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**Aid-society relations in humanitarian
crises and crisis recovery**

International Institute of Social Studies

Aid–society relations in humanitarian crises and recovery

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Erasmus University Rotterdam



INAUGURAL LECTURE

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Aid–society relations in humanitarian crises and recovery

Inaugural lectures are one of the types of ceremonies of which the academic world is so fond. As a gesture of welcome, a newly appointed professor gets the opportunity to inform colleagues, the academic community and the general public of their work to date, as well as their current research and future plans. It is a really nice custom to give the floor to a newcomer, and I would like to take this opportunity to outline current trends in my domain of work and to share what I bring to the multi-disciplinary, and even transdisciplinary, ways of researching global development and social justice at the Institute of Social Studies.

My chair of 'humanitarian aid and reconstruction' is part of the interdisciplinary field of humanitarian studies, which concerns how humanitarian crises originate and evolve; how they affect people, institutions and societies; and the responses they trigger. For the last 15 years, I have been involved in research programmes examining the multiplex ways in which people, institutions, societies and aid interventions respond to conflict and disaster and how this relates to processes of development.

When we see television images of large disasters, with the tent camps and a lot of white Toyotas with agency logos on the side, one can easily get the impression that international aid is of paramount importance. In reality, however, people in need find support and services from many different actors. The help of neighbours and communities are often the primary—or only—safety net upon which people can rely. On top of that, we find an amalgam of institutional forms of assistance, ranging from religious organisations to state services, private initiatives and NGOs. International aid may make only a small contribution to the survival of people in need, yet continues to be an important actor and topic of this lecture.

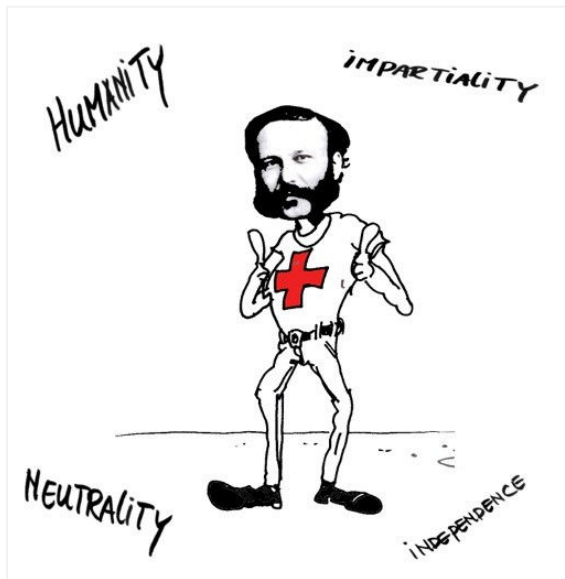
Chapters on the history of international humanitarian aid always begin with the battlefield of Solferino in 1859, where Henry Dunant was present as an accidental spectator. He helped with the medical care for wounded soldiers, which inspired him to initiate international humanitarian law and the protection of war victims (the Geneva Conventions), as well as the foundation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The basic principle of humanity is phrased by the Red Cross as 'the desire to prevent

and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found'. Humanitarian aid is meant to be purely needs-based: Decisions to help must not be driven by political motives or by discrimination of any kind. This notion of humanity, together with the ideas of impartiality, neutrality and independence, make up the basic principle of humanitarian aid.¹ It takes only a glance at the field of humanitarian aid to see how difficult it is to uphold these principles, but they remain an important reference for how discussions on humanitarian aid continue to be framed.

Ironically and sadly, humanitarian aid is least effective in its iconic role of accessing and assisting people in situations of open, violent conflict. Daily, we witness in the news how aid is denied to besieged people in Syria and how complex it is to deliver aid through the Syrian government, opposition parties or local actors. Open conflict areas are often inaccessible: too dangerous for people in need to reach assistance, and too dangerous for aid workers to reach these people.² Improving access is a major challenge for policy and humanitarian diplomacy. Nonetheless, most humanitarian budgets are being deployed in other domains of work: refugee care outside the immediate conflict area, responses to natural disasters and service delivery in fragile setting where international aid maintains a large presence in prolonged periods of 'no war, no peace'. Across these different domains of work, the premises and practices of aid differ, and this is a core tenet of my research.³ One aspect of this concerns the presence of aid in different crises. While the numbers of internationally and nationally operating humanitarian actors tend to swell to the hundreds, if not the thousands, during large natural disasters and in some refugee crises, other crises tend to be forgotten and only see droplets of aid trickling down: Northern Nigeria, where Boko Haram operates, and the Central African Republic are two current examples.

