Human Security and Gender: Insights from the Conflict and Gender-Based Violence Research Project by JICA Ogata Research Institute

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Abstract | In the 1990s, with the end of the Cold War, the concept of "human security" emerged as an alternative to the dominant view of state-centered security, with advocates claiming the need to focus security on people (individuals and communities) rather than states. Meanwhile, gender scholars have raised various questions about the way "human" is perceived in the discussion of human security. This paper explores the question of what insights we can draw from human security perspective in understanding and dealing with gender-based violence (GBV) as a crucial gendered issue. To this end, this paper first discusses the commonalities and differences between gender and human security in response to the critiques of human security raised by gender scholars. It then reviews the findings of a research project on GBV in refugee communities conducted by JICA Ogata Research Institute since 2017. Lastly, in the third section, it presents three aspects typical to human security: people-centeredness, equal emphasis on individual and community, and respect for human dignity, along with the implications for GBV response and recovery of the GBV survivors.

Introduction: Why Human Security and Gender?

In 2022, JICA Ogata Research Institute published the first issue of its biennial report on human security, titled *Human Security Today* (JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development 2022). In the same year, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) also published *New Threats to Human Security in the Anthropocene* (UNDP 2022), the first special report on human security since the publication of its 1994 Human Development Report (UNDP 1994). Aiming to contribute to this revitalized debate, this paper presents the findings of a research project on Gender-Based Violence in Conflict-affected Situations, conducted by JICA Ogata Research Institute since 2017. It examines the implications and effectiveness of adopting a human security perspective and policy framework for addressing gender-based violence (GBV) suffered by refugees in conflict-affected situations. As a premise for this discussion, this paper

explores the differences and commonalities between human security approach and gender perspective,[1] regarding the conditions of human survival today.

Conceptually, this paper is based on the recognition that gender issues intersect with human security issues, as seen in the commonalities of the empowerment approach and respect for human dignity. However, some gender and feminist scholars have adopted a critical view of human security. Their arguments cover a wide range of issues, such as whether women should be seen as objects of protection, what the relationships between communities and individuals are, and how the term "human" is to be perceived. By clarifying the differences between the two positions, the aim of this paper is, in turn, to address the gender challenges of GBV from a new angle and to explore effective ways of dealing with it from human security perspective.

This paper is organized as follows. In the first section, we review some of the critiques from gender scholars and how they influenced human security discussions. These critiques and responses reveal several key differences between gender studies and human security, as well as the fact that historically there have been two different orientations in the human security debate: development-oriented and humanitarian-oriented. The second section presents the findings of the JICA Ogata Research Institute's project, "Conflict and Gender-Based Violence: The Role of Aid in Help-seeking and Recovery Process for Victims" (hereafter referred to as "GBV research project"). Section 3 will further develop the research findings of Section 2 to discuss the implications of the human security framework in addressing the challenge of GBV. With the differences and commonalities between gender and human security in mind, the third

section will focus on the following three points: (i) the significance and limitations of the "survivor-centered"[2] approach advocated in GBV responses in recent years; (ii) new ways to shift from protection to empowerment of GBV survivors; and (iii) how to ensure the "dignity" of survivors while balancing their needs and relationships with the people (community) around them.

1. Gender and Human Security: Critiques and Dialogue

1.1. From the publication of the UNDP report to the critique of the Ogata-Sen report

The interlinkage between human security and gender was already observed in the *Human Development Report 1994* of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 1994), the first report to take up the idea of human security in a significant way. Notably, the report took up human security as today's major challenge in Chapter 2, discussed the potential post-Cold War "peace dividend"[3] in Chapter 3, and then proposed modifications to the Human Development Index to incorporate a gender perspective in Chapter 5 (in a section titled "Gender-disparity-adjusted HDI). The structure of the report shows that the critical importance of addressing gender inequality in advancing human security through development measures was clearly recognized by the UNDP.

From a gender studies perspective, close connection between gender and human security can also be seen in the active engagement of gender and feminist scholars in incorporating human security ideas. However, from 1994 until today, the discourses on human security within this field

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[1] "Gender" is a multifaceted concept referring primarily to differences between men and women as socially and culturally constructed and perceived, including the differences in their social roles, behaviors, expressions, and identities. This concept was first introduced by Stoller and others in the 1960s to distinguish the socially and culturally ascribed features of men and women from biological sex (Stoller 1968) and widely accepted and adopted by feminists and gender scholars in the 1970s. In the 1980s, Joanne Scott redefined gender as a "knowledge that gives meaning to physical differences" (Scott 1988). In the 1990s, Butler expanded Scott's argument to insist that even biological sex is constructed according to gender (Butler 1990, 3).

[2] "Survivor-centered" is a concept proposed in the context of violence against women. It maintains that the rights, needs, safety, dignity, and welfare of survivors should be prioritized in the process of protecting and recovering the survivors. Still, some insist that the term "victim-centered" should be used instead of "survivor," as the word "victim" entails the existence of a perpetrator and their responsibility while the word "survivor" obscures this.

[3] "Peace dividend" is a slogan that appeared shortly after the end of the Cold War. The slogan calls for a redirection of security-related budgets to development-related areas, such as the economy, health and education.

have also been notably diverse. While some scholars have tried to address gendered political and economic issues by incorporating human security as a policy framework (Truong et al. 2006), others have expressed skepticism and voiced criticisms regarding the concept of human security (Chenoy 2009).

Looking more closely at the voices of gender researchers, criticism appears to have peaked between the mid-2000s and the mid-2010s.[4] This was driven by two events: first, there was the publication of a report by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) in 2001 (ICISS 2001). This report was supported by the Canadian government, which advocated the principle of a "responsibility to protect" (R2P). The ICISS report was criticized for being "gender blind" and ignoring the recommendations of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which was adopted in 2000 and stressed the importance of protecting women in conflict situations and their crucial role in peacemaking and reconstruction (Bond and Sherret 2006). The UNSC resolution and related resolutions are collectively called the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.

