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# ANALYSING THE CONSEQUENCES OF POST CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

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## ABSTRACT

The period after conflict is characterised with large-scale destruction that necessitates investments in post conflict reconstruction (PCR). It is important that the PCR strategy take a holistic approach to rebuild the economic, social and political structures while taking measures to prevent future conflict. On the other hand, individual PCR interventions may focus on reconstruction of a particular sector with specific objectives. Nevertheless, it is important to account for the consequences of these PCR interventions as negative consequences may fuel the conflicts. This paper is an analysis of the potential consequences of PCR interventions and the significance of understanding them prior to intervention. The purpose of this paper is to introduce a conceptual framework on consequences of PCR interventions that has been developed as part of a long-term study on PCR consequences. Using the conceptual analysis method, the framework was developed to demonstrate the causal linkages between the PCR intervention and its consequences relating them to the post conflict context and long-term outcomes.

**Key words:** *Consequences, Framework, Intervention, Post-conflict, Reconstruction*

## INTRODUCTION

Conflicts are a form of disaster that affect the modern world on a daily basis. In addition to the large number of deaths and disabilities caused by it, the conflicts have a colossal impact on the economic, social and political structures through destruction of soft and hard infrastructures, natural environment, livelihoods of people and cultural heritage. The post conflict societies are thereby faced with a number of challenges including rebuilding infrastructures, ensuring livelihoods, poverty reduction, achieving economic recovery, and re-establishing the social and political institutions (Athukorala & Jayasuriya, 2013). On the other hand, post conflict societies have a high chance of reverting to conflict (Höglund & Orjuela, 2011). Therefore, it is important to address the root causes of the conflict and implement sustainable solutions, while ensuring the

safety and security of the people. A post conflict reconstruction (PCR) intervention should not only look at rebuilding the economy through infrastructures and livelihoods, but also ensure that root causes of conflict are addressed and new conflicts are not created (Jabareen, 2013). Hence, it is important to account for the consequences of a PCR intervention at the planning stage. The PCR interventions are individual projects that focus on a defined set of objectives. These should be strategically placed within the overall PCR strategy in order to achieve economic development and prevent the recurrence of conflict. The purpose of this paper is to introduce a conceptual framework on consequences of PCR relating these consequences to the post conflict context and long-term outcomes. It adopts the conceptual analysis method in order to develop the framework and bases the analysis on previous body of knowledge.

The next section introduces the rationale behind the work presented in this paper. Section three is a discussion of the methodology adopted in developing the conceptual framework. Section four presents the conceptual framework. The final section concludes the paper and offers future research recommendations.

## **JUSTIFICATION**

There is a vast body of literature on understanding the post conflict context and challenges faced during reconstruction. Accounting for the economic consequences of war and understanding the challenges of PCR form an important part of post conflict agenda (Arunatilake, Jayasuriya, & Kelegama, 2001; Athukorala & Jayasuriya, 2013; Ganegodage & Rambaldi, 2014; Pradhan, 2001). Since these societies are at risk of reverting back to conflict, PCR should incorporate conflict prevention strategies parallel to economic recovery (Collier, Hoeffler, & Söderbom, 2008; Cramer & Goodhand, 2002; Höglund & Orjuela, 2011). Intervention in a conflict context differs from that of non-conflict context (Rajasingham-Senanayake, 2005). PCR projects tend to fail if the local conditions and war dynamics are not taken into account (Brun & Lund, 2008; Earnest, 2015). The PCR literature provides several examples of failures due to lack of planning and clear agenda (Dale, 2015; Earnest, 2015). At the same time, some interventions may create negative consequences that were not previously accounted for (Unruh & Shalaby, 2012). Thus, it is important that any intervention takes in to account potential negative and positive consequences at the initial planning stage.

In previous studies, very little attention has been paid to analysing the consequences of a PCR intervention. Although consequences are discussed in isolation or as a group of related consequences, they are not comprehensively analysed relating to the larger context and long term outcomes. Also, existing frameworks in the PCR literature do not necessarily highlight the consequences of PCR intervention. Therefore,

this paper analyses the potential consequences of PCR intervention, relating them to the context and long-term outcomes.

