



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA



Military Might for Civilian Plight: Defence in Development

Dan Kuwali, LL.D.
Post Doctoral Fellow



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From State Security to Human Security

- ▶ The primary threats to security are not external military aggression. The security challenges are not military threats but human insecurity and human development. Such challenges require political and economic solutions—not military solutions
- ▶ Thus, the primary guarantor of the security of people is not likely a formidable military equipped to deter foreign aggressors but rather favourable social, political, and economic conditions
- ▶ In this case, national security can be a meaningless concept if it does not encompass individual citizen's economic vitality, social justice, ecological stability and human development.

From State Security to Human Security

- Apart from national security, contemporary definition of security encompasses economic vitality, breathable air and portable water, safe from radioactive and toxic hazards, ecological stability and protection against the loss of topsoil that assures food security.
- Ensuring human security requires a seven-pronged approach, addressing economic, food, health, environment, personal, community and political security.
- Although the task of socio-economic upliftment does not belong to the military, 'defence' includes the use of the military as a legitimate policy instrument of state in pursuit of its national interests.
- Development is indispensable to the achievement and maintenance of peace and security. Without development, there can neither be peace nor security.



Contemporary Security Challenges

- ▶ Food security is a major human security challenge in most countries.
- Africa's challenges have less to do with fragmentation of state but more to do with the lack of infrastructure connectivity, especially energy, transportation, irrigation and telecommunications.
 - ▶ Poor infrastructure and lack of economic opportunity traps populations in spirals of poverty and conflict over limited resources.
 - ▶ Many of Africa's armed conflicts occur in isolated regions with limited opportunity for economic growth.
 - ▶ World Bank estimates Africa must invest \$93 billion annually in infrastructure in next 10 years. A third of this cost will go towards maintenance.



Contemporary security challenges

- Agriculture is still characterised by low and stagnant yields, overdependence on rain-fed farming which increases vulnerability to weather related shocks and low level of irrigation development, etc. This uncertainty poses food insecurity.
- Climate change causes weather and environmental disasters, leads to a decline in crop yield, livestock, wildlife fisheries and freshwater supplies, the loss of forests and wetlands.
- Developing countries will bear the brunt of climate change impact since they have a lower adaptation capacity to climate change than industrialized countries.
- There is an urgent need for policy tools for sustainable agricultural productivity and mitigation and adoption to climate change.



Why Defence and Development ?

- If human insecurity is the most imminent challenge, the military should, address the threats within the sphere of their competence
 - ▶ Most countries in southern Africa are peaceful with cordial relationship with their neighbours. Given that peace and stability in the region, there is potential for the military to employ their organizational, competence and underutilized operational skills, to adaptation–centered innovations and institutional changes necessary to meet climates challenges and development.
 - ▶ By not being burdened by extraordinary domestic security requirements, the military has special opportunity to contribute to national development.
 - ▶ The military can perform additional roles towards socio–economic goals, especially where there are no serious military threats but urgent need for human security.

Why Defence and Development ?

- ▶ The military has a human capital since it usually constitutes the second-largest formal sector employer. African armed forces possess extensive human resources and equipment needed to build infrastructure projects.
- ▶ The defence sector has a high portion of the national budget.
- The military has skills and technology which can be employed in social and economic development.
- Addressing Africa's infrastructure requires additional non-conventional interventions such as the mobilization of the military.
- Historically, there is a long legacy of military involvement in infrastructure projects going back to the Roman days.

The Military and Agriculture

- Agriculture is a viable channel for sustainable food security and economic development.
- Agriculture is the driving force behind food security and development to ensure human security.
- Agricultural production varies with variable weather conditions and climate changes.
- As ‘green soldiers’, the military has unmatched organizational, planning and logistical capabilities to integrate the human security dimension into strategic thinking about mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change for optimal investment of resources.



The Military and Infrastructure development

- The military has ready capacity and capability to perform development projects such as the construction of dams and other water installations, particularly those which are meant to change the country's dependency on rain-fed agriculture to irrigation agriculture.
- For example, the military has skills and technology which can be employed in social and economic development. African armed forces possess extensive human resources and equipment needed to build infrastructure projects.
- They regularly use such facilities during emergencies and are at the forefront of developing robust systems such as smart microgrid systems that can provide decentralized power supply for rural Africa.

