



## Post-war Development in Asia and Africa

The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium of the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA)

in collaboration with the

Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC)

### Concept Note

#### **Background**

Africa and Asia, home to an overwhelming majority of the world's population, have also witnessed the most intense and protracted armed conflicts over the past several decades.<sup>1</sup> While a number of these were international or inter-state, many, if not most, have been intra-state in character, related to sub-nationalisms or natural resources and commodities.<sup>2</sup> Countries affected by war and conflict in the two regions also face significant challenges, particularly in terms of the levels and distribution of economic and social development, use of environmental assets, legitimacy and effectiveness of governance, and access to justice. Asia and Africa also bear diverse but often related histories of colonialism and under-development as well as contested post-colonial political, economic, and nation-building experiences, often also influenced by neighbourhood issues and the politics of the Cold War. Political economies in the two regions also carry the legacy of structural adjustment policies and are marked by divergent histories and presents of 'integration' into the global economic system, whether involving natural resource extraction (especially in Africa), manufacturing labour (more so in Asia) or internal displacement and migration (in both regions). It is this context that several countries in the two regions face the challenge of post-war economic and social development.

While it cannot be gainsaid that countries recuperating from war and conflict in Asia and Africa do so under differing and unique conditions, many of the challenges they face are not particularly unique. These include developing new constitutional and political arrangements, rebuilding the economy and securing livelihoods, repairing the social fabric, restoring rule of law, strengthening civil society, and shaping mechanisms for reconciliation and transitional justice, among others. The specific challenges and solutions including their precedence, timing, and execution, vary from country to country and are shaped by the particular social, economic and political configurations that are implicated in the conflict and which therefore need to be addressed by the solutions.

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<sup>1</sup>See Themnér, Lotta & Peter Wallensteen, 2013, Armed Conflict, 1946-2012, *Journal of Peace Research* 50(4).

<sup>2</sup>See, for instance, Thomas Parks, Nat Colletta & Ben Oppenheim, 2013, *The Contested Corners of Asia: Sub national Conflict and International Development Assistance*, Asia Foundation; Jakkie Cilliers & Julia Schünemann, 2013, *The future of intrastate conflict in Africa: More violence or greater peace?*, Institute for Security Studies, Paper 246.

Hence, post-war/conflict development policy must necessarily encompass several distinctive goals, priorities, and processes. However, there are at least two overarching, inter-related and equally important imperatives in this respect, both central to reducing risk of renewed conflict and ensuring a credible and sustainable peace. These include addressing questions of distributive justice, economic reconstruction, and sustainable and inclusive growth on the one hand, and ensuring political inclusion, democratic participation, social cohesion, and rule of law, on the other.

In the aftermath of war and conflict, states struggle to rebuild the lives of their citizenry, to deliver basic services and to address complex issues such as unemployment, food security, education, health, and financial access. According to the World Bank's *World Development Report 2011*, people living in fragile conflict affected states are twice as likely to be undernourished than in other developing countries, more than three times as likely to be unable to send their children to school, twice as likely to see their children die before age five, and more than twice as likely to lack clean water. Moreover, by definition, the presence of conflict impinges fundamentally upon the individual's right to life and personal security, affects their access to natural resources and ability to engage in livelihoods, and opens the door for infringements of a number of other human rights.

It is therefore crucial that the post-war/conflict development agenda is built on elements such as equality and non-discrimination, participation, empowerment, and accountability, which must receive sustained attention. Such an approach complements more orthodox approaches to development and poverty reduction, looking not just at resources, but also at the capabilities, choices, security, and power needed for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living as well as the full spectrum of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. Therefore, it is important to consider development and economic policy more broadly, in ways that accounts for its linkages with post-war/conflict processes and societal changes in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of factors that support or hinder development and distributive justice as a guide to policy.

While the agencies like the World Bank have stressed that sustainable economic growth is crucial to reduce the probability of a country relapsing into conflict, a narrow focus on economic growth alone can lead to a neglect of other factors that contribute to poverty reduction and post-war/conflict stability. Taking a narrow view of the material conditions underlying the conflict and their transformation, risks overlooking the "dark matter" of conflict.<sup>3</sup> This includes issues that are not always easily observable, manifest themselves in complex ways, or defy standard institutionalised interventions, such as mistrust among groups, politicized identities and stereotypes, trauma, unexpressed fears and resentments, standards of masculinity, etc. In addition, perceptions of the legitimacy of and trust in the institutions of state, local or national, and civil society, also have strong implications for the outcomes of post-war/conflict interventions.

The dominant view on post-conflict states also posits that countries emerging out of conflict have weak institutional environments and that the state often lacks capacity to meet the basic needs of its population (Lockhart 2005). The role of domestic civil society organisations and international institutions and mechanisms of aid thus assumes significance. However, given that civil society organisations are themselves affected and shaped by the conflict, their interventions also pose challenges. Moreover, questions of

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<sup>3</sup>Jacqueline H. Wilson, The 'Dark Matter' of Peacebuilding, at <http://www.usip.org/olivebranch/the-dark-matter-of-peacebuilding>

institutional capacity cannot be isolated from questions of credibility and legitimacy, achieving which is often a far harder task.

Similarly the political economy of international institutions and mechanisms of aid, also pose their own challenges. Moreover, in both Asia and Africa, the manner in which countries recovering from conflict are tied into regional and global political and economic grids of power generate additional contingencies. Particularly relevant in this regard are the engagements of global institutions and mechanisms pertaining to humanitarian assistance, development, monetary stability, conflict resolution and intervention, peacekeeping, human rights and justice.

