UNIT 15 POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION

15.1 INTRODUCTION

Conflict has been a feature of human history and has shaped civilisations. It emerges from political differences and ideological divides between religions and ethnicities. Conflicts among societies and people also arise from failed political institutions resulting in poor governance, lack of political and social justice, accountability and transparency of the government, corruption, abuse of political power and high levels of poverty. These deficiencies in governance have resulted in civil war that threatened the stability of states.

At another level, conflicts arise due to clash of interests over national values among states, groups of states, organisations, organised groups who are ever so aggressive to uphold their views and interests and win their cases.

In contemporary times, conflicts have become transnational in nature and its actors have challenged state authority. At another level, nature-based causes such as climate change has further contributed to conflicts among humans. These varying forms of conflicts leave societies destroyed with long and lasting adversarial impacts on the lives of people.

According to "Global Conflict Barometer", a report published by the Institute for International Conflict Research at the University of Heidelberg, there were 365 political conflicts recorded in 2009 and these included seven wars and 24 severe crises that witnessed massive violence. Further, the number of conflicts increased from 353 in 2008 to 365 in 2009. The report also notes that the total number of non-violent conflicts rose by ten, as did the number of crises. However, the number of highly violent conflicts decreased from nine wars and 30 severe crises, i.e. a total of 39 highly violent conflicts, in 2008 to 31 highly violent conflicts in 2009.

The report clearly reflects that the contemporary world continues to be less peaceful and violent force is repeatedly used in an organised way. Therefore there is a need for greater engagement by the international community to prevent conflicts, wars, and crisis among the

people. In the above context, post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation is a critical step for longer-term peace and stability and requires the responsiveness of a variety of actors, state and non-state, either unilaterally or multilaterally.

Aims and Objectives

This Unit would enable you to understand

- The dynamics of post-conflict re-construction and rehabilitation in order to achieving the overarching goals of sustainable peace and prosperity.
- The definition of the post-conflict re-construction and rehabilitation
- The identification of the actors and stakeholders.
- The process of re-construction and rehabilitation of the Tamils in Sri Lanka in the post-LTTE period (case study).

15.2 UNDERSTANDING POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION

Although the Cold War ended the great power rivalry, it witnessed large number of intrastate conflicts particularly among the developing countries. During the 1990s, nearly one third of the world's countries were afflicted with armed conflict and nearly two-thirds of these experienced conflict particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America. These entailed international attention and global collective action in post-conflict reconstruction.

The World Bank defines post-conflict reconstruction as "the rebuilding of the socioeconomic framework of society" and the "reconstruction of the enabling conditions for a functioning peacetime society [to include] the framework of governance and rule of law." It is noted that post-conflict reconstruction is a process of rebuilding war-affected communities and 'includes the process of rebuilding the political, security, social and economic dimensions of a society emerging from conflict. It also includes addressing the root causes of the conflict and promoting social and economic justice as well as putting in place political structures of governance and the rule of law in order to consolidate peace building, reconciliation and development.' This entails delivering social and economic development, providing governance and the rule of law including justice and reconciliation and longer-term development assistance.

It has also been argued that there is 'no definition for post-conflict rehabilitation and peace-building that has been agreed to by the consensus needed in order for them to be used by the different actors that participate in the process.'

For the purpose of this chapter, Post- conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation can be defined as the process of developing long-term programmes that are designed for improving the economic well being of the affected societies and people and also developing institutions that can deliver governance, and political and social justice.

In the aftermath of any violent conflict and military interventions, the need for post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation becomes central. A variety of agencies including international organisations and coalitions of countries are in the forefront to bring in their respective capacities for restoration or transformation of the fragile social capital. There is also a need for a greater commitment to postconflict reconstruction and rehabilitation in areas and societies to develop strategies that close the gap between humanitarian assistance and development, and help to organise cooperation and partnership.

At another level, the economic penalty of conflict includes capital flight, economic decline, high defence spending, and structural changes to the economy. Post-conflict economic recovery is also dependent on the responses by the private sector.

In its broad sense, reconstruction entails rebuilding of governance structures, institutions, and conditions that had existed prior to war. It also includes the rehabilitation and restoration of basic services like health and education. However, the biggest challenge facing countries is to define the priority areas in the post-conflict reconstruction programme and how to reconstruct. This issues gains salience due to the fact that all peacetime conditions, though desirable, cannot be reconstructed in short time and would need to be prioritised.