Case studies–Rwanda

- Many African countries have been converting military facilities to support civilian infrastructure activities.
- Rwanda, for example, turned a military barracks into the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology, which played a vital role in the reconstruction of the country after the genocide.
- The role of the military in Rwanda's civilian affairs involves a wide range of operations which include the awareness–raising annual Army Week

Case studies–Uganda

- One of the most explicit commitments to the role of the military in infrastructure projects comes from Uganda.
- The country's armed forces recently established Africa's first University of Military Science and Technology which is training engineers to build and maintain infrastructure projects.
- Uganda has been collaborating with the US Army on how to rehabilitate its railway networks.

Case studies–Senegal

- Senegal, for example, has established clear policies and operational guidelines that have since independence steered its “Army–Nations” program.
- The program includes activities in infrastructure (especially water supply and road construction), healthcare and environmental management.
- In 1999 Senegal set up the civil–military committee in support of development to bring together representatives from parliament, the military, government ministries, civil society and the private sector to collaborate on implementing public programs. Its broad membership helps to foster trust and coordination.

Case studies

- Investments in Earth observation satellite infrastructure, as well as the ability to deploy troops along national boundaries, is an important element in maintaining peace.
- Infrastructure built to address economic needs has the additional purpose of helping to maintain internal law and order as well as maintenance of national security.
- New countries such as South Sudan face the challenge of keeping large armies that were built up to fight for independence.
- They can choose to dismantle their armed forces or convert them to a force of development. They are better advised to do the latter; their potential role in infrastructure rehabilitation pays for peace building.

Policy recommendations

- Given the apparent security challenges and opportunities in view of the limited resources of the country, the military should contribute to socio-economic development while maintaining the prevailing peace and stability in the region.
- The military may utilize its expertise in construction of dams and irrigation to enhance food and cash crop production, in renewable energy such as installation of solar panels, building bridges and construction of roads, combating poaching, reforestation and afforestation.
- The underutilized human resource in the military should be converted to save meager resources for the country whose bigger part of the budget depends on donor funds.

Policy recommendations

- In a knowledge economy, the military is well placed with its innovative expertise, which is the key to managing climate change through new and more cost-effective technologies.
- The military can spearhead technological innovations on adaptation and mitigation: to reduce and capture emissions, to geo-engineer climate, to make energy use more efficient, and use of alternative and renewable sources from oil, coal and nuclear to a no-carbon future, waste disposal and recycling, reforestation, afforestation, natural resource management and irrigation systems.
- For this arrangement to work seamlessly, the M/DoD may need to coordinate with key actors in economic development of the country and communicate the policy transformation to the general public.

Policy /Legal Implications

- Most Constitutions do not expressly state that the military can provide expertise and resources in developmental roles.
- However, considering that human development and human security are two sides of the same coin, the military may perform such roles under the direction of those civil authorities since human insecurity is the immediate security threat in the region.
- What is needed is an explicit policy to extend their role in the construction and maintenance of infrastructure projects in cooperation with civilian agencies.
- This requires balancing the demands of defence and development

Policy /Legal Implications

- There is need to update the current strategic plan and defence policy to accommodate the role of the military in the developmental agenda and ‘green revolution’ of the region.
- Policy makers need to ensure that educational systems provide adequate scientific and technical training to meet these new and additional roles.
- The reserve forces can also form part of the ‘Green Brigade’.
 - ▶ It can be argued that deploying the military in civilian infrastructure activities could divert attention from essential defence functions. To the contrary, the military would strengthen its national security activities by building infrastructure projects.

Epilogue

- The over-dependence of rainfall for water vacillates most countries' agricultural production and destabilizes food security.
- The military can employ their organizational structure to strengthen the agricultural sector through sustainable and innovative agricultural methods, techniques and tools to increase food production, water management and productivity of livestock.
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- Time has come when the military ought to be seen to serve the people directly. Many African countries are converting military facilities to support civilian activities. Military should be mobilized for infrastructure projects
- In the age of human security, it is appropriate for the defence sector to be involved in the developmental agenda in order to timely achieve the MDGs.