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Peace Agreement Implementation (PAI): What Matters? A Review of the Litterature

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Peace Agreement Implementation (PAI): What Matters? A Review of the Literature

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Abstract:

In this working paper, we offer a review of the available literature on the factors shaping peace agreement implementation (PAI).[1] The main difficulty for peace implementations is translating words into action to transform societies that have experienced armed conflict. Throughout this literature review we analyze the main factors or variables involved in peace implementations using a variety of sources and examples to illustrate the challenges. We begin by presenting several definitions, characteristics, and effects of PAI; then we analyze what we believe to be the main factors or variables involved in successful peace implementation. We provide a general overview of these factors that will allow scholars to have a broad sense of the most important debates within the literature. This working paper can serve scholars as well as practitioners as a departure point for further research on factors that influence PAI.

Keywords: peace agreement, implementation, peacebuilding, war economies, political regime, security, civil society, gender, transitional justice.

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I. Introduction

Much of the research on conflict resolution has focused on the conditions for getting parties involved in a conflict to sign a peace agreement (PA). Less attention has been paid to what happens next: implementation and actors' capacity to facilitate the transition from war to sustainable peace (Stedman et al, 2002; Lyons, 2016; Joshi & Quinn, 2015). As argued by Stedman (2001), after the signing of a PA numerous threats—such as difficulties in the environment or spoilers—can hamper the goal of achieving lasting peace. To counter such threats, adequate strategies for implementation are therefore of utmost importance.

Joshi et al. (2015b) refer to research on the implementation of peace agreements and their impact on post-accord dynamics "as theory-rich but data-poor" (p. 551). Lyons (2016) has argued that most peace agreements are flawed, to varying degrees, due to the particularities of the peace process; because implementation can therefore provide opportunities to strengthen weak agreements, it is more likely to lead to sustained peace if the process is flexible and includes considerations beyond the original text. In other words, the content of a PA itself does not bring peace unless it is successfully implemented (Lyons 2018).

In this working paper we offer a review of the available literature on the factors shaping peace-agreement implementation (PAI). The main difficulty for PAI is translating words into action to transform societies that have experienced armed conflict (Bekoe, 2003). We therefore analyze the main factors or variables involved in peace implementations using a variety of sources and examples to illustrate the challenges. We begin by presenting several definitions, characteristics, and effects of peace implementation; we then analyze what we believe to be the main factors or variables involved in successful implementation. We provide a general overview of the factors that will allow scholars to have a broad sense of the most important debates within this literature.

II. Laying out the problem: Definitions and a model of implementation complexity

Peace implementation refers to narrow, short-term efforts to get the parties involved to comply with their commitments to peace (Stedman, 2001; Stedman et al. 2002). Stanley & Holiday (2002) suggest that for peace agreements to lay the foundations for a more democratic post-war environment, implementation needs to move quickly and rearrange political institutions so that newly incorporating elements of the polity have sufficient guarantees. In a similar vein, Joshi and Quinn (2015) argue that the daily work of implementing a PA implies a continued "negotiation, renegotiation, a sustained dialogue, and continuous dispute resolution between […] sectors of the government and population segments affected by the implementation" (p. 5). Lyons (2016) extends this to describe peace implementation as "a period of constant evaluation and re-evaluation in a constantly shifting context" (p. 72), marked by uncertainty and risk, and requiring a flexible process that tests perceptions and feelings towards the viability of a durable peace (Lyons, 2016; 2018). Thus, successful peace implementation may be referred to as a "flexible process of creating and re-creating ripeness so that broad coalitions in each of the major parties continue to favor non-military strategies" (Lyons, 2016, p. 73).

Several scholars have also demonstrated the need for a set of subgoals to accomplish peace implementation (Stedman et al., 2002). This is further explored by Joshi et al. (2015b), who argue that implementation processes often unfold in a "reciprocal fashion" whereby actors condition their continued participation and compliance in the process to their counterpart's level of participation and compliance. This brings forth a great deal of uncertainty surrounding implementation and the probability of the parties honoring commitments (Bekoe, 2003). Bekoe (2003) argues that there are several potential deal-breakers in the implementation process that are impossible to know in advance even though they may also encourage compliance.

