A Critical Analysis of 'Security-Development' Nexus: United Nations, Peacekeeping Operations, and Peacebuilding Framework

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Abstract

The security-development nexus has become one of the most important agendas especially in the field of peacebuilding in response to urgent needs in complex humanitarian assistance in war-torn areas. With the changing dynamics of conflict since the end of the Cold War, recent peacebuilding efforts have employed a combination of security and development paradigm to ameliorate severe human rights situations in different contexts. In particular, the functionality of security-development nexus has been well observed in post-conflict scenarios where broader state-building, institutional, security, and governance-related reforms were implemented to ensure sustainable peace processes. In addition, it has been criticized in terms of the imposed liberal values. This article critically analyzes the security-development nexus and attempts to examine *how* and *why* the nexus has become essential to the post-Cold War peacebuilding framework. It further elucidates the role of the United Nations (UN) as the leading actor in peacebuilding operations, especially in the form of UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) which have played a significant role in establishing and consolidating peace in various conflict-ridden societies.

Keywords

Security-Development Nexus, peacebuilding, post-Cold War, post-conflict development, post-conflict reconstruction, United Nations, United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

Introduction

Undoubtedly, the concept of the security-development nexus has become one of the most important agendas with regards to peacebuilding, and post-conflict reconstruction and development. Consequently, the concept became an important conceptual theme to be explored by various scholars, practitioners, and international organizations (Stern, 2010). The attention toward the concept was primarily driven by the need to understand the complexities of the inherited multifaceted challenges associated with the peacebuilding processes. Since the announcement of the Universal Declaration of

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Human Rights in 1948, violations of human rights have been regarded as among the most pressing matters in various contexts. In accordance with such flow, activities to deal with violations of human rights have also been developing especially in cases of severe conflicts, particularly after the Cold War era. Therefore, the 'contemporary' peacebuilding has a tendency to employ a combination of security and development works in order to overcome difficulties in conventional peacebuilding and to ameliorate severe human rights situations in conflict and post-conflict scenarios.

In view of the above discussion, the main objective of this paper is to elucidate and examine *how* the security-development nexus has become essential to the post-Cold War peacebuilding framework, and more importantly what kind of challenges it has created in case of foreign-based interventions (such as the United Nations). After a brief definition of the key terms, this study explains in detail, firstly, the convergence between 'security' and 'development', and secondly, why the nexus needed to appear in the post-Cold War peacebuilding framework. This discussion will be followed by a consideration of the effects that are generated by peacebuilding efforts based on security-development nexus. This paper argues that the nexus has become inextricably linked to each other in the context of peacebuilding in order to tackle complex situations on the ground, however, also contains the various problematic issue.

Defining 'Security-Development' Nexus

According to Stern (2010), there are different narratives associated components around the convergence between 'security' and 'development'. This argument illustrates the complexities around the developed nexus. This research considers both the elements — 'security' and 'development' — as mutually reinforcing each other in the broader context of the peacebuilding process. Also, 'security' in this paper refers not only to military power but also towards the institutionalization or reconstruction of the security sector along with the associated sectors, often termed as Security Sector Reform (SSR). Regarding post-Cold War peacebuilding, this paper recognizes that the 'new' idea of 'peacebuilding' (as a concept) kicked off by 'An Agenda for Peace' in 1992. Although the concept was first introduced by Johan Galtung (Galtung, 1976), it was the United Nations (UN) that 'formalized' and 'institutionalized' the peacebuilding as a practice and process. In addition, especially since the 1990s, the number of actors in peacebuilding has dramatically increased within the broader context of conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction & development. Considering the change in the scale and nature of 'new' conflicts, the peacebuilding aspect necessitated the involvement and responsibility of the international community and organizations (Tschirgi, 2004). In this vein, this paper focuses on the role of the UN as the leading actor in peacebuilding operations (Dodson, 2006), especially UN Peace Keeping Operations (PKO) which have played a vital role in the establishment and consolidation of peace in various conflict-ridden societies.

