope the best way he or she could with changing circumstances in order to best pursue his or her own interest. To evaluate proposals to transform this system, we need to take a step backwards, to move away from the day-to-day decisions of coping with this system's insidious dynamics.

All of the analysis presented here is predicated on the presumption that all rational actors have limited capabilities of looking ahead and predicting the consequences of their actions. No one actor can exert control over the system as a whole. The sequential nature of the conflict cycle makes it difficult for any actor to look much beyond the current or, at best, the next stage. There is no prospect of introducing an omniscient planner seeking to exert optimal control over this system. This limitation is made especially pertinent by my framing of this book as advice to the amorphous network of global conflict policy organizations, which can hardly be expected to act in a fully coordinated manner.

Most actors are concerned with immediate consequences, especially in the heat of battle. Entrepreneurs putting together a rebel group in the first place may not be much concerned with the consequences of an organization's details on its performance during peace negotiations. Sophisticated leaders look ahead and take into account the strategic response of other actors. Humanitarian aid organizations may have begun by concentrating on relieving suffering in the short term, but they have come to locate their efforts within a larger and more explicitly political perspective. Third-party intermediaries may impose an immediate peace settlement, but if they want to advise the

parties on how to construct a sequence of reconciliation moves that can result in a fundamental restructuring of the system of governance, they must, by necessity, adopt a longer-term perspective.

Most rebel leaders are understandably more shortsighted in their calculations. Initially, they are primarily concerned about how to set up a rebel organization that can best take advantage of the resource base available to them. Others may have a more ideological, long-term goal in mind.[4] Many struggle just to keep the rebellion going. Indeed, the longer a rebellion goes on, the more likely it will be that leaders will emerge who see their interest in perpetuating the existence of that rebellion. All organizations tend to take on a life of their own, as agents develop an interest in maintaining their position of authority.

Institutional analysts who want to make a positive contribution towards the enshrinement of peace need to be much more strategic and long-term in their thinking. This is especially true in the post-conflict period, when external advisors are trying to help the parties devise a long-term sequence of games that they can play in such a way as to increase the chances of establishing a robust system of peace.

Finally, analysts need to recognize and respect the demonstrated skill of parties on the ground when it comes to strategic action. Too often, critics of rational choice theory decry its supposed imposition of Western patterns of thought onto peoples from diverse cultural traditions. I have always considered that criticism to be patronizing in the extreme. Why presume that only Westerners are capable of rational thought? Haven't political leaders from all cultural regions and in all historical periods amply demonstrated their dexterity at the Machiavellian arts of strategic manipulation? As I see it, one of the

crucial legacies of the increased attention to rational choice models of political behavior has been an extension of recognition for their capability for clever planning to individuals in all walks of life, from all the cultures of the world. No public policy can hope to achieve its desired effect unless analysts have incorporated the effects of the rational response of the people affected by that policy. Although rebel leaders might be excused for just trying to keep their organization going, no matter what happens, advocates of peace must hold themselves to a higher standard of sophistication.

For institutional analysts, a more general conclusion can be drawn concerning the importance of looking beyond the immediate consequences of any proposed change in existing institutional arrangements. In order to have a reasonable chance of predicting the consequences of reform, institutional analysts must carefully consider how the individuals most directly affected by that reform will revise their own behavior in order to best take advantage of the new opportunities opened up to them, as well as circumventing any constraints that may have been introduced. Their responses are driven by their rational pursuit of their own interest, as they perceive it. Rational actors are not omniscient, so projections should incorporate limitations on actors' ability to obtain all the information needed to optimize their status, especially over the long-term. At the same time, it is not a good idea to underestimate the creative ability of individuals to devise solutions that may not have occurred to any analyst studying the matter ahead of time. Such creativity is especially likely to be elicited in situations in which significant rewards accrue to those exhibiting the efficient responses. Selection processes can generate feedback mechanisms of incredible versatility.

Institutional analysts must keep one step ahead of the responders, but analysts face limitations as well. It is a better strategy to focus on the overall range of possible responses rather than try to predict the precise strategies that will be devised. In this analysis, for example, the creativity of rebel leaders was incorporated into an informal model of resource mobilization by assuming that any new niche in resources will, sooner or later, be exploited by some rebel entrepreneur.

Given the creative abilities of individual entrepreneurs, few opportunities to organize a rebellion will go untapped. This is not to say that all aggrieved groups will successfully organize, since they must first overcome many dilemmas of collective action. Still, whenever some ethnic (or other identity) group widely shares significant grievances that are unlikely to be resolvable by legal means within their respective countries, this creates an opportunity for individual leaders who would like to engage in violent operations in order to redress these grievances (and to pursue their own interest in obtaining power).[5] If these leaders can obtain access to weapons (or enough money to buy weapons) and are able to retreat into safe sanctuaries, then they are likely to preside over rebel organizations that survive for many years, even if they fall short of ultimate success. The ability of victimized groups to respond, even if it may take a while, should induce some degree of caution in those contemplating further repression.

Constitutional orders should be designed so as to facilitate the effective response of victimized groups. Instead, the general tendency seems to be towards limiting the arenas in which politics take place to national-level political institutions. A brief digression into the historical development of legal systems in colonial and post-colonial Africa illustrates the dimensions of this problem.

A Lost Legacy of Legal Pluralism

One of the most crucial requirements of governance is the management of disputes between members of a community. The ubiquity (and diversity) of disputes has led all societies to develop an array of alternative mechanisms for their resolution or management, or, at a bare minimum, to "process" disputes from beginning to end. The concept of "legal pluralism" is relevant here, since several layers of legal systems have accumulated in the countries of the Horn of Africa (and most other countries as well). [6]

Long before the imposition of colonial rule, intergroup relations at the local level were immensely complex in this incredibly diverse region. Identity or livelihood groups at the local level had, over the centuries, worked out a series of institutional arrangements with their neighbors. Their relationships may well include aspects of violence or animosity, but typically some procedures are in place to limit the escalation of disputes. Too often, analysts presume that such "traditional" institutions are static and incapable to change. Instead, all such arrangements are complex and subject to change. For our purposes, the important concern is whether or not local identity or livelihood groups have recent experience of situations in which the use of violence against other groups has been considered legitimate. The more intensely remembered are these situations, the easier it should be to convince members of that group to once again treat the outsiders as legitimate targets.

Immediately before the advent of European colonial rule in this region, there were only a few instances of centralized political authority. As Herbst argues, people who did not trust the growing authority of a particular leader found it relatively easy to move on to other areas, and this tendency towards migration made it extraordinarily difficult for the

creation of centralized states, except in areas of high population density or where mobility was impaired by the nature of the environment.

