Social Development and Human Security
Issues and Perspectives

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Section 1
Gone are the Old Days

It wasn't too long ago that children went around in their neighborhoods with no fear and the parents were satisfied with two monitoring indicators – a time in the evening before which they had to return home, and (occasional watch on) the companions with whom they intermingled. With our current perceptions on safety (of children), one wonders who had protected the children in the old days – from all potential 'unsafe' events? Or, did the society have some characteristics that did not allow breeding of such events? With regards to the children, rather unfortunately, 'safety' and 'protection' measures in many societies these days are largely undertaken by individual families. Total cost of all these measures – visible and hidden – may be rising at exponential rates; and yet, no one can vouch for increases in the safety level.

Not too far back, we were commuting in the city, or traveling abroad without any fear of 'non-accidental' death and without having to lose our dignity at the hands of 'intelligence' personnel, whose levels of intelligence may be questioned, not to mention of the ill-manners that often aggravate the pains from the encounters. For a while, the imposed reality of a strong trade-off between the two (cost arising from imposed security and attainment of safety) was accepted with faithful submission. The number of skeptics is now on increase.

Parts of the South Asian region have undergone fast changes in the social fabrics defining responsibilities towards the old generation, and changes within each society have not been linear either. People in some other regions are constantly in conflict with the prevalence of extended families and the obligations (often perceived to be liabilities) tagged to such institutions. In societies a step ahead in the break-away, there is amplified voice on 'rights' of 'old people' and the 'obligation' of the 'state' (not the children of the old people), at times, translated into a political demand for old-age pension and increase in resources allocated for other supports to old people. There are also instances of renegotiations for win-win arrangements between the old and the new generation to support each other, especially when both spouses of the young generation work and demand childcare services from the old.

Amidst all these, relative roles of state, markets and non-market transactions often get blurred. More importantly, such roles are changing, often impinging on the character of each of these institutions, including changes in the organizational structure within each. What had, to some and for a while, been perceived as a supra body able to act for the benefit of its constituency, is now increasingly perceived as a toll-collector, often strangling the very life on which its existence (often deemed parasitic) depends. Thus, questions are often raised on predatory role of the state – and at times, voices are raised for protection from certain parts of the state machinery as well.

With increased globalization, power of agencies that run the government is no more bound within the very nation it is meant to serve. This runs contrary to the very idea of propagating 'democracy' and 'making national governments accountable' that are often claimed to underlie the very globalization effort – at least in the political arena! Some of the outcomes are now interpreted to make a case for the so called 'clash of civilizations', where 'civilizations' are perceived across territory (east and west), religion (Islam and the rest) – even though one observes alliances that cut across those boundaries and clashes within each to be no less significant! And one wonders how the resultant approach towards human security will alleviate human insecurity amongst the majority of the population in the developing world!

Several changes in the knowledge domain are also worth noting. There was a time when people used limited sets of vocabulary and professional engagements generally confined to people of the same profession, thus requiring less cross-fertilization of vocabularies. With cross-boundary exchanges and multiple agencies vying for limited resources, the knowledge/discourse on social protection, security and the rest have often got hijacked of their initial content. On the surface, the latter has led to standardized connotation of meanings to different words/constructs (in the guise of 'global knowledge'), making it difficult for alternative ideas to enter the discourse. And beneath the surface, multiple interpretations of the same term exist – often brought out of the hat selectively to suit one's purpose. So rampant is the practice, that the distinctions between 'truths' and 'lies' are no more commonly shared. And ironically, 'objectivity' has been reduced to few numbers and we have increasingly become captives of our own constructs, and the segment (of our society) expected to show the way forward continues to reproduce the sectarian image of the real world.

With those disjointed reflections, the sections to follow will examine current perspectives on social development, social protection and human security, and reconstructs some of the thoughts to suggest ways into future – obviously with the hope that the tide is going to turn. There will be obvious bias towards elementary economic tools due to author's limitations; and questions will be raised for the readers to define future course of actions.

Section 2
Lost amidst Semantics – social development and security

One may identify at least four different terms that refer to sets of issues pertaining to some sort of social protection, which have good deal of overlaps. These are 'social policy', 'social development', 'safety net' and 'social protection'. Two other agendas often find their ways through – that of 'governance' and 'human rights', before the canvass gets further complicated with the entry of 'human security'. This section briefly outlines current (dominant) perspectives on some of these concepts before untangling some of the issues (in later sections) – primarily from the perspective of a student of economics and development studies.

