



Ethical dilemmas in the development-security nexus: A human development and capabilities approach

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Ethical Dilemmas in the Development-Security Nexus: A Human Development and Capabilities Approach

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Abstract:

The 'development-security nexus' marks a paradigm shift for development, security and humanitarian practice, with implications for education and development education. This article explores zigzag changes, initially towards human security and human development, then back towards donor governments' own security and economic interests. Aid has become 'bunkered', while development's scope has somewhat narrowed. The increasing salience of private actors and educational securitisation add to the ethical ambiguities and complexities. Four ethical dilemmas are explored: securitisation, privatisation / 'NGOisation', fragmentation, and declining internationalism. Development ethics considers both the ethical justifications for doing development and ethical judgments about development practices. Development ethics helps us think clearly about how responsibilities are assigned, ensuring that responsibilities are not assigned to the wrong actors. This article assesses a major new resource on development ethics (Drydyk and Keleher 2018) and endorses the human development and capabilities approach (HDCA) as an ethical lens for assessing neoliberal securitisation.

Key Words:

Development-security nexus; securitisation, development ethics, human development and capabilities

Introduction: The changing contexts of the development-security nexus

The 'development-security nexus' describes a number of intersecting dynamics and trends that together constitute a paradigm-shift for 'development' and 'security' where the agendas of 'development' and 'security' are blended. The increasing centrality of this 'nexus' indicates a paradigm shift for development as well as security and humanitarian practice, with humanitarian assistance providing some common ground for approaching security and development in conflict affected and fragile settings and during, or following, conflicts and

emergencies, whether politically or naturally induced. This shift has also impacted education, development education and education for global citizenship.

As the development-security nexus has become more salient, development's scope and problem focus has shifted perceptibly and narrowed, from policies concerned with economic development and welfare expansion to emergency assistance and the containment of forcibly displaced and stateless people. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) reports some 68.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, including refugees, in 2017, about 40 million of whom are 'internally' displaced (UNHCR 2019). In 2009, the figure was 40 million in total, 25 million of whom were internally displaced (UNHCR, 2017). The latest decade has seen a further drift from the development-security nexus towards 'continuous global disaster management' (Sørensen and Söderbaum, 2012). These new articulations can be used to legitimise a more radically interventionist, but also more narrowly defined and exclusionary security agenda which purports to be 'about' the global South, but is in reality predicated on securing the global North, including the advanced economies' own economic and 'development' interests, including promoting military and dual-use exports.

With the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, it was initially proposed that 'security' could be redefined to move closer to 'development' and become better aligned with human development, changing the referent object of 'security' from the state to the human being. This change of referent object was intended to enable the global community to address challenges to human survival and wellbeing, which cannot be secured by merely protecting state territories and apparatuses (Owen, 2004). The idea of 'human security' offered a way to achieve security in a people-centred and sustainability-oriented sense of the term (Nsiah-Gyabaah, 2010). However, the 9/11 attacks in 2001 and ensuing 'War on Terror' shifted the direction of change back, towards donor countries' priorities to secure their own territories against various risks. In Britain, (the most influential force on Irish development policy) the project that began with New Labour and the establishment of the Department for International Development (DFID) joined overseas aid and security sector reform in an ambitious programme for 'doing development' as a means of reducing security risks 'at home'. 'Any previously perceived contradictions between benevolence and self-interest has vanished in a seamless fusion of moral obligation and national interest' (Abrahamsen, 2016: 286).

Liberal western donor powers have increasingly focused on humanitarian assistance as the key modality for addressing external political crises beyond their borders (Duffield, 1997).