Humanitarian aid consists of multiple realities. At the onset of the first World Humanitarian Summit, which was held by the United Nations in Istanbul in May 2016, one reality was visible through the extensive rounds of worldwide consultations. Here, tens of thousands of people were bringing their voices to the process, and this culminated in large numbers of reports, events and agendas of change. In a parallel process just four months before the Summit, another

reality was visible in an initiative called the Grand Bargain. This high-level consultation brought together a select number of organisational actors: five key donors, six key UN agencies, and a few international NGOs and international NGO networks. The five donors together contributed 60% of the officially registered aid, worldwide, and the agencies at the table were responsible for spending 50% of all of these funds.⁴ These actors formulated an agenda for change in a few meetings prior to the Summit and pledged their commitment to this agenda during the event.



It is beyond the scope of this lecture to detail the specific outcomes of these processes. My point is that both of these realities adequately describe an aspect of what is now aptly called the humanitarian ecosystem: This refers to the variegated resonant and dissonant worlds spanning international bureaucracies, as well as the muddled practices on the ground that, together, comprise the humanitarian response. There are thousands of agencies and humanitarian voices, but the resources and power in the humanitarian sector are largely concentrated among a small group of international actors, sometimes critically called the ‘empire of aid’. In my view, we should not overestimate the power of this so-called empire. Resources from the largest spenders are allocated through numerous pipelines, and there are often several organisational layers before aid is actually implemented on the ground. In the arenas of high politics, where crisis could and should be resolved, even the main humanitarian actors hardly have a say. A reading of power based only on the source of funding would grossly neglect the dynamics of service delivery to people in need. It is the core of my chair to dig more deeply into how aid is shaped and how it obtains meaning through its implementation.

Trending news: aid breaks through the binary between normality and crisis

Although some aspects of aid never seem to change, I maintain that we are currently experiencing a significant turn in humanitarian aid. Whereas some changes are enabled by technological innovations, such as the use of digital payment systems or drones, I see an especially major turn in the stories that international actors tell about the nature of crises, crisis-affected populations and their societies, and ultimately about aid itself.

Societies in crisis—because of violent conflict, large-scale disaster or political collapse—are usually characterised by very complex institutional landscapes with high institutional flux. Empirically, the distinction between crisis and normality or emergency and post-emergency is hard to draw. Conflicts and disasters are breakpoints of the social order, with a considerable degree of chaos and disruption, but they are also marked by processes of continuity and re-ordering, or the creation of new institutions and linkages.

Humanitarian aid, however, used to be framed around the idea of a strict separation between crisis and normality. Such a separation is deeply engrained in legal and cultural norms worldwide. Humanitarian aid clearly belonged in the realm of crisis and exceptionality, serving as a temporary stop-gap for needs triggered by a specific crisis. It was generally assumed that normal institutions would cease to operate or be completely absorbed in the dynamics of conflict and crisis. In this image of complete institutional breakdown, aid could be construed as working in splendid isolation from the society in which it operated. A strong symbol of this image was the camp where people came for refuge, disconnected from their networks, livelihoods and societies and completely dependent on the goodwill of international care.

For several decades, voices from aid workers on the ground and critical academic research have fiercely challenged this view. Developmental forms of aid would, in the margins of the international aid spectacle, continue to work with local partners, taking offence at the arrogance with which international actors came to take over service delivery. Research pointed to the capacities of people in need and how many people preferred not to find refuge in camps but tried instead to carve out an unassisted living among host populations. Other studies provided ample evidence that camp dwellers, far from being passive and disconnected, brought their social networks, political associations, customs and livelihoods initiatives to their lives in the camps.⁵ For a long time, this mass of critical voices did not seem to make a

dent in the dominant images of crisis and aid. It was only 10 years ago that Christopher Cramer could accurately accuse dominant policies from suffering from a 'complete make over fantasy', when they talked about rebuilding societies after the formal end of crisis.⁶

In the last decade, however, this dominant notion has begun to shift spectacularly. This began in the realm of disaster relief, where the resilience of local people and communities and the importance of local response mechanisms became the core of the Hyogo Framework for Action in 2004. National players now take more control of disaster response which is anchored on the recognition of the resilience of people and communities. International aid has increasingly retreated, mentally and physically, from these situations (unless they concern mega-disasters). This trend reflects changing insights, growing national response capacities for disaster, and it undoubtedly plays a role too that the international community foresees it cannot continue intervening in the fastly growing number of disasters caused by climate change.