On Social Development and Social Protection

The organizers note that "Social protection is defined as the set of policies and programs designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting efficient labor markets, diminishing people's exposure to risks, and enhancing their capacity to protect themselves against hazards and interruption/loss of income"[1]. Social protection as defined above is restricted by the goals it sets (and how each of these goals are interpreted) and the instruments it identifies (efficient labor market and capacity building). As for who are to be protected, the definition is all inclusive (people)[2]. The above definition however includes protections from 'poverty and vulnerability', 'exposure to risks', and from 'hazards and interruptions/loss of income' – most of which are economic! Even though no explicit mention is made about the actor, policies are perceived to be 'public' and the government is presumed to be the sole actor/provider. Increasingly however there is recognition of non-public providers/actors as well.[3]

Social Policy flagship conference, organized by the World Bank as a follow-up to the Social Development Strategy[4], identifies social policy in the following terms (rephrased by the author):

> Social policy is defined as a series of public policies designed to promote social development, undertaken by a variety of actors through a range of instruments. Social development is envisaged as a natural complement to economic development. Social policies are aimed at three levels:
> - promoting equality of opportunity to benefit individuals/improve wellbeing by increasing assets and capabilities (micro-level),
> - equality of agency and institutional reform to benefit groups by increasing latter's capacity to participate in the development process (meso level), and
> - horizontal and vertical social integration to benefit society so that peaceful governance and management of transition are possible (macro level).

It is important to note that the boundaries of 'social' and 'economic' are not always distinct, and often policies designed to tinker with the economy are termed 'social policy' merely because the rationale for such intervention is rooted in social concerns. Thus, one may generally conclude that social development, social protection and safety nets embody a set of objectives whose rationales are normally rooted in social concerns[5]. The

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1 This is from ADB, http://www.adb.org/SocialProtection/faq.asp#1. One finds this definition to be widely quoted in the literature.

2 To a layman like me, the literal meaning of social protection is protection (of those affected) from 'social evils'.

3 An ILO definition accommodates 'collective arrangement' in such provisioning. See van Ginneken (1999) quoted in Deveraux and Sabates-Wheeler (2004). Barrientos et al (2004) notes that as an approach social protection includes 'all interventions from public, private and voluntary organisations and informal networks to support communities, households and individuals in their efforts to prevent, manage and overcome risks and vulnerabilities'. Shepherd (2004) reminds us that informal networks include individuals transferring resources to friends and family.

4 Other collaborators include bilateral donors - DfID, Finland, Norway and Sweden.

5 One may include security concern to be another element of social concern. It is worth noting that there may be long term economic rationale of such policies as well. An analogy may be drawn with the way

concepts, as these are currently understood, pre-judge the instruments as well as the processes by which these objectives are realized.

While discussing social protection, Devereaux and Sabates-Wheeler 2004 observes that "the core components and boundaries of social protection are far from agreed, and different stakeholders perceive social protection in very different ways". They provide four examples:

(i)   old-style social welfare provided to "deserving poor" (widows, orphans, people with disability);

(ii)   social safety nets, or interventions that cushion the poor against production and consumption shocks, such as food aid for drought –affected farmers;

(iii)   a very broad approach, including education and health subsidies, job creation and microcredit programs, as well as safety nets for groups that may be vulnerable to shocks; and

(iv)   a more "political" or "transformative" approach to include such concerns as, equity, empowerment and economic, social and cultural rights, rather than confining to targeted income and consumption transfers.

What is considered above to be different ways may also be perceived as different stages in the evolution of policies towards social protection, particularly since the national governments took charge of the affairs. Governance existed long before the nation states and 'governments' emerged, and various mechanisms of transferring resources from one segment of the society to another prevailed. If one may generalize with obvious caveats, the following steps in the evolutionary path may be identified:

- The earliest form of obligation was possibly to the children – both due to biological attachment and due to urge to expand one's territory within the relevant human society;

- Obligations to other members of the clan[6], who would be natural allies during times of disasters and attack by enemies;

- Narrow self-interest required sustenance of labor reproduction and called for supports to the poor by their 'masters' when needs arose[7];

- Targeted support programs by kings and fiefs to maintain social harmony, isolate rebel groups from supports and avoid other forms of 'disorder' and social discontent;