15.3   ACTORS AND STAKEHOLDERS

It is an acknowledged fact that no single actor can manage the post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation and requires the assistance and support of a variety of actors both at the government and non-government level. Among these, the governments are the most important players and without their support, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts will yield little in improving the well-being of the affected people. Multilateral institutions such as the United Nations and financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank emerged as significant stakeholders in the process of reconstruction and rehabilitation by providing fiscal support outside the national budget process. The non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other development agencies too are critical for the purposes of relief and emergency assistance.

At the societal level, women have a major role to play in the post-conflict re-construction and rehabilitation process. Though the military is a coercive tool of the state, it has an important role in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of war torn societies. It has an important role in ensuring a viable and an effective domestic security system through the civil police agencies and ensue that democratic civilians are able to ensure law and order.

Role of the State
The state is the primary actor in the post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts. It should formulate and lead the development strategy and be in the driver's seat. The government must undertake economic recovery and structural adjustment programmes to

restore macroeconomic stability and bring down inflation. It must be noted that the private sector has an important role to play and be an effective instrument that can support the government deliver sustained growth. Also, economic growth requires the active participation of the population.

The task of rebuilding the nation and reconstructing social and physical infrastructure is critical for post-conflict re-construction and rehabilitation. The post-conflict period requires major health sector reforms and investments in education, investment with smooth flow of funds reaching to the grass root level. It should also define the objective of post-conflict reconstruction process, identify institutional and human resource development needs, and clearly spell the capacity building strategy.

At another level, there must be close collaboration between the government and the international community including international financial institutions for availability of fiscal resources, grants and loans. The externally funded investments must be controlled by the Government and these must fit well into the national development programme to achieve fruition over the longer term. Further, aid cannot be effective unless the state has a robust institutional framework that allows the rule of law to prevail.

The government must evolve long term plans for development that are fully integrated in national development policies, plans and strategies. For that it must have in place an efficient institutional and administrative machinery to formulate, coordinate, and implement policies, strategies, programmes, and projects. The focus should be on good governance and sound economic management. In essence, the government must promote security and human development, rebuild infrastructure for economic growth, and create conditions for private sector participation for a sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Role of the UN
During the Cold War period, the UN mandate for international governance entailed supporting states to monitor borders and ceasefires, and in the conduct and monitoring of elections. However, in the post Cold War period, the UN has been increasingly engaged in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation missions. In 1992, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Former UN Secretary-General, in the landmark *An Agenda for Peace* set out an international strategy for conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, post-conflict reconstruction and peace building. Since then post-conflict reconstruction has been an agenda for the UN in its efforts to rebuild war-affected communities. In 2005, Kofi Annan's, then Secretary-General, report, *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All* recommended that UN member states 'establish a Peace building Commission to fill the institutional gap that exists with regards to assisting countries to make the transition from war to lasting peace.' In September 2005, during the UN world summit and the 60th session of the General Assembly, the recommendations of the report were reviewed. Kofi Annan noted "Our record of success in mediating and implementing peace agreements is sadly blemished by some devastating failures. Indeed, several of the most violent and tragic episodes of the 1990s occurred after the negotiation of peace agreements … if we are going to prevent

conflict we must ensure that peace agreements are implemented in a sustained and sustainable manner."

Role of Military

The role of military in the post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation has been an acknowledged factor. In that context, it has been noted that the 'use of military force in the aftermath of a conflict to underpin rapid and fundamental societal transformation … [including] comprehensive efforts … aimed to engineer major social, political, and economic reconstruction'.

The military is an important tool for post-conflict re-construction and rehabilitation in at least three areas: (a) Establishing a secure and safe environment for the people at large and for the development agencies to commence their activities, (b) restoring essential services to an acceptable standard, and (c) creating stable conditions for development and economic growth.

The militaries are also critical for security sector reforms in the post-conflict re-construction and rehabilitation environment. Their role can be envisaged in both defensive and offensive domains. The military is trained and equipped to address contingencies arising from chaos, lawlessness, reappearance of violence, human rights violations, untrustworthiness and mutiny.

The military is also crucial for disarming violent groups and their demobilisation, recovery of arms from the public, quelling violence and emergency stabilisation, and preventing relapses into anarchy. At another level, the military should prepare and train the police forces to take on the responsibility of post-conflict situations and develop capacities for establishing rule of law. Its primary aim is to demilitarise the society and ensure civil control.

