

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Peace Component of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus

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Staging the adaptation of the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus has been a significant development for the humanitarian sector in the past years. While remarkable efforts embarking on this approach have occurred in humanitarian programming, the peace component of the nexus has remained unclear in most cases. This study seeks solid answers to address this gap in the humanitarian sector. To comprehend and analyze the regional dynamics effectively, the study provides a detailed elucidation of the HDP nexus by exploring key viewpoints on peace and incorporating associated notions such as peacebuilding and peacekeeping to establish a solid theoretical foundation.

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The emphasis on the global humanitarian agenda has been concentrated on sustainable solutions for complex humanitarian crises for a long time (Tamminga, 2011). The 2016 World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) had quite a path-breaking impact on the humanitarian sector, in which the international community with the participation of more than 3,000 sector-related attendees acknowledged this trend by accepting the New Way of Working (NWoW), which introduced a new approach with the above-mentioned concerns (Barakat & Milton, 2020). The approach was published by the UN as a booklet and suggested that solutions for such crises cannot be found solely from a humanitarian perspective. Multi-faceted approaches should clearly be found in order to achieve long-term solutions. In this regard, the best way to adopt such solutions was expressed in the summit as combining humanitarian and development concerns and perspectives together, and this was called the humanitarian-development nexus (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [UNOCHA], 2016).

In the post-WHS period, humanitarian actors developed remarkable progress in line with the nexus, as leading humanitarian donors have required comprehensive approaches for humanitarian programming from

fund-chasing organizations, Namli, a senior Doctors Without Borders (MSF) official, reflects in a personal interview (Kaan Namli, interview, November 14, 2023). However, humanitarian crises in armed conflict zones remain problematic as serious restrictions occur on the way to achieving persistent solutions. As the biggest source of these restrictions, the parties in conflict are complex in themselves and generate constant problems for the responding humanitarian actors, as they do not recognize international law, humanitarian principles, moral values, or norms of any sort, which makes them unreliable. Eventually, relevant responding organizations and authorities fail to make long-term plans for these regions and their resident peoples. All these facts have caused the international society to understand that sustaining solutions for complex humanitarian cases, particularly in the context of armed conflicts, requires efforts that go beyond the humanitarian-development nexus. The humanitarian community has agreed that the peace component should be included in the nexus, following the interference from the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres (Böttcher & Wittkowsky, 2021). Even though the idea was logical and its possible positive impacts are undeniable, how the peace component will be implemented in the nexus has yet to be described clearly. This study examines what the peace component is able to imply within the nexus.

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The Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus

Once taken case by case, humanitarian crises lasting a decade or even longer have become a global reality as a permanent part of human life, regardless of the variations in time, place, and people affected. This situation has resulted in a growing risk of establishing enduring dependencies on humanitarian aid for the millions residing in prolonged displacement. According to the latest updates on the Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) issued by UNOCHA (2023), 364.6 million people across the world were in need of humanitarian aid as of October 2023. To address this problem so as to decrease long-term dependency, programming by humanitarian organizations must be focused on not only covering immediate needs but also diminishing them by actively supporting sustainable local and national systems that can bring durable solutions for displaced populations. Alongside the basic humanitarian perspective, collaboration with development and peacebuilding entities is certainly crucial in this endeavor. Humanitarian actors, development agencies, and peacebuilding organizations should aim to ensure that individuals are able to access fundamental social services and gradually achieve self-sufficiency in alignment with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a special commitment and focus on the most vulnerable.

Many countries facing humanitarian challenges encounter obstacles in delivering basic social services, as outlined in their relevant response plans. Although the primary responsibility for service delivery rests with governments, impediments such as territorial control gaps can hinder their capacities for properly carrying out these plans due to political interests or administrative weaknesses. When the financial support provided by the relevant international organizations for implementing their response activities is withdrawn, the burden often falls on humanitarian actors who are already dealing with high caseloads and very limited resources, and these actors become less available for each case as the number of crises increase. The comments from Atay, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Emergency Response Delegate for Europe Region, also reflect the level of challenge that humanitarian workers have to face in the field in the personal interview:

Another important element is funding. From my experience, humanitarian and development activities are underfunded in conflict areas. This makes it very hard to meet the requirements of the affected population; hence, creating a vicious cycle of growing needs and decreased services and supplies. There is also the question of neutrality for humanitarian actors in conflict zones. Often as humanitarian we have to communicate with different parties to the conflict to ensure safety and access. This can lead to challenges because humanitarian actors can be seen as taking part in conflict, which can decrease security and access to affected populations.” (E. Atay, interview, November 13, 2023)

Humanitarian organizations traditionally approach crises with a focus on immediate life-saving assistance. Yet collaborations with development partners are substantially essential for ensuring the sustained and stable provision of basic social services. In most cases, this collaboration regarding programming joint responses also needs to extend to the peacebuilding actors, because accurately considering the governance and security prerequisites for service delivery needs to be ensured without any gaps. This collective approach facilitates not only the fulfillment of basic needs but also addresses the underlying risks and vulnerabilities, as well as enhances resilience, thus securing an efficient and effective response. Ultimately, strengthening national and local systems stands out as one of the most sustainable strategies for delivering basic social services and responding effectively to future shocks.