The second event was the publication in 2003 of *Human Security Now*, co-edited by Ogata Sadako and Amartya Sen and supported by the Japanese government (Commission on Human Security 2003, henceforce, the Ogata-Sen report). The report appeared very similar to the ICISS report in attracting criticism for its lack of gender perspective (Chenoy 2009).[5] However, as the Ogata-Sen report discusses human security as a multifaceted concept—rather than the narrower R2P framework in the ICISS report—it attracted a much broader range of criticism from gender scholars. While these criticisms are of some interest, in view of the focus of this paper on GBV, we would like to highlight the following three criticisms of the Ogata-Sen conceptualization:

(1) By foregrounding the concepts of "human" and "people," human security obscures the fact that men and women differ in their perception of threats to security. "People" are constantly embedded in power relations, of which gender relations are an essential part (Tripp 2013). Women comprise a "missing chapter" in human security discussions (Bunch 2004, 32) and "gendered" human security is required (Chenoy 2009, 49).

(2) Although the Ogata-Sen report identifies both "individual and community" as the targets of ensuring security, communities and families often oppress women and can be a source of gender inequality (Moussa 2008). Another negative aspect of the community is that people who feel marginalized in an increasingly unstable global world may seek to withdraw into "traditional security communities," such as family, clan, ethnic groups and religious identity (Chenoy 2009, 82).

(3) While "protection" is emphasized in human security discussions, feminism has traditionally considered that protection disempowers women. This is because, as Elshtain (1987) points out, the idea of protecting women often leads to women always being seen as vulnerable and demands subordination in exchange for protection (Chenoy 2009).

However, the Ogata-Sen report did not deliberately ignore women. In fact, the report repeatedly refers to gender inequality, the presence of GBV under conflict, and the magnitude of its impact on women. It is worth noting that statements by Ogata Sadako, such as "protecting people regardless of race, religion, gender or political opinions" (Commission on Human Security 2003, 30 (Box 1.2)), should not be seen as a denial of the importance of gender, but as a statement of impartiality—one of the four humanitarian principles. This is underpinned by the fact that in the early 2000s, the protection of children and civilians under conflict was actively discussed in the UNSC, following the discussion surrounding Resolution 1325 on the protection and participation of women. As a result, the focus of security discussion also gradually shifted to the threats to which men are exposed in conflict situations, such as forced conscription and the treatment of ex-combatants in peace processes.

Against this background, we can see that the Ogata-Sen

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4   See, for example, Ammann and Kool (2021).

5   According to Bunch (2004), Sadako Ogata explained that the report did not make women an issue of special interest but they were instead incorporated into gender inequality (Bunch 2004, 32). Chenoy (2009) quoted this statement from Bunch and criticized it as a weakness of the gender perspective (Chenoy 2009, 46).

Report's decision not to specifically target women reflected the broad humanitarian concerns around that time, especially for the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons, an issue that Ogata had been involved in for many years as UN High Commissioner for Refugees. This humanitarian aspect of human security would later come to influence the WPS agenda, as will be discussed in Section 3 of this paper.

1.2. Integration and collaboration between gender and human security: The 2012 General Assembly resolution and subsequent events

As we have seen above, human security has a set of development-related aspects (in which gender is considered a priority issue), as discussed in the 1994 UNDP report, as well as a humanitarian-oriented aspect that has become more pre-eminent since the release of the 2003 Ogata-Sen Report. How, then, have discussions and practices around human security changed since the Ogata-Sen Report in response to criticism from gender scholars and researchers?

Firstly, though we see no specific reference to women or gender in the 2012 UN General Assembly resolution on human security (UNGA 2012), this does not mean that human security has failed to respond to criticism from gender studies.[6] More specifically, human security has incorporated a gender perspective through its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 2015. The SDGs, framed around the goal of "leaving no one behind," implicitly acknowledge the people-centered nature of human security. With the specific inclusion of gender equality as one of the 17 goals of the SDGs (Goal 5), a trend has emerged within the UN in recent years to explicitly include women in human security discussions. Examples of this include the UNDP Special Report on Human Security (UNDP 2022) and *SDGs and Japan: Human Security Indicators to Ensure No One is Left Behind* (Takasu and JICA Ogata Research Institute 2020). The latter analyzes the status of women—alongside refugees,

people with disabilities, children, and the elderly in Japan—as a social group whose security is more likely to be threatened. However, it should be noted that "women" in these recent SDGs-related publications are not seen as a social category that fundamentally defines our human existence, as gender scholars maintain, but as a vulnerable social group that needs to be focused upon, like refugees or the elderly.

Second, research and assistance in areas that require both human security and gender perspectives, such as refugee women and GBV, have increased dramatically in recent years.[7] The GBV research project by JICA Ogata Research Institute—discussed in full below—and JICA's assistance to the Department of Social Welfare in Punjab, Pakistan (see Column on p. **) are good examples of this recent trend towards collaboration between gender and human security.

Third, in recent years, the discussion of human security has also focused on the threats suffered by men. For example, it has been pointed out that GBV should also be redefined to include threats to men instead of focusing solely on women, with a greater awareness of the existence of male GBV victims and a recognition that male survivors are more likely to be socially silenced than female survivors (Dolan 2017; Gorris and Philo 2015). Similar trends can be observed in gender studies, such as a greater acceptance of men's studies that problematize the negative aspects of men's gender roles and masculinity.

However, while there has been a renewal of awareness regarding the connections between human security and gender, a sufficient level of understanding has not yet been reached about the importance and implications of human security within gender studies and gendered assistance. Criticisms from gender scholars have identified important inherent features of human security, such as explicitly maintaining the importance of protection and community, but

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[6] One reason for this may be that the aim of the resolution was to differentiate human security from R2P, which is based on the same humanitarian concerns but allows armed interventions as the last resort.