Pathway of the Security-Development Nexus

After the ending of the Soviet Union, the international community was challenged with a new form of chaotic situation(s). In response, a paper titled 'An Agenda for Peace' was published by then-Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali in 1992. This report

opened a pathway of post-Cold War peacebuilding approaches. In the very document, the UN understood peacebuilding as a comprehensive framework that includes various concepts such as the rule of law, democratization, and respect for human rights. In order to accomplish such comprehensive peacebuilding, various actors, particularly international NGOs were considered as important actors in peacebuilding framework (Duffield, 2010). As Boutros-Ghali (1992) described, such a framework is steered towards 'state-building' rather merely 'building peace', particularly during the (conflict) transition phase. Therefore, it can be said that the new approach towards peacebuilding is to promote pre-conditions which are important to ensure sustainable peace. Moreover, the international community framed the peacebuilding plan as based on ''the need for a more systematic and intrusive approach' (Helman, 1992, p.7). In doing so, many scholars have illustrated how transitional governments supported by international actors served as one of the more effective solutions. Given the nature of peacebuilding processes, it is important to ensure the re-construction of security framework (i.e., SSR) which in turn supplements the post-conflict development-related agendas.

In view of the above discussion, it can be well observed that the 'security' aspect in the peacebuilding process has expanded itself into a broader domain; that is to say, the change from a conventional understanding of security to a broader institutional and governance-related domain (Newman, 2010). Furthermore, the broader governance-related reforms in post-conflict or transition societies and SSR supplement each other. As such, Security Sector Reform (SSR) encompasses many structural processes such as police and military reforms, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), judicial reforms, etc. Owing to these broader considerations, the security-development nexus became integral to the post-Cold War peacebuilding framework.

The functionality of security-development nexus can be observed in the UN's PKO operations (e.g., the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia [UNTAC] and the UN Operation in Mozambique [ONUMOZ]). According to the UNTAC's official web page, the authority had around 15991 military and 3359 civilian-police components from 43 countries, along with 1149 international civilian staffs and 465 UN Volunteers.

This extended resource was concerned with various sectors: a civil administration, civilian police, repatriation, and rehabilitation components. ONUMOZ also had a similar structure that was composed of 6576 military components and 1087 police observers with 355 international staff and had diverse expertise related to DDR, election support, etc. Furthermore, in order to implement such a comprehensive peacebuilding approach in conflict-ridden societies, the UN strengthened the conventional security aspect in the PKO's operations. For example, the UN Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II), supported by Security Council Resolution *794,* was endowed with the authority to implement all means to improve the security situation on-ground for humanitarian assistance and effective peacebuilding.

Although the peacebuilding framework had included various security-related components combined with developmental agenda, nevertheless, the UN missions in Somalia and Yugoslavia were not successful. After that, the concept of human security was introduced in 1994 supplemented by Boutros Boutros Ghali's released 'Supplement to an Agenda for Peace' in 1995 (Bosold, 2010). These new developments

in the context of the post-Cold War era fostered the unification of security and development in peacebuilding while also providing a stable conceptual foundation for a sustainable approach. Moreover, the Brahimi Report in 2000 showed further necessity to improve PKO works. The report argued that the simultaneous implementation of peace-keeping and peacebuilding is necessary for terms of dealing with civil war. However, these commendable developments created practical challenges for the 'security-development' nexus itself (Duffield, 2010). Kofi Annan in 2004 further emphasized that 'development and security are inextricably linked' (Stern, 2010, p.5). Such an understanding led to a new PKO, which is usually called a robust or integrated PKO, and thus strengthened the combination of the nexus. Additionally, as many researchers described, in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MUNUSMA), the UN attempted to set an intervention brigade in PKO for peace enforcement. Hence, in comparison with the 1990s, nowadays, the peacebuilding framework which the UN has been leading defines the security aspect as an essential factor of peacebuilding.

With regard to the security and development nexus, various practitioners and scholars have also explored the gender dynamics; especially the rights of women and related human rights violations, such as observed in the case of Yugoslavia around 1992 (Cockburn, 1999). In order to deal with such human-rights issues, in 1993, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women was adopted by the UN General Assembly. That was followed by the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 and the Security Council Resolution *1325* in 2000, which pointed out the necessity of 'protecting' women, improving gender equality, and women's broader involvement decision-making processes (Carpenter, 2006; Väyrynen, 2004). Such a gender-based approach further strengthened the security-development in the broader context of peacebuilding framework(s).

