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Violence and conflict undermining UN’s Millennium Development Goals

Holly McGarr and Webster Zambara

WITH the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) reaching their final deadline next year, it is becoming increasingly obvious that countries in conflict or those emerging from conflict have largely been left behind.

While the narrative of the MDGs helped to galvanise development efforts and guide development priorities, a recent World Bank analysis estimates only 20 percent of fragile and conflict-affected countries have met the poverty target.

Sadly, this problem is most pronounced in Africa. Most of the 1.5 billion people living in fragile states across the world are in Africa, with one in four African countries presently suffering from the effects of armed conflict. The struggles that the Central African Republic, Libya, Somalia, Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan and South Sudan, among others, have experienced illustrate that there can be no development without peace, stability and security. This situation has been worsened by the rise in acts of terrorism perpetrated by Boko Haram in west Africa and al Shabaab in east Africa.

If the global development agenda is to have a tangible impact on people’s lives, it’s important that discussions about what will come after the MDGs recognise the negative effect of conflict. One of the main outcomes of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 was the creation of a 30-member Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that has been negotiating on what should be included in the post-2015 development agenda since January last year.

The group released its report in July. The goals and targets that the report proposes can still be improved on as some important targets are excluded. For example, the targets do not mention increasing access to conflict resolution mechanisms to mediate and reconcile tensions, grievances and disputes within society. This is an important measure to give people and communities alternatives to violence that could be further reinforced by education on a culture of non-violence and peace.

A target on perceptions of safety, confidence and trust in the security forces and the police would also ensure that outcomes reflect the reality on the ground where in some cases they violate the rights of the civilians that they should protect. Achieving goals that are purely quantitative will not have real impact unless a change in perceptions is felt at a grassroots level too. Comprehensive, measurable goals are required in order to achieve democratic, sustainable and inclusive societies that truly leave no-one behind.

Africa has added its voice to the emerging consensus among the international community that peace and security should be seen as the fourth pillar to development. The African Common Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda pronounced that continent-wide consultations spearheaded by the UN Economic Commission for Africa recognised that peace and security is “essential for the achievement of the continent’s development aspirations, particularly for countries affected by conflict and those emerging from conflict.”

This notion has long been a feature of South Africa’s foreign policy and approach to development. The White Paper on South Africa’s Foreign Policy, “Building a better world: The diplomacy of Ubuntu,” affirms that “peace, stability and security are essential preconditions for development”. South Africa’s foreign policy has consistently recognised that its national interests are intrinsically linked to Africa’s stability, unity and prosperity, and has therefore been actively involved since 1994 in supporting peacebuilding on the continent.

The inclusion of conflict prevention in the post-2015 agenda is therefore in keeping with our current development approach and with our experience as a country emerging from conflict. As President Jacob Zuma remarked at the 66th UN General Assembly, “Development and security are two-sided of the same coin. The best way to ensure both is through good governance and the promotion of democratic values in all societies.”

The MDGs did not take into consideration the different development requirements in conflict-affected countries. For example, while in 2010 the MDGs were considered achievable for Syria, after the 1991 war in 2014, the country is now unlike any of the goals. The recent call of violence in northern Iraq as well as the Gaza Strip will certainly leave the Middle East more fragile and insecure.

If development is to overcome the serious obstacles of war and instability, lessons of the MDGs need to be left in the new framework. A goal on peace and security will ensure the post-2015 development agenda will garner support and attention in the nexus between peace and development. The role of conflict in preventing development must be addressed, then the SDGs should be geared towards the same results as the MDGs in countries and communities affected by violence and conflict.

McGarr is a project co-ordinator with the United Nations Association in South Africa. Zambara is a senior project lead at the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation in Cape Town.

Only 20 percent of fragile and conflict-affected countries have met the poverty target.
Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality

4. **Reduce Childhood Mortality**

5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat infectious diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global development partnership
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. No Poverty
2. Zero Hunger
3. Good Health and Well-being
4. Quality Education
5. Gender Equality
6. Clean Water and Sanitation
7. Affordable and Clean Energy
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth
9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
10. Reduced Inequalities
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
12. Responsible Consumption and Production
13. Climate Action
14. Life Below Water
15. Life on Land
16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
17. Partnerships for the Goals
1. What is the situation?
Africa

- 2nd biggest Continent
- 1 Billion people
- 500 million children
South Africa

- Approximately 54 million people
- Approximately 20 million children
- Approximately 500 000 Disabled children
Childhood Deaths
Ratio Adults/Children

18
* Trauma a leading cause childhood deaths
* Approximately 1 million deaths annually

1. **Motor Vehicle Crashes**
   - Pedestrian (70%)
   - Passengers (30%)

2. **Drowning**

3. **Burns**
WHO

TRAUMA NUMBER 1 KILLER IN 2020
World Health Assembly

* Decade of Action:

BRINGING DEATHS DOWN BY 50%

in the decade 2011 – 2021

* Currently (2017) no reduction as yet...
Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020

National activities

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International coordination of activities

TRL supports the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020
Burden of Injury in the U.S., 2006

- Deaths: 179,065
- Hospital Discharges: 2,968,000
- Emergency Department Visits*: 42,400,000
- Episodes of Injuries Reported: 93,566,000

Each number is a vulnerable child  

MDG 4
Statistics

- Annually 8000 children die as a result of unintentional injuries
- Child in SA 25 times more chance to end up in hospital as compared to the UK
How can we make the world safer for children?

