

**Humanitarian Aid Interventions towards Children: A Brief Critique**

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**Introduction:**

Within the fast-growing agenda of human rights and the excessive emphasis on the human rights at international level, the humanitarian policy and aid interventions have occupied a central place in international politics and relations. Under the garb of ‘ethical’ and ‘moral’ rhetoric, the humanitarian and foreign policy is no longer seen separate or mutually exclusive. The integration of humanitarian organizations and other international agencies into the policy-making has given so called ‘humanitarian face to the State’s strategic policy and foreign relations (*Parekh 1997; Curtis 2001; Barakat & Wardell 2002*). Though, such transformations have strongly taken place in developed states, but many non-western states like India and China, have also taken a lead in this direction (*Chandler 2001; Kapila 2004; Sengupta 2006*). The present approach of humanitarian agencies – state or non-state, is more interventionist and legitimized as a rights-based, ethically-driven and non-political ‘new-humanitarianism’ (*Reiff 1995; Weiss 2001*). This redefinition and re-conceptualization of humanitarianism has deep-rooted political, economic and ethnocentric factors that have an immense bearing on the nature, extent and distribution of humanitarian aid interventions in the third-world especially in the regions of armed conflict (*Summerfield 1996; Chandler 2001*). The excessive involvement and integration of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and private agencies in such endeavours has tremendously politicized the present day humanitarian aid and policy. Moreover, the functionalist and individualistic disciplines and approaches have greatly influenced and shaped such humanitarianism. The ‘new humanitarian approach’ has transformed itself into an international politics, which has taken a serious retreat from the traditional principles, not un-critiqued though, of humanitarianism like neutrality, impartiality, humanity and universality (*Barnett 2005; Domini 2010*). The consequences of this change at the international level is manifested in the increasing role of western states and its allies in military aggressions, gloated as ‘military humanitarianism’ in the developing and poor nations particularly in the regions caught in armed conflicts. The nature of the ‘need-based’ or ‘rights-based’ aid interventions is greatly moulded in line with the western international advantages and interests.

**International Organizations: Politics of Claims**

The International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) has been at the forefront in establishing values of humanitarian universalism and in propagating the principles of neutrality, impartiality and universality to its interventions. Importantly, the separation of humanitarian sphere from that of political one is projected as the core value being emphasized through ICRC guidelines (*Weiss 2001; Curtis 2001*). The non-political outlook of ICRC, in the words of Michael Ignatieff (*Weiss 2001; Curtis 2001*). is described as that ‘...[ICRC] makes no distinction between good

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wars and bad wars, between just and unjust causes, or war between aggressors and innocents.” (p 680).

Similarly, the United Nations set up institutions solely for the humanitarian aid like UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) in 1943-47, the UN International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in 1946 UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 1950. These institutions were conceptualized to be non-political, impartial and non-discriminatory platforms for humanitarianism. Besides, Amnesty International set up in 1961, pursued universal campaign for the protection and safe-guarding the rights of political prisoners irrespective of the political affiliation, belief or region of the prisoner. It advocated for establishing a minimum universal standard of treatment for political prisoners. Likewise, the ICRC values and principles for the humanitarian interventions also started getting reflected in the policies of private charities and organizations like Save the Children, Oxfam, etc. In the aftermath of World War-II and Cold War era many of these organizations pursued to fill the gaps in the humanitarian needs which the collapsed political systems failed or were unable to do (*Leebaw 2003; Lischer 2005*). By the end of 1940, these organizations widened the scope of work and intervention and took a more permanent role in humanitarianism especially in the developing world. There was an emphatic claim of universality, neutrality and non-political outlook in their work. It is claimed that such organizations mediated a radical change in humanitarianism so much and so that, aid NGOs intervened in certain crises like Biafre Crisis in 1968, in spite of international dis-approval towards assisting and intervening in such situations (*Summerfield 1996; Chandler 2001*). The geo-political divide and pursuing realpolitik in the aftermath of cold war, the major western states were not willing to assist or provide aid. These organizations claimed that their humanitarian relief and aid interventions were non-political and un-conditional, without linking it to western states or to dictate foreign, economic or social policy of the recipient nations (*Rieff 1995; MacFarlane 1999*). During 1960s and 1970s, there was a clear distinction between the state-led aid and the NGO humanitarian aid to meet the ‘needs’ of the developing and poor states that had problems of war and famine (*Leader & Macrae 2000; Murshed 2002; Vaux 2006*). The so called radical non-state humanitarian organizations, nonetheless, did not locate and study problems of inequality and deprivation in an international context, which in reality lie in the broader structural relations of power and dependency. The post-cold War changes in humanitarianism led to a shift of focus from emergency aid to the ‘long-term developmentalism’ that was conceptualized to be as an increasing involvement of NGOs and grass-roots organizations with a more extension of rights-based approach. The long-term assistance was defined in the terms of ‘peace-making’, ‘empowerment’, ‘capacity-building and development’. Unfortunately, such humanitarian endeavours and approaches were dominated by the over-simplistic analysis of problems with an extreme individualistic orientation and models of intervention. Particularly, the problems and concerns in the regions of armed conflicts were seen as the indigenous and internal, having roots in the ethnic and cultural norms (*Sadowski 1998*). The rhetoric of empowerment and development was used with the language of morals and ethics, with an alleged non-political guise. The resulting policies and interventions in developing nations and other non-western states were conceptualized in line with the western models and frameworks, much in contradiction with the local cultures and contexts. Hence, the shift in humanitarianism from need-based approach to rights-based one made little contribution in changing the quality of life of the people living in third world and marginalized regions (*Summerfield 1996; Parekh 1997*). The piecemeal and individualistic focus of humanitarian aid interventions proved to be too superficial and