- Obligation to take care of society's old, children and the disabled (and occasionally women) gradually emerged with increased surplus and civility, in some instances (e.g., towards the disabled), much later than organized entities

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development literature identifies social sectors (such as, education and health), many aspects of which are economic in nature, given that such services are exchanged in the markets responsive to economic policies.
[6] In rural Bangladesh, it would go by the name *Bari*, which is a cluster of households who came from the same ancestor. Relative financial and social standings of the families within the Bari/clan may vary widely, even though they tend to join hands in social and political spaces against other entities, including government agencies.
[7] Kautilya's Arthasastra, written during 321-296 B.C., mentions of flexible crop sharing rules so that the cultivators do not face undue hardships. Mookerji (1940) cites Moreland's Cambridge History of India to describes the mediaeval India (extending up to 15th century): "the aim of administration was to keep peasants to land, not to turn them off it."

in the forms of governments and/or multilateral agencies engaged in 'social protection';

-   With nation states expanding their functions into development activities, especially after the WW II, part of these obligations were perceived to be the responsibilities of the national governments[8]; and the coverage expanded ever since.

The four types identified by Devereaux and Sabates-Wheeler 2004, perceived as cumulative coverage[9], define the gradual expansion of the government sector, having increased focus on poor and the socially excluded ones. The transitions within a nation state went side-by-side with the changes at the global level. What was observed at a community level got translated into a national level mediated by a system of 'governance', and finally got epitomized in obligations amongst nations channeled through aid arrangements and later with a more focused poverty reduction strategy. While inter-governmental transfers had once dominated supports to country-level 'social protection' measures, there has been shift towards non-government agencies, and subsequently an increased emphasis on social capital has been evident. It is now recognized that "the traditional mix of social policy—borrowed from OECD countries and consisting of state interventions in health, education and safety nets—is necessary but inadequate for developing … economies". Based on an argument of non-existence of "state capacity, legitimacy of public institutions, and clearly established citizenship rights and obligations" in many less developed countries, it is also argued that "the key to socially sustainable development is the creation of inclusive and accountable institutions and the strengthening of social capital across socio-cultural groups and trust between state and citizens to create socially cohesive societies."

In summary, social protection measures include transfer of resources from one segment of the (national or global) society to another (less fortunate ones), quite often mediated through the governments and international agencies. Such transfers may originate due to pious intention of fulfilling social and moral obligations (be it recognition of human rights or not). It may also arise due to protecting long term interest of the 'providers'. This takes us to the second broad theme of the title, that of 'human security'.

Where does Human Security fit in?

Human security within the broader scope of social protection is often claimed to have its root in the concept of 'human development' credited to the initiatives of UNDP during early 1990s[10] – even though concerns that poverty and deprivation in the developing world could threaten "common security" dates back to the early 1980s. The post-9/11 concerns for security have added new spices to the discourse reviving past elements of

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[8] Nation states in the developing world in their current forms emerged out of their colonial past, and the separation in many regions broadly coincides with the end of WW II.

[9] That is, each type includes the programs embedded in preceding types.

[10] UNDP's Human Development Report of 1994 included a section on human security called "Redefining Security: The Human Dimension". See also Bajpai (2000).

'military security' that now tends to threaten the more humane concept of 'human security'.

Discussion in the preceding sub-section noted that there were concerns to maintain social harmony and stability of social and political systems that rationalized undertaking of social protection measures. One may find ample evidence in the history of the Indian sub-continent dating back to the time of Kautilya. I am sure it is no less abundant in other regions in the world. Formal recognition and concerted efforts towards addressing the problems emerged with new institutions undertaking global responsibility. The constitution of ILO, written almost a century ago, noted that peace is impossible without social justice. UN Charter of 1945 mentions development as a means to have peace. The recent Agenda for Development, 1997, also clearly states that 'development cannot be attained in the absence of peace and security'. And the post-9/11 discourse is widely known due to the courtesy of satellite-supported electronic media.