In recent years, this thinking has spilled over to conflict areas and refugees. Today's 'policy speak' builds on continuity between crisis and normality, and UN reports now consistently refer to 'crisis as the new normality'. One of the manifestations of this trend is the renewed appreciation and often the reassertion of state control of humanitarian responses.⁷ Although this change can be positive, considering that the primary responsibility of state should be to protect its citizens, it is problematic when states are part of the conflict or for other reasons do not live up to this responsibility. The phenomenon of the shrinking space for civil society that we have seen in many parts of the world is now also affecting the humanitarian domain. The most important aspect of this trend of viewing crisis as the new normality is that the humanitarian response increasingly relies on the resilience of people affected by conflict or disaster. The notion of resilience has been developed to denote how people and communities prepare, adapt and respond to disaster. This idea is now increasingly being used in conflict-affected situations, where the resilience of people and communities has quickly become a default starting point of the humanitarian response.

Locating the new trend: realities from Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey

The beginning of trends in aid can usually be pinpointed to a hallmark crisis, from which they spill over to the ecosystem at large. In the case of aid breaking through the binary between crisis and normality, the change can be located in relation to

refugees, from Syria and the wider region, living in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. Last May, I travelled in this region for three weeks to take stock of the humanitarian response. Despite differences, notably the large financial contribution that the Turkish government makes to refugee care compared with its neighbours, there are many striking similarities in the situations of refugees in the three countries.

Of the refugees in the region, 90% live outside the camps.⁸ While humanitarian actors at the beginning of the Syrian crisis operated strictly on the basis of assisting people in camps, service delivery is now almost entirely geared towards refugees living among the host communities. Being a refugee alone is not enough to be entitled to aid; agencies select the most vulnerable families, which are often female-headed households or families where members have serious health problems. Only these families receive assistance, usually in the form of a kind of Visa card where the aid agency deposits a certain amount of cash on a monthly basis. Health care is offered at scattered locations, sometimes in special clinics or through a half day of free clinic services at regular facilities. Education for refugee children is organised mainly during off-school hours in regular schools.

How can we interpret these new sets of practices? It should be appreciated that aid builds on people's capacities and does not make the mistake of reducing people's identity to the sole category of vulnerable refugee. Current technologies impressively allow aid to provide services to people who, as much as possible, manage their own lives. The turn in humanitarian aid brings about a lot of positive energy among policy makers and aid workers who enjoy working with partners and populations on a more equal footing and in a more dignified way. It can also release funds for humanitarian action where it is most needed.

On the other hand, there are serious questions to be raised about the chances of refugees to be resilient. The majority of refugee lives in the regions are most precarious. Their entitlements as 'alien residents' are unclear. They are supposed to survive by their own means, but they can rarely do so in a legal way. Only a few refugees have a work permit, and legal work is simply not available to them.

A family I met in Izmir, just a stone's throw from the rich city centre, lives with nine people in a single room. The father is handicapped, the mother takes care of the children and only one of the sons has found an informal job earning him 200 euros per month, which barely covers the cost of rent. Still, the family was lucky, as they managed to create a link with an NGO that provides them with 175 euros per month for their living expenses. Many people don't

find their way through the system and are extremely vulnerable to abuse. As one informant in Lebanon told me, ‘Refugees keep their head down and even when they are being robbed, they will never go to the police’.

Refugees, in this context, have joined the ranks of what is now aptly called the ‘precariat’.⁹ This concept refers to the poorest of the poor, who have no linkages to the formal parts of society—not as wage workers, not as consumers and not as politically significant members of an electorate. They survive by navigating their precarious conditions on a day-to-day basis. In a world where an estimated one billion people—migrants and resident poor—are part of this precariat, refugees may become a hardly distinguishable lot of urban poor. Although having an informal life does not necessarily mean destitution, refugees are much more likely to be deprived of informal protective networks and livelihoods. Many refugees who cross a border are particularly vulnerable, lacking legal status, employment and street knowledge of their new place, and they often face hostilities from host populations. Their only lifeline for survival may be formed by entitlements on the basis of being labelled vulnerable to obtain a small amount of support for basic protection and care from an aid agency. I am especially concerned with the fate of single men. The everyday politics of the labelling of vulnerable people are highly gendered, and this status seems increasingly reserved for women and children. Men in the most deplorable conditions may not find access to aid, and their specific vulnerabilities are rarely recognised.¹⁰