There is a considerable amount of research on post-war recovery studies (PRS), that discusses development in the post conflict context. Peace and conflict impact assessment is a measure introduced by Bush (1998) to anticipate, monitor and evaluate the impact that interventions has on dynamics of peace and conflict. Barakat and Zyck (2009) suggest that PRS should be free from politicisation and should be strongly structured and theoretically grounded. Barakat and Chard (2002) also examines the limitations and barriers in implementing PCR projects. The studies by Mac Ginty (2010) are mainly concerned with comparing the traditional, indigenous approaches to peacebuilding with western, liberal approaches while identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. However, the present research is concerned with consequences of PCR interventions, not limiting them to peace and conflict aspects. Thus, the framework introduced in this paper is different from PRS, as it discusses the consequences related to economic, environmental, social and political aspects.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study uses the conceptual analysis method in developing the conceptual framework. This method was previously used by Jabareen (2013) to develop a framework of concepts generally related to PCR, aiming at better understanding concepts related to PCR and the relationships among them. Jabareen discusses these concepts in general through a holistic approach. Since this study specifically focuses on consequences of PCR, it differs from Jabareen's framework.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Context**

In addition to the large number of deaths and disabilities, conflicts cause large scale damages to infrastructure, disturbing the production process and thereby restraining development (Oji, Eme, & Nwoba, 2015; Smith, Houser, Leeson, & Ostad, 2014). Therefore, it is necessary to focus on economic recovery during the post conflict period, while maintaining political stability and general security. Negative peace, failed state, poverty, corruption and prevalence of war economies are some of the conditions that can be typically seen in post conflict societies (Cole, 2014; Cramer & Goodhand, 2002; Earnest, 2015; Jabareen, 2013; Zabyelina, 2013). The society is also in the danger of reverting back to conflicts (Collier et al., 2008). It is within this context that the PCR intervention takes place in the form of soft or/and hard infrastructure.

## **PCR intervention**

Reconstruction is defined as an innovative approach to solve development issues (Brun & Lund, 2008). Successful PCR solutions can be yielded through planned coordination among different policy interventions and stakeholders (Anand, 2005). There are mainly three types of actors involved in PCR: local government, foreign donors and NGOs. Democracy and strong state are to central post conflict development and peacebuilding (Cramer & Goodhand, 2002; Lappin, 2010). The lack of private investments in post conflict societies necessitates state intervention to provide essential infrastructure (Schwartz & Halkyard, 2006). Due to the lack of institutional capacity and high level of uncertainty of post conflict states, the foreign intervention plays a crucial role in reconstruction (Earnest, 2015). Foreign donors can contribute to conflict prevention and peace building through promoting sustainable recovery (Toh & Kasturi, 2012). NGOs can also contribute to peacebuilding through promoting local participation (Anand, 2005; Dale, 2015). Their role is instrumental in capacity building and empowering communities in the post war context (Gellman, 2010).

## **Soft and hard infrastructure**

The above mentioned actors are mainly involved in PCR interventions by way of providing soft and hard infrastructure that contributes to the restoration of people's livelihoods (Anand, 2005). While PCR strategy should take a holistic approach to integrate the economic, political and social reconstruction (Jabareen, 2013), the individual PCR interventions may address a specified set of objectives within a PCR strategy. Generally, there is a trend to focus more on hard infrastructure provision and soft interventions are postponed to later stages (Stewart, 2005). The lack of attention to soft infrastructure demonstrate the failure to understand the social, political and cultural dynamics of the post conflict context (Jones, 2014). Timely infrastructure provision is key in the PCR agenda. Although quick solutions are necessary, ad hoc interventions that lack planning may cause PCR failures (Dale, 2015).

## **Consequences**

The consequences that results from PCR intervention can be put in to four broad categories as economic, environmental, social and political consequences.

