Human Security and Peace Building: Practical Research Through NGOs

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Human security is argued as a concept that bonds peace and development. Human security means human liberation, that is to say, liberation from physical and artificial hindrances such as war, poverty or political oppression, which prevent people from choosing freely and acting freely on what they have chosen. By shifting the idea of security from nation-based to individual-based security, it becomes possible to discuss the protection of individuals from threats to individual security – which cannot be addressed adequately by nation-based security. As a method, development rather than arms is advocated. Peace is argued to be a goal of development. The peace referred to here is 'positive peace', that of a society in which human rights are a reality.

This paper addresses human security theory as one approach to building peace. It offers an overview of aspects of both conflict management governance and resolution of the structural factors of conflict, as methods of ensuring human security. It then discusses practical applications: the role of NGOs and their potential for empowering the weak. Finally, practical research and education in the field of human security is explored as one form of peace-building activity: viewpoints, practical details, and partnership, as well as the possibility of practical cooperation with NGOs and other organizations.

I. The concept of human security

The concept of human security is an attempt to treat the issue of security as an individual issue rather than an issue between nations. As shown in Figure 1, human security can be seen as the overlap of two concepts of human development[1] and positive peace[2]. This is because the goal of human security is the overlapping of the development of individual capability discussed by Amartya Sen and a society without structural violence, such as poverty, as discussed by Johan Galtung.
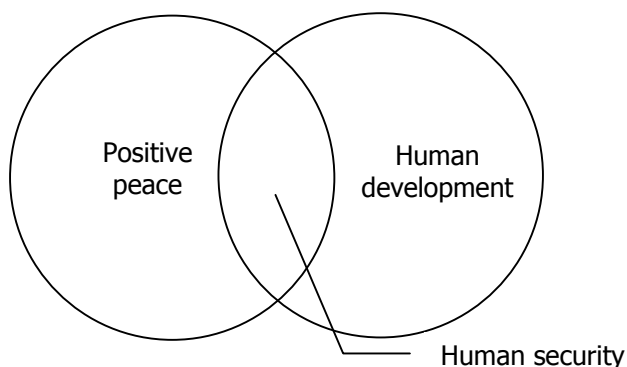

Figure 1 (drawn by author)

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Here, we will consider the meaning of human security.

1. UNDP Human Development Report 1994 and The World Summit for Social Development 1995

It was the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) which identified human security as a new development issue. This emerged from a paradigm shift in development theory from development focused on the economic growth of a nation to human-oriented development (human development), the goal of which is the advancement of human rights.

According to the 1994 UNDP human development report, 'human security' has seven dimensions: (1) economic security, (2) food security, (3) health security, (4) environmental security, (5) personal security, (6) community security, and (7) political security. These are identified as typical areas in which human security is threatened, but it is recognized that human security is not limited to these seven. In other words, the problems of employment, income, food and so on are not only problems of development, but problems of human security: thus security and development are two sides of the same coin. It is further recognized that development relates to conflict prevention. Moreover, the assertion that individual human security should be respected draws attention to the weak, who have hitherto been ignored. The UNDP raised the questions of who protects human security in situations such as civil war and ethnic conflict, when the nation isn't fully functioning, and how?

This UNDP proposal, in the 1995 Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, and the Programme of Action of The World Summit for Social Development, confirmed that social development/social justice and peace/security are inseparable. Underpinning these ideas is the UNDP theory of human security, which regards social injustice as a structural problem threatening peace and development – a problem which must be addressed.

2. Approaches of the Japanese government toward human security

Learning from the Gulf War, Japan has been searching for ways of using humanitarian aid to achieve world peace. It therefore focuses on the use of Official Development Assistance (ODA) for humanitarian aid. A policy speech by former prime minister Keizō Obuchi in December 1998 noted the Japanese Government's definition of human security as a concept encompassing all kinds of threats to human survival, human life and human dignity, and requiring strengthened measures to tackle such threats. In its Mid-Term Policy on ODA in 1999, the Japanese Government identified conflict and development as important issues to be tackled, and established the Trust Fund for Human Security[3] at the United Nations. At the Okinawa Summit 2000 and at the United Nations Millennium Summit, the Japanese Government proposed an initiative

for conflict prevention: a comprehensive approach under which consistent efforts toward conflict prevention should be made in all phases from pre- to post-conflict. Based on this, and again on the initiative of the Japanese Government, the Commission on Human Security was established in June 2001 with co-chairs Sadako Ogata, the commissioner of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and former high commissioner of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), and Professor Amartya Sen.