Where agencies are forced to restrict the numbers of people they can help and need to reduce the packages of assistance, the trend towards building humanitarian programming on people’s resilience may boil down to a politics of abandonment, where people’s vulnerability is denied or not addressed. When humanitarian aid is making this turn towards building on the resilience of refugees, it must consider how the conditions can be achieved to enable refugees to make a living and find a minimal level of protection. This would give a whole new meaning to the old adage of linking relief to development. It brings the refugee question to the heart of debates on global development and social justice.

Aid–society relations

The above discussion shows a glimpse of how the conditions and relations of aid are changing. It signals a general trend, but is also the specific trajectory of aid in three (lower) middle-income countries at the borderlands of Europe that are facing a large influx of refugees. The nature of aid, the

extent to which international actors engage and the availability and modalities of service delivery vary widely in other geographies and different institutional settings, as well as for different types of crises. The same is true for the ways in which aid relates to local institutions and affected populations. My chair aims to analyse these different aid–society relations. I have always positioned my work as part of the actor-oriented sociology that views aid as being shaped through everyday practice.¹¹ I see aid as an arena where different actors along and around aid chains—donor representatives, headquarters, state agents, local institutions, aid workers, aid recipients and surrounding actors—interpret the context, the needs, their own roles and each other.¹² Aid, in this perspective, is shaped as the outcome of their reflections, actions and interactions.

As a sociologist, I analyse the provision of services, the politics and policies that underpin that service provision, the economic transactions that enable these processes to exist and the technologies through which services are delivered—all as *social action*. The concept of social embeddedness is very helpful in understanding this undertaking.¹³ When we say that economic transaction, policy making or technology is socially embedded, it means that these things operate through different melanges of, respectively, economic, political or technological logics on the one hand, and social rationalities and relations on the other. Human agency, the capability of people to reflect and act upon their surroundings, is shaped by—and unthinkable outside of—the normative frames and social relations in which people function. For institutions, social embeddedness refers to how and to what degree institutions are shaped by the interaction with other institutions. Examples of this abound in theories on state–society relations, such as the notions of twilight institutions, hybrid governance, legal pluralism and institutional bricolage, all of which consider how institutions emerge through the interaction of different sets of institutional rules, rationalities and routines.¹⁴ Aid actors cannot be seen as external to the institutional realities of crisis-affected states; they are part of them. International aid adds a layer to the complexity of governance in crisis-affected settings, creating an imprint on the institutional landscape as it unfolds. Vice versa, aid also forms a playground for different actors to further their interests and mould interventions according to their objectives. Studying aid as evolving in implementation sheds light on the everyday politics of control, allocation, production and use of resources, as well as the values and ideas underlying those activities.¹⁵

Values and ideas are important, and we emphasise the meaning actors bestow to what is happening and the way they strategize to exploit the room for

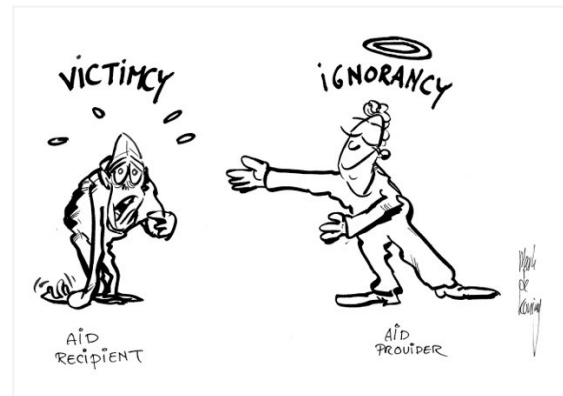
manoeuvre and further their interests. For example, when a refugee situation is perceived as temporary and hopeful, people act very differently from when they perceive the same situation as being forever in limbo. Social action is, moreover, performative, and people use their agency to act according to the role they see for themselves. Let me illustrate this by briefly by discussing two main actors in the aid chain: the recipient and the humanitarian aid worker.