[7] As regards the trend in aid, OECD (2020) singled out armed conflict-related aid as the area where the proportion of aid focused on gender equality has increased most rapidly in recent years (see Tables 2 and 4 in the OECD publication). In terms of research trends, the recent surge in the number of refugees has led to an increase in research focusing specifically on refugee women. UNHCR has also placed gender equality at the top of its Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) policy (UNHCR 2011).

it is imperative to discuss how these unique features of human security can contribute to gender studies and gender mainstreaming.

The following discussion in Sections 2 and 3 is primarily motivated by this question. In Section 2, we review the GBV research project conducted by JICA Ogata Research Institute, and based on the findings, Section 3 presents an analysis of how human security perspectives and policy frameworks can contribute to the response to and recovery from GBV. As described in Section 2, the GBV research project situated its targets in the intersection between human security and gender: GBV within the refugee community. Moreover, although the research question was established in association with the WPS agenda—especially with the goal of protecting GBV survivors (as this was most under-researched among four pillars of WPS)—the initial research proposal stated that this research would also contribute to the realization of human security. It is therefore expected that a thorough review of the outcomes of this GBV research project will shed light on the implications of human security perspectives and policy frameworks for effectively addressing the gender issue of GBV.

2. Research on Gender-Based Violence by JICA Ogata Research Institute

The JICA Ogata Research Institute's GBV research project[8] was designed to study the processes of protection, relief, recovery, and prevention of GBV survivors among refugees affected by armed conflict. After the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in 2000, women's *participation* in decision-making in relation to conflict prevention and resolution has become an important active research area. On the other hand, Cohn (2012) and Semimovic et al. (2012) pointed out that there has been a lack of research on other gender-related aspects

of the four pillars[9]—in particular, the process of protection, relief, recovery and prevention of GBV occurrence and recurrence. Therefore, the GBV research project undertaken by JICA Ogata Research Institute focuses on the following questions: when and what kind of assistance is required for refugee GBV survivors to take help-seeking behaviors? And how do survivors' help-seeking behaviors and the presence of assistance affect family and community responses and prevention? The GBV research project established a specific objective: to investigate the role and mechanisms of assistance in the help-seeking behavior of GBV survivors and the impact of such assistance on those around them (JICA 2019).

It should be noted that this research does not focus solely on help-seeking behavior but examines various issues related to the occurrence of and responses to GBV in two different contexts: South Sudanese refugees in Uganda and Syrian refugees in Lebanon. These two countries were selected as research areas for the following reasons. First, both countries host a large number of refugees. Uganda is the largest host country in sub-Saharan Africa, with 1.5 million refugees from neighboring countries, including South Sudan (UNHCR 2022). Lebanon is home to approximately 800,000 refugees from Syria, the world's largest source of refugees and hosts the second-highest number of refugees per capita in the world after the island of Aruba.[10] Second, there is a notable contrast between the refugee admission policies and the status of refugees in the two countries. The Ugandan government's refugee policy is unique in that it provides for long-term resettlement in 12 government-designated "settlements" where refugees can work and move around, rather than the traditional refugee camp setting.

In the case of Lebanon, due to its cultural and historical background with Syria, there was initially a high degree of tolerance toward accepting refugees. However, due to the rapid increase in the number of refugees over a short period of time, Lebanon suspended the registration of new refugees in 2015 and gradually tightened its reception policy. As a

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[8] This research project defines *gender-based violence (GBV)* as physical, sexual and psychological violence directed at a person on the basis of their social and cultural sex (i.e., gender) (UNHCR 2003; Bouta et al. 2004).

[9] The four pillars are *participation, protection, prevention*, and *relief and recovery*.

[10] This equates to one refugee per seven Lebanese citizens (UNHCR 2022).

result, many Syrian refugees face significant challenges in renewing their refugee status and have experienced economic and social exclusion due to the fear of deportation. The GBV research project, conducted by researchers with different research expertise, thus allows for a comparative analysis of the impact of both humanitarian crises and host country policies on GBV by comparing the two countries that receive large numbers of refugees from neighboring countries but have very different policies and socio-cultural contexts.

The following subsections review each of the project's key research findings, focusing on issues such as the permeation of WPS as an international policy framework into local contexts, the impact of humanitarian response mechanisms of the international community as a basis for addressing the GBV, the disparity between humanitarian response mechanisms and traditional community norms, and the exclusion of refugees from host communities.

2.1. Permeation of the International Norm of GBV Eradication

Fukui (2021), a researcher in the GBV research project, examines how the WPS agenda adopted by the UN Security Council has affected refugees in Uganda. As the WPS is an international norm that requires member states to develop and implement a national action plan (NAP), the Government of Uganda has developed its own NAP. Fukui examines the NAP at three levels: the national policy level, the intermediate level focusing on refugee assistance structures, and the grassroots level encompassing refugee settlements. According to her analysis, the concept of GBV eradication, advocated in the WPS agenda, has permeated to the national level in Uganda. This can be seen in the development of the NAP and the introduction of specific measures to address GBV. Furthermore, GBV has been recognized as a priority issue to be addressed by humanitarian mechanisms, with NGOs playing a crucial intermediary role between the government (national level) and refugees at the grassroots level (ibid., 288–289). This suggests that the concept of WPS has permeated into the intermediate level as well.