As mentioned above, in a post-Cold War situation, there was a need to employ security in order to fulfill the 'needs' of peacebuilding framework. Hence, the relationship between security and development became indispensable in the peacebuilding agendas.

Motivations behind 'Security-Development' Nexus

Although 'An Agenda for Peace' was based on a reflection of the past, the situation after the Cold War became much more complicated As various scholars and practitioners have described, the 'new' conflicts became more internal (intrastate) in nature, and more importantly, exposed the identity-based cleavages (ethno-religious, cultural or political) within various societies (e.g., Dodson, 2006). Kaldor (2007) termed these altered nature of conflicts as 'new' wars. According to Kaldor (2013), 'new wars' have features such as the privatization of violence which targets civilians. At the same time, such wars transcended the national borders, thus expanded its influence, impact, and space. With regards, Duffield (2005) also argued that the border between international and national disputes disappeared which can be considered as negative globalisation. Such circumstances led the international community to reconsider the concept of governance while linking it with a western understanding of globalisation (Stern, 2010). According to Hettne (2010), the concept of global

governance subsequently generated the concept of global regimes that regarded the developing places as of global concerns. Later, underdevelopment and horizontal inequalities started to be regarded as one of the main factors behind the manifestations of violent conflicts (Duffield, 2010; Stern, 2010). Moreover, the background assumption, that poverty creates a lack of security and a lack of security creates underdevelopment, supported such comprehension. Therefore, the international community, led by the UN, decided upon a more positive, systematic and intrusive approach towards addressing the issue of poverty and underdevelopment. As a 'Supplement to an Agenda for Peace' mentioned, a 'feature of such conflicts is the collapse of state institutions, especially the police and judiciary, with resulting paralysis of governance, a breakdown of law and order, and general banditry and chaos' (Boutros-Ghali, 1995, p.5) and 'It means that international intervention must extend beyond military and humanitarian tasks and must include the promotion of national reconciliation and the re-establishment of effective government' (Boutros-Ghali, 1995, p.5). Such an approach can be seen as solid and dynamic state-building or reconstruction to create a democratic state which can maintain peace and prevent conflict recurrence. Such state-building projects need a well-structured development and security approach to supplement the agenda of sustainable peace and stability. In this respect, development theoretically has no choice but to build itself on security. In this manner, the security and the development aspects perform simultaneously in peacebuilding.

Within the broader discussion of security-development nexus, the concept of security expanded its domain, thus encompassed 'human security' as its main objective (Krause, 2005, p. 457). Indeed, this expansion had positive impacts over the broader developmental and governance-related agendas; however, it burdened it with tasks, such as SSR, DDR, and small arms control (Krause, 2005). Del Castillo (2008) described it as extremely important to complement socio-economic development. As such, contributions of security acquired an important position in peacebuilding and became a necessary component in a peacebuilding framework after the end of the Cold War.

As indicated above, Holt (2009) identifies some failures in PKO in Sierra Leone which produced many lessons learnt, thus led to a refined PKO robust and integrated approach. The improved approach fostered the nexus between security and development. The Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, usually known as Brahimi Report 2000, argued that 'History has taught that peacekeepers and peacebuilders are inseparable partners in complex operations: while the peacebuilders may not be able to function without the peacekeepers' support, the peacekeepers have no exit without the peacebuilders' work' (Brahimi Report, 2000, p. 5). That report reconfirmed the value of security in the peacebuilding framework and recognised that security works are vital in deciding a result of peacebuilding. Moreover, the 9/11 attacks in 2001 played a decisive role in advancing cooperation between security and development (Tschirgi, 2004; Youngs, 2008).

It should be noted that the above-described motivations behind the nexus of security-development are based on an approach known as *liberalism*. In fact, in post-Cold War societies, tenets of liberalism, such as human rights and democracy, have

become major international norms. As such, almost all peacebuilding projects have been implemented by such a liberal viewpoint (Jones, 2006; Baranyi et al., 2011). In addition, one of the significant factors which made a huge influence on the post-Cold War peacebuilding framework is an economic perspective. Since the end of the Cold War, the prominence of the political economy and a 'greed' analysis in various fields has been noticeable. These political-economic dimensions of violent conflicts have been well explored and theorized by Keen (2009) and Collier (2000).