During the colonial period, European-style legal systems were imported and given precedence over existing traditions. Some local traditions were codified into "customary law" or "native law" that was allowed to be applied to certain restricted realms of interactions. In areas populated by Muslims, aspects of Islamic law (*shari'a*) were incorporated into a pluralistic legal system, but it remained subservient to the overarching authority of European-style law.

Contradictions and tensions between these different sources of law were pervasive. As a consequence, each post-colonial state inherited a complex array of poorly integrated legal systems. A full depiction of this complexity would divert us from our primary task. Suffice it to say that the pluralistic components of precolonial legal systems have been truncated in the process of the centralization of political power in the executive branch. To the extent that a single national code of law dominates all other legal traditions, significant advantages are conveyed upon segments of that community most conversant with the dominant tradition (including the language in which national laws are written).

Too often, political analysts and public officials focus on the national-level processes that take place in or around the capital cities or in the halls of diplomacy. In so doing, they place far too much importance on such matters as elections, political parties, constitutional documents, and cabinet formation. These matters are, of course, important contributors to the process of democratic governance. However, a stable and peaceful political order requires the establishment and maintenance of a multitude of political

institutions, a diverse array of institutional mechanisms through which various political decisions can be made and disputes managed.

Why Polycentricity is Essential to Peace

A fundamental problem driving each repetition of the cycle of the onset and resolution of violent rebellion lies, I argue, in the insufficient range of alternative means for the resolution of disputes. Collective decision making, in any form, necessarily generates dissatisfaction among those whose preferences are not directly reflected in that decision. In short, *governance generates grievances.* The mere existence of a public authority with the ability to enforce collective decisions practically ensures that some groups benefit more than others. Those on the losing end who find themselves subject to socially-supported sanctions or punishments will, automatically, feel aggrieved. The key to peaceful governance is to make it difficult for any aspiring rebel leader to effectively nurture that grievance into support for violent rebellion.

It takes organizational skill to convince people to risk their lives and possessions in a possibly vain struggle for political change, and especially to maintain this action over a long period of time. Even so, the efforts of the cleverest entrepreneur will fall on deaf ears unless some groups have come to realize that they too often lose out in competition over access to significant resources.

To avoid repeated instances of the full sequence of conflict stages, some means must be crafted to forestall the steady accumulation of grievances by any significant segment of that society. The task facing reformers is to arrange things such that no single group is repeatedly required to pay these costs, while some other groups continually benefit. Maintaining a diversity of institutional mechanisms for the resolution of disputes

is the essential requirement for such an even-handed political order. For whenever responsibility for political decisions is concentrated on any single actor or set of actors, this creates an overwhelming incentive for those actors, no matter how public spirited they may seem, to exploit their position of exclusive control. It also makes them a lucrative target for takeover efforts by competing groups in that society.

Personal rule is, of course, a tradition of long-standing in much of Africa (Jackson and Rosberg 1982), as well as more broadly. Yet, the recurring pattern of one-man rule breaks down if no one person is able to dominate political affairs, as has been the case in Somalia since 1991. A more flexible notion of sovereignty is inherent in the notion of democratic self-governance, which hopefully lies in wait for future generations of the peoples of the Horn of Africa.

Polycentricity is an alternative system of governance that relies on a complex array of multiple authorities with overlapping jurisdictions. Ideally, any group facing a common problem will have easy access to institutional support (in the form of norms, rules, or formal organizations) that can facilitate the resolution of that problem. Practically speaking, such *polycentric* orders are very difficult to establish and sustain (see V. Ostrom, Tiebout, and Warren 1961; V. Ostrom 1987, 1997; E. Ostrom 1990, 2005; McGinnis 1999a, 1999b, 200b). Under an ideal system of polycentric governance, any group of individuals will have easy access to some institutional settings by which they can work together to resolve their common problems and pursue their common interests. As a consequence, no one group should be able to systematically impose unfair costs on any other segment of that community. In this sense, a vibrant system of polycentric governance forestalls the concentration of grievances needed to instigate the

steps towards violent rebellion. Unfortunately, this polycentric ideal is rarely approximated in real-world societies and certainly not in recent decades in any of the countries of the Horn of Africa.

To disentangle a complex, multilayered conflict system such as the one now existing in the Horn of Africa, a complementary array of dispute-resolution mechanisms at all relevant levels of aggregation must be established or reestablished. Such a process of reconstruction cannot be done from any detailed blueprint. Nor can it be done from afar. Those people most directly involved in the conflict must exert the needed effort to think through their collective problems and to communicate fully and fairly with each other. Outside analysts, such as myself, can contribute to this process only indirectly. The unique contribution of institutional analysts is to provide comparative evaluations of the strengths and weaknesses of alternative institutional arrangements. To do so, we need to maintain an open mind, to remember that the institutions in place to resolve local disputes may not even look like "political" institutions.

Lessons for the Global Conflict Policy Network

The network of governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental organizations involved in peacemaking, peacekeeping, humanitarian aid, human rights monitoring, and post-conflict development and reconciliation constitutes a potential basis for polycentric governance in this policy area. Admittedly, the global conflict policy network is considerably more inchoate than more easily recognizable networks of organizations and activists concerned with environmental or health issues. Still, there is a growing recognition of the significant cross-effects of operations directed at only one of these issue areas. This sense of shared purpose and common dilemmas needs to be

nurtured to serve as the basis for an improved global response to local and regional conflicts.

All members of the global conflict policy network need to demonstrate a higher level of political sophistication. It is too facile to presume that all that is needed is to assign the responsibility for coordinating these diverse actions to some particular unit of the United Nations. Doing so would defeat the whole premise of building upon this diversity the foundation for a more fully polycentric system of governance.

Instead, each type of organization needs to focus more effectively on its own primary areas of concern, its *core competencies*, to borrow a term from the management literature. Networks of communication need to be established and sustained so that the respective strengths of each type of organization need to be harnessed to the common cause. Potential complementarities between the strengths of different organizations need to be appreciated and realized through joint actions. It is particularly important that the weaknesses of organizations of one type can best be countered by the complementary strengths of other organizations (see Hanisch and McGinnis 2005). To build upon the core competencies of its member organizations, the global conflict policy network needs to craft interorganizational networks to facilitate the realization of *strategic complementarities* among these core competencies.

As a guide for creative recrafting of the global conflict policy network, let me suggest four slogans that encapsulate the lessons of this examination of dilemmas exhibited in the past record of global response to conflict in the Horn. Each pithy phrase is explained a bit more fully below, but each also summarizes much that has gone before.