Francine Mestrum's "Two concepts of security - Some thoughts on the merging of the development and the security agendas" and Bajpai (2000) provide lucid narrations of how the concept of security was redefined in non-military terms and made inroad into the development discourse.[11] Beginning in the 1970s, the Club of Rome group produced a series of volumes on the "world problematique" which were premised on the idea that there is "a complex of problems troubling men of all nations: poverty…degradation of the environment; loss of faith in institutions; uncontrolled urban spread; insecurity of employment; alienation of youth; rejection of traditional values; and inflation and other monetary and economic disruptions." Even though the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues (chaired by Olof Palme)[12] during the 1980s focused on military issues and national security, it acknowledged that security in the Third World was in addition threatened by "poverty and deprivation, by economic inequality." Calls for new thinking in security matters grew rapidly with the end of the Cold War.

It was only in the early 1990s that an explicitly human security perspective was articulated with some rigor. In 1991, the Stockholm Initiative on Global Security and Governance issued a call for "Common Responsibility in the 1990's" which referred to "challenges to security other than political rivalry and armaments" and to a "wider concept of security, which deals also with threats that stem from failures in development, environmental degradation, excessive population growth and movement, and lack of progress towards democracy." Four years later, the Commission on Global Governance's report, *Our Global Neighborhood*, echoed the Stockholm Initiative's words on security: "The concept of global security must be broadened from the traditional focus on the security of states to include the security of people and the security of the planet."

The 1994 UNDP concept of 'human security', which was introduced in parallel with 'human development', was not linked to territories and the military, but was meant to have meaning in the daily lives of people. That the welfare of individuals rather than simply the macro-economy had to be central in development thinking and policy was

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[11] The paragraph is largely borrowed from Menstrum and Bajpai (2000).
[12] Reference is made to the "common security" report.

explicitly put on the table by Mr. Mahbub ul Haq. This was also the time, when, prompted by the Canadian initiative, a series of basic questions were raised: security for whom, security for which values, how much security, security from what threats, and security by what means[13]?

Voice was also raised urging the international community to look for a new paradigm which would shift priority from the security of the state to the security of people - to human security[14]. Perception on what constituted 'security' however differed. Arnold Wolfers considered security as "the absence of threat to acquired values"! This led to additional questions that remained unresolved - security for whom and security of which values; and security from what threats and security by what means. The UNDP's Human Development Report of 1994 identified seven values of human security to understand localized threats: threats to economic security; food security; health security: environmental security: personal security; community security; and political security. In addition a number of global or transnational threats were identified (whose spread or effects go well beyond any given national boundaries): population growth; growing disparities in global income; increasing international migration; various forms of environmental decay; drug trafficking; and international terrorism.

Interesting enough, the traditional security discourse was greatly influenced by all the developments around human development and human security, and had undergone transformations (see Debiel). The traditional notion of state security was considered outdated due to several reasons: it was based on inter-state conflicts, ignored intra-state violence, statehood was considered permanent/consolidated rather than undergoing changes, and the vulnerability of consolidated states to non-military threats was not adequately appreciated. Debiel notes that "As a consequence of these weaknesses, security studies as well as peace and conflict research broadened their definitions to include non-military threats in new concepts of extended or comprehensive security. Within this second generation of security concepts, however, the state and the international system remained the crucial points." He also noted that third generation of security concepts introduced the individual as a normative and analytical category. "This not only broadened the horizontal axis of security threats but went vertically beyond and below the state by focusing on those who are affected by violence in their daily lives." Introducing the human security perspective has changed the security discourse in two ways:

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[13] There were however substantial differences between the UNPD approach and the Canadian initiative. The Canadian- and Norwegian-led meeting of middle powers (in Lysoen, Norway in May 1999) listed ten items as crucial for the human security agenda — anti-personnel landmines, small arms, children in armed conflict, international humanitarian and human rights law, international criminal proceedings, exploitation of children, safety of humanitarian personnel, conflict prevention, trans-national organized crime, and, lastly, resources for development — only relates to economic development directly.

[14] Reference is made to the Independent Commission on Human Security co-chaired by Nobel Prize winner in economics, Amartya Sen and former UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata. The Commission also argued that "instead of putting up walls of fear and resorting only to the strategies of power politics, we should seek ways to focus even more on promoting in practice shared values of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect and shared responsibility which can unite rather than divide North and South, rich and poor, religious and secular, us and them."

- Attention is now drawn to new forms of violence beyond regular fighting in wars, such as those linked to social and socio-economic problems.
- Human security tries to protect core human rights as an ultimate goal of security policy and has strongly influenced the debate on humanitarian issues and the prevention of violent conflicts.

