



# Magazine Development and Emergencies

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EDITORIAL

# Development and Emergencies: Finding Resilient Paths Toward Development

**Aarne Hakomäki**

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Editor-in-chief

As the world is still struggling to contain the Covid-19 pandemic, complex man-made and natural crises are evolving and causing major setbacks in the living standards and safety of countless people globally. While the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) give a promise of leaving no one behind, a study by the International Rescue Committee finds that 82 percent of fragile states are off track to meet their targets for 2030. Lockdown measures and

rights abuses have also flared into large-scale demonstrations in Europe and North America unseen in recent years.

Emergencies that threaten development programs and goals today are unpredictable and sudden. More often than not, however, crises tend to enhance and bring to a boiling point issues that have remained unaddressed for a longer period. Thus, preventing catastrophes requires confronting underlying societal injustices.

# THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

What happens when emergencies derail development efforts? What should governments and international organizations address before, during and after “the storm”? The December 2021 issue of the FUF Lund Magazine addresses these critical questions and seeks to find ways forward for a more resilient path toward development.

In this issue of the FUF Lund Magazine, development and emergencies will be discussed through a wide range of examples and viewpoints. Our authors cover topics from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and uncertain future of Afghanistan, to the wrongdoings of the development sector, the threat of the Sahara expansion and trends of rising political extremism during times of crises.



**Aarne Hakomäki** is a master's student in Economic Development at Lund University. His focus lies in the political and economic drivers of development and sustainability.



**Tanya** is a master's student of LUMID. Her research and professional interests lie within the gender aspects of international development

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# Hope Hangs in Limbo for Afghanistan

A News Article by Vedika Jiandani

The aftermath of the political fallout of former President Ashraf Ghani's government has been nothing short of apocalyptic for the people of Afghanistan. The implausible rise of the Taliban after two decades has brought with it immense turmoil and uncertainty for the future of the country.

**I**n the days following the unprecedented takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban forces, the world watched in horror as thousands of people attempted to flee the country by any means possible. Images of desperate crowds at Kabul International Airport, subsequent suicide bombing and gunfire attacks killing over 70 people were all a stark reminder of life under the Taliban rule twenty years ago. Within a few weeks of the political fallout, reports of physical torture, stringent restrictions on women and of Taliban soldiers dealing out severe punishments

for petty crimes flooded the international media.

## **International rejection of the Taliban government**

The Taliban has assured global audiences that they would not regress to oppressive and brutal policies of their past dictatorship, but contradictory evidence has left world leaders unconvinced. Unwilling to recognise the Taliban as a legitimate government, international aid organisations such the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund quickly

froze aid flows. The sudden crippling of critical funds in addition to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and administrative chaos has triggered a massive humanitarian crisis.

Millions of Afghans are facing starvation, displacement, and rising conflicts thereby pushing the struggling nation to the deep end. In response, the United Nations is urging countries to support the people of Afghanistan through collaboration. But progress has been painfully slow and halting. Rapidly changing ground realities, lack of development institutions, rampant corruption, and the high risk of aid-misuse by the Taliban are only some of the contributing factors to the intensifying economic and humanitarian catastrophe. As development workers, non-profit organisations, and aid powerhouses navigate this fragmented labyrinth, the nation continues to slip further into the looming abyss.

### **Resistance by the people**

Yet despite the grim circumstances, the people of Afghanistan have been outspoken about their animosity towards the Taliban. Recent protests led by Afghan women are a reflection of a society that demands accountability and fair treatment by their alleged government. Increased awareness, social media, education and a determination to



*The Taliban has assured global audiences that they would not regress to oppressive and brutal policies of their past dictatorship, but contradictory evidence has left world leaders unconvinced.*

fight for their rights has propelled widespread resistance in several major cities in Afghanistan during the months of August and September. However, violent crackdown by the Taliban has since forced journalists and protestors to hide or flee the country. Reports suggest that of the 700 female journalists working in Afghanistan pre-Taliban, less than 100 are currently employed.



***As development workers, non-profit organisations, and aid powerhouses navigate this fragmented labyrinth, the nation continues to slip further into the looming abyss.***

Given the unpredictability of the Taliban regime and rising clashes with other internal militia groups such as the Islamic State-Khorasan, there is no telling what the future holds for Afghanistan. Only time will tell whether angry and frustrated citizens will rise to oust the Taliban, if the cash-strapped Taliban will eventually collapse under mounting global and internal pressures, or whether the current government will manage to bring the country out of the present tragedy.



**Venika Jiandani**

Currently pursuing a master's in International Development and Management at Lund University, Vedika is a communications and development professional with a decade-long career across non-profit organizations, corporate philanthropy, and multinational firms in India and the United States..