1. *Listen to the Locals*
2. *Expect Exploitation*
3. *Institutionalize Incentives*
4. *Respect Religion's Roles*

1. Listen to the Locals

In this phrase, the word "listen" is meant to convey how important it is that observers actually hear the concerns of the local peoples rather than always interpreting local concerns within the context of their own overarching political schema. During the years of the Cold War, for example, events in the Horn of Africa were interpreted in terms of whether the United States or the Soviet Union benefited or lost from particular occurrences. In reality, little if anything of what happened in this region had any meaningful impact on that global competition, which proceeded along its own internal logic. Still, placing events in the Horn within this context made it virtually impossible to understand what was really happening there. Since the end of the Cold War, the world's attention has shifted elsewhere, only to return when this region seemed to have some connection to the post-9/11 war on terrorism. Some faith-based organizations still treat this region as a pivotal battleground for global supremacy between the rival lands of Islam and Christendom.

Agents of organizational members of the global conflict policy network who seek to intervene in an effective manner must look past their own ideological blinders to recognize the reality of local situations. The Horn remains a region where diverse peoples struggle to cope with harsh environmental conditions with precious little help from their

own political leaders. Those who can cope effectively with these constraints have a lot to teach the rest of us.

2. Expect Exploitation

To listen to the locals is not to believe everything they tell you, nor need you trust their intentions. This book documents numerous instances in which political leaders from the countries of this region devised clever means to extract benefits from external donors, so successfully that the results were often nowhere near the donor's intentions.

Any policy analyst advocating a new form of intervention should prepare the political equivalent of the environmental impact statements that are now so commonly required for development projects. It is critical to predict at least some of the ways that local actors take advantage of these proposed programs by skewing benefits in their direction. Policy advocates need to forecast likely responses in order to take precautions against those actions.

Of course, no piece of analysis, no matter how comprehensive it may appear, can possibly encompass all the manipulative responses that may be thought up by clever and creative political entrepreneurs. Still, efforts should be made to deal with the most likely weaknesses of any proposal, as well as building into proposals a capacity for adjustment in response to responses too clever to have been foreseen.

3. Institutionalize Incentives

A recurring theme in this volume has been the uneven and episodic nature of global response to events in the Horn of Africa. A more steady and predictable mode of response needs to be institutionalized and sustained in a way that can enter into the calculations of the relevant actors on the ground. In this way, their incentives to take or

avoid certain actions can be shaped in ways conducive to sustainable peace and development.

I use the word institutionalize in two senses. The first is the common usage of the term—to connote a process of regularization or expected continuity of behavior. But my second usage is more precise, building upon the grammar of institutions developed by Crawford and Ostrom (1995; see also E. Ostrom 2005). In this grammar, institutions include shared expectations, strategies, norms, and rules as well as the formal organizations that are built up from configurations of shared role expectations, strategies, norms, and rules. If norms are essential prop for certain kinds of behavior, then the appropriate intrinsic feelings need to be instilled in members of the population. In particular, some agents must be assigned the task of realizing and sustaining these norms. Similarly, any rule must be backed up by assigning particular actors the role and the responsibility of monitoring behavior and sanctioning violations of that rule.

To institutionalize incentives via network governance is, in short, to promote polycentricity. As discussed earlier, sustainable polycentric governance requires integration of the unique contributions to be made by both types of political jurisdictions (Hooghe and Marks 2001, 2003) at all levels of aggregation (McKinnon and Nechyba 1997) as well as partner organizations from the private and voluntary sectors (Salamon 1987, 1995).

The use of formal organizations also needs to be understood in a comprehensive manner. Too many examinations of recent dilemmas of humanitarian aid, for example, conclude with a recommendation for reforms that would centralize coordination and oversight of the global response in some existing or newly proposed agency affiliated

with the United Nations. But such organizations need not always be the best choice. Compare, for example, the sorry history of the UN Commission on Human Rights with nongovernmental organizations such as Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch. The UN Commission included governments (notably Sudan) whose own human rights records were considerably less than exemplary. They had to be included in the commission for political reasons unrelated to human rights per se, a complication one must expect from such a politically suffused organization as the UN bureaucracy. Often times, it is preferable to have organizations whose sole concern lies with a particular narrow set of issues, one that can keep its core competencies in clear focus.

4. Respect Religion's Roles

For similar reasons, faith-based organizations can make unique contributions towards the effective selection and implementation of global conflict policy. Yet in the post-9/11 world, religion has become tainted with the sin of association with conflict and terror. Conversely, I have been profoundly moved by the many positive contributions that individuals inspired by their faith and organizations established by like-minded believers have made at all stages of the conflict process.

This fourth principle is stated as such for purposes of effect, but it should not be interpreted too literally or narrowly. Contributions of all types of nongovernmental organizations, including private corporations, need to be more widely recognized and respected by policy analysts in this area. Multiple levels of government authorities should also be included. For the Horn of Africa, it is especially important to consider the potential contributions of regional organizations. Since many of the problems faced by peoples in this region naturally cross national boundaries, the creation of organizations

that can more effectively deal with cross-national issues should be encouraged, even if (and perhaps especially if) these organizations may seem to encroach upon the supposed responsibilities of UN agencies.

These four principles are designed to fit together as a coherent whole. After analysts have become attuned to the local grounding of ongoing dilemmas, they might better craft responses that can help shape the incentives of actors in ways more conducive of resolution of these dilemmas. Yet any intervention will have effects on the distribution of political opportunities among the relevant parties, many of whom should be expected to be clever enough to exploit any advantage to the fullest. Policy interventions should be designed to facilitate subsequent adjustments while remaining true to the overall logic of that intervention.

Ultimately, no external intervention can solve a problem of any significant magnitude; only the cooperative efforts of people on the ground can do that. Conflict policy advocates and analysts must remain open to the views and respectful of the innovations of the local peoples themselves.

I realize that these proposals may seem to be a bit abstract, but that too is a consequence of the tenor of the advice I am tendering. The Horn of Africa is a huge place, inhabited by peoples of bewildering cultural diversity. I know I can’t solve all their problems, but I do think the analysis presented in this book can help concerned individuals and organizations to adopt a more productive attitude of constructive assistance.

The Way Forward

This book amounts to an extended case study of a single example of a multicountry conflict system. To a significant extent, conflict processes in all of the countries of the Horn have been integrated into a single system. The detailed operation of that system has changed in significant ways over the years covered in this study, but all fundamental components of its overall structure have remained in place.

This case study of one regional conflict system is intended to serve as a concrete example of broader theories of international conflict and to contextualize detailed analyses of particular conflicts in this region. Precisely because of the tight interconnections among separate civil wars and rebellions in this region, it becomes imperative to seriously consider the prospects for implementing a fundamental reconceptualization of the nature of governance.