Economic development is a major focus of most infrastructure projects, which can be achieved through integration of development policies with reconstruction (Jones, 2014). Countries tend to achieve high levels of growth soon after conflict due to the inflow of foreign aid, but many fail to sustain it (Athukorala & Jayasuriya, 2013). To achieve sustainable growth, it is necessary to support development with a clear vision for infrastructure (Brown, 2005). Infrastructure reconstruction has causal linkages with reducing poverty, improving investments and creating

livelihoods (Anand, 2005; Collinson, 2003). While it improves access to markets (Dale, 2015), a potential negative impact of PCR is relocation of industrial activities from poorer areas to urban areas (Chandra & Thompson, 2000).

Certain PCR interventions cause horizontal inequity (HI) in the society, making it a significant social consequence of PCR. HI occurs when vulnerable communities further experience unequal resource allocation after the conflict (Stewart, 2005). Increased HI can result in the re-emergence of conflict or create new conflict (Anand, 2005). On the contrary, equitable delivery of infrastructure can contribute to sustainable peace (Zabyelina, 2013). At the same time, infrastructure can be used as a tool to enhance social capital and promote community participation (Handrahan, 2004; Vervisch, Titeca, Vlassenroot, & Braeckman, 2013). Community driven reconstruction often ensures the sustainability of the projects (Brown, 2005) but if the reconstruction is centrally driven it can lead to increased mistrust (Höglund & Orjuela, 2011). However, a centralised approach to PCR is necessary at the planning level in order to align reconstruction with an agenda for sustainable development (Dale, 2015). PCR can also lead to increased social tensions through land grabbing and exploitation, which can occur due to the prevalence of violence (Unruh & Shalaby, 2012). It is necessary to account for such consequences in a context of instability and insecurity, and where violence can re-emerge at any point.

One of the significant political consequences of PCR is corruption, which intensifies during the PCR period. Corruption can occur especially when government and local elites are involved in reconstruction (Höglund & Orjuela, 2011). It is common that PCR funds are controlled by local elites as development gatekeepers, which hinders community driven reconstruction (Handrahan, 2004). Sometimes conflicts are created among local elites to gain control over funds and as a result project objectives are not achieved (Kyamusugulwa & Hilhorst, 2015). Westernization is another consequence of PCR highlighted in the literature. The external interventions often impose external models of development and foreign notions of governance, which may not be compatible with local conditions (Gellman, 2010; Hamieh & Mac Ginty, 2010; Jabareen, 2013). Rather than implementing a whole new system, PCR intervention should understand the local practices and conditions prior to implementation (Richmond, 2012).

### **Long-term outcomes**

The aforementioned economic, environmental, social and political consequences have linkages to the long-term conditions that occur in post conflict societies. Conflict prevention should be a major focus of the long-term plan for reconstruction which also involves peacebuilding and long term stability (Höglund & Orjuela, 2011). Failing to achieve reconstruction

objectives may cause poverty and instability to prevail in the society, which can lead to future conflicts (Jones, 2014). On the other hand, sustainable development achieved through PCR can be used as a tool to promote peace (Brown, 2005). Soft infrastructure interventions play a crucial role in promoting peace through governance institutions (Jones, 2014). Once the soft and hard infrastructure is in place, and political stability is achieved, political reforms can be introduced to address the root causes of the conflict (Höglund & Orjuela, 2011).

### **Conceptual framework**

Figure 1 is a visual presentation of the framework described in the above conceptual analysis.