The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) held on May 23-24, 2016 was marked as a critical moment in humanitarian history in terms of the sector's global evolution. The WHS convened in Istanbul, Türkiye and brought together more than 3,000 participants who are experts in humanitarian and other relevant sectors from approximately 180 countries, 55 of which participated at the heads-of-state level. The primary objective of the WHS was to address the challenges facing the humanitarian sector, discuss constructive solutions for these challenges, and lay the groundwork for a more integrated and effective approach to crises.

One of the key outcomes of the WHS was the conceptualization and endorsement of the HDP nexus. This nexus emerged as the fruit of prominent humanitarian donors' endeavors toward seeking ways to enhance harmony between humanitarian and developmental fields as part of the Grand Bargain, which was a milestone consensus sealed among the leading humanitarian organizations and donors (Barakat & Milton, 2020). This paradigm shift represented a departure from the traditional siloed approaches to one that would add peace to the humanitarian and development efforts as another essential of the nexus. The HDP nexus recognizes the interconnectedness of these three domains and advocates

for a more cohesive and collaborative response to global challenges. It is characterized by its commitment to breaking down the artificial barriers that have historically separated humanitarian action, development initiatives, and peace-building efforts. The nexus approach is not merely a theoretical framework but also a practical strategy that seeks to integrate these sectors to address the root causes of crises and promote sustainable solutions.

Since the summit in Istanbul, the HDP nexus is observed to have gained global traction and influenced policies and practices in various regions. The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region in particular has witnessed efforts to advance the nexus with initiatives that would promote collaboration in humanitarian, development, and peace activities. The HDP nexus approach recognizes that crises are not isolated events but are often interconnected and overlapping. It offers a more holistic and effective response to crises by acknowledging the links among humanitarian needs, development goals, and peacebuilding and by preparing relevant actions and activities accordingly. In recent years, a growing emphasis has been found on supporting the HDP nexus in conflicts and fragile settings, as this comprehensive approach is particularly relevant in such cases.

Following the summit, UNOCHA prepared a document that has been serving as a guide on understanding how the HDP nexus works: the NWoW. This booklet explains all aspects of the nexus along with the phases it covers. However, the peace component is seen to have not been taken into consideration at the time, as the nexus had initially been presented as the humanitarian-development nexus. The main purpose of the booklet is to explain the method accepted for the humanitarian-development nexus in the WHS 2016. The booklet starts with an Introduction covering background information regarding the altering necessities of the humanitarian aid sector and an emphasis on the extended duration of aid activities in the previous years. The guide underlines the 2030 SDGs, how these relate to the nexus, which occupied a large part of the WHS 2016 agenda, and how the nexus was prepared with absolute commitment to it (UNOCHA, 2016). In brief, the NWoW details how development and humanitarian actors should work by cooperating locally toward their aims of achieving collective outcomes set for reducing the risks and vulnerabilities of the targeted groups and/or regions. The NWoW emphasizes this newly adapted method as presenting a promising path that can be implemented and measured concretely.

The next section of the NWoW is “Defining The New Way of Working”. It gives more information about how the method should work (UNOCHA, 2016, p. 6) and defines such concepts as collective outcomes, achieving vulnerability, reducing needs and risks for a targeted group or region, comparative advantage, the essence of cooperation between organizations with previously related experiences, the multi-year timeframe, and planning an overall action over a specific period of time (e.g., 3-6 years). Additionally, the NWoW also remarks how, in order for this method to work properly, the nexus implies that all the responsibility should not be given just to one sector but instead that collaborating between humanitarian and development sectors is needed. Moreover, the role of having organizations work locally was mentioned as important, especially in respect to achieving maximum efficiency and success in the operational part of the programs. Leaning to implement a more localized response by including local actors surely is logical, as they would be the ones to most comprehensively understand the settings as well as the affecting factors. Moreover, local peoples have an advantage in terms of liaisons and logistics, which are two key areas that shape a response’s effectiveness. This is because local people are familiar with the local entities, resources, and opportunities and thus have quite crucial contributions.

The NWoW goes on to explain how the new method works with a brief analysis of the case of cholera in Haiti (UNOCHA, 2016, p. 9). Once the case specific context is taken out, this section narrates the sectoral contribution into five separate stages: humanitarian, development, government, other related international institutions, and civil society. In the process of achieving a collective outcome, the lifesaving and vulnerability reducing roles become attributed to humanitarian actors, while capacity building and provision of essential services are assigned to the development sector. The NWoW describes the government’s role as more of a coordinating authority above all other pieces of the mechanism. As part of the process, however, longer-term solutions are stated as the responsibility of international partners who are specialized in specific fields (e.g., finance, children, women, refugees). Last but not least, the NWoW defines civil society’s participation in the process as the labor power of actions that are able to respond to the cases directly in the local sphere.