Although my specific conclusions have been shaped by the unique dimensions of conflicts in this one region, I am confident that lessons drawn from this study should be relevant for similar situations in Africa and in other regions of the world. Multicountry regional conflict systems currently operate in West Africa (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Ivory Coast), Central Africa (DR Congo, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi), and Central Asia (Afghanistan, Pakistan, and neighboring post-Soviet republics). Earlier examples of regional conflict systems include Indo-China (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia), Central America (Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala), and South Africa (including Mozambique, Namibia, Angola, and Zimbabwe). This latter case is particularly interesting given the fundamental changes in governance that accompanied the demise of apartheid in the

Republic of South Africa. This last case demonstrates (at least provisionally) that it is possible to move to a more peaceful regional solution.

Generalization must be tempered by a realization of the many ways in which this region differs from other regions. The Horn has an especially confused colonial legacy, leading to situations in which former colonial subdivisions continue to resonate among local people decades after that country's independence. Another complication is that Ethiopia itself played a role similar to the colonial powers of Britain and Italy, making it more difficult to separate the effects of imperialism per se from that of Western influence. On the other hand, all countries in the post-colonial world include groups that historically collaborated with their colonial overlords and thus enjoyed more influence in the colonial period and expected more of the same after the end of colonial rule.

One significant way in which the Horn of Africa differs from other contemporary examples of regional conflict systems is the relatively low importance of pure criminality in this region. Absent are the drug traffickers or diamond traders that play such dominating roles in sustaining rebellions in Central Asia, Colombia, Angola, West Africa, and elsewhere. This is not to say that crime is nonexistent, just that its contribution to political violence in this region is considerably less than in other regions.

Similarly missing is the typically domineering role of multinational corporations. Sure there are multinational corporations in this area, especially with respect to the emerging oil production in Sudan. Overall, however, mining and other extractive industries have played remarkably quiet roles in the political history of the countries in this region. Indeed, the relative absence of resource-extracting multinational corporations and criminal organizations is no coincidence, since both types of organizations are

attracted to regions for pretty much the same reasons, namely, the availability of natural resources that can be extracted and traded with relatively little involvement of the local population.

There has also been less evidence of demographic pressure, certainly less than in areas like Rwanda and Burundi. Still, some parts of Ethiopia have reached high levels of population density, and Khartoum suffers from rapid urbanization and large squatter communities. Overall, overpopulation is not yet a pressing problem in this region. Nor has the HIV/AIDS crisis in these countries received much attention, although that will certainly change should peace be established and medical care becomes more widely available.

Other factors are more important here than in other regions. The low level of economic development makes the contributions of humanitarian aid organizations unusually pivotal in the Horn of Africa. Even though the levels of humanitarian aid are not large in absolute terms, rebel organizations such as the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and Somali factions have, at various times, been highly dependent on the resources they were able to extract, forcibly or not, from humanitarian relief operations.

Finally, pastoralists play an unusually important role in this region, and are active in all of the border regions. Their behavior serves to link conflicts in neighboring countries in a particularly intractable manner. Yet, as argued in earlier chapters, pastoralists bring unique perspectives to bear on the practice of governance.

Unraveling Linkages

In this active tapestry of regional conflict, local, national, and international conflicts interact and sustain each other in a seemingly endless fashion. It's not sufficient

to simply decry the unfortunate effects of linkages between conflict processes at different levels. These linkages were initiated by strategic actors pursuing their own interests as best they could, and policy advocates need to take account of their likely response to proposed reforms. Some way must be found to encourage at least some of the major participants that they can more effectively pursue their interests in other means. Those who prefer to continue to rely on violent means must be resisted, but in ways that do not contribute to the perpetuation of this multilayered system of violence.

The many deficiencies of existing institutions of governance in this region have been amply documented. This multilevel system of governance (or the lack thereof) is a far cry from any vision of an ideal polity. Ideally, conflicts of interest among actors at any level of aggregation can be resolved peacefully by reference to an appropriate set of institutions. At the local level, traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution or more formal judicial procedures may be available. Elections and party coalitions constitute a mechanism for choosing winners at the national level. Conflicts between neighboring countries could be resolved in the context of regional organizations or direct negotiations.

This vision of a multitiered structure of mutually reinforcing, conflict-resolution mechanisms draws some of its inspiration from the "democratic zone of peace" that has recently been the focus of much research in the field of international relations.[7] Ultimately, this multitiered system would form a "pluralistic security community" (Deutsch et al. 1957) under which individual and communities at all scales of aggregation would experience stable expectations of peaceful change (see Starr 1992, 1997).

Today, the Horn of Africa is an exact polar opposite of this utopian image of a multilayered zone of democratic peace or pluralistic security community. Conflicts at all

levels are routinely expressed in violent interactions. Participants in one conflict level routinely funnel resources to other conflict levels. The fundamental problem facing the Horn of Africa, as well as similar regions throughout the world, is how can a multilevel system of protracted social conflict be transformed into a pluralistic security community under a polycentric system of self-governance?

The implications for policy recommendations are sobering. Basically, this analysis suggests that no single level of conflict can be effectively resolved without simultaneously addressing conflicts at all levels. A multitier strategy, with complementary components at all levels of aggregation, can be the only long-term solution. Local groups should be encouraged to rely on traditional means of conflict resolution rather than taking their disputes to the modern political arena. Major donor organizations must come to realize the counterproductive effects of focusing their assistance exclusively on the holders of governmental authority.[8] The nature of national governance must be redesigned, and mechanisms for intraregional cooperation instituted.

A Multilevel Strategy for Regional Transformation

In sum, the global conflict policy network needs to implement a multitiered strategy to take maximal advantage of the complementary strengths of humanitarian, diplomatic, and other efforts at the local, regional, and global levels. An outstanding set of recommendations concerning the ways in which the complementary contributions of different types of organizations operating at all scales of aggregation is found in my colleague Amos Sawyer's (2005) recently published book *Beyond Plunder*.

Sawyer advocates a multilevel approach to the dilemmas of conflict and governance in his home region of West Africa. His policy recommendations are directed

specifically at the problems faced by countries in the Maro Region Basin (Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea). Still, his conclusions can be applied, with minimal revision, to the multilevel conflict system in the Horn of Africa. Both systems include many of the same compounded dilemmas of collective action, even if they differ in their precise configuration. At the risk of oversimplifying his nuanced recommendations, he asserts that organizations at the local, provincial, national, regional, and global levels each have especially important contributions to make.