A widely acknowledged merger of the two discourses articulated human security in terms of 'freedom' - 'freedom from want'; of 'freedom from fear'; and 'freedom from despair';[15] and view realizing these as shared responsibility. The marriage between human development and human security however ran into difficulties with the twists in security perspectives following the 9/11 incident, and particularly after the US invasion of Iraq. Since then, differences between the US and the UN perspectives have often surfaced in the media. The achievements in building consensus around 'human security' are now threatened by a new force trying to reverse things to 'old style' national security. In a recent background paper prepared for the US Congress by James Jay Carafano, and Janice A. Smith recommend that the Administration and Congress should:

Protect the use of "national security" and "national sovereignty" in international statements, documents, and treaties;

Discourage use of the term "human security" in international deliberations unless it is defined within the boundaries of nation-states and sovereignty;

Retain the term "human rights" as the international standard for moral behavior by the state toward its citizens, and

Rely, in legislative enactments, agency regulations, and case decisions, exclusively on human rights instruments that have been officially adopted and ratified by the United States.

Obviously the debate over 'human security' is not over yet. The Human Security Report 2005 partly reflects the dilemma that acknowledges of many adherents to a broad concept of human security[16], and yet, chooses to use the narrow concept for "both pragmatic and methodological reasons". If one assumes a close correspondence of security with trade regimes and with international flow of resources negotiated through non-market means, the world community is certainly going through interesting changes, and any prediction on the future of humanity is bound to have large degree of error!

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[15] Mrs. Mary Robinson's speech at the closing Banquet of the Oxford Analytica International Conference on "Protection and Empowerment: Connecting Human Rights and Human Security", held at Oxford, September 18, 2003. One may recall President Franklin Roosevelt's Four Freedoms: of speech and expression, to worship God in his or her way, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.

[16] As described by the Report, the broad concept argues for a threat agenda that "should include hunger, disease and natural disasters", as well as violence, going beyond war, genocide and terrorism. The report also mentions that "in its broadest formulations the human security agenda also encompasses economic insecurity and 'threats to dignity'."

Captivated by Indices

The account of the evolution of concepts pertaining to human development, social protection and (human) security will remain incomplete if no attempt is made to touch the emerging power of numbers often constructed in the form of indices. I am referring to the numerous numbers that we generate to measure progress (or lack of progress) in various fields, and to assign relative (cardinal) standing of various entities (countries, communities, etc.). We now have the corruption index of the Transparency International[17]. Then there are the governance indices, and more than one agency is competing to get wider acceptance of their constructs. And the subject of social development and human security are no less infested by these indices.

There is a long history of dissatisfaction with such economic indicators as annual growth in gross domestic product or in per capita income. Eventually we have a Human Development index (HDI) that puts the quality of human life at the center of all development initiatives. The latter had further impetus from the drive towards realizing millennium development goals (MDGs). We also have the various measures of poverty that get the center stage in initiatives around poverty reduction strategies (PRS). Of late, we have the human security index, and contributions to fine-tune the indices continue to pour in[18]. It may not come as a surprise if in one of the coming days we find another index suggested aggregating the concerns on social development, measures of social protection undertaken and some concept of human security! The questions however remain – who do these indices serve and what purposes do these serve?

Georges Ifrah has a three volume book on *The Universal History of Numbers*, and in one of those pages he mentions that "numbers … are the very vehicle for traditional myths and legends – and the finest witness to the cultural unity of the human race" (Ifrah 2005). One may not share his view about unity, but no one may deny the power that numbers have in unifying, as well as in dividing people! It is generally acknowledged that all the indices I have referred to above have rather weak analytical basis[19]. Yet, numbers of such kinds do serve certain purpose – so long these are interpreted within the context the numbers are generated. When numbers are used as monitoring indicators tagged to resource allocation (incentives or disincentives), one would expect these numbers to get biased, and that is precisely where the danger lies! Quite unfortunately, in various fields of studies within development studies, the trend is towards reducing all knowledge to 'numbers' that are mechanically generated and quoted – and the '*gigo*'[20] technology has done wonders in reducing once humans to 'artificial intelligence'.

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[17] After several years of being at the bottom of corruption index constructed by the Transparency International, some political parties in Bangladesh are taking solace in getting promoted to third from the bottom position in the recent ranking!

[18] One may recall the engagements of numerous bright and beautiful minds contributing towards fine-tuning the poverty measures!