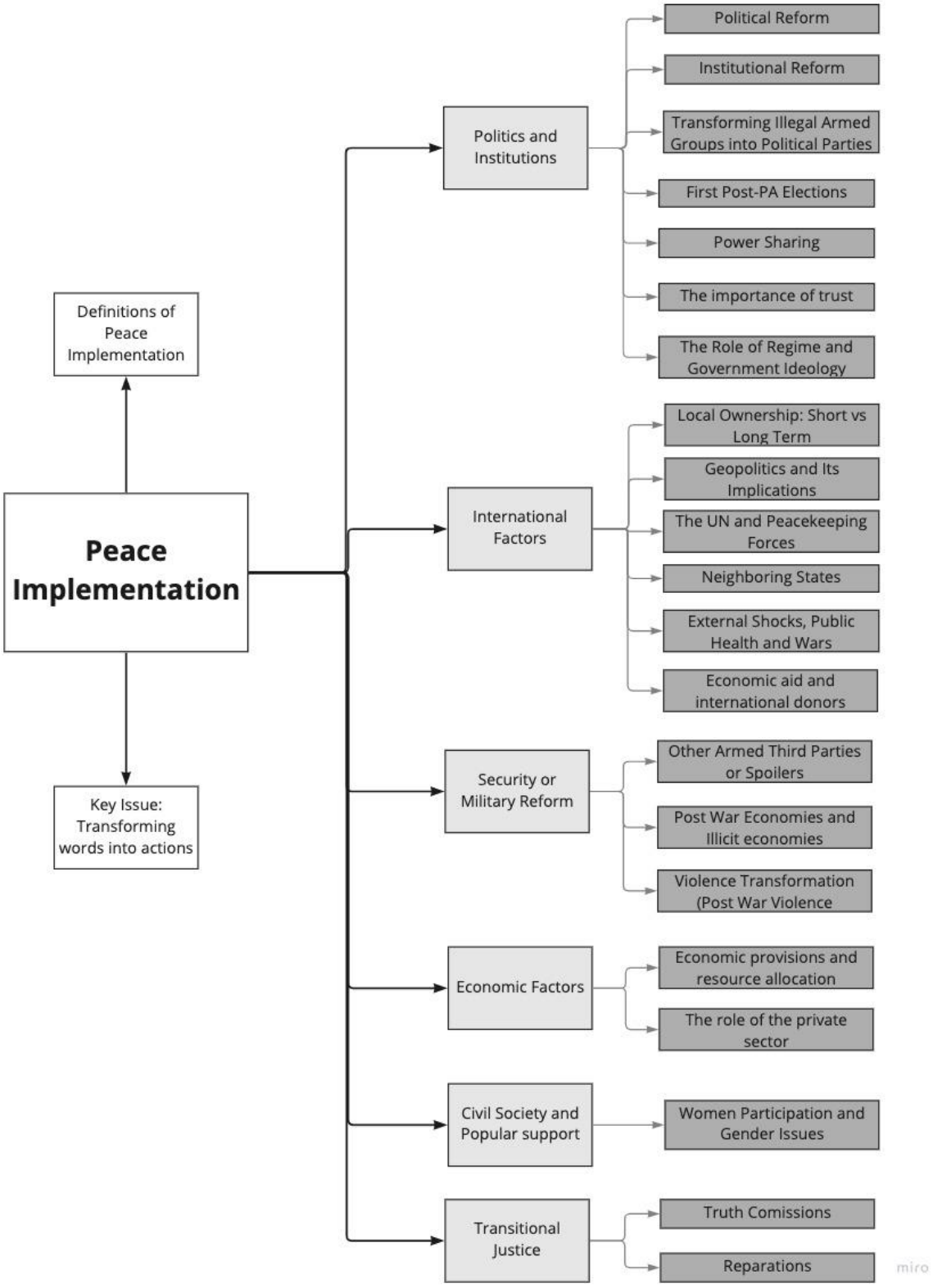
One main challenge of peace implementation is transforming words into actions. Lyons (2018) argues that to correctly implement a peace negotiation, implementation must be a process of redefining the terms of the agreement rather than a narrow interpretation of it. Furthermore, Lyons (2016) suggests that if peace implementation focuses on strict adherence to the agreement, post-war periods can perpetuate the polarized conditions of wartime. Jarstad and Nilsson (2008) argue the most important provisions to be implemented are those that denote greater concessions for the parties because they reflect a high degree of commitment.

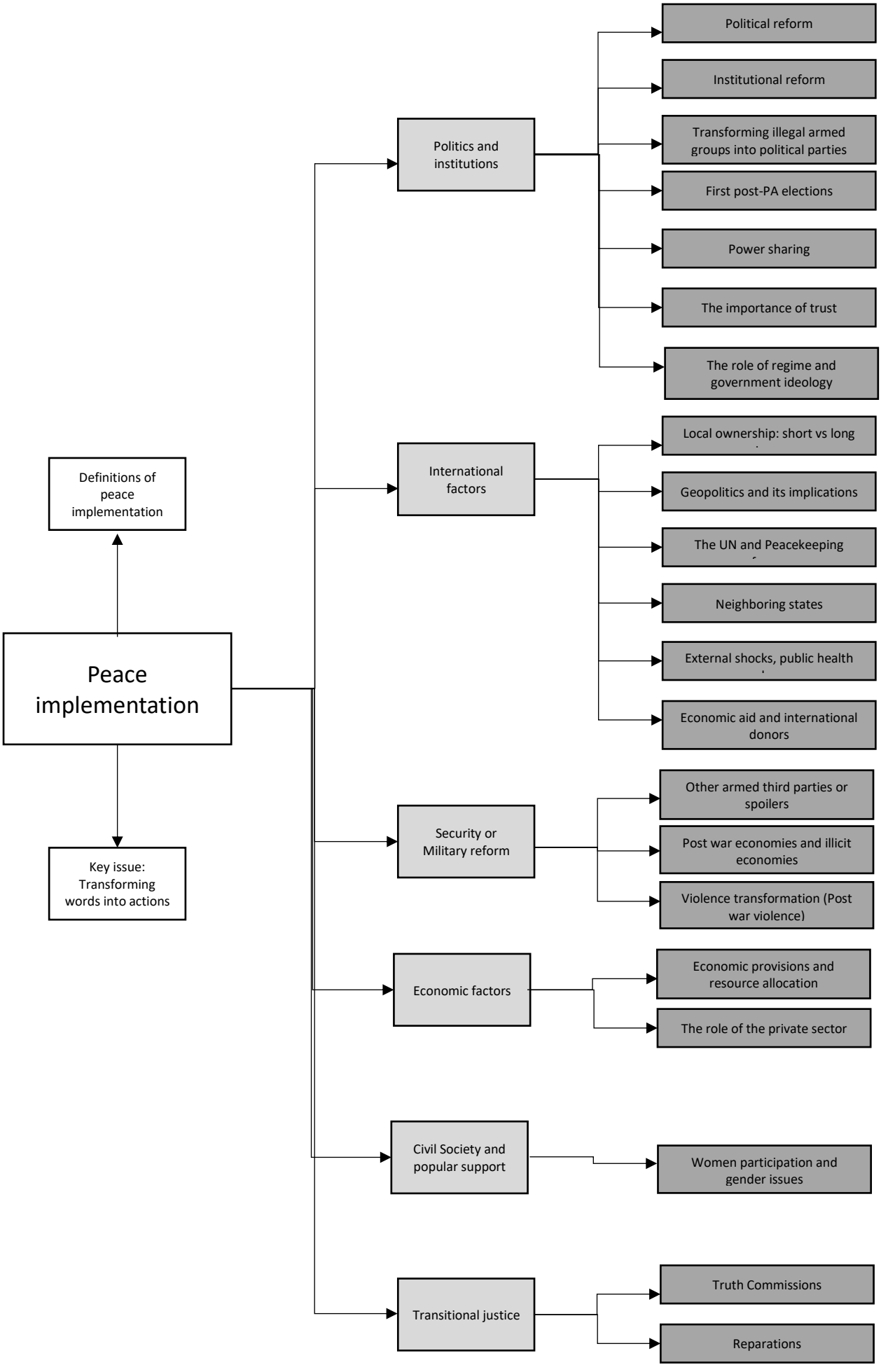
Moreover, they quantitatively demonstrate that when the parties engage in costly concessions, the likelihood of peace prevailing is higher (Jarstad and Nilsson, 2008). Mac Ginty et al. (2019) have also shown that in most cases provisions in peace agreements are not meant to be implemented independently but in accordance with each other. Moreover, the process of implementation of a PA is a form of peacebuilding that is integrated into a collection of parallel processes aimed at promoting reconciliation, fostering better state-society relations, and addressing the root causes of armed, social, and political conflict (Joshi & Quinn, 2015).