As Sawyer sees it, the primary aim of global organizations or extra-regional actors should be to facilitate the conditions under which local peoples can resolve their own problems. He sees a continuing role for material and financial support for economic development. In the political arena, he stresses the potential contribution of internationally sponsored war crimes tribunals that can assign responsibility to the individuals most directly responsible for the excesses of recent conflicts. Any peacekeeping forces should be organized under the auspices of regional organizations, supplemented with the logistical support of UN members. The primary responsibilities of these forces should be to monitor the implementation of peace agreements and especially to oversee the disarming of combatant forces. He also sees an essential role for nongovernmental organizations at the regional level, in particular, cross-border cultural organizations that help restore connections among peoples of similar ethnic, religious, and linguistic backgrounds who currently reside in different countries. New institutions of governance must be created at the national level, including executive, legislative, judicial, and, especially, nongovernmental organizations of civil society. A national police force must be established that is capable of dealing with criminal organizations

operating within its territorial jurisdiction. The national level may also be the best forum for the operation of a truth and reconciliation council, along the lines of the innovative experience of South Africa. The international cultural NGOs mentioned above should be built upon similar organizations at the provincial level rather than going through the national government. By recognizing the existence of strong subnational ethnic ties, a surer foundation can be built for revitalized institutions of interethnic conflict resolution. Finally, all types of organizations should be encouraged at the local level. After all, this is where most peoples' most important interactions take place, and it should be easy for members of local communities to commune together to discuss and resolve their own particular problems. In urban areas, in particular, these organizations will need to cut across ethnic lines. These community-based organizations should be especially effective in helping national police and regional peacekeeping forces uncover hidden caches of prohibited weapons. Finally, a multilevel system of early warning procedures should be put in place.

In Sawyer's framework, the essential idea is to find some way to combine the complementary strengths of contributions from organizations of diverse forms and levels of aggregation. A similar degree of coordination will, ultimately, be required to unravel the dynamic logic of violent rebellion in the Horn of Africa.

Five Steps beyond Just Peacebuilding

In conclusion, I would emphasize five points of attack, each of which exploits a different vulnerability or potential weakness in this well-worn tapestry of regional conflict.

First, national-level conflict needs to be attacked from below. Previous ties between communities need to be restored and rejuvenated, or reconstructed on a new basis. It is essential to convince local leaders, both traditional and emerging, to de-link their disputes with neighboring communities from competitive political processes occurring at the national level. For if one community too closely associates with a particular faction or political party, then the opposing groups at both levels are likely to find common cause. Then, the problems between the national-level contenders will necessarily infect what are better treated as local-level disputes. In one sense, this may be the easiest step to accomplish. Given the level of destruction that has been wrought on so many local communities, and the general inability of national political officials to constructively resolve conflicts, many community leaders are likely to be sufficiently disillusioned with their political patrons to begin to seek more direct contacts with the leaders of neighboring communities. Indeed, there have been many examples of people-to-people negotiations, especially in southern Sudan and in Somaliland. These talks have drawn on the patterns of more traditional forms of interaction between communities. Such locally-grounded efforts at intergroup communication need to be encouraged and supported.

Second, the stakes need to be lowered at the national level. Once the victors in a multiparty election or an interethnic civil war take charge of the national government, they too often treat that government as an instrument for their own self-aggrandizement. Individual leaders amass vast fortunes, and resources and privileges are allocated to narrow groups, effectively disempowering many other ethnic groups. As a consequence, elections become very intense affairs indeed, as competing leaders use dramatic rhetoric

to flame the fears of their potential supporters. In such cases, the step between election and civil war is not very large. If, on the other hand, there were well-recognized limits to the extent to which a victor in any one election could subsequently divert government resources for personal or partisan gain, then those who may be on the losing side are unlikely to be swayed by overblown rhetoric.

Third, there needs to be a significant regional component. It is not sufficient for any one country to reform its political institutions, not if conflicts remain unsettled in neighboring countries that might spill over the national borders. Many efforts at separate peace within particular nations have been implemented, but it is time to better coordinate efforts on a regional level. This is an area where persistent international support might be most effective.

Fourth, attention needs to be paid to intermediate steps along the way to peace. Just as this regional conflict system was built up over many years, accumulating from multiple sources and the actions of diverse actors, peace is itself a complex outcome that cannot be imposed in a day. The sequential accumulation of small moves towards peace may be most influential at the local level, since reestablishing contacts between local communities should help forestall any automatic escalation of subsequent disputes. Similar sequences of small steps may prove efficacious at the national level as well. In particular, if institutional procedures are set up that help reveal the true intentions of actors who have sabotaged earlier agreements, then it will become more difficult for them to continue to undermine subsequent agreements.

The fifth and final point is that organizations in the global conflict policy network need to play a supportive role, not a domineering or interventionary one. Too often

international actors, whether governments or nongovernmental organizations, have viewed the Horn as an arena in which to competitively pursue their own agendas. As demonstrated throughout this analysis, these efforts have routinely led to unintended consequences, as actors at the national and local levels have taken the offered resources or assistance and turned them to their own purposes. At other times, they have effectively ignored the Horn of Africa for long stretches of time, only to return their gaze to this region when a new famine erupts or one of its many conflicts escalates beyond some noticeability threshold. International actors need to maintain more of a consistent role of support, but with less intense intrusions.

It is particularly important that the members of the global conflict policy network remain open to the possibility of learning from the successes thus far achieved by people in this region, rather than presuming that external observers have all the answers. To improve the prospects for more effective global responses to future conflicts, each organization in the global conflict policy network needs to reexamine its fundamental assumptions.

As I see it, the Horn teaches us that the standard model of state sovereignty is not workable in the presence of such incredible diversity, both of biophysical environment and social practices. No one can doubt that the Horn is home to a remarkable array of diverse peoples, and the events surveyed in this volume should convince the reader that any effort to use boundaries to carve this region up into neat little packages called nation-states is doomed to failure. Instead, we need to listen to the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the Horn and help them devise and maintain a more complex array of political institutions, an array uniquely relevant to the circumstances in which they find

themselves. Because their actions cut against the traditional grain of modes of thought, most outside observers have so far been unable to fully appreciate their efforts. I hope the reader of this volume gains a new-found appreciation of the hidden potential of alternative routes to peace and reconciliation.

As external observers, we must take comfort from the realization that this system is not fixed in stone but has instead been crafted, bit by bit and piece by piece, by innumerable instances of human ingenuity. The problem is not a lack of creativity but rather a misplaced focus for its realization. External observers can rest assured that the people in this region will continue to react to their changing circumstances with their full array of talents. The most we can hope for is to help them see their way towards a more effective means of coordinating their actions to contribute towards the transformation of this conflict system into an equally robust system of peace and prosperity.