Over the past two decades, the context and worldview has zigzagged, initially towards human security and human development and then back again to donor security and economic interests, including arms exports (Klare, 1996). I make this last point because it has regained currency of late due to calls upon United States (US) and European states to restrict arms exports to Saudi Arabia following the recent murder of the Saudi journalist Jamal Kashoggi (Chazan and Pitel 2018; Reinhard et al 2018). The human security rationale has not been effective in preventing military exports to Saudi forces who have, in the past three years, used these imports to attack and embargo Yemen, forcing some 12 million Yemenis and other North Africans in Yemen to suffer casualties, displacement and famine (Summers, 2018). The zigzag back towards securitisation has redefined economic welfare in terms of the interests of a donor-military-industrial-NGO complex and arguably redacted the scope of 'development', which might otherwise have been more broadly defined. The current global prospect is one of continuing complex and protracted conflicts and a changing *modus operandi* that continues to deepen its focus on security-sector reform and the operational challenges of delivering emergency relief amidst persistent insecurity and war.

The increasing importance of the development-security nexus brings to the fore the increasing role of private actors in development and security. The aid industry is a powerful industry in itself that, in some instances, can come to assume a 'quasi-state' aspect (Jackson, 1990), even approximating a powerful sovereign actor (Edkins, 2003). However, such 'sovereignty' of donor aid is not uniform or straightforward – it is hybrid and complex. Since 2001, the world has seen a major shift towards outsourced, subcontracted and privatised governance, involving major for-profit contractors and non-profit NGOs (Duffield, 1997). Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) have found themselves operating in concert with a vast range of actors and within increasingly morally, ethically and politically conflicted and ambivalent spaces – governmental versus non-governmental, profit versus non-profit, securing development actors or securing beneficiaries. Recent NGO forums have also raised the ethical dilemmas that they face when they are obliged to resort to making agreements with warring political actors, in order to be able to deliver humanitarian aid in conflict zones. The zigzagging between human security and private economic interests has also been noted in the development education sector. For example, the UK government significantly withdrew grant funding for development education in late 2010. Remaining programmes subtly reframed development education in terms of private, commodified learning providers, while redefining learners as consumers, a shift that I commented on in the guest editorial on the shifting landscape of

development education, in Issue 13 of this journal (Khoo, 2011). Education in both donor and recipient countries has become securitised with the introduction of the ‘countering extremism’ and ‘protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism’ or ‘Prevent’ agenda (HM Government, 2015a; 2015b, Human Rights Watch UK, 2016). O’Donnell criticises this development from an educational and pedagogical perspective, arguing that the ‘securitisation of education, effected through initiatives in counter-terrorism such as Prevent, leads to what I call ‘pedagogical injustice’ for students and teachers’ (O’Donnell, 2017: 177).

The ways in which governance, security and even education regimes are being redefined reflect complex, mixed logics. Public and economic life in both donor and recipient regimes has evolved through waves of privatisation, public-private hybridisation, managerialism in general and ‘New Public Management’ in particular – in short a spectrum of neoliberal governance, in its different manifestations. In 2017, *The Guardian* reported that at least half the world’s population has more private security workers than public police officers (Provost, 2017). This rise of private security is a consequence of increasing income and wealth polarisation, and in South Africa, the world’s most economically unequal country (Chapman, 2010), there are around half a million security guards, more than twice the number of state police and military personnel combined (Provost, 2017). The global market for private security services alone is estimated to grow to \$240bn by 2020, outdistancing by far the total international aid budget promised for ending global poverty (\$140bn a year) and dwarfing the Gross Domestic Products (GDP) of over half the world’s countries (Ibid). The growth in the private security industry followed the US-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which greatly expanded the use of private contract services. Following on from military contracting, security companies continued to expand and seek opportunities in private and privatised services in the civilian sector, employed to protect private wealthy individuals and their private personal and commercial assets.

Bunkered aid and fractured, narrowed development

Aid efforts have become increasingly narrowly defined, concentrated and bunkered. Instead of being progressively developmental in a people-focused sense, localised and recipient-driven, the development-security nexus has increasingly led to the centralisation of aid in heavily fortified compounds. Development practice is increasingly concerned with risk analysis and a sensibility set by standardised, centralised and ubiquitous field security training (Duffield, 2012). This new normal defines the external working environment for development

practitioners as one of permanent and pervasive danger. The standardisation, centralisation and professionalisation of security training aims to effect behavioural change and strengthen personal and organisational resilience; it is an absolutist approach which cannot entertain doubt, critique or reflection. Local environments and people are seen as risks, hence isolation and risk aversion end up being the default (Duffield, 2012: 28).