In the ODA Charter, revised in August 2003, peace-building was clearly identified as an important new issue, with human security as one of the basic principles. The development assistance of Japan is now shifting its emphasis to peace-building, though specifics and features are still under discussion. The Commission on Human Security released its final report in May 2003, before being reformed into the Advisory Board on Human Security (ABHS). Since then, the Board has been implementing the report's proposals and advising about the operation of the Trust Fund for Human Security.

The commission's report concerns mainly security from conflict, poverty and disease, and the education needed to attain this. This paper will deal simply with how development can maintain security by focusing on conflicts which directly relate to peace-building.

II. Peace-building: toward development for human rights and justice

Human security theory offers theoretical support for peace-building. So what does peace-building mean in practice? Peace-building means building a society in which positive peace is secured – peace without structural violence such as poverty and discrimination – or a society which guarantees human security. In other words, it is a society in which individual human rights and social justice are respected. That is to say, this is a discussion about how to transform a 'conflict society', characterized by conflict, terrorism and violence, into a 'peace society' in which human beings can live freely; and how to create the conditions to bring about such a transformation. Below is an overview of the approaches toward peace taken by the United Nations.

1. Development and limits of Peace-Building Operations (PBO)

At the heart of the United Nations' Peace Building Operation (PBO) are Peace Keeping Operations (PKO). PKO started at a time when the Security Council, the core of the UN collective security system, was paralyzed by the Cold War. The General Assembly took the initiative in establishing PKO in place of the Security Council as ceasefire observer missions. Subsequently PKO have developed into peace operations including comprehensive transitional governance such as that provided by the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). This kind of comprehensive and complex PKO is

sometimes called second-generation PKO to distinguish it from earlier PKOs, which were mainly cease-fire operations. In 1992, Mr Boutros-Ghali, the UN Secretary General at that time, proposed in his report *An Agenda for Peace* preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, post-conflict peace building, cooperation with local organizations and other measures as ways of strengthening the United Nations after the Cold War. In this report Boutros-Ghali's idea of 'peace-enforcement forces' attracted a lot of attention; although details were not given, the idea saw expression in the second United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II). This peacekeeping operation, to confiscate arms and ammunition, was authorized to use 'all necessary means' – in other words, force. However, as a result, the use of force by the United Nations became an everyday matter and therefore the United Nations itself became a party to conflict. The reaction went far beyond Somalia, reaching an international level. The UN mission ended in failure, and was compelled to withdraw.

2. The development of UN peace-building operations

After the lesson of Somalia, UN PKO returned to its original form: the principle of non-use of force has been enshrined; thus, as in the first Gulf War, operations involving the use of force are conducted by multinational forces mandated by a United Nations resolution. At the same time, the United Nations Peacekeeping Operation expanded its mission further into taking on peace-building operations which lead smoothly to post-conflict reconstruction. One such operation is the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) started in 1999. Its mission was as follows: to maintain security and government in East Timor, to fund effective administration, to support the construction of administrative and social services, to secure humanitarian aid and the coordination and implementation of reconstruction and development assistance, to support development of the capacity to establish independent self-government, and to support the establishment of conditions necessary for sustainable development. This is a new type of peacekeeping operation which focuses on peace-building.

From the awareness that peace and development are inseparable, discussion shifted away from peace imposed by force to a realization that peace-building through development assistance is necessary and that peacekeeping operations and peace-building operations are consecutive issues[4]. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) released its *DAC guidelines on conflict, peace and development co-operation* in 1997 based on Canada's concept of comprehensive peace-building. In the guidelines, the DAC confirms the importance of the role of development assistance at each phase: pre-conflict, mid-conflict, immediate aftermath of conflict, and post-conflict. The DAC also makes proposals at each phase regarding the goal of development assistance to strengthen the

rule of law and promote civilian participation in the democratization process. In this way, discussions are now addressing the concretization of comprehensive Peace Building Operations (PBO), attempting further cooperation with development assistance and aiming at conflict prevention[5].