This brief outline gives us a departure point towards the challenges of peace implementation. In the coming sections, we focus on specific provisions, challenges, or variables that we have identified as key for peace implementation.

We conceive the implementation process as composed of multiple temporal stages (short to long-term), layers (from international to local), and dimensions (including politics, justice, the economy, and culture). In an implementation phase, all these need to be addressed in parallel, as they exert mutual impact and shape each other's progress. We think of this complexity as a multilayered, multi-thematic, and temporally diverse model, in which what is needed for implementation—and implementation in itself—intersects with other social, political, and economic processes going on at the international, national, and local levels. Figure 1 describes this model. The following sections discuss each of these topics.

Figure 1. Model of implementation complexity




Peace implementation
Definitions of peace implementation
Key issue: Transforming words into actions
Politics and institutions
Political reform
Institutional reform
Transforming illegal armed groups into political parties
First post-PA elections
Power sharing
The importance of trust
The role of regime and government ideology
International factors
Local ownership: short vs long
Geopolitics and its implications
The UN and Peacekeeping
Neighboring states
External shocks, public health
Economic aid and international donors
Security or Military reform
Other armed third parties or spoilers
Post war economies and illicit economies
Violence transformation (Post war violence)
Economic factors
Economic provisions and resource allocation
The role of the private sector
Civil Society and popular support
Women participation and gender issues
Transitional justice
Truth Commissions
Reparations

III. Factors Affecting Peace Agreement Implementation

a. Politics and Institutions

Political Reform

One of the most studied provisions for a successful implementation of a PA is political reform, which comes in multiple shapes and forms, depending on the context and content of the agreement. The most documented implementation challenges are power-sharing agreements, the political participation of former combatants, and transitional elections. Joshi and Quinn (2015) have argued that civil wars are less likely to recur in cases where higher levels of democratization were achieved after peace agreements, and that a positive strategy for establishing lasting peace is therefore to implement a set of mutually agreed upon socio-political reforms. According to Joshi and Quinn (2015), 76 percent of PAs contain provisions for electoral reform aimed at making the electoral system more representative; 55 percent additionally include constitutional reforms; and 50 percent include political power-sharing arrangements; these provisions are aimed at creating a more accountable, politically open, inclusive, and representative political scenario that supports armed groups' transformation into legitimate political parties. In this section, we explore that topic in greater detail.

Institutional Reform

Scholars have pointed out that institutional transformation is key for a steady and flexible implementation processes (Lyons, 2016). Jarstad and Nilsson (2008) have identified that power-sharing institutions—including political, economic, territorial, and/or military institutions—built during implementation are key for durable peace. Thus, a transition from war to peace is also a transition from institutions designed for conflict and war to institutions that can effectively respond to the challenges of post-war societies (Lyons, 2016)—a process of "creative destruction of wartime institutions" (p. 77) through proposing, modifying, and creating new institutions.

Ansorg et al. (2013) argue that institutional reform is an appealing option to shape such state institutions like the system of government, electoral systems and party regulations, territorial state structure, the judiciary, and the security sector to promote sustainable peace and prevent the recurrence of conflict. Because it is a difficult and time-consuming task that requires

institutional design and involves a large group of actors, however, institutional reform should aim at preventing the recurrence of organized violence by examining why societal conflict escalated into such a form (Ansorg et al., 2013). Additionally, they argue that not only the causes of war but also the war's dynamics may crucially impact the design of postwar institutions (Ansorg et al., 2013). One reason why institutional reforms are time-consuming and complicated to implement is that they often require the enactment of new laws and institutions (Jarstad & Nilsson, 2008). Based on their logic of "costly signaling," Jarstad and Nilsson (2008) demonstrate that when parties "engage in such costly concessions peace is more likely to prevail" (p. 211).