The NWoW also underlines a set of methodologies for practicing the above-described process in the best way possible. In this regard, the guide points out such important component as analysis prior to targeted action, planning and

programming by including a comprehensive framework, leadership and coordination by the related authorities, and financing as being important in terms of realizing the sustainability of the action (UNOCHA, 2016). One can deduce from the booklet that identifying what shared achievements will mitigate risk and enhance resilience is essential for crafting a tangible and measurable contribution to the 2030 SDG Agenda in next 3-5 years ahead of a situation. In certain scenarios, establishing a connection between these shared achievements and the national strategies for achieving the SDGs, particularly in different sectors such as nutrition, shelter, education, human rights, health and several others, can serve as a clear strategy for synchronizing short- and medium-term initiatives. As reflected in the NWoW, this alignment aims to drive the most vulnerable populations toward developmental advancements. Acknowledging that implementing the NWoW might have different characteristics from one context to the next, the booklet outlines certain steps as a fundamental illustration of how shared achievements can be established and accomplished in dynamic environments. The NWoW first suggests that conducting a comprehensive common country analysis by utilizing the information from the humanitarian needs overview (HNO) and assessing the various essential risks and vulnerabilities as the first step. This aims to attain focus on vulnerability at the household and community levels, as well as to understand the local capabilities for managing the identified challenges. The NWoW then advises defining the strategic priority areas within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) or equivalent national frameworks aimed at reducing vulnerability in critical domains of risk and susceptibility and then establishing connections to SDGs where possible. The guide then states the third step to be identifying the practical and achievable measures for significant and tangible declines in humanitarian and development challenges, including needs, risks, and vulnerabilities. The NWoW further mentions that these should be adopted as shared goals by both humanitarian and development actors, with the possibility of translating UNDAF strategic priority areas and country-level SDG targets into action plans which also might involve creating a collaborative framework around each of these objectives. Next, the booklet indicates suggesting and aiding methods that harmonize individual agency projects and work plans and thus contributing to the realization of shared objectives would be useful as the fourth step. The final step the NWoW suggests involves the organizing the mobilization of resources to support the achievement of shared goals, as this would guarantee consistent funding for short-, medium-, and long-term initiatives through alternative financing mechanisms over a timeframe of 3-5 years. Nevertheless, implementing a development program is also not as easy the booklet suggests. One important reason for this is that development initiatives indicate comprehensive plans that will take place as mostly permanent formations, and this directly affects a state's mid- or long-term planning. Therefore, consensus among local authorities is crucial for the success of development initiatives (Strand, 2020).

Since the Istanbul Summit, an increased focus has been found on peace as an integral part of the nexus. The UN Secretary-General António Guterres has prioritized sustainable peace in his agenda, envisioning a UN capable of preventing conflicts by integrating development, human rights, and peace and security approaches. Recognizing the significance of conflict resolution and prevention, including peace in the nexus aims to address the human-made barriers that hinder humanitarian needs, poverty reduction, and sustainable development. Nonetheless, the relatively short history of peace being integrated into broader humanitarian and development activities has led to varying interpretations of what peace entails, as well as its implications. Concerns also exist about potential compromises to the humanitarian principles of independence and impartiality when engaging with peace processes, raising apprehensions about appearing to support or align with specific groups or solutions (Oxfam, 2019).

The Peace Component

To claim that the peace component of the HDP nexus is the one that is least clear in the nexus while also being very crucial would not be inaccurate (Barakat & Milton, 2020). Acknowledging peace as an abstract concept similar to happiness and justice and as having an existence that can be felt the most when it is absent, Barash and Webel (2022) argued peace to have two perspectives: positive and negative. Positive peace is conditioned on the need for certain concepts such as harmony, justice, and equality being in place, whereas they defined the perspective of negative peace simply as the state where war is absent. Meanwhile, heavily criticizing the common point of view in the literature of peace and conflict studies, Galtung (as cited in Matyók et al., 2011, p. 3) stated that peace embodies a constructive connection between individuals marked by unity and solidarity. Heavily criticizing the common point of view in the literature of peace and conflict studies, he intentionally disregarded negative terms in his description such as military, violence and

conflict. Rather, he emphasized that peace should be defined solely with positive concepts as the term itself implies. Positive concepts such as mutual respect, dignity, equality, and reciprocal interactions are encompassed by the prerequisites for attaining peace. This approach takes a definition of peace based on the Barash and Webel's definition of positive peace, as Galtung stressed that "peace ... is a positive relation between parties, of union, togetherness."