What can we do to reduce childhood deaths?
1. No children under the age of 8 ever alone in traffic

2. All children strapped in
First recorded Car Crash in Africa

Maitland level crossing on 1st October 1903
A new Darracq, driven by Charles Garlick hit on the rails by the Johannesburg Express

Since then over half a million people died in South Africa alone
SA ranked worst out of 36 in global road safety report

Over 17,000 deaths a year
47 DEATHS A DAY
Overcrowding
Kommetjie Road
Safety Belt usage
Traffic related injuries in children
Children (n= 313)

Red Cross Children's Hospital

- No seatbelt: 89
- Child Car Seat: 8
- Seatbelt: 3
Conclusion

Strap your children in!!
Do you drive as safe with your children as this guy with his eggs?
John Adams in transport

John Adams on arrival
Background

200 - 300 children passengers annually

Promote buckling up and save a child’s life

Y Ferreira,1 MB ChB, DipPEC, DipForMed (Clin); A B van As,2 MB ChB, MMed, MBA, FCS (SA), PhD

1 Trauma Unit, Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital, and Division of Paediatric Surgery, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Cape Town, South Africa

2 Childsafe South Africa, Cape Town; Trauma Unit, Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital, and Division of Paediatric Surgery, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Cape Town, South Africa

Corresponding author: A B van As (sebastian.vanas@uct.ac.za)
Safety Belt use in Cape Town

Fig. 1. Distribution of passengers in RTC cases (n=4 981) at RCWMCH over a 25-year period (1991 - 2016).
Childsafe

Travel Safe Poster

Travelling Safely
Keep our children safe in traffic

- Needs 100% protection
- Grasp
- Takes first steps when holding on
- Turns, croaks and handles
- Pulls objects into reach

0-2 years

- Needs to
- Keep children safe in the presence
- Keep children safe and secure in the
- Use safety straps or safety belts
- Keep your family to consider

2-4 years

- No idea of danger
- Imbibes others
- Quick & uncontrolled
- Adventurous
- Very active

Never leave a child alone in the car.

- Do not hold a child on your lap
- Use car seat or a booster seat
- Reclined
- Provide entertainment for children
- Keep children away from dangerous vehicles

4-6 years

- Fearless
- Exposed to the thought of danger
- Moves fast
- Sheet-latent

- Don't
- Wash and wash children in traffic
- Keep hands on the steering wheel
- Keep children near the road
- Have a safe play area
- Have a safe play area

1-4 years

- Overestimates own ability
- Unable to judge speed and distance
- Plays away from home
- Less focus on self, more focus on others
- Still needs supervision

5-8 years

-Cycles in single file
- Keep children near the road
- Use safety seats
- Use safety seats

8-10 years

- Takes risks
- Shows off to others
- Strongly influenced by friends/daredevils
- Impatient
- Often breaks laws

Always wear a seatbelt before getting on or off.

Fundamental Principles:
- Drive sober
- Drive slowly
- No children
- Children
- Drive sober
- Drive slowly
- No children

www.childsafe.org.uk

Childsafe
Childsafe
**Child Vulnerability**

### Travelling Safely

**Keep our children safe in traffic**

**0 - 2 years**
- Needs 100% protection
- Sits up
- Takes first steps when holding on
- Turns knobs and handles
- Puts objects into mouth

- Keep children safe on the pavement until crossing the street.
- Car safety seats for newborns should face backwards.

**2 - 4 years**
- No idea of danger
- Imitates others
- Quick & unpredictable
- Adventurous
- Very active

- Never leave a child alone in the car.
- Do not hold child on your lap. Use car seat or seatbelt correctly - even for short trips.

**Supervise children at all times.**
- Use safety straps on shopping trolleys.
- Plan your journey to consider your child’s needs.
- Supervise children at all times.
- Provide entertainment for children while driving.
- Use child safety door locks.
- Keep children away from windows and doors.
Child Vulnerability

4 - 6 years
- Fearless
- Explores with no thought of danger
- Moves fast
- Smart/observant

5 - 6 years
- Never let a child stand in the car.
- Have a safe play area away from traffic.
- Watch and teach children in traffic.
- Helmets should be worn on any bike.*
- Check for children behind vehicles before moving.

6 - 8 years
- Overestimates own abilities
- Unable to judge speed and distance
- Plays away from home
- Less focus on self, shows concern for others
- Still needs supervision

6 - 8 years
- Watch that child near the road.
- Stop children chasing vehicles.
- Get out of the car on the pavement side.
- Never put small children alone in the back of a bakkie.*

8 - 10 years
- Takes risks
- Shows-off to friends
- Strongly influenced by friends/dares
- Impatient

8 - 10 years
- Always check for traffic.
- Cycle in single file.
- Always cross at a marked crossing.
- Wait for the train to stop before getting on or off.
General Principles

Fundamental Principles

1. Set an example - always wear your seatbelt
2. Drive slowly near children.
3. Cellphone use when driving causes crashes.
4. Don’t overload!
5. Everyone watch out for children near traffic.

childsafe
www.childsafe.org.za

CAPFSA
CHILD ACCIDENT PREVENTION FOUNDATION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
Tel: 031 5498888

Safe Kids

DEPARTMENT of COMMUNITY SAFETY

DEPARTMENT of HEALTH
Economy
Minister Ben Martins (2014)

- Cost of Car Accidents in South Africa: 306 Billion Rand
- Total health budget: 134 Billion Rand
Real Disasters
Estimated global number of deaths annually

- **Terrorists**: 5,000
- **Armed Conflict**: 370,000
- **Motorcar Crashes**: 1,400,000

MDG 4
Conclusions

• *There is little as sad as losing a child in traffic*

• *All traffic crashes are preventable*

• *We have to work together to fight this forgotten pandemic*
Our world is created mainly by adults for adults and children often get a hard deal!

Child Safety starts with all of us!
“A better society will and must be measured by the happiness and welfare of the children at once the most vulnerable citizens in any society and the greatest of our treasures”