The threats are very real. Security risks to aid workers, including fatalities are thought to be steadily increasing, from 30 incidents increasing to 160 per year, reported by Stoddard et al. (2009). Reliefweb monitoring shows consistently high levels of threats, attacks and fatalities in the humanitarian sector (Reliefweb, 2018), while Christian Aid reports that that 300 human rights defenders were killed in 2017. While Duffield is not criticising the need for security or risk management per se, he does suggest that the institutionalisation of risk management erodes individual and local autonomy in favour of rules and protocols devised by distant security experts. Risk management within the civilian aid industry has been effectively militarised and become increasingly rigid and conformist. Social segregation and defensive living are the everyday reality of aid practice. Within the context of United Nations (UN) work, and many of the larger NGOs who work with the UN, standard security training is compulsory and unavoidable. The UN attributes the increased risk to the emergence of violent and 'irrational' non-state actors who do not play by the rules of humanitarian law or norms (Boutros-Ghali, 1995: 42). Mary Robinson's voice-over in the UN Basic Security training module offers the opinion that: '...some barrier has been broken and anyone can be regarded as a target, even those bringing food to the hungry and medical care to the wounded' (UNBSF 2003 cited in Duffield, 2012: 27).

The trend towards militarised and securitised aid results in the locations of aid work becoming heavily fortified and segregated in compounds, mirroring a broader pattern of development which privileges 'elite gated communities, social segregation and defensive urban living' (Duffield 2012: 31). A new fractured and exclusionary urbanism is emerging, a pattern that closely links with cycles of urban violence and threats to personal and community security (Koonings and Kruijt, 2007). Ironically, the built environment that is supposed to signal the physical signs of a return to peace and define features 'of the architectural peace dividend' offers instead fortified compounds or even whole districts, taken over and divided up between different agencies. Aid's alienating and exclusionary physical spaces seem to prefigure failure, even before the shift from humanitarian assistance to 'developmental' support can commence,

while underdevelopment and those who suffer it are continuously redefined as other and dangerous (Duffield, 2012: 32-33).

The logic and form of international interventionism has changed, particularly with 'integrated missions' which converge humanitarian and development activity with peacekeeping and political agendas (Eide et al., 2005). In integrated missions, UN specialist agencies and NGOs combine forces in ambitious, donor-led post-intervention programmes of disarmament, demobilisation and reconstruction (DDR) in support of an internationally recognised state, such as Kosovo, Afghanistan or Iraq. Integrated missions go beyond the limits of traditional humanitarian action, forming more ambitious efforts to reshape the social, political and economic structures of the countries concerned (Duffield, 2012).

The ethical dilemmas: four challenges

Building on the preceding discussion, four challenges can be identified arising from the current development-security nexus: i) securitisation, ii) privatisation and 'NGOisation' leading to iii) fragmentation and complex, mixed governance, and iv) declining internationalism which are considered in turn.

Securitisation

Securitisation has led to an increased emphasis in external interventionism and potentially a crisis of legitimacy. Securitised interventions are more often designed to achieve the goals of the interveners rather than those of the intervened upon, the so called 'beneficiaries'. As the distance between the interveners and the intervened-upon widens, local and national dynamics and cultural understandings may be obscured or minimised (Gelot and Söderbaum, 2012) since the referent object of security has zigzagged back to the security of the external donor and their idea of security sector reform, rather than the security of the people who constitute the intervened-upon.

Privatisation and 'NGOisation'

The outsourcing of national and global public policies relies on greater penetration of for-profit market actors and not-for-profit NGO service deliverers into the development space, displacing state and citizen agency. The entry and proliferation of NGOs in the development scene was premised on the idea that they would deliver alternative and transformative development based

on popular empowerment and social justice. The growth of the NGO sector was seen to widen the real participation of civil society in development and increase the inputs of poor people into planning and implementing development, making them more responsible for it. However, as NGOs became more successful and grew bigger, they began to play by managerialist, top-down approaches that enhanced the advantages of larger more 'corporatised' NGO players, while smaller organisations with pro-poor and participatory values became somewhat marginalised (Khoo, 2018; Lewis, 2008; Wallace, 2003).