Certainly, the term peace in its core, as well as its associate terms of peacebuilding and peacekeeping, are two of the key elements for explaining the peace component of the nexus. Understanding these terms' true implications is crucial for understanding the HDP nexus. Peace is a multifaceted concept that surpasses the dull absence of conflict in its essence. Harmony, serenity, and the well-being of individuals and societies are embodied within it. Conversely, achieving and sustaining peace is quite a complex endeavor. The process requires the active involvement of various stakeholders, along with detailed planning and programming. Peacebuilding and peacekeeping are among the practices that are commonly employed within this process. As the nexus highlights the interdependence among humanitarian assistance, sustainable development and peace efforts, it also stresses that these concepts are derived from each other: development is hindered without peace, and sustainable peace is difficult to attain without progress in development. Therefore, comprehending these terms and their interconnectedness is essential for effectively addressing sustainable development.

Peacebuilding refers to the process led by third-party forces that seek to implement peace efforts between confronting parties within a conflict. In other words, peacebuilding means stopping the conflicting parties from fighting each other and describes the peace brought to a conflict zone by external force. As described in the Report of the Panel on the United Nations Peace Operations (RPUNPO):

Peacebuilding is a term of more recent origin that, as used in the present report, defines activities undertaken on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war. Thus, peace-building includes but is not limited to reintegrating former combatants into civilian society, strengthening the rule of law (for example, through training and restructuring of local police, and judicial and penal reform); improving respect for human rights through the monitoring, education and investigation of past and existing abuses; providing technical assistance for democratic development (including electoral assistance and support for free media); and promoting conflict resolution and reconciliation techniques. (United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2000, p. 3)

This report can be considered a textbook on peace missions and the relevant practices to be employed. Even though RPUNPO does not attribute a role or describe any other non-UN way of peacebuilding due to its very nature, the report does examine gives room certain ways for conducting effective peacebuilding. The report indicates that actively engaging with local stakeholders using a comprehensive approach is essential for achieving effective peacebuilding. Empowering the mission to create remarkable improvements in the lives of the local population is also important in the first stages of a peace mission. The mission leader must also have a certain authority on how the mission budget should be managed, such as choosing which projects will make quick impacts and positively impact people's life quality. These projects play a vital role in establishing and sustaining a mission's credibility in the eyes of the international civil society that closely watches such cases. The resident coordinator or a humanitarian coordinator from an existing UN country team should head these initiatives, acting as the primary advisor guiding the main route for operations so as to ensure efficient resource allocation and prevent conflicts with other development or humanitarian programs (UNSC, 2000).

The second point for effective peacebuilding addresses such things as elections that are to be held for determining the government that will be in charge in the aftermath of a conflict. RPUNPO states that free and fair elections must be seen within the context of broader initiatives that should fortify all governance institutions. The successful conduct of elections is highly dependent on creating an environment where a post-conflict population embraces the ballot as a credible means of expressing their views on governance and as such safely participates in the process. Commitment to democratization and civil society development, effective civilian government, and a culture supportive of fundamental human rights are also seen to be imperative for maintaining the right path following elections. Even if an election process is successful, not taking the proper steps after it bears the risk that peace might not be a long-term state in the country, as a government that accumulates absolute power might follow, which might have serious consequences for any minority population and thus retrigger aggression (UNSC, 2000).

Thirdly, RPUNPO continues the argument for the role of a civilian police force being appointed for peace missions and extends that the UN civilian police monitoring missions do not necessarily serve as peacebuilders unless their role is identified beyond just documenting or attempting to deter abusive or intolerable behavior by local armed forces such as police or military. RPUNPO describes this conventional and shallow approach toward civilian police capabilities as outdated and asserts that contemporary missions can and should include task assignments for the civilian police, such as reforming, training, and restructuring local police forces to meet international standards for democratic policing and human rights. These local police forces should also be provided with certain security equipment, perhaps even heavy or light arms depending on the sensitivity of cases, with the purpose of intimidating potential attackers and enabling to perform effective handling of civil disorder and self-defense situations. The local courts and the penal system, backbones of sustaining and securing justice within society, should be structured in such a way that they are politically impartial and free from intimidation or intervention by any other institutions or individuals. In support of this idea, international judicial experts, penal experts, human rights specialists, and civilian police should be available in sufficient numbers to be deployed and assigned with their respective tasks in a guiding role to strengthen rule-of-law institutions in cases where this is demanded by peace-building missions. In addition to this, in the times when justice, reconciliation, and the fight for freedom are necessary, experts, criminal investigators, and forensic specialists should be authorized by the UNSC to back the apprehension and prosecution of individuals indicted for war crimes in collaboration with the UN international criminal tribunals in a just way. RPUNPO highlights that even though the collaborative approach appears to be a useful method, the UN has nevertheless encountered instances in the last decade where the UNSC has sanctioned the deployment of several thousand police in a peace-keeping operation while hesitating to include even 25-35 criminal justice experts. Additionally, a pressing need exists for a comprehensive understanding and development of the contemporary role of civilian police. RPUNPO claims that majorly shifting the doctrine through which the UN perceives and employs civilian police in peace operations is a necessary action. At the same time, RPUNPO also recommends that a well-funded team strategy that supports the rule of law and human rights be in place, one that involves judicial, penal, human rights, and policing experts who conduct their respective tasks collaboratively in coordination with one another (UNSC, 2000).

