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The global migration crisis through the lenses of Hirschman's Voice and Exit paradigm

1. In Exit, Voice and Loyalty, Hirschman extrapolates the dichotomy of consumer's behavior to state level. Hirschman analyzes the pattern of migration flows from Europe to the United States during different stages of economic development of the sending countries. In espousing Jean-Jacques Rousseau's thesis, in that migration operates as a safety valve for stateless societies and it contributes to perpetrating the status quo by exiting dissent, thereby diffusing conflict. Today's migration flows can be interpreted in Hirschman's terms as collective movements of citizens' decisions to opt for exit in the face of unmet expectations of improved welfare, higher levels of income, and better services. The paradigm can be further articulated to analyze states' responses to rising insecurity and citizens opting for an exit solution as a result of late response by the state. Hirschman considers insecurity, conflict and violence among the push factors in the decision to emigrate, and the existence of a state properly defined as incompatible with the systematic exit option as a "routine response to dissatisfaction".

2. The thesis remains valid today. However, the evolution of conflict and violence from intra-state or inter-state conflict to widespread insecurity linked to terrorism poses new challenges for states and international organizations involved in long term development or emergency humanitarian support. It calls for new alliances to build a nexus between security-development-humanitarian actors in support of states. The paradigm applied in today's context assumes the inclusion of security among the public goods, or "attractions" provided by the state in response to citizens' voice. Supporting states to respond to citizens' expectations requires long-term development responses to emergencies like forced displacement and massive migration, and a stronger compact between development and humanitarian agencies. The Sahel, the region south of the Sahara that extends from Mauritania to Sudan, is at the center of a security crisis and the point of departure or transit of unregulated migration flows to Europe.

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11. Solutions to these challenges undoubtedly necessitate targeting the most deprived populations in high-risk settings and investing in physical security. In other terms, they require states' response that takes voice seriously before exit becomes the default option. For development practitioners operating in areas where state capacity is particularly weak, tailoring humanitarian action and development to local contexts can empower often-marginalized stakeholders and make assistance more relevant to community needs and responsive to opportunities as they arise. This is especially important in the Sahel, where violent groups are dependent on the local population for both support and recruitment. Strengthening programs for more effective response to citizens' voice requires addressing the broad governance spectrum of communication tools, reliable and public statistics are powerful tools to empower citizens' voice. Establishing citizen engagement tools to report on the quality and reliability of services, as well

as generating more rapid responses and demand for accountability from governments are critical to enable a shift from exit to voice.