Through interviews with refugees, Fukui identifies that survivor protection measures, including those to eradicate GBV, are also recognized among refugees (ibid., 297–302).
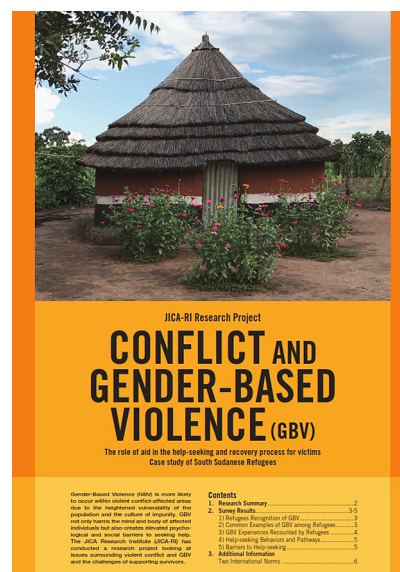
Conflict and Gender Research Project Brochure
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However, it is interesting to note that the refugees did not learn of these WPS-related measures through the Ugandan government's NAP but rather through humanitarian agencies. Fukui attributes this to the fact that the government's NAP was not initially based on the needs of the refugee settlements. At the same time, the humanitarian actors implementing GBV responses were not fully aware of the link between their assistance and the NAP. In other words, the eradication of GBV among conflict-affected populations—one of the goals of the WPS agenda—was not directly disseminated top-down from the international level to the grassroots level, as seen in the formulation of NAP, but was recognized by refugees through the grassroots practice of GBV-response measures through humanitarian response mechanisms at the intermediate level (ibid., 291). In Section 3, the question of why WPS and the NAP are less recognized among refugees will be explored further.

2.2. Refugees under the threat of GBV

Kawaguchi (2019, 2020, 2021), who spearheaded the GBV research project, provides insights into the mechanisms of the help-seeking behavior of GBV survivors among South Sudanese refugees in Uganda. Kawaguchi conducted a series of focus group discussions with refugees, exploring three key areas: (1) their perceptions of GBV, (2) survivors'

help-seeking behavior, and (3) GBV response and challenges by people and communities around them. She identifies the refugees' reasons for fleeing their country, insecurity and difficulties at their refugee settlements with the prolonged displacement (Kawaguchi 2019, 6–13). Her study also clarifies the refugees' perceptions of GBV in their communities, the actions taken by survivors of GBV when seeking help, and the actual assistance provided by the people and communities. Interviewees recognize various forms of GBV, such as rape and domestic violence, and practices including forced and early marriage—both of which are prevalent traditional practices in the refugee communities (ibid., 14–15). Some participants reported that while they recognized that violence should be punished, domestic violence (DV) and intimate partner violence (IPV)[11] should be concealed and kept as private issues rather than openly reported as crimes (ibid., 16).

Survivors' pathways for seeking help vary depending on the types of cases. In the case of domestic violence and rape, there is a tendency for survivors to consult close relations, such as family members, relatives, friends, and neighbors, and then seek help from church or refugee community leaders. If the survivors' lives are endangered, for example, through severe injury or the threat of homicide, they may contact GBV-related service providers, such as police, hospitals, or NGOs outside the refugee settlement through refugee community leaders (ibid., 17–19). Physical barriers to help-seeking were also identified, including the distance to the place of assistance, the time required for assistance to be provided, and the inability to pay (ibid., 20–21). Kawaguchi also conducted interview surveys of service providers and found that challenges faced by service providers include insufficient staff capacity, duplication of roles among different service providers, physical and psychological risks, and lack of trust from GBV survivors (ibid., 28–31). These challenges could affect humanitarian assistance and the roles of other service providers.

Kawaguchi builds on these findings by delving into the

Cover photo of the survey report
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fear of stigma, identified as the most powerful barrier to seeking help. A typical example of stigma, according to Kawaguchi, is the fear that the survivors of GBV will be insulted and ostracized by other members of the community when the news of being a victim of rape is exposed to the community (Kawaguchi 2020, 27–28). The fear of negative labeling as the victim of rape or DV and unfair treatment from those around them inhibits their help-seeking behavior and conceals the reality of the damage. Kawaguchi (2021, 331–32) raises the fear of stigma as the most serious problem in the GBV survivors' help-seeking behavior.

2.3. Norms and values of refugee communities affecting GBV protection

The research undertaken by Sebba (2021, 340)—also a researcher in the research project—focuses on the negotiations over the purpose and meaning of assistance in help-seeking. By focusing on the negotiations taking place between GBV survivors and the health and justice institutions that provide assistance, Sebba emphasizes that the refugee community's social norms can influence GBV survivors' points of view and their feelings of agency. According to his research, help-seeking begins with the perception that an act of GBV has occurred, but when it is perceived as normal

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[11] While domestic violence (DV) was traditionally used to cover violence occurring during marriage, the term has now been replaced by intimate partner violence (IPV), which covers violence that occurs in various intimate relationships in addition to marriage (Sardinha et al. 2022).

for husbands to commit acts of violence against their wives in their houses, the action taken by the survivor is often to remain "silent" (ibid., 357).

When the GBV survivors choose not to remain silent, there are three patterns of actions that survivors may take. The first is selective disclosure, in which the survivor does not expect any assistance but shares the incident of violence with a third party, such as a friend, a family member, or an acquaintance who is not involved in the GBV case (ibid., 359). Apart from cases where survivors are unaware of the available help-seeking channels, this can be due to the fear that disclosing the violence to the public is contrary to social norms. They may be reluctant to seek help because of the risk of future loss of marital opportunities, the risk of not being able to stay in their homes and communities, the possibility of losing their means of livelihood, or the fear of retaliation by the perpetrator.

The second is the concealment of the violence. This means that GBV survivors do not disclose their experience of GBV, although they have access to public institutions for any assistance needed, such as treatment for injuries, abortion and counseling, and in some cases judicial consultations for legal protection. In this case, the survivor will likely not receive GBV-specific services, and service providers will not be able to intervene in a manner most appropriate for GBV (ibid., 359). The third pathway is to formally access public institutions designed for those seeking help as GBV survivors. Even in this case, it is noted that GBV survivors may not be adequately assisted because health services and the justice system lack sufficient specialization, or resources may be insufficient to support GBV survivors. Like Kawaguchi, Sebba also points out that refugee communities hold a distinction between public and private life and maintain strong norms and values in each area. His research suggests that the norms and values of each refugee community need to be fully considered when understanding the help-seeking behavior of GBV survivors.