As another method for enhancing peacebuilding efforts more effectively, RPUNPO presents a fourth recommendation emphasizing the human rights aspect of a peace operation. The report suggests that UN professionals who are specialized and dedicated to human rights could take a leading role, such as taking active part in the implementation of a comprehensive program for national reconciliation efforts. However, the human rights components in peace operations have not consistently received the necessary political and administrative support, nor have their functions always been clearly understood by other elements due to the process being intensely political and sensitive in nature. Consequently, RPUNPO views training military, police, and other civilian personnel on human rights issues and the pertinent provisions of international humanitarian law to be critical for mitigating risky situations. In this regard, RPUNPO underlines the Secretary-General's Bulletin ST/SGB/1999/13 dated August 6, 1999 and titled "Observance by United Nations forces of international humanitarian law" (UNSC, 2000).

Last but not the least, RPUNPO attributes importance to efforts at sustaining the stability of peace and prevent re-escalation of conflicts through disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating formerly fighting individuals in the conflict. This aspect of peacebuilding is directly related to public security and the establishment of law and order and thus contributes to their promotion. RPUNPO also emphasizes that, in order for all these components to work efficiently, no single one should be disregarded; in fact, all should be strictly implemented with equal importance. When considering that former combatants who might retain some stash of weapons that were used during conflict even after demobilization, former combatants are likely to return to violence unless they find legitimate livelihood opportunities, making this crucial in the integration phase. One aspect that poses a risk in making this work is that the funding for the reintegration element of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration is provided on a voluntary basis, and securing the necessary initiatives might be insufficient for what was planned or required (UNSC, 2000).

Although several approaches are found for explaining peacebuilding as a term, Roland Paris (2004) explained it by basing it on the first UN peacebuilding initiatives after the Cold War while using his own interpretation. According to Paris, with the decrease in tensions between the East (led by the Soviet Union/Russia) and the West (led by the United States) following the Cold War, having both superpowers provide the same level of military and economic support to their allies as before was not favorable. This shift in approach was particularly notable in regions that were considered

strategically less significant, such as sub-Saharan Africa. As a result, international organizations such as the United Nations stepped forward for a role in resolving longstanding conflicts. With the aim of reducing their costly foreign commitments, the powers who had previously been rivals decided to delegate responsibilities to international agencies for these tasks. Having superiority over one another had certainly played a key role in the transition to more diplomatic behaviors in the international arena and particularly in conflict resolution. The UN and other global organizations became more willing and capable of assuming the attributed roles of providing assistance for these new missions. At the same time, a newfound sense of collaboration within the UNSC stipulated the possibility of reaching agreed-upon decision, and in cases where the consensus was not on the table, they at least attempted to avoid vetoes regarding proposals for initiating new operations in countries grappling with civil conflicts or post-conflict recovery.

Assuming the position of UN Secretary General between 1997-2006, Kofi Annan's made a statement on the objective of the UN's peacebuilding efforts. Annan expressed the main aim as being to establish an environment where peace would last long after a conflict where enemy groups had stopped seeking armed engagement with each other (Paris, 2004). Thus, peacebuilding bares implications beyond targeting to end an ongoing conflict. With a more comprehensive and multilayered approach, its initial goal is to remove the reasons for a conflict entirely and to create a consensus and sustainable circumstances for peace for all parties involved so that reescalation of aggression would not occur. Despite the clarity of what is to be achieved, the considerations and related actions to be implemented while achieving peace are not easy for a mission.

Paris (2004) claimed that peacebuilding efforts with regard to the UN definition are made from a liberal perspective. He conveyed that liberalization was required through the efforts in conflict zones, namely the respective local authorities and resident people. He indicated democratization practices such as organizing fair elections for governing a state, establishing a solid constitution that draws borders around the power of the head of state and that clearly grants certain human rights and liberties for people, and transforming an economy to a free market to largely limit a state's interference. In other words, Paris (p. 6) views peacebuilding as a "social engineering" through which one assumes that all mentioned alterations will create social cohesion and sustainable prosperity in the economy. This for sure implies that a properly planned peace brings development. Nevertheless, when considering that this peacebuilding approach is a product of a certain ideology, its working in variety of regions where different ideologies are dominant at the local level is a controversial matter.