Security-Development Nexus and Peacebuilding: Understanding the Impact

As this paper illustrated, it is important to establish a comprehensive approach around the nexus of security and development. Such an approach needs to be implemented in order to address the conditions which are in fact the root causes of violent conflicts. It further establishes itself as a long-term approach that can possibly ensure the prevention of violent conflicts along with the violations of human rights. We have observed various success stories where such comprehensive approaches/frameworks have addressed the complex underlying issues in post-conflict settings. For instance, the case of Sierra Leone is a classic example, which had capacity-based issues however when offered assistance, the country successfully recovered itself. Nevertheless, we have to consider the detrimental impacts of security-development based approach in the post-conflict environments, as mentioned previously.

Mac Ginty (2011) and Belloni (2012) commented on the 'hybrid peace' which seeks coexistence with *liberal* and *non-liberal* values. The coexistence is fundamentally based on incorporating the indigenous traditions or social capital rather than imposing liberal schemes on developing countries or post-conflict societies. In this vein, a significant literature has been produced which criticizes the de-contextualized 'mainstreaming' of peacebuilding framework driven by liberal standards. Such literature has thoroughly examined various components of *liberal* peacebuilding (such as SSR, DDR, and reconciliation) led by international actors (e.g., Heathershaw, 2008). In other words, one can argue that the post-Cold War peacebuilding approach has adopted liberal state-building (as a binding force), which aims at developing economic policy based on a free market and building a rule of law to protect individual rights through institutional reform and election (Newman, 2009). Paris (2002) also pointed out that such liberal peacebuilding has functioned to spread the liberal sovereign state model to the world, and argued that 'Peacebuilders promote this model in the domestic affairs of war-shattered states as the prevailing 'standard of civilization' that states must accept in order to gain full rights and recognition in the international community' (p. 650). Additionally, in terms of human security, which has fostered further relations with development, yet has been criticized for re-adjusting or re-defining itself to fit with a liberal peacebuilding approach in a globalised world (Stern, 2010).

Moreover, there is a tendency in liberal peacebuilding to intervene in a particular context through kinetic force or military power. As many scholars have observed, since the end of the Cold War, many peace agreements (a *precondition* for peacebuilding peace processes have tended to be created by powerful international intervention. This

trend can be seen in various states such as in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya; however, the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina could be the best example.

The Bosnian War was one of the bloodiest conflicts in the 1990s and took a heavy toll on human lives. The UN dispatched PKO operation called the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to protect people and refugees on the ground. However, it was concerning to observe that the international community was not able to prevent the Srebrenica massacre in 1995.

Later, NATO did decide to intervene in Serbia with unilateral aerial bombings without the consensus in the UN Security Council. In fact, it can be said that that strong intervention led the *Dayton Agreement* followed by an exhaustive peacebuilding process in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bose, 2002). However, in terms of the provisions of that agreement, there was great dissatisfaction on the ground, particularly among the Muslim dominated areas (McMahon, 2009; Caplan, 2010). In order to deal with such dissatisfaction, the UN and other international actors deployed a large-scale military force to keep the structure of peacebuilding. Moreover, regarding the state-building process, which the UN has planned to strengthen the central government to build a legitimate and democratic sovereign state, the Serbian faction bitterly disagreed with such a policy (Bose, 2002). According to Friedman (2019), over 20 years have passed after the Dayton Agreement was signed, there are still foreign military forces stationed there to deal with unforeseen events caused by the dissatisfaction on the ground. It means that the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina clearly shows that military humanitarian intervention based on the liberal peacebuilding framework led to the development of other serious problems, such as increasing concerns over nationalism, ethnic divisions, etc.

It is evident from the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina that a liberal peacebuilding framework (embedded within the security and development nexus) has a high possibility to create a wide range of challenges on the ground, as well as undermines local ownership because of its de-contextualized approach (Donais, 2009). In addition, Paris (2004) noted that peacebuilding and state-building processes could never be effective until there is mutual trust between different stakeholders and institutions. Additionally, the post-Cold War peacebuilding approach tends not to present *victory* or *defeat*, thus there is a possibility that such an attitude leaves a question mark over the neutrality or legitimacy of foreign intervention in the conflict setting or conflict-induced crisis situation(s). Consequently, any withdrawal of external forces increases the risks of conflict reoccurrence and intensification (Berdal, 2017). In addition, according to Krause (2005), a liberal peacebuilding approach which is developed and supported by the concept of human security is not really proven to be effective (see also Kuperman, 2015; McCants, 2015). The reflections of the mentioned challenges can be found in the discussion triggered by the concept of 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P). For instance, interventions in Libya and Syria were conducted with reference to R2P, however, later the international actors found themselves in a much-complicated environment (Morris, 2013).