The privatisation trend that characterises the role of government and public services is paralleled by a 'governmentalising' trend that sees NGOs becoming increasingly influenced by, and dependent upon, donor policies since the late 1990s. Since the 1980s, neoliberal politics have sought to actively reconfigure the relative roles of the state, the market, and civil society – focusing on the role of states before the 1980s, promoting the role of markets in the 1980s and 1990s and pointing to market failures after the mid-1990s (Wallace, 2004). Thus the rise and proliferation of NGO actors reflects ideological preferences and assumptions concerning global development and poverty reduction since the 1980s (Hulme, 2013). While this trend was not a focus for development research until recently, more recent work has started to address this in greater depth (Khoo, 2018; Lang, 2013).

The trends of privatisation and NGOisation may actually undermine local and national movements for structural change and benefits to the poor, while serving, and remaining complicit with, state and private sector interests (Lang, 2013). This underpins the radical argument that the dramatic expansion of the NGO sector over the past three decades has failed to produce a stronger, more vibrant civil society capable of tackling issues of power and inequality head-on, thus generating real transformative change. Upward accountability to a profit bottom line or donor or consortium agenda displaces the bottom-up expectations about legitimisation processes justifying any intervention. Downwards accountability and answerability regarding the responsibilities of actors has tended to decline as managerial solutions and efficiencies are sought to overcome the problem of fragmentation.

Fragmentation

The field or profession of development practice is also fractured by areas of functional specialisation and focus: humanitarian relief workers rarely interact with development researchers and analysts; human rights activists or advocates rarely interact with development

programme implementers. Legal structures also constrain and fragment development practice. For-profit enterprises are legally distinct and regulated differently from non-profit NGOs and community-based organisations, although the Busan Principles make it clear that for-profits should be treated as ‘equal partners’ to nonprofits in development practice. Arguing that the old architectures for global collaboration cannot handle the shift from ‘collective action’ to today’s ‘hypercollective action’, Severino and Ray (2010) suggest that a more open and comprehensive framework should focus on knowledge sharing centred on evaluation, to provide ‘innovative sticks and carrots for governments and all civil society players to improve convergence’ and form new generation coalitions.

Amidst a general global development context of increasing complexity and plurality of actors, motives and underlying values, Severino and Ray (2010) argue that the prime challenge for global governance is simply steering that increasing complexity towards efficiency. From an ethical perspective, however, this is only one possible justification, which much of the work on complexity and fragmentation tried to dodge. In the context of scarce resources and high-stakes competitive bidding, NGOs and aid consortia are expected by donors to be as innovative, cost-effective, and based on ‘best practices’ as possible. Yet, the field or profession of development practice is fractured by areas of functional specialisation and focus: humanitarian relief workers rarely interact with development researchers and analysts; human rights activists or advocates rarely interact with development programme implementers. The problem is that collaboration and learning are stymied as it is not in competing actors’ interests to reveal to others in their ‘industry’ how they are going to solve the development challenges as posed by the terms of reference. There is relatively little incentive for implementers within the industry to share their experiences and participation by the intended ‘beneficiaries’ in either setting the initial terms of reference or in revising and learning from them is usually absent or severely limited (Schwenke, 2018).

We will return to Schwenke’s provocation that development practitioners are absent from the critical conversation about development ethics in the concluding section, and it is enough to say at this point that this is an extremely important criticism. Development practitioners comprise an immense industry, but one that employs a relatively small number of people. Development practitioners work as (largely self-defined) global ‘experts’, problem solvers and purveyors of ‘best practices’. They deliver humanitarian relief, as well as ‘development’ projects and programmes, aiming to direct communities or even whole nations or regions towards sustainable development. These aims and practices involve highly

aspirational ambitions in a world of actually unsustainable politics, great and growing inequalities and immense absolute need and suffering.