3. The World Bank

The World Bank is, of course, the development bank which has led world development assistance since World War II, but the approach of the World Bank toward conflict has been passive as a result of its mandate of being non-political. In 1997, however, a Post-Conflict Unit[6] was established in the Social Development section, and a Post-Conflict Fund[7] was also founded. As a result, the World Bank now responds rapidly and flexibly with reconstruction assistance in the immediate aftermath of conflict. In 2001, operating manual 2.30[8] was released regarding nations affected by conflict. This manual states that causes of conflict vary and it is thus necessary to analyze the relation between development assistance and conflict. Based on the opinion given in the manual, the World Bank released the draft of its Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF) in August 2003 and is now drawing up its final edition in cooperation with the organizations of the United Nations.

As stated above, in cooperation with the United Nations or other organizations, the World Bank now cooperates with emergency aid agencies from the early phases of a conflict. On the other hand, based on experience, the World Bank studies the causes of conflict by analyzing conflicts and determining suitable methods of assistance for resolving the causes of conflict.

III. Conflict management governance and resolving structural factors of conflict

To prevent conflict, a system is necessary which avoids conflict and violence as responses to a situation. However, as human society allows individual freedom as much as possible, collisions of freedom vs. freedom, right vs. right, are inevitable. Thus, the system should be able to resolve conflicts not through force or oppression, but peacefully with justice. In other words, governance for managing conflict is required. At the same time, social development to resolve the structural factors of conflict themselves is also necessary. These two aspects are interrelated, and if both can be practically implemented, the vicious circle of violence can be cut and conflict can be prevented.

1. Conflict management governance

Conflict management governance is when both the processes of democratic and legal resolution of conflict are enabled. This is because justice in modern society is regarded as democracy and the rule of law. So long as people believe that justice prevails, they will

not feel it necessary to resort to violence. Therefore, as governance assistance for conflict management, programs are required which offer assistance with democratization, assistance for improving legislation, and assistance with the administration of justice. In other words, the aim is a political process and a legal process which shifts the conflict from tyranny and violence to democratic process and the rule of law, and governance is the system of assistance and human resource development to achieve this aim.

However, the developing countries where many conflicts break out generally lack the features associated with modern society. Community-based cooperative human relationships are offered as justification for the oppressive conflict resolution associated with traditional society, and there is a possibility of anarchy if traditional discipline is broken. The only method is a compromise by which the reality and values of the society are respected, but traditional discipline is changed little by little, while recognizing the identity and autonomy of the citizens. In implementing such a method a stopgap solution is to use the traditional method of conflict resolution as a 'cover', though this is not without associated dangers. This is the issue of transitional justice.

For instance, consider the problem of introducing alternative dispute resolution as a conciliation system into Japan's legal system. It must be founded in what citizens themselves consider to be justice. Not only the formal law of the modern state but informal law - customs as indigenous norms, so-called 'living law' – would have to be taken into consideration and modified. However, it must not be forgotten that from a practical point of view 'justice' is rather ambiguous and subjective, and standards vary by region, race, or religion. Without forgetting this ambiguous and subjective characteristic of justice, it is necessary to try to understand the cultural characteristics of a region and the normative consciousness and values of the local people.

2. Resolving the structural factors of conflict

It follows from this perspective that conflict management governance is directly linked to tackling the structural factors of the conflict. This is because the structural factors of the conflict derive from the actual political, economic and cultural structure of the local society. On the other hand, it is not enough merely to deal with and manage the conflict non-violently by establishing democratic politics and legal systems. It is also necessary to understand the economic, social, historical, cultural, religious and psychological aspects of the people, the groups and the society to which they belong. Such aspects, like poverty, social injustice, historical hatreds and cultural dislikes, are the structural factors of conflict. The situation must then be transformed to resolve these factors. Otherwise, even if the conflict appears to have ended, the structure of the conflict continues, and this will reignite into violence again.

For example, even if a conflict ends through a vote or court case, if the structure of the conflict remains, the discontent simmers. The conflict is resolved only through a

process by which the parties overcome their point of dispute, come to a settlement, and achieve reconciliation. Poverty cannot be solved by mere welfare. This is because poverty is frequently only a result of discrimination, political power balance, or lack of access to justice. Therefore, in many cases measures such as affirmative action are necessary, measures which actually ensure political equality.

Cultural, historical and religious confrontation may have deep roots because they relate to human identity. Therefore, resolution of the factors of conflict must take a long-term, generational approach. Such measures may be required as increasing opportunities for mutual understanding by putting each side in the other's shoes and creating chances for them to meet and act together.