Aid recipients have often been seen to display passive behaviour, or even to have a dependency syndrome.¹⁶ Aid workers and local governance actors throughout the world continue to repeat the message that aid recipients behave in a dependent way. The passive attitudes of aid recipients stand in sharp contrast to the initiative they display in navigating the vagaries of everyday life. Several authors have pointed out that the passive attitude of aid recipients represents a role they play to claim aid. Their attitude is an expression of agency, and Mats Utas calls this type of agency 'victimcy'.¹⁷

The other main group of actors in the aid chain, humanitarian actors and policy makers, are often accused of not understanding the political realities of the arenas where they operate. Countless are the reports that aim to enlighten humanitarians about the politics of their work and the way that their humanitarian principles are being undermined and abused. In my observation, the seeming naivety that many policy makers and humanitarians display in the face of politics, is also an expression of agency. I see it as wilfully navigating around the politics of the day, hoping that their technocratic approach will help them to achieve their goals of getting access to people in need. I propose to call this type of agency 'ignorancy'. Ignorancy can be a pragmatic attitude as much as a coping mechanism. A medical doctor working with Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) in Jordan told me that, to keep his sanity at work, he needed to block out the bigger picture of the thousands of people in need across the border and focus on the dozen patients he could treat in his clinic.

It is easy to see how victimcy and ignorancy can meet and reinforce each other in sustaining the myth of the aid relation between the principled aid provider and the vulnerable recipient. Even though the implicit conspiracy between aid and recipients and providers—of victimcy and ignorancy—may work well in the everyday practice of aid, it is of course also problematic. The public at large may tire of hearing the flat stories of miserabilism, on the one hand, and the technocratic promises of agencies on the other. These tactical attitudes can easily be internalised and may lead to the long-term neglect of the political realities and root causes of crisis. Importantly, the harmony between ignorancy and victimcy works

against a more activating impulse that could bring together crisis-affected populations and their sympathetic supporters to advocate for resolving crisis, and realising development and justice.



Research programme: 'When disasters meet conflict'

The study of aid–society relations is facilitated when these relations occur in a situation of upheaval or accelerated change. At these moments, many observable actions take place, and they are often discursively rich. It is in times of crisis that we become aware of what we normally take for granted, and that the questions of what we aim for in life, how we relate to our neighbours and what kind of society we want become more intensely debated. This is one of the reasons why I have chosen to use the wonderful VICI grant that I was given by the Netherlands Research Foundation, NWO, to work on moments where disasters triggered by natural hazards coincide with crisis situations. The responses of people and institutions to disasters in these conditions may reveal a great deal about the ways in which power is distributed, how institutional relationships are forged, and who and what is given policy priority.

My interest in these situations, however, is not only academic. There are several pressing reasons to focus on situations where disasters coincide with conflict. Disasters and conflict have the tendency to exacerbate each other. Disasters, as outcomes of natural hazards, result from processes in the socio-political context.¹⁸ Conflict tends to compound vulnerability and further weaken the response capacities of people and institutions. In other words, the likelihood that a storm, flood or volcanic eruption will reach devastating disaster proportions is larger in areas of conflict.

Attention has also been given to the potential of disasters to change the dynamics of conflict. This work was mainly triggered by seeing how the 2004 tsunami seemed to speed up the peace process in Aceh but to intensify the conflict in Sri Lanka. While

large disasters may sometimes override the dynamics of conflict, there are many cases where the exact opposite happens. Most commonly, disasters tend to aggravate the military, socio-political and socio-economic effects of conflict.¹⁹ However, the influences of disasters on conflict depend on, amongst other things, the way in which governments and other actors respond to the disaster. This will be an important aspect of the case studies of my research programme.

This research programme also has a clear policy relevance. It has been estimated that 30% of disasters happen in areas of conflict.²⁰ However, response models for natural disasters all assume that there is a functioning state, and there is little systematic analysis of how to respond to disasters where this condition is not met. We have already formed networked research collaborations with different humanitarian actors, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Core Humanitarian Standards Alliance. We hope that these actors will be able to use our findings to improve the response to disasters in different conflict scenarios.

Methods

One of the challenges of this research programme is to seek patterns and trends that aim to find a middle ground between sweeping one-story-tells-all explanations and narrow each-case-represents-a-different story accounts of aid. I find it problematic that stories of aid are usually framed with a particular setting in mind and then extrapolated to the whole of the humanitarian response. However, it is also unsatisfactory to refrain completely from generalisation and insist that each case is unique.