Declining internationalism

The founding instrument of the UN system, the UN Charter was devised to prevent the scourge of war, reaffirm common faith in fundamental human rights based upon the dignity and worth of the human person, advance the equal rights of men and women and establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from the treaties and other sources of international law. This vision of cooperative internationalism provided the backdrop to the project of ‘development’, as social progress and improving standards of life ‘in larger freedom’ (UN, 1945).

Article 28 of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights (UN, 1948) states that ‘[e]veryone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration can be fully realized’. Article 28 comes near the end of the UDHR, followed by Article 29 stipulating everyone’s duties to the community, the limitations morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society and the principle of non-contravention of purposes and principles. The ‘salvatory clause’, Article 30 conserves the human rights set out in the declaration and prohibit their destruction. Yet these statements of intent leave most people with a feeling of scepticism, even incredulity concerning the international system. The emergence of the development-security nexus, and numerous threats to, and deterioration of the state human rights in recent years, coupled with the rise of right-wing nationalist-populist politics offer indications that the commitment to cooperative internationalism is not in a healthy state and that it has been significantly declining (Amnesty International 2018; Human Rights Watch 2017; 2018).

Development ethics

Despite strong underlying shared values and a sense of shared mission amongst development and humanitarian practitioners, the space to debate development ethics and what it means for development practitioners, their work and identities remains very limited. In the absence of an open space for debating and deliberating development ethics and thinking about development critically, development ethics becomes increasingly occupied by a single concern – efficiency. The concern for efficiency cannot solve ethical dilemmas as it consigns a world of value plurality to a narrow and unrealistic ‘reality’ dominated by value singularity – *a reductio in*

absurdum. The hegemonic discourse in international development is dominated by the so-called ‘realist’ perspective on political-economy and an anarchistic perspective on international relations (Mitzen, 2005). The discourses that prioritise effectiveness, efficiency, power and money are rooted in the presumption that all human behaviour and decision-making must be driven by the maximisation of self-interest in a Hobbesian world and the presumption of the rational impossibility of a collective world. Sen’s work in establishing the human development is oriented to challenging that set of assumptions:

“It strikes me as absolutely extraordinary that people can dismiss any attitude as irrational other than that of the maximization of self-interest. Such a position necessarily implies that we reject the role of ethics in our real decision-making . . . Taking universal selfishness as read may well be delusional, but to turn it into a standard for rationality is utterly absurd” (Sen, 1993, cited in Schwenke 2017: 331).

Development ethics goes beyond the purely philosophical and abstract ground and is not just a dream or demand, as it might have been in the 1960s (Goulet, 1995), but an actual ongoing set of discussions, research, political interventions, and policy initiatives. Drydyk and Keleher’s new handbook on development ethics (2018) particularly focuses on helpful forms of cooperation between philosophers, other academics, and practitioners. They note that development ethics has become quite robust in research, but its scope in teaching and grassroots practice discussions still remains very limited, especially when compared with other fields of applied ethics such as environmental ethics, business ethics, or bioethics.

Development ethics works on both ‘sides of the divide’ looking at ethical justifications for doing development and ethical judgments about development practices. Development ethics involves the examination of the goals and nature of desirable or worthwhile development, and asks questions about the legitimacy of the governmental, institutional, and corporate policies and practices that support these. The space of justification, where options for exercising power, discussing and making decisions is the space of ‘public reasoning’ (Drydyk and Keleher, 2018: 6-7). One of the key issues that is being raised in the civil society research grouping is how the definition of civil society, its workings and resulting expansion or capture of the spaces of public reasoning are influencing and narrowing the spaces of public reasoning.

Development ethics is concerned with how we evaluate development and the ability to make distinctions between desirable, beneficial and justifiable forms of development and

undesirable, harmful and unjustifiable forms. Three main contributors established the problem-space of development ethics: Goulet (1995), Gasper (2004) and Crocker (2008). Goulet made the distinction between 'authentic development' and 'false', 'anti-development' or 'maldevelopment'. Gasper (2004) contrasts the ethical choice between economism and human development - 'human development' means that development must enhance people's well-being, and be equitable, empowering, and environmentally sustainable. Gasper's critique of economism points towards a theory of human development that consciously distinguishes itself from utilitarian values and promotes an interest in alternative human values.