Several militaries have developed comprehensive strategies and developed capacities to respond to post-conflict re-construction and rehabilitation and have constituted specialised units for such purposes. Some militaries are engaged in addressing human security issues in the post-conflict environment. The UN too is engaged in transforming its capability to address issues of security, development and democratisation, notably in fragile and post-conflict states in a comprehensive manner.

Role of Civil Society Organisations and Non-governmental Organisations

The Civil Society Organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are important stakeholders and have assumed a crucial role in the post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation dynamics. These entities play a pivotal role by setting up and maintaining essential services, assisting the refugee and internally displaced populations in remote areas. They help to strengthen societies through their deep understanding of local needs and culture which acts as a catalyst for fast and effective aid. Further, they fill the gap when political circumstances prevented multilateral and bilateral activities inside the country.

It is true that any violent conflict results in the polarisation of social relationships that can have long term devastating effects on societies. The circumstances of uncertainty contribute to the creation of a long-lasting social mistrust. It is this reason that the communication bridges must be restored among the social groups and encourages participation in political life for social reconciliation. The civil society must contribute to resolving differences of interests of the different groups over the long-term. However it is important that the actors of the civil society drive the mechanisms that are critical for strengthening peace and reconciliation within the communities and avoid supporting the forces that were responsible for the war.

Civil societies can also help manage the tensions in the community by influencing the political leaders and creating unofficial mechanisms for the resolution of disputes. Traditional institutions and mechanisms for peace-building such as advice from elders or religious leaders can play a significant role in peace-building and reconciliation processes thereby creating a connection of trust with local partners.

In general, the NGO's and civil society must explain the idea of their work and the processes they chose to the people who should develop trust in their activities. Also they must have a network with the society, public authorities and other social sector actors. Their efforts can be instrumental for improving the quality of people's lives.

Role of Media
The media has a major role to play in the post-conflict re-construction and rehabilitation process. Experiences show that media can play a positive role in promoting peace and reconciliation. However, the flip side is that media can also act as tool that can generate hatred leading to disintegration. Be that as it may, if democratic social actors have access to the media it can establish connectivity among all the stakeholders i.e. governments, financial institutions, civil society and NGOs and provide information about the society, economic and political structures, and generate social cohesion and enhance social human capital. Therefore a well-functioning media can help promote democratisation.

As a result, international organisations, bilateral donors and NGOs have begun to explore opportunities for media as a tool for enhancing their activities. For instance, the UN has developed a sophisticated strategy to harness the tool of media in almost every UN intervention and the media's role in sustaining peace and democratic transitions continues to increase.

The media can also have a role in terms of social education, addressing many issues of concern to the target audience, and in the process helping to reduce tensions and build trust within the society. Important information can be relayed to the populations regarding health, literacy, the environment; in areas of conflict or post-conflict, this can include information on landmine awareness, war trauma, the Geneva Conventions or the peace accords and demobilisation processes, and it may also ensure that each side to a dispute is allowed to hear the other's position, thereby opening lines of communication between them. On their part, the

media should train the local staff in reporting on conflicts, to help develop high quality and accurate overage, establish autonomous national and local media institutions and create a gene pool of professionals with high ethical standards.

Some of the successful media ventures in the post-conflict and rehabilitation process are (a) The Center for Conflict Resolution in Uganda conducts workshops for media outlets and members to examine their roles in peace-building and to develop conflict resolution skills, including sensitising reporters to traditional African mechanisms of dealing with peace and reconciliation; (b) Studio Ijambo created by Search for Common Ground to specifically counter a recurrence in Burundi of genocidal hate radio in Rwanda. (c) Radio Blue Sky established for the UN in Kosovo as an emergency source of information programmes to specifically open dialogue and democratic debate in Albanian, Serbian and Turkish communities and (d) UNTAC Radio to inform the people of Cambodia about the United Nations Transitional Authority and promoting reconciliation.

Role of Women
The discourse and debate on the role of women in the post-conflict re-construction and rehabilitation has gathered momentum. It has been noted that 'women make a contribution to the rebuilding of countries emerging from armed conflicts. Special attention is given to women's priority concerns, to their resources and capacities, and to structural and situational factors that may reduce their participation in reconstruction processes'. Further, 'the post-war reconstruction processes influence the reconfiguration of gender roles and positions in the wake of war, and how women's actions shape the construction of post-war social structures.'