problematic that the onus of the underdevelopment, poverty, disease and illness is put on the indigenous and local populations itself (*Ibid; Sadowski 1998*). The aid and interference of external agency is projected as an ethical, moral and humane duty and responsibility, chronically neglecting the socio-economic and structural inequalities caused and perpetuated by the colonial rule and neo-colonial western politics and economic development (*Harvey 2005*). The involvement of NGOs led to the ‘discovery’ of a new humanitarian tool of neo-colonialism and neo-liberalism in the moral and ethical guise.

### **‘Humanitarian’ Transition: Growing NGOs and the Shrinking State**

An important shift was seen in 1970s and 1980s humanitarian discourses with governments and states directly funding NGOs and integrating them in the policymaking and international politics (*Billon 2000; Chandler 2001*). The organizations like Christian Aid, Oxfam, Save the Children and many other received huge financial grants from the state institutions and were tremendously relied upon to execute government and international relief and aid operations across regions. As discussed, the increasing role of NGOs in the developing and underdeveloped nations and their integration and inclusion in the policy formulation, foreign politics or other political engagements, where in reality they have little or no proficiency, has worsened the conditions of already-malaise ridden populations in the third world (*Parekh 1997; Curtis 2001*). In such a scenario the manipulation of the humanitarian aid and assistance has been quite effectively used as a substitute to any resolute political action or intervention. Moreover, humanitarianism is seen an alternative to diplomacy just making the world believe that ‘something is being done’ (*O’Hagun 1999*). There is a serious lack of concerted endeavours to devise coordinated and comprehensive political and economic solutions to the crises. On the other hand, there is extreme form of readiness in the international humanitarian organizations to fund aid programs and intervention that are in itself too superficial and narrow. Moreover, on the pretext of humanitarianism different actors, having their own or of their donors’ stakes in the activism, intervene in the regions caught in complex emergencies. The problem has become more complicated with western and rich nations attaching severe *conditionality* with aid and almost completely withdrawing *aid-without-conditionality* to poorer or underdeveloped nations. In fact, the NGOs increasingly started to become the face of the governments, particularly under the influence of neo-liberalization. This transition was explicitly visible in the area of humanitarianism (*Natsios 1995; Weiss 2001*). The state-led humanitarian strategies developed in western context were being exported to the poor and third world countries. These humanitarian aid and relief interventions were seen as a panacea for the underdevelopment, poverty, backwardness and deprivation across globe, while seriously neglecting the inequalities and income gaps promoted by the exploitative and capitalistic world market and military system (*Chandler 2001; Harvey 2005*). The earlier non-political outlook of humanitarian organizations vanished and witnessed a drastic shift as the western states and donor agencies diverted huge funds and resources to such organizations to promote and safeguard their economic, political and cultural interests in the global arena and aid-recipient nations. The humanitarian programs, in reality, were tainted by the ‘superpower geopolitics and were hugely politicized, disguised and strictly conditional (*Vogel 1996; Leader & Macrae 2000; Curtis 2001*). As discussed, with the excessive reliance on individualistic and so called alternative grass-root models under the rubric of ‘empowerment and participation, this non-state interference had little relevance to the actual felt-needs of the people. The mushrooming of NGOs and private organizations increasingly started to replace governmental institutions at the grass-root level that acted as an escape route