External actors, such as international organizations, can play a significant role in determining institutional outcomes during implementation (Ansorg et al., 2013). Mac Ginty and Richmond (2007) argue that heavily engineered governance institutions and frameworks being exported to post-conflict zones as part of post-conflict reconstruction process can be difficult to implement, especially where acute poverty and underdevelopment coincide with conflict. It is important to track the effects of institutional design in various social and cultural contexts, including ethnic and religious groups (Ansorg et al., 2013). Thus Mac Ginty and Richmond (2007) argue that "the process of building institutions and designing must be locally owned and reflect the local identity, and must quickly and demonstrably benefit most of the population" (p. 493).

It is also important to consider the role of informal institutions or hybrid forms as institutional arrangements. Ansorg et al. (2013) point out that an interesting example could be a security reform that not only considers the national army, but also "ethnic militias and neighborhood watches that continue to operate and are tacitly accepted by society because they may more effectively guarantee security for the local population" (p. 22).

Transforming Illegal Armed Groups into Political Parties

Several scholars have argued that the demilitarization of politics, normalization of politics, or the transformation of armed groups into political parties are some of the most important provisions to be implemented (Joshi & Quinn, 2015; Stedman et al., 2002). Implementation of these provisions frequently puts a stop to violence and provide a political alternative to ex-combatants (Stedman et al., 2002). Therefore, a concerted effort to transform armed groups

into viable political parties plays a crucial role in consolidating democracy and strengthening the prospects for war termination (Lyons, 2016). Furthermore, Lyons (2016) argues that building effective political parties increases the likelihood of demobilization, because armed groups see that they can protect their interests through political rather than military means. These reforms, which in some cases guarantee seats in the legislative branch, are critical to the ex-combatant's ability to overcome a political impasse which would otherwise often lead to renewed violence (Joshi & Quinn, 2015).

The First Post-PA Elections

The first elections after a PA has been signed to represent one of the main challenges to the implementation of political reforms, and in fact postponing elections and initiating demobilization before elections lengthen the duration of peace (Joshi et al., 2015a). The acceptance or rejection of the electoral outcome is also a key moment in these types of provisions. This is to be achieved by establishing a level of trust between the parties and confidence in the electoral institutions; Joshi et al. (2015a) suggest that implementing accommodation provisions—such as interim electoral commissions to build consultative mechanisms and norms that increase the perception that political reforms will be effective (Lyons, 2016)—as soon as possible after the signing of a PA is a highly effective strategy in getting a peace process started on the right path. Holding elections without such accommodation measures will raise fears of possible fraud, so the measures need to be “swift, verifiable, costly, facilitative, and non-disempowering” (Joshi et al., 2015a, p. 7). Lyons (2016) suggests that collaborative institutions manage the electoral process during a transition, generating greater confidence in the peace process. Furthermore, interim institutions can create confidence in the electoral process and ease the transformation of armed groups into political parties (Joshi et al., 2015a; Lyons, 2006).

Power Sharing

Vandeginste and Sriram (2011) have suggested that power-sharing agreements are often essential incentives to induce post-agreement stability. However, power-sharing has also been linked to significant problems. It may provide political access to the state to individuals and groups who have committed violations of human rights and humanitarian laws during the armed conflict, which can limit transitional justice mechanisms (Vandeginste & Sriram, 2011). Some scholars have found that political power sharing has no effect on durable peace, and it is only territorial and military provisions that reduce the risk of recurring conflict because the latter entail high costs to the parties (Jarstad & Nilsson, 2008). Analyzing whether these types of provisions are suitable for all kinds of divided societies, Ansorg et al. (2013) have also questioned the role of power-sharing agreements within polarized ethnic groups, and argue that power-sharing provisions may limit opposition.

The Importance of Trust

Many of the aspects mentioned above involve the key challenge of peaceful cohabitation, confidence, and willingness among the parts involved in the implementation process. According to Mac Ginty et al. (2019), the willingness of policymakers and other actors to implement peace provisions could be affected by the prospect for stable peace. Joshi and Quinn (2015) argue this is especially relevant "early after the accord has been signed when anxiety levels are high, trust has yet to be established, and most times both sides remain armed and mobilized" (p. 8). For ex-combatants, there are no guarantees that the government will keep its word once they have disarmed and demobilized (Joshi & Quinn, 2015). Overcoming these challenges requires honest communication between the parties, which is difficult because both have clear incentives to misrepresent their true positions (Joshi & Quinn, 2015). A key moment for consolidating the confidence and willingness of actors is the context of the first democratic elections. According to Joshi et al. (2015a), violence in this period often results from uncertainties regarding how opponents will rule if elected and "the inability of each side to convince the other that they will not exploit them if given the chance" (p. 6).

Vandeginste and Sriram (2011) propose that power-sharing arrangements can promote cohabitation during PAI, which can in turn help to prevent the reoccurrence of conflict and promote political and social reconciliation. For the authors this is a key issue, because it allows a peace deal to be justified to the population (Vandeginste & Sriram, 2011). Bekoe (2003)

argues that mutual vulnerability works through the presence of sanctions for reneging the agreement, ensuring parties compromise on implementation. She shows that when political accommodation coincides with suspicion of military or financial threats to the factions, implementation stalls; on the other hand, implementation advances in the presence of mutual vulnerability.