It is an acknowledged fact that women are the primary civilian victims of war; yet they are generally excluded from the decision-making process. Significantly, they are powerless to prevent wars and are excluded from the discussions and negotiations when it comes to their resolution. They are restricted to a secondary and unimportant role in the post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation efforts. This is notwithstanding the fact that the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 of October 2000 on women, peace and security calls upon the member states 'to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.'

Women have a major role to play in all aspects of conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building for the establishment of a lasting peace. Women are critical for post-conflict re-construction and rehabilitation at the grass-roots and community levels and their practical steps and initiatives should be taken seriously. Further, their role as peace ambassadors has come to be acknowledged and are a common sight in national, regional and international meetings concerned with peace and security. Further, they can offer practical suggestions for women's socioeconomic rights including employment, property ownership and inheritance during post-conflict reconstruction.

In Afghanistan, women are being empowered though their engagement in rebuilding the country. For instance, 2 of the 29 ministries in the government are headed by women; there are four women deputy ministers, five female generals, and two commissioners on the nine-member panel drafting the constitution. The Afghanistan government's National Development Framework (NDF) acknowledges that national development cannot be realised without the participation by women in policies and resource allocation and also without specific programmes for women. Even international financial institutions such as the Asian Development Bank encourage the role of women in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation. It is agreed that special attention must be paid to gender, and not include it as an afterthought.

15.4 POST-CONFLICT FUND AND THE ROLE OF WORLD BANK, ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (ADB) AND AFRICA DEVELOPMENT BANK (AfDB)

States engaged in war divert substantial resources from productive activities to acquiring destructive tools. This diversion of resources to the war effort often results in decrease in other public expenditures for infrastructure, health and education. During the war, the opposing forces often target physical infrastructure such as telecommunications, airports, ports, roads and bridges. They also destroy housing, schools and health facilities. Post-conflict reconstruction therefore involves the repair and reconstruction of physical and economic infrastructure and rebuilding weakened institutions. Funds for the post-conflict reconstruction activities can be broadly divided as one requiring funds for relief and the other for the long-term development. The immediate post-conflict situation requires large amounts of aid to a conflict-ridden country on an urgent basis and the long term development funds can be made available over a period of time.

At the end of World War II, The World Bank was established for reconstruction and development activities in its member countries and since then it has been in the forefront of post-conflict reconstruction. In the initial stages, it concentrated on providing financial capital and rebuilding physical infrastructure through country assistance programmes. The increase in intrastate and regional conflicts in the 1980s and early 1990s highlighted the need for the Bank to rethink its role and shift away from providing physical capital to rehabilitating social capital and institutions of conflict-affected countries.

With its successful track record in the post-conflict reconstruction and development activities, in July 1997, the Executive Board of the World Bank decided to constitute and establish the Post-Conflict Fund (PCF) 'to increase knowledge and improve available instruments within the Bank tenable early engagement and ensure an appropriate role for the Bank in the crucial transition from relief to rehabilitation, and reconstruction activities.' The programme envisages 'constructive engagement in conflict-affected countries where normal instruments and budget provisions cannot apply.'

In 2009, the Post-Conflict Fund (PCF) was superseded by the State and Peace-Building Fund (SPF) and the Low Income Countries under Stress (LICUS) Implementation Trust Fund. The SPF also serves as an entry point to countries that have had limited or no involvement with the World Bank, or piloting an approach that is later scaled up with IDA funding. The SPF allows the Bank to evaluate the programme performance in the concerned country, region, or theme and offers strategic direction for effective implementation of the programme. It is planned to make available about $100 million for the SPF over the three-years of FY09 to FY11 with three equal installments of $33.3 million. Since 2009, 28 grants, of which 22 have been signed with the recipients and 11 are effective and commenced disbursing.

Like the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been actively engaged in the post-conflict reconstruction activities in the Asian countries. For instance, the ADB began post-conflict reengagement in Afghanistan with a disaster and emergency relief programme in Afghanistan. The 2004 Performance-Based Allocation (PBA) Policy provided a framework for ADF allocations to post-conflict countries. In the case of Afghanistan, ADB set aside $400 million during two biennial periods, 2005–2006 and 2007–2008.

The African Development Bank (AfDB) programme of assistance to fragile countries aims to support socio-economic development and fighting poverty in its Regional Member Countries (RMCs). The bank has recognised the huge challenges faced by post-conflict countries and fragile states and the criticality of providing basic services and restart economic activity. The Bank's point of entry into a country's post-conflict reconstruction and development effort begins after the cessation of hostilities and the establishment of a transitional government authority supported by stakeholders within the country and the international community.