for the state to shed its accountability and responsibility towards peoples' needs (*Amin 2000; Qadeer 2005*) Moreover, as the developing and underdeveloped states were being plunged into debt-crisis and Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), welfare and social sectors started to collapse (*Ibid*) and thus making inevitable the coming of the neo-liberal 'messiah – NGOs, for the third world 'crisis'. The inequalities have only deepened, deprivation and suffering has exacerbated and the people's resources are being exploited and exchanged for dependency, poverty and hunger. These external humanitarian agencies also created tensions in the indigenous political systems, thus causing conflicts and division, and above all delegitimizing local state's structure under the garb of emancipation, capacity building and social engineering (*Summerfield 1996; Sawdoski 1998; Zwi, Fustukian & Sethi 2002*). It portrayed non-western states as incapable of self- governance and in dire need of external assistance. Besides the presence of humanitarian organization in the third world, the nature of humanitarian aid and interventions in the regions facing armed conflicts has been implicitly more exploitative and disempowering, diseased with ethnocentric politics. The following section analyse the role of humanitarian agencies in armed conflicts in the framework of power, dominance and creation of knowledge. The different players and factors – media, politics and propaganda, the west and humanitarian organizations take recourse to in promoting their models of intervention and knowledge, and eventually safeguarding their own interests. Contextualizing these debates of humanitarianism and international politics within the mandate of this paper, it becomes interesting rather imperative to review international policy, research and practice concerning children who are facing war and armed conflict.

### **Child Rights Activism and The Politics of Innocence**

The role of organizations working in the third world conflict zones is pre-dominantly influenced by the western policy models and frameworks. There basic conceptualizations of children, their issues are too simplistic, problematic and unrelated to the contexts in which such children live and confront adversity and contingencies of life. Such a policy approach undermines the cultural and local understandings and context specific socio-economic picture and above-all the structural determinants of the issues and problems for which they legitimize their presence and intervention.

The international aid organizations and other global child-rights organizations quite effectively use media – both national and international, to influence masses, in general, and mobilize donors, in particular. In the context of armed conflict they strategically exaggerate and mystify suffering and warn of dire predictions if their *messianic* interventions are not carried out (*Rieff 1995; Billon 2000; Curtis 2001; Barakat, and Wardell 2002*). In the case of children experiencing conflict, they are depicted as 'helpless victims of distress', who are mentally-ill, most of them being suffering from *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*, and above all who need a saviour in the form an external aid agencies or professionals (*Summerfield 1996; Boyden 2006; Hart & Tyrer 2006*). Their nexus with media further facilitates the promotion of their narratives and gives them a global reach to attract funds and grants from donors. Ironically, the media industry in the conflict situations is pre-occupied with the 'search for victims', where journalists are impatient to find 'a good' story, i.e. *a mass atrocity*, for media promotion of humanitarian cause. As *Chandler (2001)* argues :

“Human rights NGOs have explained the civil conflicts as events in and of themselves, from which it can only be concluded that the people of these regions are uncivilized,

prone to violent and savage ethnic passions, or at the very least easily manipulated by governmental propaganda because they lack independent critical faculty” (p691). Thus, by dehumanizing the indigenous populations and communities and denigrating the local political structures, the external agencies legitimize the western activism by emphasizing the rhetoric of rights-based approach and ‘best-interest’ politics. The intense ethnocentric bias, de-contextualized problematization of issues and universalistic programs and policies get clearly reflected when we review and analyse the policy response towards children in armed conflict zones. The psycho-social work or mental health in conflict has seen an overwhelming focus of humanitarian aid interventions in the recent past (*Boyden 2003*). There has been redefinition of suffering and victimization of people facing conflict especially of children, into a psychological condition and traumatization, where the western psychosocial models are replicated. This creates *inappropriate sick-roles* and neglects the cultural and local understandings of loss, suffering and illness (*Summerfield 1995; Boyden Ibid; Patel 2007*). This individualistic and narrow approach sidelines people’s own choices, traditions, communal and indigenous healing and support structures. The mental health problems are mystified and the role of western experts and psycho-medicine is aggrandized and assumed to be applicable universally across cultures and regions.