My analysis shares a common inspiration with the emerging literature on *just peacebuilding* in which concepts of just wars, nonviolent political activism, post-conflict reconciliation, and other related themes are integrated (Stassen 2004). To this literature, I bring an unremitting emphasis on the need for political sophistication on the part of third parties seeking a more peaceful outcome. From the opening lines of the introduction, I encouraged humanitarians and peacemakers to develop a deeper appreciation of the skills of strategic thought.

I can think of no better way to conclude this book than by quoting John T. Williams, a dear friend and colleague who is tragically no longer alive to speak for himself. John once told me how he had been struggling to convince a class of undergraduates about the relevance of abstract concepts concerning collective action, free

riding, game-theoretic equilibria, and strategic manipulation to their intended careers in some nonprofit organization. He finally got the point across when he spoke bluntly: "Being moral doesn't mean you have to be stupid." In today's increasingly complex and interconnected world, humanitarians, peace-builders, religious leaders, and all other moral entrepreneurs can no longer afford to treat political naiveté as a virtue.

Notes to Chapter 13

[1] I intend global conflict policy to become as easily recognizable as global environmental policy or global health policy. In all cases, reference is made to a complex network of widely diverse organizations all engaged in related efforts to cope with a particular range of policy problems. Conflict policy turns out to be particularly important at the global level, where policy networks are intrinsically difficult to identify.

[2] As an emerging exporter of oil, Sudan has come to the attention of certain states, notably China, that previously had little interest in this area. Yet, as discussed earlier, increased oil revenues without governance reform can prove to be a recipe for disaster. In addition, China's insatiable appetite for secure sources of oil will probably make it even more difficult for the United Nations to impose sanctions on Sudan, in the all-too-likely prospect that its behavior helps trigger additional conflict and public misery.

[3] Thusi (2003) concludes that too much effort has been given to efforts to implement pan-regional controls on weapons sales, and advocates instead more ad hoc arrangements at national and bilateral levels. Such disputes over the most effective level of policy implementation should be expected in any multilevel system. It's not easy to get the level right.

[4] Mao, to take a prominent example, organized his movement in order to better implement a long-term strategy over the course of a multistage process of revolution. Clearly, not all rebel leaders are as sophisticated as Mao.

[5] Strictly speaking, even a political entrepreneur who has no intention to actually redress these grievances, but instead engages in violence for more selfish purposes, may be able to use the existence of these grievances as a means of garnering more support than would

be forthcoming for overtly criminal organizations. For further discussion of the similarities between these two forms of activity, see Fearon and Laitin 1999 and Berdal and Malone 2000.

[6] See Bussani (1996) for details on the legacy of legal pluralism in Ethiopia and Eritrea and Benton (2002) on the general topic of legal pluralism in colonial states.

[7] Classic works on the democratic peace include Doyle (1986), Russett (1993), and Brown, Lynn-Jones, and Miller (1996).

[8] IRIN (1999b) and ICG (2003a) provide related arguments in favor of reexamining the basic logic of state-building in the case of Somalia. Both organizations conclude that it might prove productive to build on the limited successes achieved in the self-proclaimed republic of Somaliland and in other regions within Somalia.