Development ethics highlights why it is important for development decisions and processes to be ethically justifiable. It links the somewhat abstract and philosophical concepts of justifiability to processes of public justifiability and legitimation. Development ethics is therefore of central relevance to development practitioners and not only something of interest to academics and theoreticians. As the:

"forms and instruments of coordinated humanitarianism have changed, resulting in shifting roles for different actors such as the state, the international community and international NGOs. The translation of the core principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and non-violence into practical measures is giving rise to a process of re-definition, which introduces new understandings" (Melber, 2012: 3).

This brings us onto the ground of moral plurality and ethics. There are several practical difficulties that are evident when it comes to discussing, or rather NOT discussing morality and moral values. There is a sort of background assumption in place that any ethical discussion concerning development must be grounded in universal, secular, moral values, but these are not givens and are hardly ever made explicit. Debates about moral values and ethics are entangled, and enmired in perspectives that take their moral groundings to be non-negotiable and, therefore, relativistic local or religious-based values are assumed to have priority. But having a particular moral viewpoint is not the same as engaging in ethical practice. The fact that many of the leading development practitioner organisations are themselves faith-based and motivated by religious convictions further complicates any effort to democratically debate and justify the values underpinning development practice.

The questions of development ethics raise for me the most general of sociological questions - how to think about solidarity and social progress, amidst the confusions and crises of capitalism? The human development paradigm offers richer ground for critically

questioning economism, globalisation and consumerism and considering the difference between ‘helping’ and charity to more egalitarian concerns about rights, citizenship and the wellbeing, freedoms and capabilities of individuals, but they offer less in the way of thinking about how to resolve social disintegration and conflicts. Environmental limits and sustainable development have not been sufficiently addressed, despite their urgency and centrality to the social questions concerning inequality and the distribution of goods, benefits and harms and the reliance of such distributions on social solidarity and cohesion.

The development ethics state of the art – seven domains for development ethics

Drydyk and Keleher (2017) situate the relevance of development ethics in the space of ‘public reason’ – development ethics includes ethical judgments about right or desirable and wrong or undesirable development decisions and practices, and the justifications for those judgments. Development ethics concerns how state and non-state power is exercised, legitimated and limited in development choices. It is especially concerned in cases where power asymmetries are strong. ‘Public reasoning’ is used to evaluate what is considered justifiable and what limits there are on justifiability. However, value pluralism exists everywhere and different people resort to different moral tools and rules of thumb when making their justifications, and they may orient their justifications towards endorsement, critique or transformation (radical or reformist) of the status quo (Khoo, 2018).

In the face of these growing challenges, ethical considerations remain central in development theory and practice. Here we can draw upon a new comprehensive resource on development ethics (Drydyk & Keleher, 2018). Drydyk and Keleher’s handbook identifies seven core aspects that we can focus on, in addressing development ethics in theory and practice. These are: a well-being focus, equitable benefit-sharing, empowerment for free participation, environmental sustainability, promotion of human rights and rights-consistent cultural freedom, and responsible conduct that upholds integrity and counters corruption. The handbook addresses each of these seven ethical domains in detail and provides an excellent introduction to each of these specific topics.

A Human Development and Capabilities Approach to securitization

The concept of human development, and Sen’s reconceptualisation of development as freedom (Sen, 1999), adopted and partly institutionalised in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has extended a liberal theory which also powerfully challenges the

dominant instrumental ideologies of neoliberalism and securitisation. Jolly (2003) notes that there are similarities between these different approaches, but also very considerable differences. The 'human development paradigm' was conceived to enable thinking to move away from economic assessments of development that treat people as means for economic growth rather than as the point of development itself. Taking 'people' as the ultimate end of development, the human development paradigm views development as a process through which to expand human choices and strengthen capabilities. 'People', the first *Human Development Report* (HDR) argued, 'are the real wealth of a nation' (UNDP, 1990: 2010).