For this reason, we opt to work with scenarios and use the method of focused comparison.²¹ The term scenario is often associated with future scenarios, but I use it in the sense of the case scenarios that are used, for example, in teaching in medical schools, where ideal-typical cases are constructed on the basis of the medical histories of real people. The existing research on disasters happening in conflict settings has the shortcoming that it lumps all conflict situations together, and therefore may result in meaningless generalisations. We, on the other hand, distinguish three scenarios: high-intensity conflict, low-intensity conflict and post-conflict, each to be studied through a separate PhD project. For each of these, three case studies will be conducted in countries that largely fit within the scenario. Our first cases have been selected and concern the dramatic current drought South Sudan as a high-conflict case, the same drought in the largely stagnant, low-intensity border conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea,

and the responses to the 2015 earthquake in post-conflict Nepal. Fieldwork in conflict areas is of course challenging, and, as part of the preparation of this programme, several colleagues and I have written a manual on conducting fieldwork in hazardous areas.²²

Thank you

Madam Rector, ladies and gentlemen, before I conclude this lecture, I would like to give some personal messages and express my heartfelt gratitude to the people I'm fortunate to work and live with.

I'm very excited to have moved to the Institute of Social Studies, thanks to Leo de Haan and Inge Hutter. Here, I find an open, collaborative atmosphere, a wonderful diversity of people and an everyday lightness in sharing easy laughter. Maintaining a sense of humour appears to be a key mechanism for survival among the people I meet in dire situations, and it is also a highly underestimated core condition for creative and connecting forms of science. The research groups of CIRI and GGSJ have been equally welcoming, and my first year at ISS has been greatly facilitated by Kees Biekart, Peter Knorringa and Des Gasper. Being part of the Erasmus University adds an interesting layer to my position, and I look forward to taking part in the new research initiatives with colleagues in Rotterdam. The joy of working at ISS is greatly enhanced by my everyday colleagues, and Roanne van Voorst, Isabelle Desportes, Rodrigo Mena and Samantha Melis form a brilliant team to realise the ambitions of the generous VICI grant I was extended by NWO.

I feel very much at home in this institute, where so many share the notion of academic activism that was eloquently elaborated by Jun Borrás in his inaugural lecture several months ago.²³ Although my research will concentrate on disasters in conflict, I will continue to engage with the current refugee crisis. Europe stands at the cradle of humanitarian principles and is a major donor of humanitarian assistance outside of its borders, but it is currently in breach of fundamental principles and refugee conventions on a large scale. There are no easy answers to how the politics of scape-goating, fear and fortification can give way to politics of principle and sharing, but there is always room for better politics. An immediate issue concerns the 60.000 refugees who are currently stuck in Greece in the most appalling conditions. The Netherlands has committed to bring 4.500 of them to our country to share the burden of refugee care, but despite the fact that asylum centres in the Netherlands are more than half empty at the moment, due to stringent border politics, the Netherlands

makes hardly any progress in living up to this commitment.

I am very happy that my longstanding relation with the Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural in Bukavu in the Democratic Republic of Congo can find continuation and additional strength through ISS. The recently co-created expert centre on gender and development at ISDR²⁴ will soon be strengthened with three DFID-sponsored postdoctoral research positions. I look forward to working with Wendy Harcourt, Helen Hintjens and Sylvia Bergh and the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium on these projects. This programme will also allow me to continue working with very dear colleagues from Wageningen, especially my Congolese PhD candidates.

A major premium of working at ISS is its location in the world capital of peace and justice, The Hague. I have always been closely connected to the myriad of organisations and initiatives in the city, and it is wonderful to be physically located in its centre. I

particularly look forward to helping to shape the new knowledge centre for humanitarian action that, largely thanks to Ton Huijzer, follows from decades of informal quality initiatives and interaction with people working at international agencies.

A very special word, finally, for my wonderful friends and family. Our children continue to be a delightful presence in our lives, and it is a great source of joy and pride to see them grow into such beautiful and meaningful adults. My greatest thanks are for Fred, my wonderful husband. Without his loving support, I would certainly not be who I am today. Another bonus of working in The Hague is that I can often see my dear mother, who has always been a major inspiration for me. I was raised by my parents with the strong conviction that gifts cannot be appreciated lightly, but also create social responsibility. I will do the utmost to live up to the confidence all of you are giving me today, and I thank you for your attention.