[19] That is, these are not derived from a consistent analytical framework. The Human Security Report 2005 has listed three core indicators: deaths from political violence, political terror scale and political instability. One does not need to be familiar with the duality theorem in economics to know that the choice of indicators reveals one's preference under given sets of constraints.

[20] Gigo refers to 'garbage in garbage out'.

Section 3
Putting the pieces together

The basic approach

The mainstream economics is often blamed to be too narrow and is alleged to give excessive dosage of 'rationality'. While there is lot to agree with this assertion, I do find the simple constructs in economics to provide powerful insights into issues beyond the usual domain of economics.[21] One of the fundamentals in economics is the proposition that (willing) exchanges take place between two parties only if these are mutually gainful.[22] The basic point of departure in this paper from the current discourse is reasserting this fundamental – a 'contract' is sustainable only if it brings gains to some parties without making anyone worse off.

If you ask how would a kidnapper's demand for ransom or obliging to a local muscle man's (mastaans in Bangla) demand for tolls be explained? I believe, an economist exposed to recent discourse on governance would explain the two types of 'exchanges' as follows:
- A failure in governance enabled a kidnapper to take (illegal and) forcible control of a resource that is of *value to someone*, and exchange of this resource is an *ex post* event.
- A *mastaan* is able to make a credible threat, again due to 'failure in governance', and to a person under threat, the choice is between a state with the threat realized, and one where she/he pays the toll.[23]

It is important to note that the value to someone in exchange may not necessarily be measurable – and that rules out an interpretation exclusively based on financial gains, even though the latter may have significant influence in determining the terms of exchanges. The two examples on the outliers (allegedly turning out to be rather the norm these days) allure to the idea that governance is important in ensuring *certain norms* in every exchange. By the same token, agency entrusted with governance, is empowered to create an additional space to claim a share in the pie as the *mastaans* do. It is therefore no surprise that there is often a divergence between desired norm and realized 'norms'!

Return to the issue of Social Protection and human Security

Concerns for those who are lagging behind or falling out of the system either because of their physical inability (associated with age and physical disability) or because of having inadequate resources to engage in exchanges with the rest of the society, have been there

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[21] Levitt and Dubner (2005) has interesting illustrations.

[22] A loose version that accommodates monopolistic pricing would be happy with fulfilment of Pareto optimality, that is, one party gains without making the party worse off. The set of all such feasible exchanges is identified in economics text book as the 'core', and thus, the search for 'non-null' core.

[23] There are more complicated versions of the story, and one would argue that excessive economic rent accessed by one person or a sector encourages the 'fallouts' to get a share in the pie, and the latter resort to using their only resource – muscle – and produce 'credible threats' that may then be exchanged!

for centuries. At individual, family and community levels, such concerns arose partly because of our obligations to the old generation (e.g., parents), partly for the values of doing good to the weak ones (often such beliefs being boosted with renewed religious commitments), and partly because of pure self-interest. The last element has several aspects – labor bondage, land mortgage, interlinking future obligations with consumption loans or gratis transfers, and maintaining social harmony and security are some. The same set of concerns amplified when matters of governance went beyond families and communities to the nation states, and subsequently came to the jurisdiction of global governance.

Most contributors to the discourse on social protection appear to be unanimous on the purpose of the (social protection) measures. The rationales appear to be: 'to do good to the worse off segment of the human race', and/or 'governments in a civilized society ought to fulfill basic human rights of its citizens'. It is at times difficult to put oneself into the shoes of a 'policy implementer'[24] and come out with ('should do' kind of) prescriptions from some 'conventional wisdom'. Thus, the very act of 'social protection' is recast below, at a more aggregate level, in the light of some basic whys.

Let me highlight the basic elements that commonly characterize social protection measures[25]:
1. Each normally involves a transfer of resource (including assistance of non-financial kind) from one group of the society to another, and the society may include global society[26]. Normally, the transfers are from better-off people to worse-off people.
2. Such transfers may be directly made from the provider to those provided. These may also include transfers mediated through national government and/or inter-governmental and other international agencies.
3. Who are to be provided (target group) are normally related to why the provisions ought to be made. This linkage is quite evident in cases of bilateral (directly from the provider to the recipient) transfers, where unique purpose is more likely to prevail in individual cases. In contrast, it is less transparent in cases of transfers mediated though third party (such as, governments or international agencies), where multiple purposes and additional interests of the mediating agencies diffuse the linkages.
4. Choice of instrument, one would expect, is determined by cost effectiveness (ease) in reaching the targets and realizing the objectives. In reality, however, interests of intermediary agencies may bias such choices.