2.4. Importance of trust in terms of social capital of refugee communities

To understand the complex social relations surrounding the refugee community, as revealed by the research, Robles (2022) of the JICA Ogata Research Institute introduces the concept of social capital as an analytical tool. Focusing on the role of refugee leaders and service providers in the help-seeking behavior of GBV survivors among South Sudanese refugees in Uganda, Robles' paper analyzes the networks, norms, and trust within these groups. For GBV survivors living within refugee communities, seeking help involves the use of networks with various actors within and outside the refugee community. Among these internal networks are diverse actors such as leaders of the South Sudan Church, leaders in each residential block, leaders of the refugee welfare committees (RWC), and community elders. External networks related to GBV response comprise service providers in various areas such as community development, GBV, medical health, and social welfare, as well as police officers and judicial officers. Robles' analysis challenges the theoretical expectation that strong relationships, as a form of social capital, facilitate one's desired behavior (ibid., 15). By contrast, for GBV survivors within refugee communities, there are situations where strong relationships inhibit survivors' help-seeking behavior and hinder them from getting appropriate help.

In societies where male-to-female violence is normalized, GBV is less likely to be reported. While survivors may be able to share their experience within close relationships—with family members or relatives, for example—it may be much more difficult to do so outside the immediate family. This echoes what Kawaguchi (2021) and Sebba (2021) discuss the strong relationships that refugee communities possess are crucial for achieving common goals and objectives, but because the shared norms are strong and binding, this can also discourage individual GBV survivors from engaging in help-seeking behavior. This is particularly the case when trust in external networks is weaker than in internal ones (Robles 2022, 15). Drawing from these insights, Robles emphasizes the need for the refugee community and social actors involved in responding to GBV to build and strengthen networks based on refugee women's trust in order to encourage better help-seeking (ibid., 19). Robles' study demonstrates that supporting survivors of GBV requires an understanding of the complex and diverse networks, social norms, and social relationships that connect people within

and outside of refugee communities, including trust. This will be discussed further in Section 3.

2.5. Multi-layered structure of refugee communities

Another researcher in the project, Tobinai (2020), examines the unique social norms and behavioral principles of refugee communities and their relationships with aid organizations, focusing on the Kuku people, a group of South Sudanese refugees that fled to Uganda and the GBV response program in their settlements. Tobinai explores how the diversity of residents in refugee settlements and the diverse relationships between them influence refugees' conceptions of gender and GBV. She combined participatory observation and interviews with service providers to examine how GBV is understood and responded to by the refugees themselves, based on three cases of (i) an "attempted rape case" in a refugee settlement; (ii) a "Refugee Memorial Day event" organized by refugees with external stakeholders, including the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), which has jurisdiction over refugee assistance; and (iii) a "funeral" in a refugee settlement.[12]

From these cases, Tobinai (2020) identifies that while refugees' perceptions of gender and GBV are influenced and shaped by Ugandans and humanitarian aid workers, there are "places that aid does not reach" within refugee communities, and these perceptions do not spill over (ibid., 31). In such places, regardless of whether individual cases are considered to be GBV, they may be regarded as "community issues" rather than cases of GBV and dealt with in the refugee community's own way, mostly by community elders, partly depending on the nature and circumstances of the case (ibid., 28). Tobinai's research reveals that refugee communities often view external assistance providers as part of a "different world," leading to the formation of social spaces within the refugee communities that are off-limits to outsiders. Within

these spaces, the community addresses GBV according to their own gender norms while ensuring that these practices and responses to GBV are isolated from external influences (ibid., 30).

2.6. Syrian refugees without communities

In addition to the research in Uganda, Alkubati and Muto (2023) examine the GBV experienced by Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Through a survey of local organizations engaged in GBV response efforts, their research identifies the social exclusion of Syrian refugees in Lebanon as a primary driver of worsening GBV. This exclusion takes three different forms: legal exclusion, economic exclusion, and exclusion from host communities. Legal exclusion arises as many Syrians are forced to remain in Lebanon without legal status, as Lebanon's initially tolerant refugee admission policy became stricter after 2015. Economic exclusion stems from restrictions on employment for refugees due to the aforementioned lack of legal status and changes in legislation on the employment of refugees since 2015. These two types of exclusion have greatly restricted the movement and employment of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. In addition, female refugees are increasingly becoming heads of households or supporting households due to circumstances where female refugees come to Lebanon first and then register as refugees. Other factors include the lower risk of being approached and questioned by the police and fewer hurdles to employment than men. Consequently, some male refugees experience psychological stress, including isolation from other refugees and depression. This can then manifest as IPV, or violence against their partners, as they are unable to fulfill the expected role of being breadwinners who provide for and support their families (ibid., 110).

Regarding community exclusion, many of the organizations interviewed by Alkubati and Muto indicated that Lebanese and Syrian refugees generally avoid interacting with each other, although situations may vary according to religion, sect, and gender. This reflects both the tendency of refugees to avoid going out, and a characteristic of Lebanese society, which has a mix of Christian and Muslim communities. Alkubati and Muto's research reveals that the current situation in which Syrian refugees are marginalized by their host

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[12] Readers should consult the original publication for an in-depth exploration of these complex interactions—including the human interactions between refugees living in refugee settlements, community leaders, NGO staff, the staff from Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), and refugee incentive workers employed by the NGOs—through three cases that are the "attempted rape case," the "refugee memorial events" and the "funeral."

communities and tend to be isolated from other Syrian refugees not only creates a hotbed of GBV, such as domestic violence and IPV, but also makes it difficult for the refugee survivors of GBV to properly report the actual situation or access various services available to protect them (ibid., 113).

3. Discussion

This section discusses the implications of adopting a human security perspective for a GBV response and the recovery of survivors based on the findings of the GBV research projects presented in Section 2. Specifically, in Section 3.1. we reinterpret the "survivor-centeredness" in the WPS as an influence from "people-centeredness" in human security, based on Fukui's analysis of Uganda's WPS National Implementation Plan (NAP). In Section 3.2, we consider how the human security framework—in particular protection and empowerment—is specifically realized in line with survivor-centered principle in the GBV response. Finally, Section 3.3 addresses the question of how to restore the dignity of GBV survivors, with reference to a recent critical reflection on survivor-centeredness. Through these discussions, we will point out that the various relationships surrounding GBV survivors, including community ties, cannot be ignored and should be respected if we are to realize the freedom to live with dignity, in addition to the freedom from fear and want.