The Role of Regime and Government Ideology

Regime type and the ideology of the government overseeing implementation matter. Through the Implementation of Pacts (IMPACT) dataset (which builds on the Terms of Peace Agreements Dataset and information from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program), Jarstad and Nilsson (2018) analyze the different challenges democracies and autocracies are likely to face when implementing and deciding on provisions in a PA, using a large-N analysis based on data on power-sharing provisions in 83 PA in 40 intrastate armed conflicts between 1989 and 2004. Literature reviewed by the authors indicates that the incentive structure for autocrats to maintain and implement agreements is weaker as they are not dependent on voters (Jarstad & Nilsson, 2018), while former warring parties will face higher local costs in democratic regimes for not upholding agreements. The authors found that territorial pacts are also more often signed in democracies than in autocratic states, and that it is much likelier that the parties will reach a political or military pact in an autocratic rather than a democratic system (Jarstad & Nilsson, 2018). This is because "the incentive structure in authoritarian regimes suggests that the previous warring actors will use any means to stay in power" (Jarstad & Nilsson, 2018, p. 180). Thus they argue that parties signing a peace agreement under a dictatorship may prefer political pacts as a way of postponing elections and keeping as much power as possible, while in democratic regimes, actors will be less reluctant to permanently hand over power to local elites through territorial pacts (Jarstad & Nilsson, 2018).

Regarding implementation, Jarstad and Nilsson (2018) found that 62 percent of PA provisions were implemented in democracies between 1989 and 2004, whereas 67 percent of provisions were in autocracies; this means that there is no significant difference between the two types of regime. The authors suggest that this could be because even though the incentives for signing agreements differ between regime types, the conditions for implementing them may be similar. In other words, after a civil war or armed conflict the security situation is normally fragile,

infrastructure is often damaged or destroyed, and unemployment tends to be high, which puts a lot of stress on any type of government (Jarstad & Nilsson, 2018).[2]

In addition to regime type, government political preferences and ideology are also relevant for implementation. Specifically, policy continuity or change of political authorities leading a country from negotiation to implementation is a crucial issue and illustrates how PA implementation is exposed to the vagaries of political and electoral processes. Chakma (2020), for example, has asked why government turnover (measured by leader and/or ideological turnover) reduces the implementation of peace agreements in some countries but not in others. On the one hand, insider leader turnover (when leadership changes within the same governing coalition) facilitates the implementation of peace agreements because insider leaders are familiar with the policies of the previous leadership (Chakma, 2020). On the other hand, outsider leader turnover (when a new governing coalition comes to power) hinders the implementation of a peace agreement because outsider leaders play the role of "shadow veto players" (Chakma, 2020, p. 1); one reason for this is that outsider leaders do not normally have enough information about the peace process, making it harder for them to decide on relevant aspects of the implementation process, or do not agree with the PA (Chakma, 2020).

In terms of ideological turnover, new governments tend to be reluctant to implement peace agreements (or any policy) attributed to their predecessors, particularly when there is an ideological turnover (Chakma, 2020). Generally speaking, supporters of left-wing parties are more "pacifist" and willing to punish leaders who take a belligerent stance, whereas a right-wing electoral base rewards aggressive policies (Chakma, 2020). According to Chakma (2020), scholars have overlooked several plausible explanations in explaining PA implementation, including the level of influence of leaders, the degree of outsider leader turnover, the early outsider leader turnover effect, the composition of the government, and ideological turnover on the left-right spectrum.

b. International Factors

[2] Mason and Greig (2016) discuss differences for types of autocratic regime when implementing peace agreements. They find three main aspects that differ between autocratic regimes: the ability of the regime to deliver policies and programs that address the material demands and grievances of different groups in society; those groups' estimate of their prospects for gaining access to power in government; and the willingness and ability to repress opposition challenges that might escalate to civil war.

Literature on peace implementations has also had a great focus on the international context in which implementation takes place. Various scholars have pointed out the importance and relevance of international interest and financial commitment or aid. International dimensions include political support (for example via multi-country groups of "friends" or supporters or via support by the United Nations) as well as resources to undergird crucial post-agreement tasks related to humanitarian attention and physical reconstruction. Haunstein and Joshi (2020), for example, suggest that international parties can induce cooperation between armed actors by imposing costs for non-compliance; overcoming resource constraints; and bringing regional, international, and local actors together in implementation.

Local Ownership, Short-Term versus Long-Term

Perry (2008) hints at a significant dilemma by posing the question of how post-conflict peace-building initiatives can "most effectively be supported by the international community, to ensure a balance between ownership and expediency" (p. 50). Perry (2008) stresses the need for long-term action rather than short-term limited engagement. Lyons (2016) also argues that without such support, implementation is prone to failure, due to the international community's role in monitoring and assistance so that the agreement is implemented as signed.

Geo-Politics and Its Implications

One factor affecting the role of international actors is their sustained commitment and interest. Stedman et al. (2002) argue that the strategic importance of a country undergoing transition opens or closes windows of opportunity, and that while intense international commitment does not guarantee success, a lack of commitment can virtually guarantee its failure. On the contrary, when there is stronger international interest, commitment towards implementation is likely to be higher and resources more likely to be made available to aid the process (Stedman et al., 2002).

