

## Development-Security Nexus A Summary of Research and Literature

### The Links between Poverty-Violence:

Poverty contributes to and magnifies underlying grievances, such as ethnic and religious differences.

Weak, poor states are much more likely to experience civil wars and provide havens for drug and weapons trafficking and terrorist recruitment.

Some members of poor communities consider terrorism a justified response to perceived political, social, economic exclusion and humiliation.

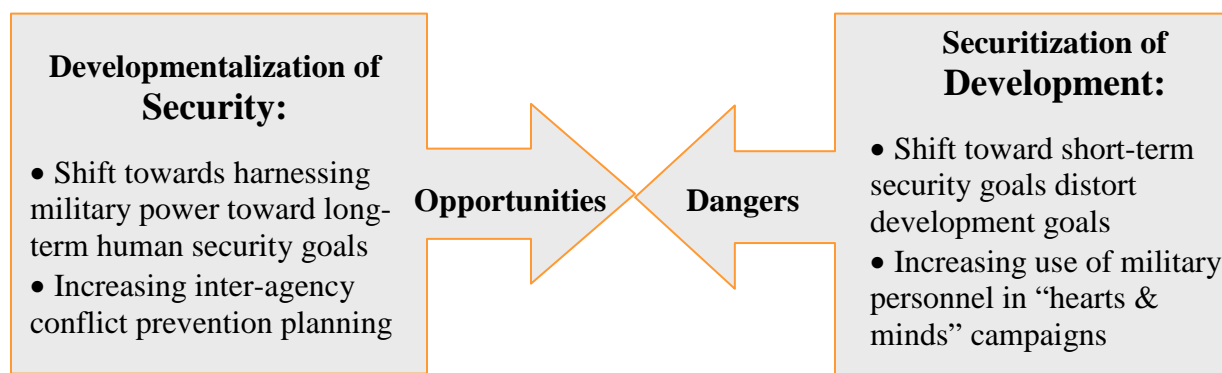
Violent conflict is “development in reverse” channeling resources toward war rather than development, destroying development projects, creating refugees, fueling traffic in drugs and weapons, and causing environmental damage and loss of life and livelihoods.

### Development Can Contribute to Security and Weaken Support for Terrorism

1. **Development can weaken local support for terrorist activities** by spreading the economic benefits of peace. Development can foster middle class and civil society actors that can put a brake on political violence.
2. **Development can discourage terrorist recruits** by addressing their perceived grievances and offering better economic alternatives than the financial incentives provided by terrorist organizations.
3. **Development can empower local change agents** who can make demands on their government for transparency and accountability.

### Development Can Contribute to Insecurity and Fuel Support for Terrorism

1. **If there is inadequate funding** relative to the population, geography and needs leading to inflated expectations for development assistance programs.
2. **If development policies and projects are NOT designed and implemented in consultation** with community leaders to address locally-identified needs that target those sympathetic to terrorist groups.
3. **If development assistance is suddenly withheld or repeatedly used as a “stick”** to punish support for political leaders, it can foster a backlash of support for groups such as Hezbollah or Hamas which provide aid and charity in the vacuum of international humanitarian support.
4. **If external development assistance frees up local resources for war**, by relieving leaders of their responsibilities to provide basic services and aid to citizens.
5. **If development resources are perceived to benefit some groups** but not others, exacerbating existing tensions between groups.



### **Opportunities of the Development-Security Nexus**

- Increasing the policy prioritization of poverty alleviation, community empowerment and the development of an infrastructure for conflict prevention.
- Increasing levels of funding for development assistance.
- Broadening or “developmentalizing” security discourse to shift away from state security needs toward individual needs and “human security.”
- Offering legitimacy to the State and stabilizing societies if citizens perceive they are benefiting equally from the State’s provision of programs.
- Preventing violence and building confidence among local stakeholders through combined development and peacebuilding programming such as building a well with members of opposing ethnic groups.

### **Dangers of the Development-Security Nexus**

- “Securitizing” or “militarizing” development can drive money away from poverty-reduction goals toward short-term military goals that focus on the anti-terrorist agenda of wealthy countries rather than the security of people in developing countries.
- Shifting development assistance resources toward countries important to the Global War on Terror that may have repressive police and security forces or make the inclusion of counter-terrorism compliance mandates conditional for development assistance.
- Involving military personnel in development or “hearts and minds” programs can endanger local development workers.
- Emphasizing the link between poverty-terrorism can lead to “criminalization” of poor people or political opponents to the elite governing the state and the state’s justification of force against them that can steer away from democratic process and reforms.
- Increasing a state’s power to define groups of people as security threats can lead to unwarranted suspicion of local development partners involvement with terrorist organizations and listing procedures that place individuals and entities on terrorist ban lists without due process.
- “Pacifying” communities through development assistance can inhibit their empowerment and their ability to seek democratic reforms if citizens perceive they are benefiting equally from the State’s provision of programs.

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