### **PTSD and the Politics of Trauma**

When the western diagnostic systems and trauma models are replicated in non-western contexts, these hardly capture what local people or victims perceive of their suffering and trauma. The use of PTSD checklists and other technical guidelines to assess the mental health of populations is diseased with problems and loopholes (*Maier 2005; Doty 2010*). In a decontextualized sense, PTSD is seen as a ubiquitous and natural human response to stressful or adverse situation, neglecting the local significance and recipes of treatment and healing of the indigenous populations. As children constitute the primary ‘forced’ beneficiaries of these aid programs, they are seen as passive receptacles of traumatization who are conceived to have more risks and are excessively prone to develop mental and emotional disorders in lieu of exposure to adversity (*Dawes & Donald 1994*). But such conceptualizations of children and childhood seriously contradict the anthropological research and interdisciplinary perspectives which regard children as *active, resourceful and competent beings*, who attach own meanings and interpretations of the situation besetting them, and who consciously take decisions that affect their survival and wellbeing. Particularly, in the contexts of armed conflict like that of Palestine, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, African regions and so on, children who actively confront the state-led armed forces and security personnel have more political consciousness and higher levels of self-esteem (*Swartz & Levett 1989; Hein et al 1993; Hart & Tyrer 2006*). Nonetheless, they also face emotional and psychological upheavals but the communal support and their identification with the people’s movements and struggles enhances their reliance and coping (*Patel et al 2007*). These complex factors that cut across social, cultural, economic and political domains of children, remain outside the purview of aid organizations. However, it is also emphasized that the argument is not to undermine the importance of mental health or psychological wellbeing in conflict situations. But the uncritical use of PTSD-like criteria to assess mental wellbeing, which often leads to over-diagnosis and exaggeration, is itself traumatic that in turn victimizes the affected populations. These approaches, as argued earlier, are coloured with individualization of pathology and neglect of social-cultural, economic and political and situational and spiritual dimensions of the problem. As *Summerfield (1995)* says:

“... these people had other problems on their mind or did not see *talk therapy* (of counsellors) as a familiar and relevant service. I understand that some ... (refugees) were irritated by the activism of certain *foreign* researchers with PTSD checklists at a time when they were struggling to survive under violent siege.” (p14: *emphasis and parenthesis mine*).

The population experiencing armed conflict or any other complex emergency have much bigger concerns and issues than psychological ones. Their suffering and victimization have roots in the political structures rather than in their individual and immediate environments. Similarly, the solutions to their problems have structural determinants rather than exploring them within the victim's own individuality and autonomy. Thus, in such scenario the narrowly conceived individual interventions and programmes may do more harm than good, besides raising many apprehensions and questions relevant to the political economy of humanitarianism and armed conflict. On similar lines, in a jail of Indian Kashmir one of a young prisoner, who had been tortured severely by armed men, related:

“Officers (referring to red cross officers and workers) come and visit us; give us bats, foot-balls, etc to play... when we have our limbs fractured and we pass blood with our urine because of the electric shocks given to our private parts. They in turn admonish us, waive their hands and disappear. Though, we relate to them our ordeal, our torture and suffering...but nothing happens till another team comes with new members and officers, but with same old stories.” (Rashid 2009).