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[24] I do have a serious problem with the word 'policymaker', who is difficult to locate in the global power hierarchy.

[25] There are services (products) within the broad purview of social protection which initially are provided non-market supports and/or subsidies, but eventually may be marketed due to rising effective demand. Even though there are interesting lessons to be learnt on how markets develop creating win-win situations, that offshoot of social protection is not discussed here.

[26] Sourcing funds from people in developed countries by the INGOs is one kind of such transfer involving global society.

Of the several motives (of the providers) that enable raising funds to be channeled to social protection measures, three were identified earlier: (i) socially rooted obligations (say, towards parents), including those for communities and for future generations; (ii) moral (including religious) grounds (say, towards, disabled and poor); and (iii) personal interest. The last of the three, personal interest of the providers, may have several dimensions, of which two are: (iii a) direct supports to ensure loyalty and to contain any form of discontent or disorder, as in the case of employers providing non-wage supports to the employees; and (iii b) indirect supports extended primarily through state organs to maintain stability of the resource generation regime, which normally are difficult to differentiate from those arising on moral and 'right-based' rationale.

One may find close correspondence of the above typology with the way we often segment society (with obvious overlaps)[27]: a civil society with socially rooted obligations (i); a more organized (often loosely through networks or congregations) under the umbrella of institutionalized religions (ii); a 'private sector' engaged in economic activities producing goods and services (iii a); and the agencies of the government with its bureaucracy under the leadership of either political parties or military rule, and bestowed with the authority to 'govern' (iii b). The correspondence laid out here will be the basis for subsequent discussion looking into future. Prior to that, two qualifications noted below.

For the purpose of clarity, social protection was narrowly identified to include transfer of resources. While the essence of social protection remains so, within a broader definition, social protection measures may aim at creating enabling conditions that will encourage such transfers. Secondly, transfers implicit in these measures may be viewed as social services[28], many of which soon have 'effective demand' and therefore markets for such services arise to accommodate commercial entities. Both these aspects are important in understanding the current discourse on social protection in developing countries, where social protection approach to poverty reduction strategy is gaining legitimacy within the Social Risk Management framework of the World Bank[29]. These issues are not addressed in this paper.

A Fresh set of Hypotheses/Questions

If one accepts the correspondence between the various types of resource transfers and the parties involved in such transfers, several interrelated questions/observations may be raised/ discussed:

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[27] It is not suggested that individuals can be grouped uniquely into the above-mentioned groups. But these cultural and institutional spaces are considered to shape the politics of exchanges whose outcomes all of us live in every day.

[28] The 'social' connotation is because of the purpose, even though many aspects of this service are 'economic' in nature.

[29] Shepherd (2004) notes that the SRM framework enabled a shift in "thinking about livelihood security from a focus on post-crisis safety nets helping poor people to cope, to *ex ante* prevention and mitigation measures across a potentially wide range of public and private decisions and public policy instruments", and this aspect in social protection "makes it a developmental rather than humanitarian approach".

- It was noted that some transfers under 'social protection' are not rooted in self-interest, and yet they may serve the purpose of maintaining peace and stability, and thereby, indirectly assist maintenance of social order and existing power regimes. Often such initiatives from the civil society are tainted with cynicism, but the innovations (such as, microcredit) to empower otherwise excluded groups with resources enable the latter to engage and be worthwhile to be engaged with.
- Roles of the 'civil society' and the 'private sector' have lot more similarity in the modes of disposing assistance. In contrast, one may observe lot more similarity in transfers under the two other regimes (parts of (iii a) and the whole of (iii b)), which generally encourage organized 'rent-seeking' behavior, subsequently introducing new dimensions to 'human security'. Do we need to reassess current resource allocations to 'social protection' through the latter two routes?
- Within the precinct of a national society, can one sufficiently explain the significant role of national government in extending social protection measures? Alternatively phrased, are there agencies within the local society which have sufficient interest in ensuring 'security', peace and stability and would therefore channel resources through government agencies? In many less developed societies, the answer appears to be no. In others where there is a burgeoning middle class, their concerns (for security and stability) are yet to be articulated and realized into actions due to absence of appropriate institutions. In spite of all these, one observes increasing initiatives towards social protection in the developing countries (even if it be far less than that observed in developed countries), and the explanations may lie in transnational exchanges and resource transfers.
- Within the global society, what is prompting one 'government' or agency to extend supports to another country – either through the latter's government or other agencies? Even if one assumes that to be the drive by certain agencies to control and extract resources (primarily energy), one may question the efficacy of the current practices in realizing the objectives.