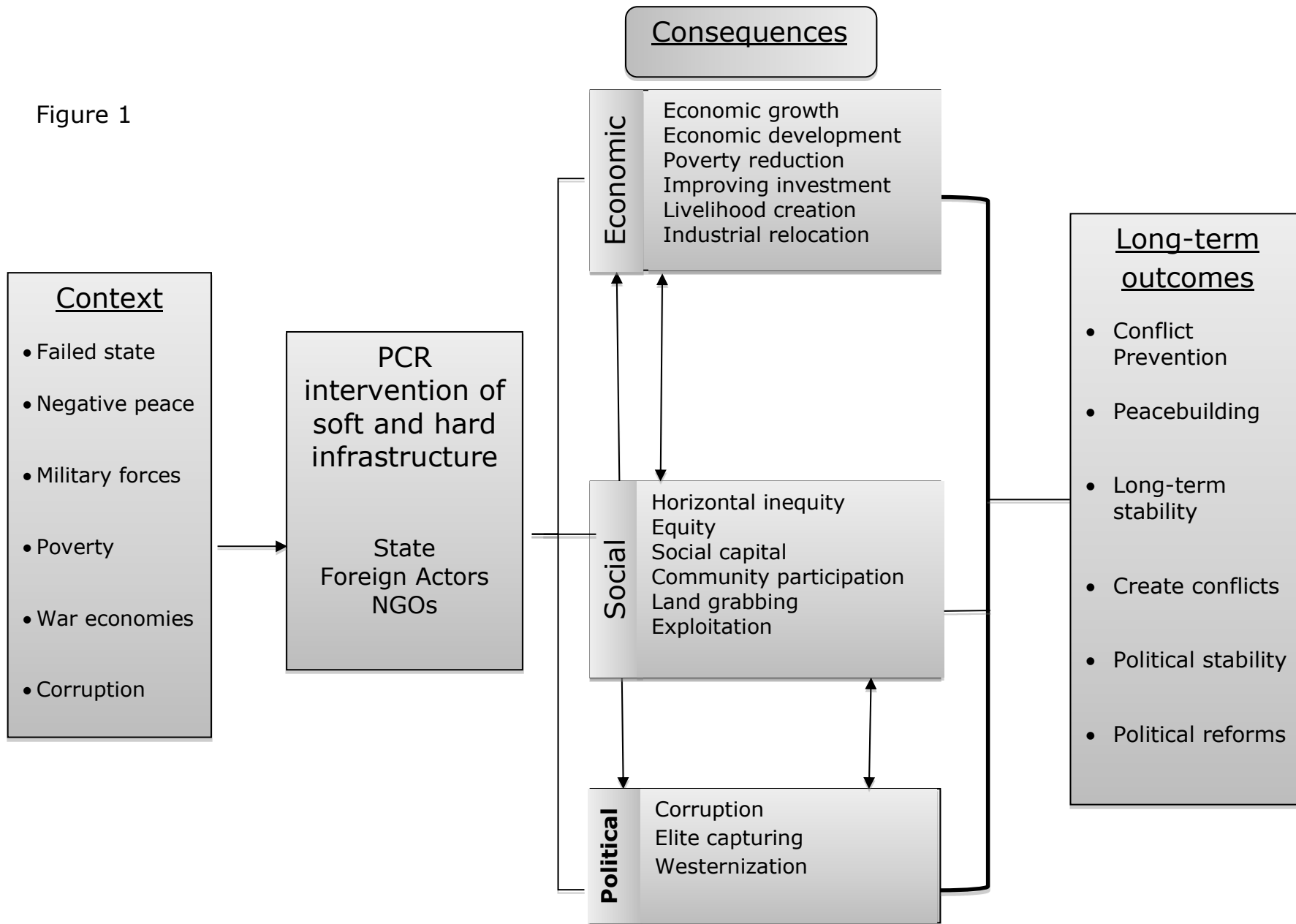
### **CONCLUSION**

Using the conceptual analysis method, a conceptual framework has been developed to address a gap in the literature concerning the analysis of PCR consequences. The conceptual framework demonstrates the linkages between PCR intervention and consequences, relating them to the post conflict context and long-term outcomes. It is important to understand the potential consequences before implementing a PCR project. Future empirical work will seek to elaborate and refine the framework, including more detailed investigation into the applicability of such a framework indifferent types of 'hard' and 'soft' PCR project.

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Figure 1





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