3.1. The "People-centeredness" norm as seen in the "survivor-centeredness" of WPS

As mentioned at the beginning of Section 2, the aim of the JICA Ogata Research Institute's GBV research project was to focus on the "protection and recovery" of GBV survivors. This should be a central concern of the WPS but tends to be under-researched compared to the "participation" aspect in the context of gender-mainstreaming of national security. We stress here that this agenda-setting was appropriate and far-sighted, as reflected in the fact that in April 2019, two years after the onset of the project, the UNSC explicitly introduced a "survivor-centered approach" into Resolution 2467 as the latest component of the WPS agenda for addressing conflict-related sexual violence

(UNSC 2019). Specifically, this idea of "survivor-centeredness" resonates with the idea of "people-centeredness" articulated in the UN General Assembly resolution on human security in 2012 (UNGA 2012). In the context of gender, the "survivor-centered" philosophy was already adopted in 2017 in the General Recommendation No. 35 on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and this may form an important context in which "survivor-centered" norm is introduced in WPS agenda. Still, when we look at this from the context of security debates, we can safely argue that the "people-centered" concept of human security has been introduced into WPS as the "survivor-centered" norm for the protection of GBV survivors.

In relation to this, we would like to reinterpret Fukui's research outcomes (Fukui 2021), which were presented in Section 2. Fukui found a disconnect between WPS and refugees' perceptions of GBV: while WPS requires countries to prepare national action plans (NAPs) to address the protection, relief and recovery of GBV survivors, refugees in Uganda understand and accept the concept of GBV through the practical activities of humanitarian assistance mechanisms, not through Uganda's NAP. Fukui interpreted this as a gap in the top-down propagation of international norms, but this can also be interpreted as an indication of the strength of the human security approach, especially field-oriented and multi-actor cooperation in response to GBV.

From another perspective, we can see that Fukui's argument points out specific limitations of the NAP, which aims to localize international norms at the "national" level. For example, if we consider the aspect of women's participation —particularly in terms of their engagement in military and defense policy, participation would almost inevitably be limited to "nationals" of the country, and migrants and refugees who are not nationals of the host country tend to be excluded from participating in the first place.

Therefore, what is worth noting here is a remarkable increase in the references to refugees in NAPs in recent years. For example, in the first edition of Uganda's NAP in 2008, there were just 11 references to refugees and only three substantive references in the Action Plan Matrix (Government of Uganda 2008). In the third edition of the 2021 NAP, references to refugees jumped to 64 in total

(Government of Uganda 2021). Even Lebanon, although the country has been reluctant to recognize the refugee status of Syrian refugees by UNHCR, discussed refugees 22 times (four times in the Matrix for Implementation) in the first edition of its NAP in September 2019 (Government of Lebanon 2019).[13] This increasing trend toward incorporating refugees in the NAP in recent years is an evidence that the humanitarian concerns and "people-centered" approach of human security (and the focus on "vulnerable groups left behind" in relation to the SDGs) has also permeated the WPS agenda.

3.2. Approaches to GBV: Differences between gender and human security

This section explores the approaches that gender and human security might each offer in addressing the specific threat of GBV. In addressing GBV, both sudden violence and long-term stigma must be addressed, as highlighted by Kawaguchi and Sebba in their discussion of survivors' help-seeking activities. The first important issue here is the protection of survivors. However, in GBV, which often occurs within intimate relationships, survivors often have to live in the same community with the perpetrator. This may require approaches that diverge from the traditional model (Muto et al. 2018), which assumes that the transition from protection to empowerment is to be made within a rather short period of time. It also differs from the feminist criticism against protection—especially its prolongation and perpetuation (see, Section 1).

The essential component needed here is a "survivor-centered" approach that empowers survivors to identify and articulate their own protection needs (self-determination). The concept of self-determination is a cornerstone of gender theory, particularly with regard to sexual self-determination. From a human security standpoint, self-determination can be

seen as integral to empowerment. Thus, in situations where protection is to be prolonged, it is crucial to include an element of empowerment, allowing survivors to decide how long and in what ways the protection is to be provided. A detailed example of this "empowerment within protection" approach can be found in the Boxed Column on p. **. It describes a cooperation project between JICA and the Department of Social Welfare in Punjab, Pakistan. The project provides comprehensive support to female survivors of GBV who wish to divorce their husbands or partners. It includes vocational training and job placements while they are safely protected in transitional homes. A new response model to GBV is being pursued in this project, ensuring that protection and empowerment are compatible in the long term. The model respects survivors' self-determination in line with the survivor-centered principle described above.

Another crucial question is how to address community stigma, which Kawaguchi (2021) identified as the most important factor hindering help-seeking behavior. Gender scholars have pointed to the need to change the traditional community norms, thereby reducing stigma. However, it may not always be the case that individuals and communities are adversarial. For example, UNHCR has advocated a community-owned approach to GBV in recent years by encouraging collaboration with communities and enhancing their ability to take ownership of change (Mirghani et al. 2017). Some examples of NGO activities adovocated by the UNHCR across Africa include awareness-raising programs specifically for young men and religious leaders, as well as a "safe home" project, in which GBV survivors are sheltered in the homes of former GBV survivors. In this "safe home" program, GBV survivors are taking the initiative by running the program, successfully speeding up their own reintegration into the community and recovery from the trauma (ibid., 12).

The significance of community is also evident in the research by Alkubati and Muto (2022). They observed that Syrian refugees in Lebanon are mutually isolated and do not form refugee communities. In Lebanon, therefore, the community-owned approach is not realistic. They also pointed out that IPV and DV (two important categories of GBV) among Syrian refugees stem from the mental depression of male refugees due to their perceived loss of dignity at home.