¹ See <http://www.ifrc.org/en/publications-and-reports/code-of-conduct>

² HPN & OPM (2010) *Operational security management in violent environments*, Humanitarian Practice Network, London, Overseas Development Institute

³ Dijkzeul, D. and D. Hilhorst (2016) 'Instrumentalisation of aid in humanitarian crises: obstacle or precondition for cooperation?' In: V. Heins, K. Koddenbrock and C. Unrau (eds) *Humanitarianism and Challenges of Cooperation*. London, Routledge, pp 54-72

⁴ <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/report/gha2016/>

⁵ For a review of this literature see B. Jansen (2011) *The accidental city: violence, economy and humanitarianism in Kakuma refugee camp Kenya* <http://www.wur.nl/nl/Publicatie-details.htm?publicationId=publication-way-343035353335>

⁶ C Cramer (2006) *Civil War is Not a Stupid Thing: Accounting for Violence in Developing Countries*, London: Hurst & Company, 245–278

⁷ D. Keen (2008). *Complex Emergencies*. London, Polity; T. Debiel and D. Lambach (2009) 'How State-Building Strategies Miss Local Realities'. *Peace Review* 21 (1): 22–28

⁸ <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>
http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/turkey_syrian_crisis_en.pdf

⁹ G. Standing (2014) *A Precariat Charter: From Denizens to Citizens*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

¹⁰ D. Hilhorst (2016) The other half of gender: Are humanitarians blind to the vulnerabilities of male refugees? <http://www.alnap.org/blog/147>

¹¹ N. Long (2002) *Development Sociology. Actor Perspectives*. London, Routledge

¹² D. Hilhorst and B. Jansen (2010) 'Humanitarian Space as Arena: a perspective of everyday practice'. *Development and Change* 41(6): 1117–1139

¹³ M. Granovetter (1985). Economic action and social structure: The problem of embeddedness. *American Journal of Sociology*, 481–510

¹⁴ For an elaboration of this theme, see the introductory chapter of our forthcoming edited volume, where we explore the she social embedded nature of recovery: D. Hilhorst, B. Weijs and G. van der Haar (eds) (2017) *People, aid and institutions in socio-economic recovery: Facing fragilities* London, Routledge

¹⁵ B. Kerkvliet. (2009) 'Everyday Politics in Peasant Societies (and ours)'. *Journal of Peasant Studies*. Vol 36, Issue 1: 227-243, 227

- 16 This term was coined by Barbara Harrell-Bond in 1986, *Imposing Aid: emergency assistance to refugees*.
Oxford University Press. Despite it being debunked by many researches, it continues to be widely used.
- 17 Utas sees victimcy “as a form of narrative that structures the presentation of self in particular ways – and
cannot be interpreted apart from an understanding of the interaction context within which such
representations are made”, M. Utas (2005) ‘Victimcy, girlfriending, soldiering: tactic agency in a young
women’s social navigation of the Liberian war zone.’ *Anthropological Quarterly* 78(2): 403- 430: 409
- 18 This has been convincingly argued since 1976 starting with O’Keefe, P., Westgate, K., and Wisner, B.
(1976). Taking the ‘Natural’ out of ‘Natural Disasters’. *Nature*, 260(15 April), 566-567. Evidence for this
was presented by many authors, see B. Wisner, P. Blaikie, T. Cannon and I. Davis (2004). *At Risk: Natural
hazards, People’s Vulnerability and Disasters*, 2nd Edition, London, Routledge
- 19 P. Le Billon, and A. Waizenegger (2007). Peace in the wake of disaster? Secessionist conflicts and the
2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 32, 411-427
- 20 P. Spiegel et al P(2007) ‘Occurrence and overlap of natural disasters, complex emergencies and
epidemics during the past decade (1995–2004)’, *Conflict and Health*, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 2.
- 21 A. George (1985). The Method of Structured Focused Comparison, in: A. Bennet and A. George (eds.),
Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences. Massachusetts, MIT Press, 67-124.
- 22 D.Hilhorst, L. Hodgson, B. Jansen, R. Mena (2016) Security guidelines for field research in complex,
remote and hazardous places. The Hague Institute of Social Studies <http://repub.eur.nl/pub/93256/>
- 23 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fz00v89uVMY>
- 24 CREGED: Centre d’Expertise et Recherche sur le Genre et Développement