Though, it is not altogether denied that such populations don't have mental and psychological needs and pathology. But it must be rigorously acknowledged that from culture to culture, people have local traditions of healing and treatment that are relevant and tied up to their social, spiritual and cultural milieus (Davis 1992). The supernatural and spiritual forces in the cosmologies of different cultures shape the perceptions and interpretations of loss, suffering and pain that have both positive and negative functions in particular communities (Qvortrup 1991; Jenks 1996; Keen 1998). Hence, the so called logical, positivist and western explanations models routinely fail to grasp these cultural subtleties. In turn they locate the cause and put onus of a problem on individual victim itself, who are forced to take sick-roles that are incomprehensible and incompatible with their social relationships and local cultures. More important, the policy interventions of majority of international organizations discredit and ignore the consciousness and sensibilities of the indigenous communities to their political identities and their support to people's movements. In fact, in any conflict situation the identification or involvement of people with popular struggles and liberation movements is greatly valued and given high regards in their local contexts (Rosen 2005; Sengupta 2006; Sonpar 2007; Roy 2008). Similarly, the political consciousness of children and young people in armed conflicts has quite negatively been portrayed on the international humanitarian law and global narratives. However, the popular liberation struggles and movements for demanding right to self-determination like in Palestine, Middle-East, African regions and so on, are witnessing unprecedented participation and involvement of children and youth (Reynolds 1996; Abdullah 2005; Patel et al 2005; Sonpar 2007). But, the dominant western discourses of child rights have demonized and condemned that participation with sweeping and universal generalizations without looking into the causality, contexts and circumstances. The demonized versions of 'child-soldiers crisis' (Rosen 2005), for instance, has been globalized through international policy frameworks and aid agencies. Rather, the area has turned out to be excessively fashionable for donor agencies and partner NGOs that have created their own global market for humanitarianism. The following section of this paper

discusses the case of child soldiers and analyses the role of international policy frameworks in the globalization of childhood where ‘politics of age-categories’ is used to further their own political and ideological position.

### **Child Soldiers and Politics of Age**

The discourses and debates around the use of children in war or armed conflicts have an underlying and ingrained politics in them. This politics, in fact an element of the market-oriented and neo-liberal humanitarianism, concerns with the ‘politics of age-categories’ that shapes the conceptualization of ‘childhood’ in international policy frameworks (*Reynolds 2005; Rosen 2005 & 2007*). The ‘age-categories’ are used by international, regional or national actors, where the representations of childhood are political and hegemonic constructs that discount the local and complex understandings of children and childhood evidenced by ethnographic research. This cultural politics of childhood (Nancy and Sergeant 1998) has widely occupied the development of international humanitarian law and legal instruments for children particularly those experiencing armed conflict. The laws regulating the use of child-soldiers have been greatly influenced by the ideologies and political manipulation of the concept of childhood (*Rosen 2007*).

Humanitarian and human rights organizations advocate a strong ban on the use of recruitment of child soldiers in armed-conflicts. The dominant humanitarian and legal narratives define children as beginning of birth and ending straight at 18. This ‘*straight-18*’ position, having its origins in the UN Convention of Child Rights 1989, has been adopted uncritically by the International Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (*Ibid*). The major humanitarian and human rights agencies like Human Rights Watch, ICRC, Save the Children Alliance, UNO, Amnesty International and so on serve on the steering committee for this Coalition. Among them ICRC has played the most influential and custodian role in shaping the legal and policy instruments concerning child-soldiers drawing mainly from its laws of war – International Humanitarian Law (IHL). The 1989 UNCRC and the 2000 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Children on the involvement of children in armed conflicts have been drafted and shaped on the similar lines. These instruments and conventions strongly advocate that the varied and competing definition of childhood be abandoned and a universal, global and standard definition be normalized and mainstreamed (*Qvortrup 1994; Reynolds 1996; Boyden 2007; Rosen 2007*). Such normative global generalizations of ‘childhood’ seriously contradict the anthropological research that showcases a multiplicity of childhood, each ‘culturally codified and defined by age, ethnicity, gender, history, location and so forth’ (*Amit and Wulft 1995; Jenks 1996; Rosen 2007*). There are antithetical conceptualizations of childhood in anthropological and dominant international policy thus widening the gap between policy interventions and their relevance for children and their communities in armed conflicts. Similarly, the use of child-soldiers mainly emerged from western normative notions of children and childhood. Participation of children and young people in armed conflicts and political struggles is generalized as a ‘deviant product of adult abuses and victimization’, neglecting the structural and political causes of such active participation and involvement (*Honwana 2005; Junaid 2010; Navlakha 2010; Kak 2011*). The military-life and childhood is seen as incompatible to each other and the helplessness of children is hugely amplified. By restraining and over-riding the local perspectives and cultural legitimacy of it, the international policy agencies enforce inappropriate solutions and programmes and divert attention from the border politics which is mainly implicit. Portraying the use of child-soldiers as an international crisis, the humanitarian and child rights organizations divert much of