Shani (2012) argues that human development merely continues the problems of instrumentalism without actually disrupting it. The human development approach may serve to make the otherwise 'disposable' poor or 'surplus populations' (Duffield, 2007) marketable through depoliticised forms of 'empowerment' that essentially play a stabilising and containment function by giving individuals the 'capabilities' needed to meet their basic needs themselves within the context of a market economy. Shani argues that there is too little difference between neoliberal and human development approaches since both share a fundamental belief in the centrality of individual choices and agree that there is a need for 'well-functioning markets' to enable individuals to exercise these choices (Jolly 2003: 109). Most believe that there are few alternatives to neoliberal globalisation (ul Haq, 1995). The best that can be done is 'adjustment with a human face', the option for the poor in times of social and economic change (Jolly, 2003). Like neoliberals, human development advocates share the preference for liberal institutions - democratic governance, rule of law and the recognition of basic human rights are seen as the most preferable framework for the smooth functioning of markets and, therefore, the expansion of individual choices (Shani, 2012: 105).

This article suggests that the human development and capabilities approach (HDCA) aligns with rights and offers ethical approaches to thinking about and doing development that foreground the treatment of people as 'agents', not 'patients' (Sen 1999: 288; Saha, 2012). Development ethics offers an important bulwark against asymmetric, securitised and exceptionalist practice, re-orienting the evaluative space towards humans whose wellbeing and capabilities matter in their own right.

Conclusions – focusing on responsibilities

The audience in Irish development education and practice will likely find the section on 'responsibility' in Drydyk and Keleher's excellent new handbook on development ethics most

relevant. This covers the particular ethical responsibilities that attach to development agents – whether that concerns individual development practitioners, organisations or governments. Development ethics helps us think clearly about how responsibilities are assigned, ensuring that important responsibilities are not assigned to the wrong actors. Drydyk and Keleher also specify an ‘omnibus responsibility’ which entails state actors’ responsibility to identify and carry out the responsibilities of aid, while individual practitioners must navigate conflicting responsibilities with integrity. The omnibus responsibility to ‘act with integrity’ requires all development actors to avoid and combat corruption (Drydyk and Keleher, 2018: 333). This requires the capacity and space for critical reflection and developing professional capabilities to navigate an increasingly complex and mixed terrain. It has been suggested in this article that opportunities, experience, spaces and professional ethics expertise needed to carry out these responsibilities with integrity are currently too rare or absent and arguably need some strategic commitments and investments to be made in promoting development ethics.

In identifying our ethical responsibilities and working to fulfil them appropriately, it remains crucial that all stakeholders in the development community are able to ask themselves the most fundamental questions and distinguish between worthwhile and desirable or harmful and undesirable development. The challenges are considerable and the four trends of securitisation, privatisation, NGO-isation and declining internationalism have exacerbated ethical pressures and potential ethical dilemmas.

Larger development organisations like official donor agencies, multilateral financial institutions and large NGOs should make more room for ethical discussion and debate instead of closing down such spaces and may consider employing designated professional development ethicists and conduct explicit development ethics training. Development educators, especially higher and advanced educators and professional educators in universities, particularly in the fields of economics, public policy, international relations and peace and humanitarian studies, together with development studies, can ensure that there are explicit spaces devoted to development ethics in the curricula that they teach.

For example, I have revised Bachelors and Masters courses that I teach in order to make ethical dimensions and dilemmas very explicit. As a research mentor and supervisor, I can advise research applicants and researchers to incorporate development ethics into the ethics sections of their research proposals. Why shouldn’t development practitioners hold themselves to higher and more consistent ethical practices and standards, especially since many allied

health, medical and scientific practitioners and researchers associated with development studies and their organisations already incorporate ethics considerations and protocols. Not every organisation will be large enough to justify employing a fulltime professional development ethicist, or have the freedom that an academic has to incorporate ethical reflection and deliberation into their practice, but every organisation can consider what kind of ethics training and what ethical discussion and deliberation spaces they might need. In a world of increasing ethical complexity, challenges and dilemmas, ethical responsibilities are critical necessities and we cannot afford to continue ignoring development ethics as if such responsibilities are irrelevant, tangential or an ‘unaffordable luxury’.

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