15.5 CASE STUDY: RECONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION OF THE TAMILS IN SRI LANKA

The twenty five year old civil war in Sri Lanka that has claimed nearly 70,000 civilian lives came to end in 2009. The United Nations estimated that over 7,000 people were killed and about 300,000 people displaced in the final phase of the war. By early 2010, about two thirds of the displaced population had returned to their homelands and communities and were confronted with total destruction of the infrastructure including their homes.

The genesis of the civil war lies in the discrimination meted out to the minority Tamil community who, during the course of the civil war, wanted complete autonomy for Tamil-dominated areas under their control in the north and the east of the country as part of the devolution of powers at the Provincial level. Over the years, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had developed extensive military capability and had challenged the Sri Lankan government forces with great success.

However, with the civil war over, the Sri Lankan government is faced with major challenges to ensure that the conditions are conducive for more than 2,50,000 internally displaced people (IDP) who now wish to return to their homes. The northern and eastern part of Sri Lanka

require reconstruction of infrastructure such as roads, hospitals, houses, churches, temples, schools, etc.

The Sri Lankan President Rajapaksha has made several assurances and commitments and noted that "there are still some aspects of security of the IDPs that had to be taken care of in view of the likely presence of LTTE infiltrators among the IDPs, who had come to the Government controlled areas. When conditions improve, especially with regard to security, there would be no objection to such assistance from organisations that are genuinely interested in the well being of the IDPs and the needs of rehabilitation and reconstruction. He said that there is a plan to resettle most of the IDPs within 180 days, under internationally accepted norms."

Further, the UN Secretary General appealed to the international community to assist Sri Lanka in its Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) jointly launched by the Sri Lankan Government and the UN, to support the relief, shelter and humanitarian needs of those in the IDP sites. The Sri Lankan President has also undertaken demilitarisation, rehabilitation and re-integration of ex-combatants into civilian life with the assistance of the UN and other international organisations. It has also been acknowledged that reconciliation is critical for promoting peace though it is a long drawn process. Further, having won the war, it is important for the government to win the hearts and minds of the Sri Lankan Tamils that would the pave the way for reconciliation and peace.

Several NGOs are engaged in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the IDP. For instance, the North-East Rehabilitation and Development Organisation (NERDO) is playing a key role in the rehabilitation, reconstruction and resettlement processes and is engaged in various activities in support of the Tamil speaking people. Similarly, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, the largest community based organisation in Sri Lanka has been actively engaged in supporting people displaced by the war. In 2008, it began coordinating relief programmes in the north and east of the country and provided services in 23 IDP camps. It provided Sarvodaya's water, sanitation and medical services and over 200,000 people benefitted from their services. It provided a mobile library for children and also offered legal services to help families obtain birth certificates and other legal documents. The Community Health Unit took care of malnourished children with a high-energy diet and brought them to normal health. Overall, people benefited from the Sarvodaya's assistance.

Likewise there has been a call on the media to play a positive role in reconstruction and rehabilitation of the IDP and also strengthen the ongoing reconciliation efforts. Negative reporting should be avoided and the focus should be on development and peace building efforts such as rebuilding, swift resettlement of the IDP and rehabilitation of the former combatants.

The Tamil community women living in the conflict ridden areas had witnessed violence and brutality and there have been reports of them being killed, injured, raped, tortured, trafficked, harassed and physically and sexually assaulted. They are now taking on the responsibility for

their families' economic and emotional survival, taking on new roles to enhance family income in the face of economic hardship.

15.6 SUMMARY

Post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation is a critical step in the longer-term development process. Its success is based on a number of factors such as the political will, the legitimacy of the state, support from international organisations, financial institutions, and other non-state actors such as the civil society, NGOs and the media.   These institutions should identify the gaps and constraints of capacity in their strategies for post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation. They also need to undertake sound political analysis and international responses should be adapted to country and regional contexts.

15.7 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Define post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation. Who, in your view, are the important stakeholders for post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation of war-torn societies?
2. What is the role of the State in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation?
3. Is the UN most suitable stakeholder to undertake post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation of war-torn societies? If so, why?
4. Are international financial institutions equipped to support post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation of states? If so, how?
5. It has been argued that 'women make a contribution to the rebuilding of countries emerging from armed conflicts'. Examine the statement at length.
6. Highlight the role of media in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation of states.
7. Explain the role of NGOs in the post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts of Sri Lanka.

SUGGESTED READINGS

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