their resources and funds to ‘reach’ and ‘assist’ such children and ensure that the ‘culprit’ armed groups or communities, who recruit children as soldiers, are dealt seriously (*Reynolds 2005; Rosen 2007*) Most of the times these armed groups are non-state entities, ‘unlawful’, tribal (*Sengupta 2006*), indigenous communities having scant resources and without any formal structure and recognition from either the local states or international community (*Rosen op. cit*). Consequently, the humanitarian agencies work with the local repressive states where the intervention may also include ‘military humanitarianism’ (*Rieff 1994; Parekh 1997; Curtis 2001*). Such humanitarian activism has widely been seen to have implicit political and economic agendas and the ‘politics of age’ or ‘child-soldier crises’ is only used to facilitate that. This politics is also used in a way to suppress and delegitimize the people’s liberation struggles and resistance across globe against the human rights violations and other forms of exploitation and victimization. In short, the language of humanitarianism and human rights has become the language of political and ideological discourses and transnational politics. As *Voux (2006)* argues:

“...after 11 September 2001, Western security has come to dominate all other agendas, moving aid and humanitarianism even further towards the core of politics. The threat has been linked variously to Islamic peoples, unstable States, and poverty. In the eyes of politicians, humanitarianism has now become a means to another end (that of Western security), rather than an end in itself.” (p242)

Ironically, in the name of ‘war on global terror, and the regime-change initiatives and neo-imperial designs the US and its allies have perpetrated war crimes in the regions like Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon and so on. In 2009 the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces in Afghanistan have killed more than 150 children in air-strikes or ground operations. The total of 2400 civilians were killed in the same year (*RAWA 2010*). The 2010 estimates show that in Iraq over 4000 civilians lost their lives. Since the invasion of Iraq by the US-led forces in 2003, the most conservative estimates show that more than 150 to 200 thousand people have been consumed by war (*IFHS 2008; Iraq Body Count 2011*). Likewise, millions of children have been the direct victims of the western imperial, hegemonic and neo-colonial aggression in Lebanon, Palestine, Libya, Syria, and in other regions of conflict (*covered in media across BBC; Haaretz; Independent; Al-Jazeera; see also Ahmad 2000 cited in Berry n.d*). Besides, the armed conflicts in South Asian context have witnessed a large-scale killing, torture and incarceration of civilians, including huge number of children, perpetrated by the armed groups. The conflicts in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, North-Eastern parts of India, Nepal and so on, are increasingly become complex and multi-dimensional. The influence of the international or western politics on the respective foreign and regional policies of these states has exacerbated the situation and made the conditions more fragile, giving rise to more tensions and conflicts (*Iqbal & Sial 2007; Lieven 2011; ICPS 2011*). The overwhelming presence of international humanitarian and aid agencies in the region seems to perform no role in building or working for sustainable solutions to the conflicts and animosities. Instead through their much hyped-up ‘humanitarianism’, notions are being created before the international community that ‘*something is been done*’ in such ‘precarious’ situations.

### **Conclusion:**

The global aid programs, generally, are being used to further diverse political and ideological agendas which generally remain quite hidden. Such an exploitative and hegemonic approach of these global power structures has led to exacerbation of the inequalities, deprivation and

exploitation in the under-developed and developing nations. The conditions are being created that further escalate or give rise to new conflicts with-in the exploited-nations as a result of growing food crisis, loss of economic and natural resources, manufactured-animosity between tribes and groups and other socio-political breakdowns. In such a scenario, local and indigenous populations are plunged into whirlpool of victimizations from all-sides. Children and young people, especially, get caught in the vicious circle of poverty, deprivation and diseases. This structural violence meted out to children gets perpetuated across their generations through exploitative and repressive policy regimes and frameworks. The international policy and global humanitarian structure concerning children in armed conflicts is an important sub-system of this western hegemonic system which is chronically diseased with neo-liberal, capitalistic and ethnocentric politics. This neo-politics neutralizes indigenous and local forms of knowledge and more-so demonizes the native perspectives, which ultimately creates more complex suffering for local people than it claims to alleviate.

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