Underlying all these issues are broader conceptual and philosophical questions and discourses that shape the policy landscape. These include the relationship between development and justice, the development and security nexus, political economies of conflict and peace building, and critical perspectives on the discursive constructions of war, conflict, peace, and development, and how they constitute and relate to each other. These are not merely theoretical preoccupations but have definitive policy implications and material effects, even if they are not always obvious, and hence warrant serious consideration.

## **The Symposium**

It is in the context of these challenges and the recognition that a one-size-fits-all approach to post-war/conflict development is counter-productive that this symposium is convened. Conceived as a multi-stake holder forum, the symposium seeks to a) inform and render post-war development policies and practice more evidence based, and b) enable learning and dialogue between post-war polities through discussion of trends, differences, special cases and best practices.

The symposium is also intended to facilitate CEPA/SLRC and partners to share outputs with and receive critical feedback from a range of peers and different actors. This in turn will support the development of more relevant research and knowledge to guide post-war/conflict economic and social development policies, especially in the global South.

It is proposed that the discussion at the three-day symposium be organised around two streams that will run concurrently (i.e., panels and debates will alternate between streams):

Stream 1 (S1): This will focus on questions of distributive justice, economic reconstruction, and sustainable and inclusive growth and will include (but not be limited to) the following policy areas:

- Social protection, welfare and poverty reduction
- Livelihoods and employment
- Basic services/entitlements: health & nutrition, education, housing, roads
- Resource entitlements—land, water, fishing, forests, etc.
- Climate change and disaster resilience
- Gender equality and non-discrimination,
- Minorities and vulnerable groups (IDPs, women & female-headed households, youth, ex-combatants, etc.)

- Macroeconomic policy
- Foreign Aid/Investment

Stream 2 (S2): This will focus on questions of political inclusion, democratic participation, social cohesion, and rule of law and will include (but not be limited to) the following policy areas:

- Political participation and democratic governance
- Rule of law and access to justice
- Credible and inclusive state institutions
- Social cohesion and pluralism
- Political representation of women and minorities
- Strengthening civil society
- Non-discrimination and equality
- Managing the commons

There will be at least 3 panels in each stream, making for at least 8 papers in each stream. The inaugural and two key note addresses are intended to canvass some of the broader conceptual and philosophical questions and issues outlined above. To ensure convergence, half of the third day will be devoted to a comprehensive reflection and review of the issues raised in the discussion, to outline convergences, contradictions/ tensions, point to possible gaps in knowledge and understanding, and raise further questions that need consideration or research. This will include questions pertaining to challenge of researching post- war/conflict development.

In addition, the symposium will also include three Policy Platforms focused on an engagement with the following key sets of actors: a) the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the United Nations, b) Bi-lateral Donors/Lenders, including the BRICS, and c) the Government of Sri Lanka.

### **Tentative Outline Agenda**

Day 0: A formal evening opening with an inaugural address

Day 1: Pre-Lunch: Two Keynotes (30 minutes each)+ First panel (S1- 2 papers)  
Post-Lunch: Second Panel (S2-3 papers) and Third Panel (S1-3 papers)

Day 2: Pre-Lunch: Policy Platform 1 (1-1.5 hours) + Fourth Panel (S2-2 papers)  
Post-Lunch: Fifth Panel (S1-3 papers) and Sixth Panels (S2-3 papers)

Day 3: Pre-Lunch: Review Panel and review discussion  
Post-Lunch: Policy Platform 2 (1 hour) and Policy Platform 3  
Closing

### **A Note on the Streams**

Streams, rather than panels on distinct themes, are proposed because they are likely to allow for greater exploration of what are really interconnected issues. The idea is not to have one or two papers on each of the issues listed as relevant to a particular stream. The concerns highlighted in each stream are intended as a guide to paper writers or invited

panelists as to how we want to view the problem at hand. For example, it is often the case that social protection is discussed without reference to macroeconomic policy, which itself remains less explored in post-war/conflict contexts.

At the same time, the streams are not constructed as mutually exclusive. The idea of the stream is to provide a broader framework that we want the interventions to account for and speak too, even if they focus on certain aspects or policy areas. While every paper may not engage with every one of the issues in the stream, taken together the papers in each stream must cover the gamut of policy areas. The idea of having panels alternating between streams is to further ensure that the two streams are not discussed as mutually exclusive. The review on day three is intended to ensure that a significant amount of time is available to crystalize insights, doubts, questions for further research, etc.

*The [Centre for Poverty Analysis](#) (CEPA) is an independent think tank working primarily in Sri Lanka. In research and monitoring and evaluation, CEPA's experience has straddled many sectors and thematic areas: resettlement, conflict, infrastructure (roads, energy, and water and sanitation), plantations and migration. Poverty, gender and environmental analyses are mainstreamed into CEPA's work. CEPA has developed fresh and challenging perspectives on poverty; explored alternative dimensions; conducted in-depth analyses of specific poverty conditions; contributed to a better understanding of poverty in Sri Lanka and formulated policy initiatives to alleviate the multi-dimensional facets of poverty.*

*The [Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium](#) (SLRC) is a six year global research programme supported by [DFID](#), exploring livelihoods, basic services and social protection in conflict-affected situations. SLRC was established in 2011 with the aim of strengthening the evidence base and informing policy and practice around livelihoods and services in conflict. SLRC's research focuses on eight core countries, covering a range of conflict-affected situations: Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Nepal, Pakistan, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Sierra Leone.*