Joshi and Quinn (2015) argue that a donor's role in implementation should also be tied to positive engagement and continued implementation progress. Emmanuel and Rothchild (2007) also argue that significant and sustained post-conflict aid provided by donors reduces the likelihood of a return to civil war. Hauenstein and Joshi (2020) argue that regional and international organizations can use their peacebuilding experience to improve implementation

"by offering security guarantees; monitoring compliance with an agreement; deploying peacekeepers, or sanctioning individuals or governments" (p. 1).

The UN and Peace-Keeping Forces

One main actor in the international community in this regard is the United Nations (UN). Bekoe (2003) shows that the role the UN plays in activities such as demobilization, civil administration, political reform, and electoral monitoring are key for peace implementation. Haunstein and Joshi (2020) suggest that although some researchers consider UN resolutions unhelpful, they can help improve PA implementation due to the commitment of the UN Security Council. These types of resolutions therefore show wide support for a PA but can also "shame parties who do not comply with the agreement, [or] deploy and coordinate resources" (Hauenstein & Joshi, 2020, p. 1). This is evident in the possibility that the UN Security Council will impose, or threaten to impose, significant material costs on parties that obstruct implementation (Hauenstein & Joshi, 2020).

One recurrent factor related to international actors is the deployment of peacekeeping forces. Jarstad and Nilsson (2008), Lyons (2016), and Mac Ginty et al. (2019) have shown that peacekeeping forces increase the prospects and help overcome security dilemmas for peace following a settlement by reducing uncertainty; it has also been argued that UN forces may be more neutral than regional peacekeepers. Yet certain studies have found that peacekeeping forces may deter implementation in some cases (Mc Ginty et al., 2019).

Neighboring States

Neighboring states, another key factor, can be helpful or problematic depending on their commitment and resources. Joshi and Quinn (2015) have shown how highly committed, well-resourced, and unfriendly neighbors shape a difficult environment, while a few uncommitted and poorly resourced unfriendly neighbors have little effect on implementation. On the other hand, neighbors friendly to the peace process can be a positive influence both directly and indirectly, by denying spoilers resources or refuge (Joshi & Quinn, 2015).

External Shocks, Public Health, and Wars

Peace agreements compete for resources and support with other policy priorities. This becomes especially clear with external shocks, such as public health threats (the Covid-19 pandemic) or international crises and wars, which can become international and domestic game-changers in terms of financial and political support (Joshi et al. 2020a).

Economic Aid and International Donors

The role of international aid and donors is key for sustaining peace initiatives in a post-conflict scenario. There exists a well-established debate on aid effectiveness in conflict scenarios, its importance, and the often-conflicting consequences international aid and donors can bring to a post-conflict setting (Kozul-Wright & Fortunato, 2011). Scholars have shown mixed evidence: donor aid can either reinforce the social contract between state and society in war-to-peace transitions or undermine it (Kozul-Wright & Fortunato, 2011). For example, Woodward (2002) acknowledges that the economic impact of international peace missions sometimes runs contrary to the aims of self-government and political sustainability. More precisely, donors' decisions about whom to assist or what projects to fund will likely have a lasting political impact on the country (Woodward, 2002). Because of this economic aid and assistance should always consider the local impact it can generate.

For many years there has been wide criticism of international interventions focused on addressing the effects of conflicts rather than the underlying causes, which in many cases includes social and economic inequalities and scarcity of resources (Distler et al., 2018). Traditionally, international aid has been considered technical rather than political, isolated from local socio-economic traditions, legacies, and pre-conflict practices, but Distler et al. (2018) argue that while humanitarian agencies now "call for a localization of responses, the international donor community keeps selecting their local partners and perspectives carefully, ensuring the chosen local perspective concurs with international agendas" (p. 146).

Recent literature has sought to understand conflict between local and international understandings of peace (Distler et al., 2018). This literature invites us to take historical, political, and relational dimensions into account when economic provisions are implemented that call for international aid (Distler et al., 2018). A focus on the local level and the international intervention in economic provisions may enable scholars and policy makers "to better grasp the processes of post-conflict economy formations, and what is required to steer

them towards peace economies that can support sustainable peacebuilding efforts" (Distler et al., 2018, p. 147). Woodward (2002) argues that international aid should always consider the need for broad-based impact assessments in short and long term; have an early emphasis on employment, which is critical to redirecting behavior and encouraging support for the PA; and invest in building institutional and social capital to ensure good governance. Berdal and Wennmann (2013) argue that what may look ideal in terms of economic development from an international perspective may prove politically destabilizing and conflict-generating in the short term. For example, the authors argue that while robust institutions at the national and local level normally provide the backbone of resource management, in the short term it may be necessary to postpone the principles of "good governance" as institution-building policies may destabilize peace negotiations or the initial implementation phase (Berdal & Wennmann, 2013).

c. Economic factors

In many ways, economic capabilities shape and limit political and social aspirations of transformation via peace agreements. Therefore, economic resources for peacebuilding, which tend to be limited, are a key factor for successful PA implementation. Governments and policymakers need to maximize existing resources and define priorities. Additionally, Distler et al. (2018) argue that disregarding socio-economic aspects leaves an important vacuum in our understanding of peace, its sustainability, and the formation of post-conflict economies. When referring to the economic factors of peacebuilding, scholars argue that complex tensions arise between the pursuit of economic priorities, the requirements of peacebuilding, and political stability in the local level (Berdal & Wennmann, 2013). Nevertheless, carefully designed policies or provisions aimed at economic recovery and the transformation of political economies of violence are not only crucial but can also provide incentives for cooperation and peaceful behavior among warring parties (Berdal & Wennmann, 2013). In this section we explore economic factors affecting PAI from the local level to international involvement.