Facts stylized with a bias

Several trends and lessons, largely drawn from the experiences in the sub-continent, are flagged below.

- Social protection is getting greater emphasis in the donor supported (often alleged to be driven) agenda. The metamorphosis of the 'social resource transfer' mechanism from relief, safety nets, and to social protection is generally observed across the developing world.[30] Development discourse had largely focused on the public sector initiatives in the areas.

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[30] Referring to Bangladesh context, Hossain (2006) notes: "the targeted safety nets received heightened prominence in the PRSP, as one of four 'Strategic Blocks' for tackling poverty. The PRSP stresses that this is not a 'relief mentality', but a 'net-and-ladder' approach to addressing risk, providing social protection specifically to support a process of graduation out of poverty.

- It is clear that accountability mechanism governing the relationship between beneficiaries and intermediaries in public safety nets does not work well through local politics. Wherever bias and corruption are controlled, the credit goes to formal and informal pressures. In case of VGD programs in Bangladesh, formal pressures include regular WFP monitors and the close scrutiny of beneficiary lists by NGO partners. The informal pressure often arise via political space - local political leaders facing persistent pressure to provide for the poor in their roles as factional leaders or patrons that they may use official safety net resources to reward their poor supporters. Given that resources transferred are less than the demand for such resources, safety net programs administered by local elites are now firmly a part of the local political-patronage system.
- Generally the leakages in the transfer system have sustained a large segment of the educated population – either with the government or non-government agencies. The practice is so rampant that condoning corruption has become a norm in many of the developing countries.[31]
- Agencies within the government and the parties vying for control of power within the government are increasingly considered as the predators. While major 'primitive accumulation' at the top may center around procurements, sale of national resources, and/or forceful grabbing of assets whose values are on rise (often facilitated by increase in remittance inflow); control over giving out contracts on resource transfers under 'social protection' measures provide the basis for extending the political patronage system. Politics has taken the central stage encouraging divisions within each segment of the society, and making the local society vulnerable – in both economic and security fronts.
- While traditional social institutions have broken down in many countries, informal supports within the broad canvass of social protection remain significant.
- Innovations are more readily observed within the 'civil society' initiatives; and it is almost absent in public initiatives on 'social protection' measures. A prime example is the microcredit and the Grameen Bank. Another is in the field of non-formal education.
- The new technology of communication and opening up of global service industry have provided additional avenues for getting a share in the world resources; and these have brought new agents on the stage. We may observe increases in flow of resources from the developed countries through non-government routes, along with declines in the share of such flows through religious binds.

An unrelated story to reflect on

Consider a segment in the city with several apartment buildings, and the residents of all these apartments avail water for domestic use (including drinking) from a single source where the latter is controlled by a public sector agency. Supply suddenly gets inadequate – possible reasons being, inadequate resources made available to this agency, mis-governance, or simply because there is no more water in the nature to extract from! Most

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[31] While the discourse on the subject continues to fine-tune instruments, there are lot more innovations for leakages to persist.

of us in similar situations possibly know how the variations in pressure may tamper with the flow of fluids. And so, each of these apartments invest on additional pumps (or more powerful pumps) to get a greater share in the water supply – even though the total supply all these apartments is not going to change! The end result (assuming that all apartment-based clusters are equally powerful): the cost of availing water persistently increases for all, import payments for purchase of pumps (if imported) increases at the national (macro) level, and the amount of resource extraction from nature (including infusion of bad resources into it) increases at the society level for a fixed benefit received (since more diesels/electricity are burnt to get the same amount of water).

Why do such practices then prevail? Some would come and argue that the water supply agency should be handed over to the private sector since all the 'evils' lie with public management! I believe we had enough experience to remain indifferent to such an assertion. There are others amongst economists who would argue that high cost of cooperation (and sustaining such cooperation) among the residents in these apartments (in our example) prevents a less costly solution to the problem. Let us then focus on the cost of association – what are the factors that make forming associations feasible and which actions/factors increase or decrease the size of the cost.

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