Peacekeeping refers to sustaining a peaceful environment in a post-conflict zone. It does not attribute to the UN as strong a role as to the executing actors. Their main responsibilities are to observe the post-conflict situation and produce periodical reports, a process which does not include any use of arms. Peacekeeping underwent a significant transformation in the 1990s, shifting from its conventional role of involving military observation of ceasefires and separation of forces after inter-State wars to the adoption of a more intricate approach. This new approach involves joint efforts between military and civilian components and underlines working together to establish peace in the times following civil wars (UNSC, 2000).

RPUNPO touches on a few critical points regarding the perception and implementation of peacekeeping. These are quite useful insights for understanding the potential challenges during peacekeeping processes. RPUNPO acknowledges that getting consent from local parties, sustaining impartiality at all costs, and limiting the use of force exclusively to self-defense cases should remain among the fundamental principles of peacekeeping. Nonetheless, consent might be manipulated by local parties in contemporary peace operations dealing with internal state or transnational conflicts. In accordance with local interests, local parties might choose to approve the UN presence at some stages or might tend to change opinion and refuse UN involvement in later stages, revoking their consent in line with their interests at the time. Potential changes in local parties' attitudes being the case, attempting to restrict an operation's movements, adopting a strategy of persistent non-compliance with agreement provisions, or entirely withdrawing consent are possible scenarios for them to steer. Moreover, control over fighting forces may be considerably less severe than that of traditional armies, despite group leaders' commitment to peace. This might lead to separations not foreseen in a peace agreement under which the UN mission operates. As RPUNPO confesses, the UN has faced failures responding to these challenges in its past endeavors. Still, the report emphasizes a crucial premise indicating that the UN must be equipped to address such challenges. UN peacekeepers must carry out their mandate with professionalism and success, starting from the time of deployment. RPUNPO specifically attributes preparing military units as if they should be ready to operate beyond self-protection by covering the security of all other mission components and assets to guarantee a mission's success regarding its mandate (UNSC, 2000).

The rules of engagement should be set in such a way that responses to straightforward reciprocity are not restricted while also permitting proportional actions to neutralize a threat of deadly force aimed at UN troops or the people under their protection. Importantly, UN assets should not be compelled by rules to surrender the initiative to potential attackers in high-risk situations (UNSC, 2000). What follows is that defenseless and unarmed civilians are vulnerable to any attacks coming from a third-party. Attacks that occur and that are directed towards them requires absolute intervention to protect using whatever means necessary. As was evident in the series of events in the case of Bosnia, this might result in a tremendous catastrophe, as the presence of such authority with the assumed role of guaranteeing the protection of people under their responsibility creates a trust bound with the people protected.

Howard (2008) comprehensively examined UN peacekeeping and criticized the defects in the system. However, she also explained its structure alongside case studies she presented. According to her assertions, the most commonly employed approach in peacekeeping is the UN's multidimensional peacekeeping missions. These operations' initial goals are to reconstruct the fundamental institutions of states in the post-civil war period. Political, military, police, refugee, humanitarian, electoral, and frequently human rights elements are incorporated by them. No superior international mechanisms are found to have been devised for restoring order in the chaotic atmosphere of civil wars, despite the challenges faced by the UN as well as the inherent complexities of peacekeeping. Nonetheless, scrutinizing and enhancing the comprehension of the UN's role in peacekeeping are imperative, as the UN remains the best solid mechanism around.

Another field that is occupied with bringing an explanation to transition the phase from conflict to peace with a particular focus on justice and the human rights perspective is transitional justice. Transitional justice refers to the set of judicial and non-judicial measures implemented in societies transitioning from conflict or authoritarian rule to address past human rights abuses systematically. As in the words of Beth van Shaack, transitional justice refers to "the range of measures – judicial and non-judicial, formal and informal, retributive and reconciliatory – that may be employed by societies in response to a legacy of authoritarianism or mass violence following a period of political transition" (Khen et al., 2020, p. 243). Providing relevant recovery for victims, identifying perpetrators and holding them accountable, actualizing societal reconciliation, and establishing proper mechanisms and structures to guarantee the rule of law are among the primary objectives of the phase explained by and included in the concept of transitional justice. Certain practices are found to be employed during the transition phase. The practices used to support the phase are supported by criminal tribunals, truth and reconciliation commissions, recovery programs, and institutional reforms. This multi-layered approach aims to constitute a balance between justice and the practicalities of political realities while advancing a transformative process toward and in parallel with a more just and stable society. As areas are found where peace and transitional justice intersect with each other, becoming familiar with the concept of transitional justice will contribute to a broader perspective regarding peacebuilding periods. Still, because transitional justice is also not directly related to peacebuilding practices, deeper discussion in the field is not needed for the argument of this thesis.