# Allegations Continue to Shed Light on Abuse in the Aid Sector

A Chronicle by Emily Elderfield

Is the aid sector truly atoning for its sins? Great strides have been made, particularly over the last decade, to hold perpetrators of abuse and violence to account. Yet, new allegations of abuse show that we have a long way to go to keep everyone safe.

**D**uring the 2010s, human rights violations such as the Oxfam Haiti scandal and Anders Kompass' exposure of sexual abuse of children by UN peacekeepers in The Central African Republic, started to shed light on some of the aid sector's most insidious systemic failures. These gross violations spurred a flurry of accountability mechanisms, whistleblowing policies, and reporting

channels designed to tackle the culture of impunity at the dark heart of the aid sector. But to what extent have these measures actually improved the situation, and how far do aid agencies still have to go?

The development and humanitarian sector have long been aware of these issues.. However, in an emergency setting

such as a natural disaster, conflict, or outbreak of infectious disease, the power landscape becomes even more uncertain. Emergency aid such as food and shelter must be coordinated within a matter of days, or even hours. People affected by the crisis may be forced to flee their homes or be separated from their families. In such life or death situations, their vulnerability can become a nefarious breeding ground for exploitation.

For aid agencies looking to begin levelling the power playing field it is vital to recognise the precarity of people experiencing fragile and volatile circumstances. But, that is only the first step. Too often, accountability from those providing aid to those receiving it is seen as a ‘tick box’ exercise. Agencies jump at the chance to show off new reporting and investigation mechanisms to uncover those abusing their positions of power. Yet, these measures are merely flimsy plasters over a gaping wound if they don’t lead to concrete change.



***Too often, accountability from those providing aid to those receiving it is seen as a ‘tick box’ exercise.***

Despite these attempts to hold perpetrators to account, many reports still go uninvestigated. And when agencies do try to act, issues such as lack of referral pathways, failure to contextualise reporting mechanisms, and a continued culture of silence mean that cases rarely get properly addressed.

Despite the clamour over the last decade to hold the sector accountable, little progress has been made. Just a few months ago, multiple women brought allegations of sexual abuse by personnel of aid agencies working on the Ebola response in the DRC. In two-thirds of the cases, the women said that the perpetrators claimed to be WHO staff members. One is left asking – how many more abuses must be suffered before the balance shifts for good?



**Emily Elderfield**

Emily is studying a Master's Programme in International Development & Management (LUMID). Her development interests include reproductive justice and gender equity in vulnerable healthcare settings.



# Major Boost for Sahel's Ambitious Reforestation Project at COP26

A News Article by Leni Lindemann

The world's largest reforestation project, known as the African Great Green Wall, received international attention and financial support at the UN's climate conference COP26 in Glasgow. Could this reforestation and revival project be the solution to underdevelopment and humanitarian suffering in the conflict-ridden Sahel region?

The semi-arid Sahel region stretches across the whole breadth of Africa, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea, and encompasses 10 countries – Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Eritrea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sudan. The region is facing one of the world's fastest growing humanitarian and displacement crises. The entrenchment of armed groups and indiscriminate violence against civilians has forced over 3 million people to flee across the region. In addition, droughts, famine and

resource conflicts, further exacerbate human suffering and hardship in one of the poorest and most climate change vulnerable regions on the planet.

In an ambitious attempt to combat climate change and to improve the dire situation of the Sahel region, a massive reforestation project, known as Africa's Great Green Wall (GGW), is implemented across 20 African countries. Africa's dream of a Great Green Wall dates back to the 1970s, when vast swathes of fertile

land in the Sahel region started to become severely degraded. Spearheaded by the African Union, this dream came into a life affirming reality in 2007, when 11 countries signed up for the pan-African initiative. This megaproject, which will likely become the world's largest living structure, aims to restore 100 million hectares of land, sequester 250 million tonnes of carbon and create 10 million jobs in rural areas by 2030, according to the World Bank.

Due to its promise to address the social, environmental and economic impacts of land degradation and desertification, the Great Green Wall (GGW) project received a major boost at UN's Cop26 in Glasgow. World leaders, such as French President Emmanuel Macron, Prince Charles and the President of the African Development Bank, Akinwumi Adesina, announced their considerable financial support and commitment to the project.

#### Leni Lindemann

Leni Lindemann is a graduate student of Development Studies at Lund University. With a background in social anthropology and international relations, she has a broad interest in sustainable development and environmental justice.