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[13] More specifically, the "Increase the capacity of humanitarian personnel in governmental agencies to facilitate the rights of refugee/displaced women to obtain identification documents, and other forms of documentation" in the "relief and recovery" matrix is of significance in terms of responding to GBV. This is because the lack of documentation was the biggest impediment for refugees' help-seeking behaviors (Alkubati and Muto 2023). Lebanon was the third country in the Arab region to enact its NAP (2019–2022), following Iraq (2014–2018) and Jordan (2018–2021).

JICA's efforts in Pakistan:
Toward an effective protection of GBV survivors, their socio-economic rehabilitation and self-reliance

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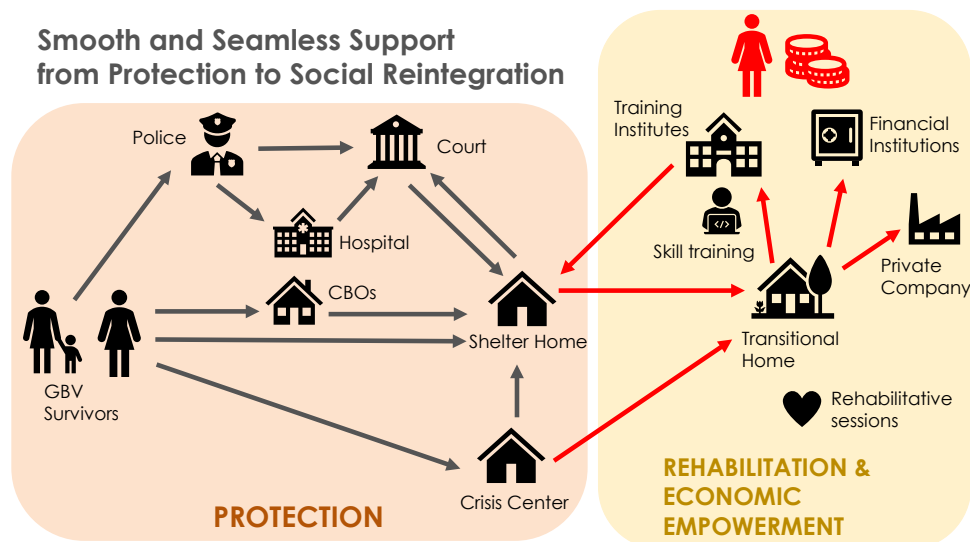
GBV represents a serious social issue in Pakistan, where social norms based on traditional patriarchy severely restrict women's freedom of movement, participation in economic activities, and access to education and healthcare (Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2017–2018). Punjab Province, located in north-central Pakistan, has enacted several GVB-related provincial laws and established shelters and crisis centers to protect GBV survivors and provide much-needed support. Nonetheless, several challenges remain, such as insufficient capacity-building training for service providers (local government officials and support staff who work on the protection and recovery of survivors). Moreover, the services provided are not based on a survivor-centered approach, and support is not effectively provided to smoothly link the protection of survivors to their social and economic rehabilitation.

In response to this situation, JICA dispatched experts to the Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Maal Department from 2021 to 2023, to promote the survivor-centered approach in supporting GBV survivors. Specifically, JICA has worked to strengthen the capacity of service providers in Punjab and conducted an assessment to effectively protect survivors and promote their social and economic rehabilitation. One of the most important advances resulting from this project is piloting the establishment of "transitional homes" in Faisalabad and Behari districts. These offer survivors not only a place to stay but also access to psychological counseling and vocational training, thereby providing medium- to long-term support that spans the transition from protection to rehabilitation and economic empowerment. These transitional homes have been established and are in operation in Faisalabad and Behari since December 2022.

Although conventional means of public support for GBV survivors in Punjab included short-term residential shelters during judicial processes such as mediation or divorce, there was a lack of support for women to become independent and reintegrate into society if they chose to divorce. In Pakistan, where unmarried women face various difficulties, service providers tend to encourage survivors to reconcile with their abusive husbands, and even if women choose to divorce, they rarely have options other than remarriage. In this context, the linkage of support from shelters to transitional homes not only protects survivors but also empowers them to recover their dignity and pursue their own potential. In this sense, the "transitional homes" can be seen as a model case of addressing social issues from the perspective of human security.

On the other hand, some women who received vocational training in transitional homes chose to remarry or reconcile with their families instead of working. This can be attributed to the existence of challenges such as harassment in the workplace, the lack of employment options for illiterate women, and the barriers for women with children to continue working, such as long working hours and lack of childcare facilities. At present, transitional homes provide job placements tailored to individual survivors, but in order to further expand work opportunities for GBV survivors, a multi-actor approach that brings together experts, academics, and government officials will be necessary to co-create a comfortable working environment for women in Pakistan in the future. Since the transitional home has been in operation as a pilot project, further assessment of its activities is needed to ensure effective operation. In any case, the transitional home is a model that can provide new options for women who have suffered GBV, and further expansion of activities in line with their needs is expected.

Smooth and Seamless Support from Protection to Social Reintegration

Police · Court · Hospital · CBOs · Shelter Home · GBV Survivors · Crisis Center · **PROTECTION**

Training Institutes · Financial Institutions · Skill training · Private Company · Transitional Home · Rehabilitative sessions · **REHABILITATION & ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT**

Correlation diagram of existing support for GBV survivors and support through transitional homes in Panjab, Pakistan
©USAMI, Mari

This leads us to the recognition that the community is not always the biggest cause of GBV and stigma; rather, loss of community ties can be more problematic, making refugee families more vulnerable and susceptible to GBV. Gender scholar Moussa (2008) also raised the difficult issue that traditional communities, which often have an oppressive power over their members, are at the same time a kind of spiritual port of refuge for people who feel marginalized in contemporary society (Cf. Section 1).