As interpreted based on the literature, the activation of peacebuilding efforts for a crisis is highly dependent on UNSC consensus as it serves as a legitimate authority for carrying out this role. In cases involving UNSC member countries, particularly the five permanent members who each has the right to veto any decision, dilemmas on other ways to achieve peace are still inevitable. This is also the case in the Northwest Syria (NWS). For cases where the UNSC cannot jointly agree that a civil war is at a very critical level for people where the international community's intervention is urgently required, the conflicts are either intervened with through external powers individually or just left as is. Being adaptable to either case, the UNSC might at least agree on humanitarian action. Yet due to the whole process being highly politicized, no standard description exists on how humanitarian aid should be conducted for such regions. Terms and conditions for each case are determined uniquely. International humanitarian pressures and common public opinion certainly play a significant role in shaping these rules. Relevant humanitarian agencies along with observing countries carry out advocacy efforts in line with their own specializations or agenda.

Certain patterns have been witnessed in terms of how to approach dealing with complex conflicts and humanitarian crisis from the peace perspective. The peace efforts that have been employed in the Bosnia case include and are perhaps not limited to authorizing third-party organizations such as the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance (NATO), initiating negotiations, performing advocacy works to direct the attention and influence of international society, establishing safe areas and no-fly zones, monitoring, coordinating, and mediating;

these are the prominent efforts that have been applied throughout the Bosnian crisis. Not getting into a comparison argument in terms of measuring their efficiency, all these play vital roles aimed at protecting civilian lives, as well as creating spaces for them to find refuge and to deliver basic humanitarian assistance to those in need (Cutts, 1999).

Authorization of neutral field forces for solely peaceful reasons has proven to be a key practice in conflicts. For instance, UNPROFOR in the early 1990s was one such force that was deployed for the crises that arose in Croatia and Bosnia to ensure the security and operation of key local infrastructures such as airbases, refugee camps, and hospitals, facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid to the city and its surroundings. NATO's involvement with the crisis also started (United States Department of State, 1996) in the later phases of the crisis. In collaboration with NATO, UNPROFOR also monitored the no-fly zone in Bosnia, as well as UN-designated safe areas around five Bosnian towns and Sarajevo. However, the efficiency of these forces has been a highly controversial topic, as fulfillment of their roles might depend on political complications. For example, although UNPROFOR was authorized to use force against attacks on these areas, and NATO had power to do the same, such engagement was not exercised by either in the most brutal times of the massacres. In the later stages, UNPROFOR was observed to still remain away from using force, instead collaborating with NATO when the need for the use of force such as air strikes arose (United Nations Protection Force, 1996).

Another technique among peace efforts is to initiate frequent and intense negotiations with the parties individually. This step is important with regard to providing the initial lines of leverages, objectives, and red lines the parties have. Effective negotiation is quite a determinant on the fate of conflicts and the affected people. Even if conflicts continue, so should negotiations for the sake of peace and for preventing catastrophe. All parties involved one way or another and that have demonstrated a certain capacity for making impact in a conflict should be approached, even if it must occur through unofficial channels, and this must be done without any concern of giving legitimacy, as unofficial contacts would not imply such an understanding. The timing of initiating negotiation processes is also vital in saving lives. The later a negotiation is initiated, the more civilian lives are likely to be lost within a conflict (Cutts, 1999).

A diverse array of actors has been participating in negotiation processes. The UN through its specialized agencies such as UNSC, UNPROFOR, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as NATO, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC), the European Union (EU), and the Western European Union have been among the actors involved in the negotiations at the international level. Besides the main actors of the conflict, several impacting parties at the local level, such as government agencies, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), or non-governmental organizations (NGOs), might also take on a role in these processes. These stakeholders engage in multiple interactions, encompassing meetings, briefings, conferences and discussions for negotiations. Negotiation is also applied during the entire process of preparing, reviewing, disseminating, and addressing these materials across various levels (Cutts, 1999).

Without establishing and activating proper coordination channels through which vital information flow is communicated and sustained among key actors including the warring parties, a chaotic environment will dominate crises, leading to vast levels of human suffering and other complications and thus making the peacebuilding course last longer. Consequently, coordination is also a prerequisite for peacemaking processes. Several factors are found that can influence the efficiency and functioning of coordination. One of these involves the different agendas and interests among not only conflicting parties but also intervening organizations such as the UN and NATO. While one decision might be appealing to one party, the other might consider an opposing argument more favorable. In addition, even the UN agencies themselves might go through such disputes among each other. Cutts (1999, p. 5) narrated:

Internal conflicts within the UN itself were common. An instance involved the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, suspending UNHCR operations in Bosnia in 1993. This decision was swiftly overturned by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali, leading to the resumption of humanitarian activities).