Economic Provisions and Resource Allocation

Scholars have shown that armed conflicts deepen socio-economic inequalities, which in fact breed and extend conflict (Distler et al., 2018). In addition, economic claims and motivations are frequently part of violent eruptions, hence their importance when implementing a PA, and

implementation cannot be sustained if economic issues are not addressed (Costantini, 2012). One argument supporting this claim is that in "post-conflict areas, the economy contributes to creating a new vision of society which convinces the parties that it is indeed worthwhile to stop fighting and benefit from the economic opportunities of peace" (Wennmann, 2009, p. 44). This is crucial in understanding the ways in which socio-economic factors condition the way people live their lives, so it is important to highlight that post-conflict economies "are politically designed and shaped by a multitude of actors who struggle over power, representation and a new social order globally, regionally and locally" (Distler et al., 2018, p. 145).

Systematic analysis of whether the inclusion of economic provisions in PAs fosters sustainable peacebuilding, reducing the likelihood of conflict recurrence, is limited (Wennmann, 2009). This is problematic because scholars have shown that PAI frequently depends on economic factors, such as: rapid economic revival in countries affected by conflict to generate confidence in a PA; adequate funding to implement key aspects or provisions; and sufficient funding to enable the establishment of government institutions and the transition to a sustainable peace-time economy (Woodward, 2002). According to Wennmann (2009), economic issues and provisions should be included in PAs to instrumentalize the economy for peacebuilding. The potential of an economic focus in PAI "lies in creating joint futures, managing expectations in the economy, reducing spoiling and providing peace dividends for the parties" (Wennmann, 2009, p. 56). More so, economic provisions as part of institutional and political transformation may increase the predictability of economic interaction and resource sharing in a post-conflict scenario (Wennmann, 2009). However, a review of cases by Wennmann (2009) shows that economic provisions only work if parties allow their inclusion; if economic provisions are forced in the wrong circumstances, this can lead to PA failure because parties may start to lose trust in the agreement.

Regarding specific policies and provisions, the economic dimension of peacebuilding may involve short-term demands for security and stability, and therefore "may require some form of engagement with informal often illiberal power structures as a necessary step in a longer process designed to wean an economy away from violence and crime and towards peaceful legitimate economic activity" (Berdal & Wennmann, 2013, p. 9). For this reason, policymakers and scholars need to analyze the peacebuilding environment to grasp the underlying political economy of a conflict zone, instead of labelling or minimizing complex problems which have served to perpetuate or stimulate renewed violence (Berdal & Wennmann, 2013).

Another key issue concerning the economic factors shaping PAI is resource allocation. Resource allocation implies a division and transfer of power and resources among the parties in conflict at political, economic, and social levels (Costantini, 2012). Resource allocation therefore can be seen as a way to solve issues in PAI or as a cause of tension leading to distrust (Costantini, 2012). The process depends on changing domestic and international political dynamics that have been identified as important determinants of which policies or provisions are implemented (James, 2021; see also section on "international factors").

The Role of the Private Sector

A key factor that can improve economic conditions for PAI is engaging the private sector and business communities (Costantini, 2012). From the start, the private sector is affected by conflict (Rettberg, 2003; Working Through Violence, 2021; Miklian 2021). In the Colombian case, Rettberg (2003) argues that the conflict placed a considerable burden on the Colombian private sector due to climbing rates of capital flight, the destruction of infrastructure (such as oil infrastructure), kidnappings and extortion of employees, and the growing tax burden to support the war effort. During the pandemic, the socio-political conditions exacerbated the threat of extortion and violence against firms (Working Through Violence, 2021). The private sector accordingly plays an important role in PA and PAI. Rettberg (2019) has argued that business responses to conflict have three main motivations: the need for peace so business can operate correctly; the willingness of business to support a PA; and the anticipation of renewed investment, profit, and growth. A strong commitment to peace by the private sector can have an impact on PAI because its support can broaden the impact, depth, and course of a peaceful transformation (Rettberg, 2019). During the pandemic, Working Through Violence (2021) argued that businesses can be seen as problem-solvers and peacemakers during these types of crises, or as harmful actors. Using a survey of 78,000 people in seven cities around the world, the authors found that in areas which deteriorated in terms of public safety, extortion, and corruption, citizens said businesses were part of the reason they were struggling; in areas that did well, citizens credited businesses with their shared success (Working Through Violence, 2021).

d. Security or Military Reform

Another factor that is central to PAI is security or military reform. Most authors acknowledge that these types of provisions, which range from smaller sub-goals to more ambitious policies, are important to a successful transition from war to peace. Joshi et al. (2015b) have identified up to eight provisions: disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, military reform, police reform, ceasefire, paramilitary groups, and withdrawal of troops. Although these seem dispersed, scholars have found that many such provisions are typically negotiated as a cluster and their implementation is highly interdependent (Joshi et al., 2015b).

Some scholars point out that a security-sector reform that includes police and judicial reforms is key to providing basic protections for combatants and the civilian population (Stedman et al., 2002). Additionally, military pacts or reforms involve higher logistical, economic, and immaterial costs than political pacts (Hartzell & Hoddie, 2003). These can include the integration of commanders and/or combatants into national armed forces, which is a provision that is time-consuming and economically costly for both parties (Hartzell & Hoddie, 2003). The goal of these types of military pacts or reforms is that former adversaries work together and share military tactics and strategies. Jarstad and Nilsson (2008) argue that when parties engage in such costly concessions, they demonstrate commitment to the process.