Another point is the increasing trend of the mortality rate of aid workers active in the peacebuilding processes (Duffield, 2010). This issue has been critically discussed in the debate concerning the operationalisation of humanitarianism in complex

emergency or conflict-induced crises (Rukavishnikov & Pugh, 2018). In general, humanitarian workers usually put a priority on humanitarian principles (i.e., humanity, neutrality, and impartiality) as sanctioned by the UN General Assembly. Here, the objective is to mobilize humanitarian assistance at full scale in order to respond to critical situations or disasters. The specified role under the mandate of the UN also distinguishes the humanitarian actors or organization from the military component of the broader peacebuilding framework. Nevertheless, emerging literature has well pointed towards the consequence of security-development nexus within which the humanitarian actors have to perform. The literature refers to the concept of 'securitization' of development. These issues can be well observed in countries like Somalia (Trachsler, 2008). While considering these complexities, one may argue that the 'security' component in the peacebuilding framework has a significant intention and tendency to encroach the development related agenda.

Duffield (2010) claimed that 'While forming part of liberalism's external sovereign frontier, they also signal the deepening institutionalization of the development-underdevelopment divide' (Duffield, 2010, p.71); thus, leaving the liberal peacebuilding framework for intense criticism. Duffield's opinion implies that the liberal peacebuilding, supported by the security and development nexus, is expanding the gap between many aspects of global north and south; nevertheless, the international community has made an endeavour to minimize the mentioned gulf. In this respect, Stern (2010) understands that the security-development nexus is facing an impasse, and further noted that the nexus generates enormous problems and consumes significant human, monetary and institutional resources (Stern, 2010, p.19).

Besides, contrary to the political and economic rationalities which have supported the very idea of liberal peacebuilding, Junne (2005) and Krause (2005) argued that mere economic development is not enough to establish the states which have the capability to prevent violent conflicts or wars. Paris (2004) further pointed out that tendencies of peacebuilding to bring stability through security sector reconstruction and democratization have not proven to be effective. In such situations, there is a need to have a greater focus on institutional building or reforms prior to commencing a democratization process (Eide, 2013).

The final point is the length or span of the peacebuilding process or initiatives. In general, it is necessary to pursue the peacebuilding process, which is long-term in nature (e.g., Keen, 2009). Dodson (2006) argued that 'the fact that the short-term effect of marketization is often an increase in want and suffering among the poor' (Dodson, 2006, p.247). Collier (2011) claimed that post-conflict peacebuilding needs international assistance for at least ten years. However, Collier (2008) noted that most international peacebuilding endeavours have been based on short-term approaches, hence led to undesirable results, such as destabilization, fragmented state0citizen relationship, poor governance, etc. (Anderson, 1999).

In view of the above-detailed discussion, it appears that the nexus between 'security-development' has been well theorized (within the broader peacebuilding framework), yet it has led to various contradictions Considering the complexities involved in the peacebuilding processes, it is, therefore, an issue of contextually-driven and sensed priorities, in the conflict settings. Similarly, the issue calls attention to

challenging the liberal-based idea in the peacebuilding processes; it needs to adopt contextualized approaches.

Conclusion

This paper has outlined an overall evolution and involved complex dynamics surrounding the nexus between 'security' and 'development' within the broader peacebuilding framework. This paper has illustrated that, given severe situations and urgent needs on the ground, the peacebuilding framework has become highly integrated. It has developed its relationship with security-development nexus, in order to deal with the complex issues in the (post-)conflict or fragile states. Nevertheless, this article has demonstrated the embedded contradictions within the nexus; thus it has led to undermining the peacebuilding process in various cases. The article has further argued that the peacebuilding approach has been primarily steered by the liberal principles, thus reflected itself as a liberal project (legitimization of western democratic 'values') rather developing a more contextualized approach in its operational and state-building agendas (Szeftel, 1998; Carbone, 2015).

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