***This megaproject, which will likely become the world's largest living structure, aims to restore 100 million hectares of land, sequester 250 million tonnes of carbon and create 10 million jobs in rural areas by 2030***

A recent study in the journal Nature Sustainability demonstrated that long-running conflicts across the Sahel have delayed cultivation of large areas of degraded land. It remains to be seen if the recent international attention the GGW received at CO26 will be a catalyst for peace and revival of one of the planet's poorest regions.



# Crucial political decisions cannot be made on gut instincts

**A Chronicle by Louise Ekelund**

New forms of nationalistic features have been recognized the recent years in modern developed countries, inter alia northern European countries. Historically, it has shown that nationalist policies become more popular in conjunction with flourishing modern processes and revolutions. How come that humans find security and confidence in nationalist thinking when they get exposed to changes they can not influence by themselves?

**T**he expansion of nationalistic thoughts seems to upsurge during the Covid-19 pandemic. Countries shut down their borders completely, fight against each other for medical supplies, as well as blame each other for not acting

responsibly and reducing the spread of the virus. In the same way as nationalism tends to rise in line with modern processes, the desire to 'preserve everything as it always has been' thrives in times of crisis.

The cognitive neuroscientist Bobby Azarian Ph.D. has written an article where he reflects on whether brain differences can explain conservatives' agenda to act politically according to their fears. Nationalism and conservatism do not necessarily have to go hand in hand. On the contrary, it can be interesting to rethink as nationalism has increased in parallel with transformation. Azarian does, for instance, bring up that conservatives in most cases tend to give attention towards the negative parts, in comparison to liberals which behave oppositely and contribute attention to more pleasant images. This makes sense as a human that is afraid will act, according to one's biological instincts, by trying to prevent the threat from taking place.

Moreover, the neuroscientist brings attention to a previous study that found conservatives having a heavier psychological response towards whatever is threatening. One keeps one's anxiety to

a manageable level by being relieved of the fact that something concrete is done in order to prevent the awful from happening.



*The desire to preserve everything as it always has been thrives in times of crisis*

To understand why people react and act differently to changes, revolutions or during crises can help to be more patient with one another. On the other hand, one has to take an honest overview over the situation. Decisive decisions cannot be made on gut instincts rather than looking back at historical cases. One has to reason over one's own situation, but also over the situations of all other affected people.

#### **Louise Ekelund**

Louise is a current student at the Bachelor programme in Development Studies at Lund University. She has a broad interest within the evaluation of the causes of the world's actual unequal schedules, as well as how they behave in the media.



## VISION

A NATIONALLY COMPETITIVE  
QUALITY EDUCATION & AN ALL ROUND LEARN-  
ING SUSTAINABLE FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

# COVID-19 Widens the Education Inequality in Kenya Even Further

A Reportage by Joyce Makuei

*A Primary School in Kisumu, Kenya.*

COVID-19 undermines Kenya's education as schools abruptly closed for nine months from March 2020. Highlighting the urgent need to develop Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure in education.

On March 15 2021, the advent of COVID in Kenya, for most, learning came to a screeching halt following government directives. To combat the spread of the virus, educational institutions of all levels were closed indefinitely, suspending the learning of over 17 million students nationwide. Teaching institutions remained closed for nine months. In that

period, privileged students - attendants of middle-class private schools - transitioned to digital learning whereas their public school counterparts did not, resulting in loss of learning that may never be recovered. Thus, COVID restrictions further widened the education inequality rift within the country.

The Constitution of Kenya, 2010, in Article 53(1)(b) states that every child has a right to free and compulsory basic education. Additionally, Article 55 (a) states that the state shall take measures which include affirmative action programmes to ensure that the youth access relevant education and training. These provisions are in line with the Free Primary Education that was implemented in 2003 that has enabled the country to make great strides in regards to primary education. According to the World Bank, 2012 this has led to the 75% enrolment rate in primary education which encompasses classes 1 to 8. Despite admission numbers having greatly increased, the policy has been met with quite a number of challenges such as low education quality, congestion, and shortage of teachers due to the ballooning numbers. The pandemic is a new challenge undermining the effectiveness of this policy and Kenya's education at large.

Globally, the conventional response to the pandemic was transitioning to online schooling and work wherever possible. This transition was more seamless in the developed and emerging economies for obvious reasons. Unfortunately, the same adaptability story cannot be told for many developing countries like Kenya. In Kenya for instance only about 22% of the population use the internet according to World Bank, 2019.