IV. The role of NGOs and empowerment of the weak for self-development

Both in improving conflict management governance, and in resolving the structural factors of conflict, the goal is to improve the autonomous, self-governing ability of both individuals and society. At the heart of participatory approaches to development (participatory development), ownership, sustainable development, and endogenous development, lies the aim of restoring the independence of the people receiving assistance. For this reason, education in autonomy is indispensable for development assistance.

Official Development Assistance (ODA) by nations, more especially direct assistance between two nations, and even multinational assistance through international organizations, is apt to maintain and reinforce a ruler-ruled relationship between provider and receiver: a hidden colonialism, as it were. Thus, the importance of the role NGOs play in development assistance is increasing. There are many kinds of NGO, and it is impossible to consider them a single category, but it can be said that they are expected to play a leading role in the field of human security as 'actors' to contribute to human interests, instead of national interests, beyond the national borders.

Along with the worldwide consolidation of superior-subordinate relationships resulting from the expansion of free trade in so-called globalization, there is the widespread fear of a proliferation of terrorism – symbolized by the 9.11 attacks – resulting from a backlash against this globalism and the relationships it engenders. The United States declared its 'War on Terror', and increasingly tends towards unilateralism. This undermines the authority of the United Nations as a cornerstone of post-WWII collective security, despite hopes that it would regain its function after the end of the Cold War. In Japan once again, both national security and the necessity for humanitarian aid provided in the name of the nation are being hotly debated. We should transcend empty nationalism and use the key of human security to unlock global

assistance to empower the weak, and use civil society to monitor the global economy and authoritarianism. That's what this century's peace could be. Here the roles NGOs can be expected to play are described.

1. Cooperation among local and international NGOs

It is not easy for an NGO to operate in an area of conflict. Nevertheless, it is possible with the support and cooperation of international NGOs. In fact, it has been pointed out that behind the success of the UNTAC operation in Cambodia lay the support of international NGOs – including Japanese ones – within Cambodia dating back well over a decade before UNTAC arrived, and the trust between local and international society which had already matured at an individual level.

NGO operations tend to be divided into factions in conflict areas, but a level of neutrality can be gained by the intervention of international NGOs. Of course, NGOs themselves are often government puppets, and thus accountability should be maintained. Rather than simply relying on relations between governments, maintaining and developing relationships among NGOs and citizens is an effective way of monitoring corruption among governments.

2. Horizontal cooperation among professionals

Recently the NGOs which provide services in the area of development assistance or humanitarian aid are becoming increasingly professional. It is no longer rare for NGO staff to obtain a position at the United Nations or the World Bank. NGOs in the EU and US invite researchers and academics to take up executive positions as policymakers in order to strengthen their advocacy. This tendency towards increasing professionalism is expected to accelerate.

On the other hand NGOs, even in occupational areas not necessarily specializing in development assistance, are increasingly cooperating with international counterparts. For example, the Japanese and US bar associations have been offering support to legal-system reforms through ODA[9]. Such cases of alliances based on a firm sense of professional mission, and cooperation based on realistic intentions – such as business investment – could contribute to creating more even-handed relations in the current one-sided relationship which we refer to by using the terms 'developing' and 'developed' countries.

A system, and professionals to put it into practice, is indispensable in order to govern a peaceful society. The legal system and the legal profession can, in particular, be understood as the 'infrastructure' of conflict management. Cooperation among bar associations will contribute to human resource development and technology transfer. Likewise, cooperation among autonomous private professional bodies has the potential to strengthen the sense of unity among people, and recover the security of local

communities which is being eroded by the penetration of the market economy. The sense of global citizenship cannot be nurtured without such horizontal cooperation.

3. Learning from real cases

Researchers can play an active part in NGOs not only through policy or advocacy at headquarters, but also by fieldwork conducted in areas of conflict, which provides the opportunity to learn from the wisdom of those who actually live there, and by presenting the results to the wider world. In an area of conflict, the weak have no voice. Those who offer assistance will fail if they deem those receiving the assistance incapable of understanding the actual situation, and if they try to import and impose their own ideas and systems. Research into human security is not simply about concepts and theories; it involves getting directly involved through NGOs, or piling up case studies derived from fieldwork through joint research.

As noted above, NGOs can be expected to offer opportunities for case studies and practical training through their operations in the field. At the same time, it is also possible for NGOs to improve their quality through research and education, to promote their operations professionally, and to enhance their ability to advocate policy.