Another factor is the harsh conflict environment that lacks the means to communicate and coordinate. Such environments in particular impose technical challenges on relevant personnel to carry out their work in the field. Additionally, by not having self-safety and security during clashes, their involvement is very limited, which undermines their ability to maintain healthy coordination. Lack of will for cooperation between warring parties and peace-making organizations is another significant problem that might be encountered during conflicts, as had happened in the Bosnia case. Bosnian

Serbs' hostile attitude against the third-party personnel in the field for peace efforts made carrying out these personnels' relevant works rather difficult. Not sharing accurate information to nurture proper coordination aside, cases have also occurred where Bosnian Serbs had captured the relevant personnel as hostages. Cutts (1999, p. 9) reflected, "The Bosnian Serbs, in particular, were very hostile to UNPROFOR after it called for punitive NATO air-strikes against them."

Creating safe areas is another method used to sustain a peaceful environment at some levels so that human suffering can be alleviated up to a point. Normally, securing and guarding these safe areas as mandated might be a notable method for creating a peaceful solution at a certain level in the middle of conflicts. Hence, the theoretical version of the idea of applying safe areas can be considered a component of peace. As McQueen (2005) claimed, the concept of a safety zone had first been used during the Franco-Prussia war in the late 19th century. Henry Dunant, cofounder of the Red Cross Movement, suggested in his letter to the Prussian Empress that designating some regions as neutral should be declared so that those places could be used for local civilians to take refuge and treat the wounded. The idea was later placed in the Geneva Conventions as demilitarized zones. According to Article 60 of the 1977 Geneva Protocol I, conflicting parties are prohibited from any forms of hostilities in areas declared as demilitarized zones where all combatants have been evacuated and all military operations cleared off (International Committee of the Red Cross, 1977).

In the last phase of most conflicts, mediation can be viewed as a peacemaking practice. In cases where conflicting parties fail to find a common ground that will stop the fighting and bring peace, the need might arise to involve a third party. External support initiates, conducts, and successfully concludes a peace process. Consequently, what is commonly viewed as a two-sided negotiation evolves into a three-sided process, involving at least a third party that facilitates the mediation between conflicting parties. In such instances, leaders from external societies that are not part of the conflict provide intermediary assistance to unite adversaries, aiming to reach an agreeable resolution, ultimately ending violence, and facilitating compromises on the issues (Ginty & John, 2022).

Conclusion

In the post-WHS period, significant progress within the HDP nexus has been achieved. However, armed conflict zones still pose persistent challenges due to the complex nature of conflicting parties, hindering the implementation of sustainable solutions. These parties, who choose not to comply with international law or humanitarian principles, create obstacles for humanitarian actors on the ground. Consequently, long-term planning for affected regions and residents becomes challenging. Recognizing the limitations of the HDP nexus, the humanitarian community has acknowledged the need to integrate a peace component. While this idea has logical merit, the precise implementation method and international mechanism remain unclear.

Despite its vitality in the humanitarian settings, the peace component of the HDP nexus still has huge gaps regarding its absolute interpretation and resultant implementation. A study commissioned by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UNHCR aimed to explain how the peace component of the HDP nexus should work. The study argued:

The scope of the peace pillar is yet to be agreed. Some argue that the peace pillar should focus on "soft" interventions only, such as social cohesion, governance and rule of law (RoL). Others argue that the peace pillar should be broader and include "hard" interventions such as security sector reform (SSR); disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR); and militarized peacekeeping efforts. The agreed scope of the peace pillar has implications for funding and coordination mechanisms to implement the triple nexus. (UNDP & UNHCR, 2020, p. 2)

Although numerous peace practices have been witnessed in world history, the efficiency and effectiveness of these peace practices are still a topic of debate even today. Therefore, a comprehensive and robust mechanism for implementing peacemaking, one that will fill the gap once and for all, is imperative for effectively addressing the complexities of crises. Such a mechanism should prioritize the cultivation of an impartial approach to each crisis and ensure a fair and unbiased intervention that will uphold justice and equality. Additionally, the development of this mechanism should attempt to eliminate political interference to the highest extent possible, safeguarding the integrity of the peacemaking process to keep it devoid of external agendas that could compromise its effectiveness. Equally crucial is proactively preparing for crisis management well before any escalation occurs. This is significant for sustaining proper foresight, strategic planning, and coordination among all relevant stakeholders. This proactive stance will enhance the capacity to respond swiftly and efficiently and eventually will minimize the potential impact crises have on affected people.

Moreover, this will ensure that the sustained efforts of the peacemaking mechanism will remain committed to securing civilian lives and supporting humanitarian operations. Prioritizing the protection of innocent lives and facilitating the unconstrained delivery of humanitarian aid will not only mitigate the immediate impact of crises but also contribute to the establishment of a stable and secure environment conducive to long-term peace. In essence, the development and sustenance of such a peacemaking mechanism are vital for fostering stability, justice, and resilience in the face of crises.

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