Even the government efforts to 'digitalize' education by broadcasting classes on national television and multiple radio stations did not suffice in ameliorating the situation. Millions still forwent learning altogether up until January 2021, when schools reopened again. This accentuated the education inequality as the privileged students carried on with learning in those 9 months of closures. For the unfortunate students, instances of early pregnancies (due to idleness), early marriages, nutritional deficiencies as school was not only for education but also a source of food for the impoverished were reported.



**Florence Mugambi**, a teacher at State House Girls' High School, Nairobi, told FUF magazine, that in their case, for instance, they could not transition online due to the existing inequality within the students. Despite being a national level school, students from humble backgrounds could not access ICT facilities. For this reason, the school remained totally closed as online-based learning was an out of touch solution. Leading to the loss of learning in the period of 9 months.

As of November 7th, the Standard newspaper reported an unfortunate and retrogressive trend where 31 public schools nationwide were burnt to ashes by students. Ms Mugambi also mentions this trend and adds that students are pressured. There's still a lot to learn and cover ahead of the national exams at the beginning of March 2022. In an effort to ease the pressure, the education ministry was forced to incorporate an unintended 3-day mid-term break starting on the 19th of November. Even then, Ms Mugambi maintains that this may not be enough and that the public school attendants remain at a disadvantage in terms of national exams preparation.

Sida considers education as a basic human need. Therefore, even though closure of schools in Kenya was circumstantial, the development of ICT infrastructure could have reduced the ensuing education inequality. This pandemic has definitely intensified the importance of ICT in development.



*Even as schools have reopened, catching up has been a great challenge since the education ministry is keen on keeping to the schooling calendar as much as possible. They have now implemented a crush program of sorts where a full school term is now 10 weeks - including breaks - as opposed to the usual 14 weeks and school holidays, reduced from one month to just one week. This has adverse effects on the mental and physical well-being of both the learners and teachers and especially in public schools. Parents are also economically pressured as they will now pay tuition more frequently. Bear in mind the negative economic effects of COVID and that their incomes remain constant. As for the private school attendants that transitioned to online based learning, the pressure is a lot less since they have covered much of the syllabus*

***Florence Mugambi***



**Joyce Makuei**

Joyce is a Kenyan raised Economic Development master student at Lund University who is passionate about sustainable development and education.



# Beyond the health crisis: COVID19 impact on human development

**A Chronicle by Ivette Nogués**

*Almost two years after the COVID-19 outbreak, the pandemic is far from over, and its repercussions might last for months and years to come.*

After surpassing the threshold of 50% of the world population who have received at least one shot of a COVID-19 vaccine, some may feel like we are finally putting the pandemic behind us. However, many experts warn that the crisis is far from over, and that its long-term consequences are still very difficult to estimate.

The coronavirus pandemic is a systemic crisis that has had huge repercussions on the health, economic and social aspects of human development, warns United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in a report from 2020. As governments strive to contain the spread of the virus and keep mortality rates low, it is becoming increasingly evident that the crisis

extends far beyond the health dimension.

With almost 5 million deaths worldwide, **Janusz Kaczorowski**, professor at the University of Montreal, argues that this might indeed just be the tip of the iceberg. Data shows that during the first quarter of 2020, economic output levels were equivalent to those last seen during the Great Depression.

# THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Moreover, as of September 2021, 117 million of students were still affected by complete school closures and educational institutions were only fully open to 35% of the total student population.

Going even further, it is noticeable that the crisis has magnified pre-existing inequities, increased the gap between developed and developing countries, aggravated gender-based violence, and led to devastating consequences for lives and livelihoods across the world. As stated in the UNDP report:



*We know that the longer schools stay closed, the more dramatic and potentially irreversible the impact on children's well-being and learning, especially for the most vulnerable and marginalized*

*Stefania Giannini, UNESCO  
Assistant Director-General for  
Education*



*The pandemic was superimposed on unresolved tensions between people and technology, between people and the planet, between the haves and the have-nots*



It is clear that the pandemic has triggered a human development crisis and as governments start formulating their recovery plans, it is crucial to highlight the need for a multi-dimensional approach that does not solely focus on the economic dimension, but takes into account the social and health dimensions as well. Many experts, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), have highlighted this and also stressed the necessity of a "green recovery". That is, a recovery strategy plan that also addresses issues such as public health, environmental degradation and gender inequality.

However, our knowledge of the effects of this crisis is still very theoretical and only time will determine the real long-term consequences and their impact within various social groups. In Kaczorowski's words,



***Many of the consequences will not only reverberate for months and years to come, but will also have unequal and profound effects on different societies and specific subgroups within societies"***



Ivette is an undergraduate student of Development Studies at Lund University. While her main focus of interest is the environmental dimension of sustainable development, she loves to explore the economic and societal dimensions as well.



# Magazine

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