V. In place of a summary: university/NGO cooperation for research and education

The concept of human security can be seen as a redefinition: from a security problem to a development issue. It is a form of rhetorical or theoretical justification for development agencies' involvement in peace-building through humanitarian and reconstruction assistance in conflict areas. The concept entails policymaking intent. Thus research and education in human security must not be mere idealism, failing to engage with the global issues, for this is the goal of research. It should always be tackled as a key to resolving practical issues. Research and education in human security is itself one aspect of the support activity required to create a society which features human security.

It is necessary for academics to participate in practical activities, to use methods such as participatory observation, to learn and theorize from practice, to put theory into practice, in some cases to criticize the practice, and to make proposals for more practical activities. What is proposed here is a method of research and education involving a cycle of learning and practice.

It is important to promote cooperation not only with agents of governments or international organizations, but also with NGOs as the main actors in the practice of development and humanitarian aid. NGOs are supported by a spirit of volunteerism, and so have the potential to work purely in the service of human security, which directly benefits mankind. The spirit of volunteerism does carry with it limitations, but it is no exaggeration to say that NGOs support the details of operations conducted by the

international organizations. To conclude this paper, some practical methods will be put forward.

1. Experimental research and education

Human security, as an issue, should be approached through experimental research. Although human security belong to a specific academic field, its research must be experimental and practical, to deal with actual issues. Thus research into human security should be practical, and based on area studies and case studies. In the educational field it is preferable to implement a curriculum incorporating field studies, such as participation in NGO activities like on-the-job training.

2. Network-style open research education

Human security is an interdisciplinary field and cannot be categorized into a specific academic discipline: thus open, interdisciplinary research is called for. It is quite impossible for only one researcher to gain the breadth of knowledge and analysis required, and so a network-style research method is necessary which connects a number of researchers, practitioners, and other experts to conduct research jointly. The same is true in the educational field in which a wide variety of lectures or interactive classes by experts in various academic disciplines or practical areas are called for.

3. The cycle of research and practice

The many experts referred to above must include practitioners. Since the goal of research is to contribution to practice, the participation of practitioners is essential to understand practical needs and to achieve the goal. On the other hand, it is also necessary for researchers to dive into the practical reality with the results of their research, to test theories, to perform participatory observation, and to evaluate it. A cycle of research and education is required in which both practice and academic learning interact through collaboration and feed back into each other.

4. Learning from refugees

Finally, even though when undertaking a field study, if the research is done only over a short period under extraordinary circumstances, it may not be possible to understand the actual situation without being subject to bias. It is preferable to conduct joint research with local people. Although unfortunately rare in Japan, there are refugees from areas of conflict, and to restore their human dignity, it may be possible to invite them as teachers or lecturers and let them participate actively in research and education from the mid- and long-term perspective. Thus, research and education can contribute to the empowerment of refugees. This means that universities will participate in peace-building assistance as experts.

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Notes

1. Development theory is shifting its paradigm from economic development, aiming for economic growth, to social development, aiming for the equal distribution of resources, and further to human-oriented development, aiming at enhancement of individual autonomy, that is to say, human development. Human development is the basis of the UNDP's human security theory which is referred later, and derives from Amartya Sen's Capability Theory.

2. As defined by Johan Galtung, a situation in which there is not only no direct violence but also no structural violence such as poverty, oppression, or discrimination, etc.

3. With the assistance of the Trust Fund for Human Security, UHNCR Tokyo Office operates training courses to improve NGOs' crisis management ability.

4. cf. Brahimi Report (Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations [A55/305-S/2000/809]; http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace_operations/report.htm)

5. DAC released a supplement to the guidelines in 2001, and in 2003 incorporated them in its guidelines *Helping Prevent Violent Conflict.* In these guidelines, conflict prevention is dealt with as the core issue and the new viewpoints like gender or business are added.

6. Now renamed The Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Unit.

7. The Japanese Government funds the Japan Post-Conflict Fund (15 million dollars in fiscal year 1999), which is used for large projects on a scale of 1–2 million dollars.

8. World Bank Operation Manual, Operational Policies: Development Cooperation and Conflict (OP 2.30, January 2001) cf. The World Bank. http://www.worldbank.org/

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9. The Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA) supports the training of lawyers with its Cambodian counterpart as part of the project to improve the legal system. It began as a voluntary project in which young Cambodians were invited to Japan to train as lawyers. The project was operated by a small NGO, the Japan Jurist League for Cambodia (JJ League), which the author founded with interested lawyers after his return from the UNTAC mission as its human rights officer.