Figure 3-1.
Modes of External Intervention in the Conflict Cycle

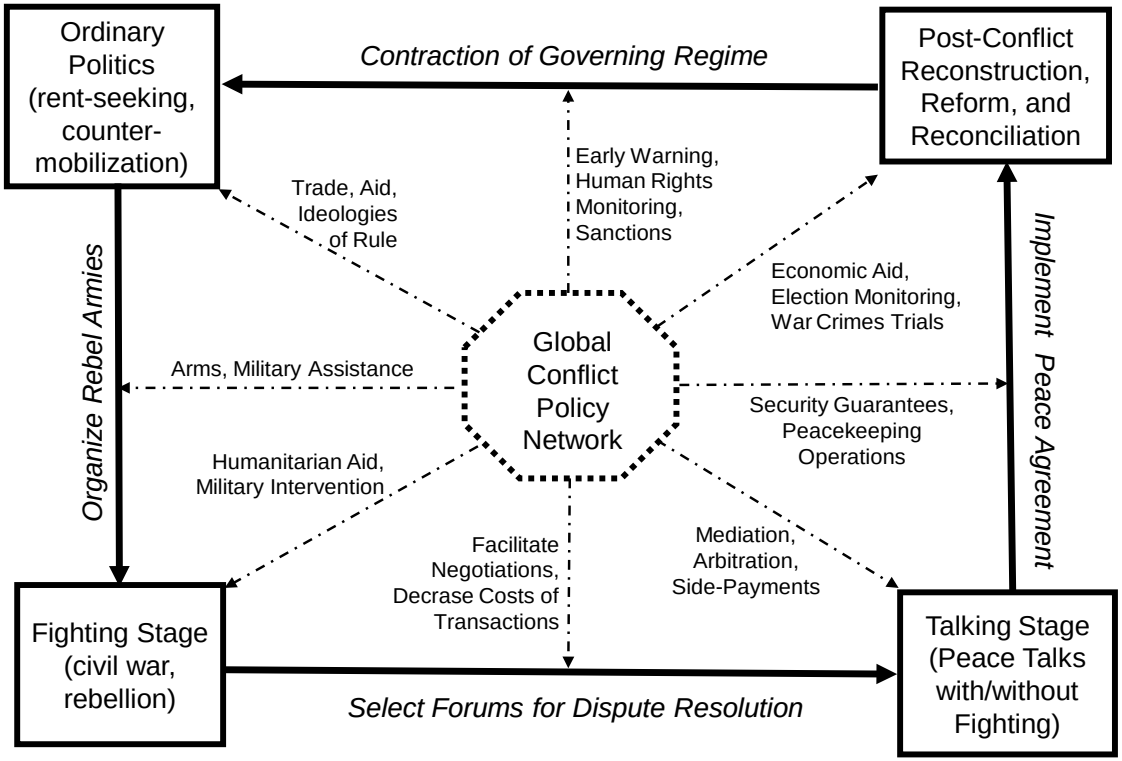

Fig. 3-2. Components of Global Conflict Policy Network

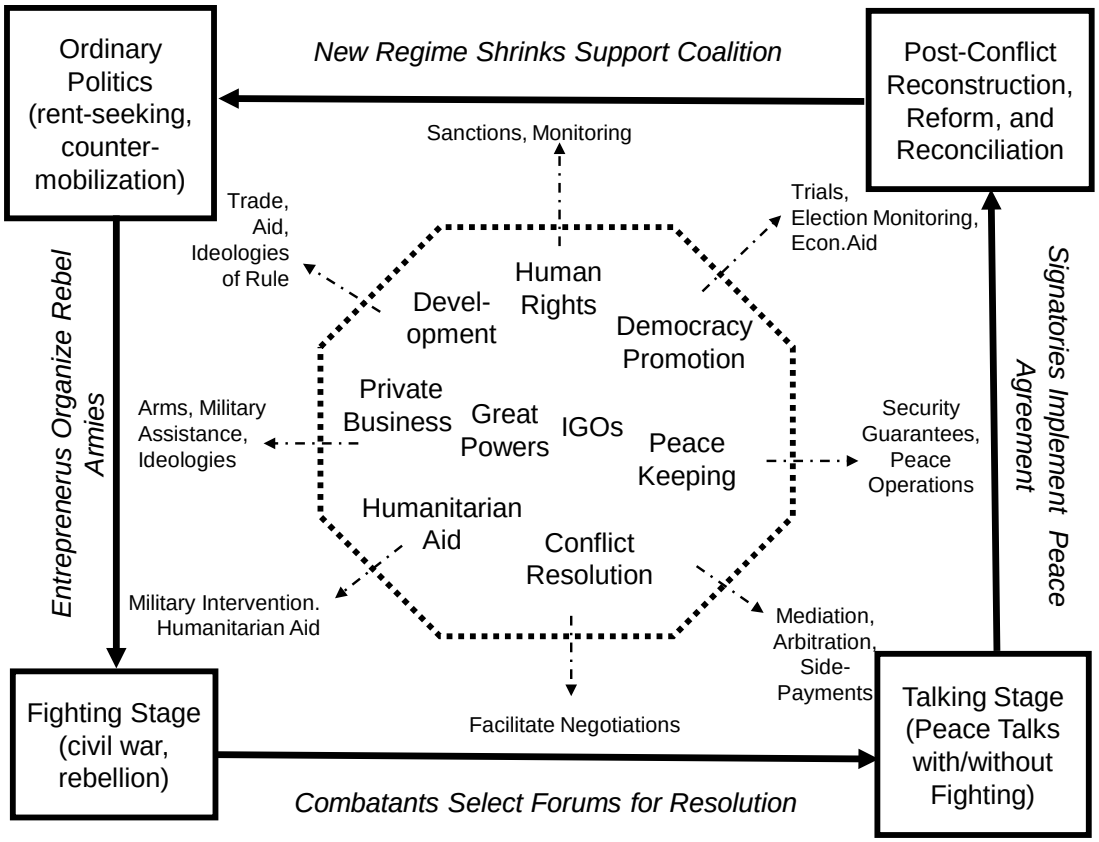

Fig 3-3. Core Conflct and Agency Games

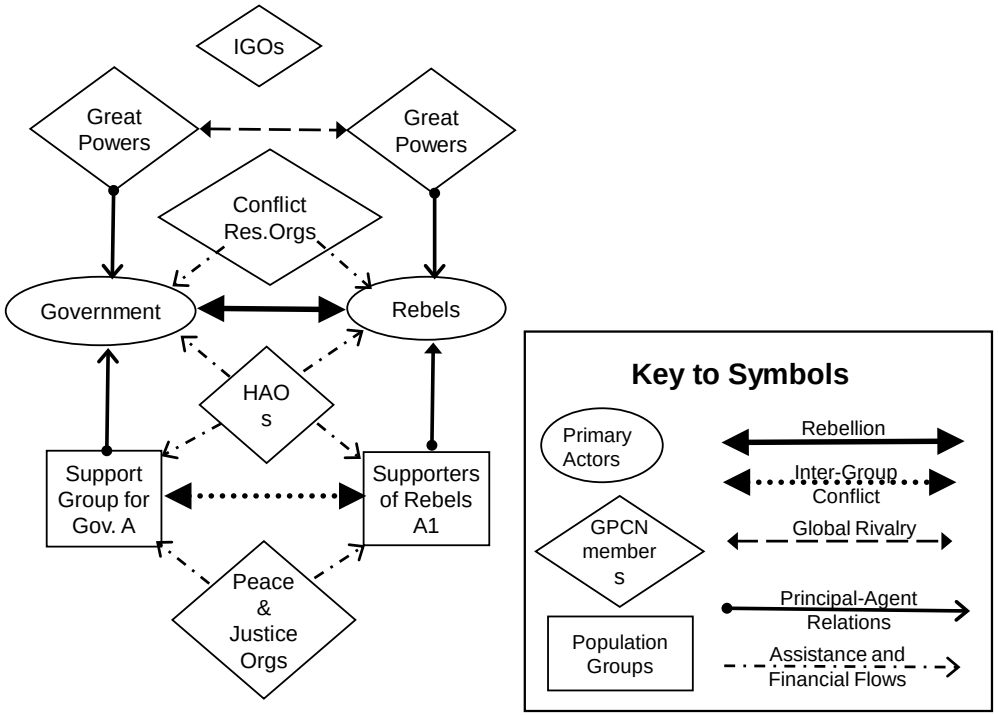

Figure 4-1. Flows of Donations and Assistance in the Global Network of Humanitarian Aid