This underscores human security's commitment to ensuring the freedom to live with dignity as well as freedom from fear and want, targeting both individuals and communities together. While communities can be a source of stigma and violence, they can also provide individuals with a sense of belonging and be a matrix for living a life of dignity. Therefore, from the perspective of human security, supporters outside the community must be careful not to undermine these positive aspects of community and its agency in making change within itself.

3.3. Dignity and connectivity

As the third point of discussion, let us explore further the notion of dignity and the importance of community, focusing specifically on "connectivity." Connectivity is a concept introduced from ecology by Clark (2021, 1070–71) to critically overcome the limitations of the "survivor-centered" approach of WPS. Clark employed this concept to illustrate that policy debates on the survivor-centered approach focus too much on survivors and neglect the impacts suffered by families and communities, thereby minimizing the potential contributions of the survivors to the social ecology that they may make after their recovery. She also argues that, from a long-term health and economic perspective, survivors should not be separated from the complex web of connections in their daily lives but should be placed within the wider social ecology— the "nested structure" that includes family, community, cultural traditions and institutions (ibid., 1073–75). The concept of connectivity is also discussed in *SDGs and Japan: Human Security Indicators to Ensure No One is Left Behind*, as an indicator that capture people's sense of isolation, the availability of advisers/helpers, and the experiences of voluntarily helping others (Human Security Forum et al.

Kawaguchi's interview with South Sudanese refugees on GBV

2019, 70–73). It is natural to assume that this connectivity would support the survivors of GBV when seeking help.

The concept of connectivity also highlights the dual aspect of dignity: the dignity of the individual, which is possessed equally by all, and the dignity that is secured in specific relationships. Clark raises the question of how to bridge these two aspects of dignity by reconciling "survivor-centeredness" and "connectivity" to family, community, and broader social contexts. In fact, similar issues have already been raised in the GBV research project. For example, Robles found that refugees generally put less trust in linkages with external supporters than in bonding between refugees. Likewise, Tobinai argued that diverse relationships within refugee communities entail the need for caution in responding to GBV.

This complex relation between dignity and connectivity was also reflected in the different categorization of help-seeking pathways in the GBV research project. While Kawaguchi and Fukui proposed categorizing the actions of reporting to officials, hospitals and NGOs as formal pathways while confiding in community leaders as informal, Sebba suggested that the first coming out of a GBV survivor is often to a third party totally unrelated to the case (e.g., a friend), and that is truly "informal" compared to confiding to community leaders. Although this was out of the scope of other researchers in the GBV research project, Sebba, a Ugandan researcher who sees even "silence" as a kind of strategy of survivors, found that this was also the first step in survivors' help-seeking. Indeed, according to Herman's study on trauma and

recovery (Herman 1992), being able to narrate a traumatic incident to a friend is surely an essential step in restoring the dignity of GBV survivors.

At the same time, special attention must be paid to the fact that dignity has both objective and subjective aspects and that restoration of dignity is not a simple process (Muto et al. 2022). If we think in terms of the subjectivity of the survivor, even if physical remedies and legal redress are provided, we do not know whether this will lead to the restoration of subjective dignity. Similarly, even if the stigma fades away as the community's traditional norms are reformed or the incident is forgotten, the experience of GBV will undermine the dignity of survivors over the long term. Supporters of the survivors, especially outsiders, must understand that legal and physical remedies alone do not always lead to the restoration of subjective dignity.

Lastly, let us summarize the discussion and outline some key implications for those providing support to GBV survivors. First, in regard to protection and empowerment, the self-determination of survivors should be respected to the maximum extent possible. At the same time, attention must be paid to the connectivity between survivors and those around them, including families, community leaders, local government officials, etc. Furthermore, external supporters must also make efforts to build connectivity with the people they support so that, in cases of GBV, they are sufficiently trusted by survivors to share their painful experiences. To this end, external supporters should not perceive GBV survivors as beings in need of protection or deprived of dignity but rather should humbly listen to them as agents of self-determination, including their need for protection and their relationships with the community.

Another important implication of the human security perspective is that the dignity of both individual and community should be respected. GBV is a social issue that depends heavily on social and cultural contexts, such as community norms. However, human security requires us to be careful not to criticize a culture or community from outside without due consideration. In this sense, the significance of adopting a human security perspective in addressing GBV issues lies in the fact that it promotes self-reflection on the positionality of external supporters and their approaches.

Conclusion

Based on the premise that GBV is at the same time a gender concern and a challenge to realizing human security, this paper has discussed the significance of the human security perspective in addressing the gender issue of GBV. Of course, the affinity between the two concepts was already recognized in the UNDP 1994 report, and the idea is also widely shared today. The originality of this paper lies in utilizing the individual results of the GBV research project of the JICA Ogata Research Institute to explore how these two perspectives/approaches complement each other in addressing GBV within refugee communities. By focusing on the humanitarian aspect of human security, we can thereby shed light on the interplay between protection and empowerment, the diverse relationships between the individual and community, and the interrelations between dignity and connectivity.

Finally, while this paper has considered the implications of human security perspectives on gender issues, it has also revealed that gender studies has much to contribute to our knowledge and application of human security—for example, the idea of understanding dignity in relation to self-determination and the criticism that protection sometimes falls into paternalism. This is compatible with our work in the first issue of *Human Security Today* (Muto et al. 2022), in which we pointed out the need for researchers and experts with different areas of expertise to work together to achieve the simple objective of ensuring human security. We think that this paper shows the possibility of such collaborations. Moving a step further, collaboration and learning should not be limited to researchers and practitioners, and based on the discussion in this paper, the people who are the target of protection and empowerment in human security practice are also important partners in this collaboration and learning. Therefore, it is desirable that future research on human security should go beyond discussions on concepts to become more field-oriented, directly contributing to collaboration with communities. These approaches can be seen in the GBV research project presented in this paper and the cooperation project of JICA with the Department of Social Welfare in

Pakistan. In such field-oriented research and cooperation, both researchers and practitioners will need to learn how to listen to the people whom they research or support, and how to collaborate with them through a greater emphasis on their "dignity" than ever before.

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