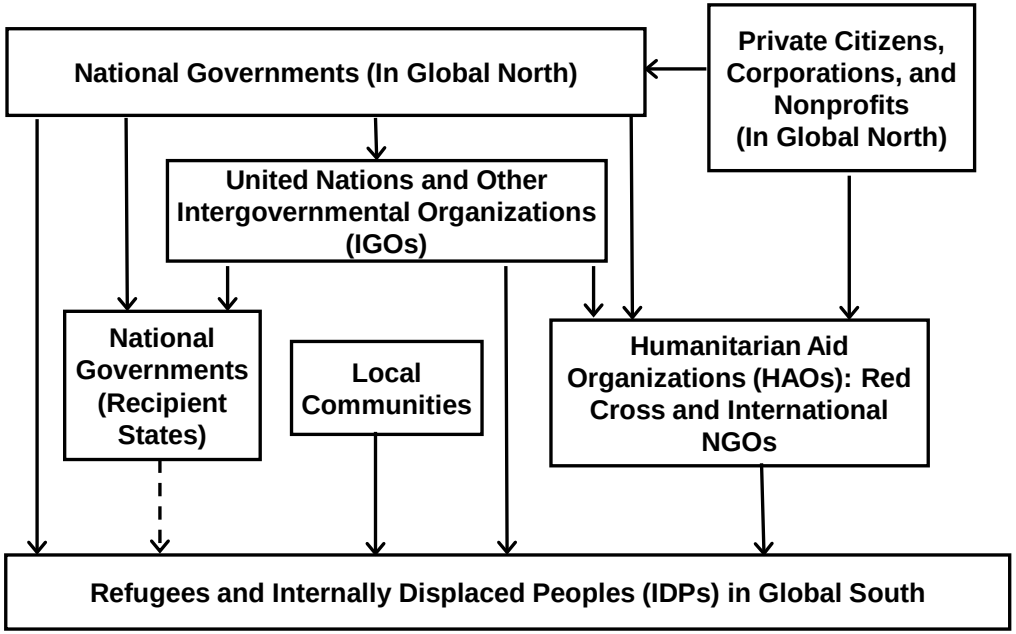

Figure 4-2.
Samaritan's Dilemma: Humanitarian Response to Famines

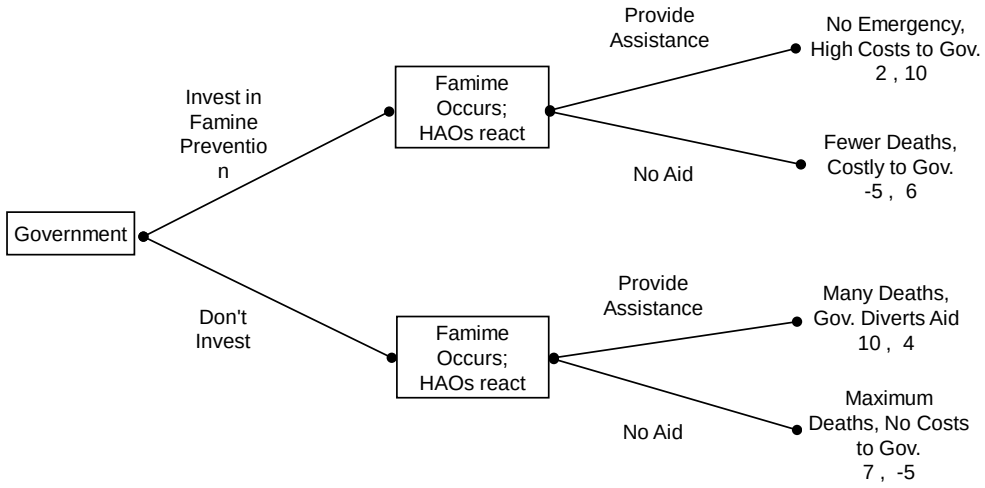

Figure 4-3.
Samaritan's Dilemma in Strategic (Normal) Form

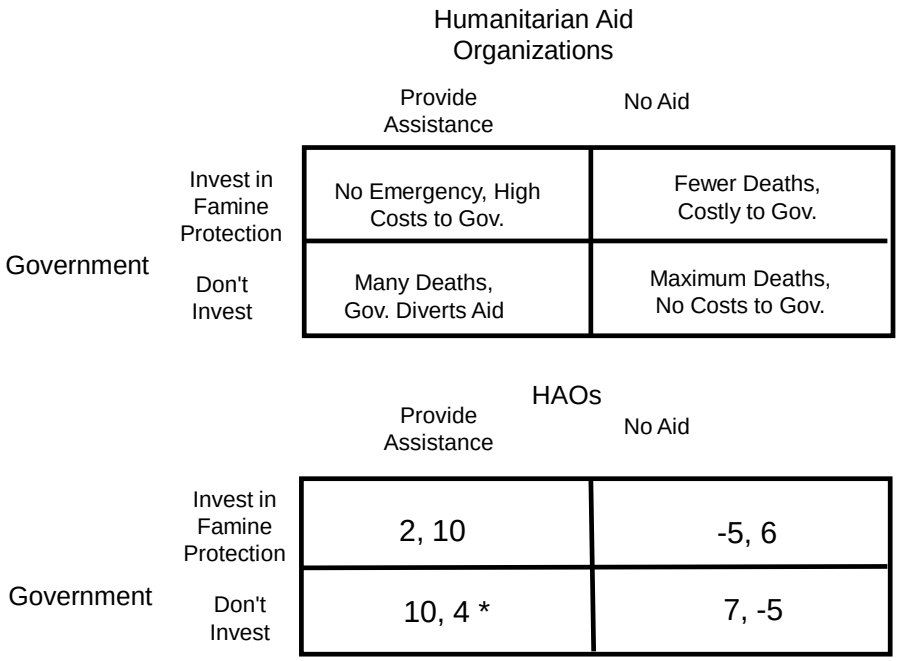

Table 4-1. Examples of Humanitarian Aid Organizations Active in the Horn

National Government Agencies
Norwegian Refugee Council
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
USAID
U.S. Committee for Refugees

Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs)
Drought Monitoring Centre for the Greater Horn of Africa
FAO (UN Food and Agriculture Organization)
International Organisation for Migration (IOM)
UNDP
UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees)
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WHO (World Health Organization)

Quasi-Governmental Organizations (Red Cross Movement)
ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross)
IFRC (International Federation of Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies)

Non-Governmental Humanitarian Aid Organizations (secular)
Action Against Hunger
ActionAid
Somaliland
Africare
CARE (Cooperative for Relief and Assistance Everywhere)
IRC (International Rescue Committee)
Médecins du Monde
MSF (Médecins Sans Frontiéres; Doctors Without Borders)
MCI (Mercy Corps International)
Oxfam
Pharmaciens Sans Frontières Committee International
Refugees International
Save the Children Fund/Foundation

Non-Governmental Humanitarian Aid Organizations (Religious-Based)
Action by Churches Together (ACT)
Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)
Caritas
CRS (Catholic Relief Services)
Christian Children's Fund (CCF)
CSI (Christian Solidarity Int.)
Episcopal Relief and Development
Islamic Relief
LWR (Lutheran World Relief)
Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)
New Sudan Council of Churches
Scottish Churches' Sudan Group
World Vision International

NGO Coordinating Bodies
InterAction
International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)

Human Rights and Other NGOs
African Rights
Amnesty International
Anti-Slavery International
Human Rights Watch

Table 4-2. Tasks of Humanitarian Aid Organizations

	Operational Arena	*Donor Arena*
	Deliver Emergency Supplies: Food Medical Supplies Shelter Sanitation	**Fund-Raising Activities:** Distribute Information Advertising Evaluate Programs
	Auxilliary Tasks: Gather Data Arrange for Protection Support Long-Term Development Report Human Rights Abuses	**Advocacy Activities:** Lobbying Governments Participation in Conferences Public Education

Source: Compiled by author.

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