Another key provision to guarantee a peaceful transition is demobilization. Stedman (2001) and Joshi et al. (2015a) argue that demobilization is one of the most important provisions during PAI. This is because demobilization can hinge on the willingness of combatants to return to conflict (Stedman, 2001). Granting amnesty shows parties' willingness to live together without vengeance (Joshi et al., 2015). The demobilization process is less likely to occur without amnesty due to the reluctance of combatants to undergo prosecution or repression, and must go hand in hand with the political transformations of former military organizations.

In an opposing view, Vandeginste and Sriram (2011) warn that implementing such provisions in volatile contexts can be a sensitive matter, meaning they can be a potential risk factor. Kurtenbach & Ansorg (2020), for example, suggests that security-sector reform may activate spoilers and constitute a risk of conflict resumption. Short of complete security-sector overhauls, implementation processes may therefore attempt careful and cautious combinations of provisions including amnesties, the release of prisoners, large-scale disarmament, and the

assurance of security for ex-combatants for demobilization to happen (Joshi et al., 2015a; Stedman, 2001).

Other Armed Third Parties or Spoilers

Stedman (1997) pioneered the concept of spoilers in peace processes, referring to leaders, parties, or groups "who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, worldview, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it" (p. 5). Joshi and Quinn (2015) follow up by arguing that a viable implementation process should include rebel factions and splinter groups that initially decided to remain outside the peace process or were not initially included. The isolationist and obstructionist behavior of these actors can become costly for the process, while the benefits of formally joining the peace process are promising (Joshi & Quinn, 2015; Stedman et al., 2002). Joshi and Quinn (2015) argue that outside factions that were not part of the PA may decide to join the process if they see that implementation is viable and fear becoming isolated. Through a statistical analysis, Joshi et al. (2015b) show that "high levels of implementation can reduce conflicts between the governments and non-signatory groups" (p. 560). In brief, the effects of these actors on PAI will depend on their commitment, and whether they have assigned resources to torpedo it or not (Stedman et al., 2002).

Post-War Economies, Illicit Economies, and Land

As soon as a PA is reached, uncertainty arises about the transformation of post-war and illicit economies. In most cases, armed or rebel groups rely on illicit economies (including trade in drugs and natural resources) for their armed efforts. Due to the possibility of a power vacuum that allows illicit economies to continue under different armed organizations, drug cartels, or local elites, it is key for implementers to address an economic transition. As Kurtenbach and Rettberg (2018) argue, "the transition out of war is a complex endeavor, interrelated in many cases with other transformations such as changes in the political regime and the economy" (p. 1), so many transitional contexts are marked by a steady and ongoing reconfiguration of criminal and illegal groups and practices. A focus on the transformation of post-war economies is a key factor during the PAI, related to institutional weakness and the influence of illicit actors. Persistently low levels of state capacity regarding the regulation of violence and the provision of public services; the ongoing control of illicit flows of resources and weapons by

armed actors; and changing patterns of violence are three of the most important factors to take into consideration for analyzing post-war economies (Kurtenbach & Rettberg, 2018).

According to Massé and Le Billon (2017), post-war transitions involve a change in the logic of conflict and violence, "understood as a shift from politically motivated violence to criminal violence driven by economic motives" (p. 8). In this scenario, weak resource governance not only accounts for the onset of violence, but also the resilience of crime as illicit markets remain a challenge once formal fighting has ceased (Kurtenbach & Rettberg, 2018). Massé and Le Billon (2017) identify a risk of renewed violence and criminalization in resource-rich post-war transition contexts. Some of the provisions intended to minimize the risks of post-war and illicit economies are: the prolongation of commodity sanctions; the effective demobilization of ex-combatants; policing of resources areas; the formalization and verification of resource extraction actors and activities; and the promotion of foreign investment in large-scale extractive projects (Massé & Le Billon, 2017).

Violence Transformation (Post-War Violence)

Compounding many of the factors discussed so far is the fact that violence may continue even when a peace agreement is signed (Kurtenbach and Rettberg 2020) and thus influence PAI. However, postwar violence does not affect all communities equally; while some remain in conflict, others escape its perpetuation due to implementation (Van Baalen and Höglund, 2019; Weintraub et al., 2021). In addition, war legacies can shape the dynamics of post-war periods (Kurtenbach and Rettberg 2020), reflecting discrepancies between national and local levels. In cases "where local conflicts were heavily exploited by armed actors there is a higher probability for war to have lasting negative effects on local conflict dynamics" (van Baalen & Höglund, 2019, p. 1171). Ljungkvist and Jarstad (2021) have also pointed to differences between urban and rural violence in post-war periods due to the fact that implementation, institutional presence, and resources take longer to arrive to some regions, causing profound effects.

One interesting explanation for post-war violence is explored by van Baalen and Höglund (2019): the authors argue that communities where wartime mobilization at the local level is based on the formation of alliances between armed groups and local elites, the likelihood of post-war violence is higher; this type of "indirect mobilization" by local elites can enable them to employ violence at will in the post-war period. Inversely, in communities where armed

groups generate civilian support based on grassroots backing of the group's political objectives, the likelihood of post-war violence may be lower; this direct mobilization allows armed groups to rally support by promoting local endorsement of their political objectives and commitment towards a PA that limits post-wartime violence (van Baalen & Höglund, 2019).

e. Civil Society and Popular Support

Civil society has long been a central actor in development and conflict studies. However, its specific role in negotiations and PAI is more recent. Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013), for example, identify a "the local turn" in peacebuilding, acknowledging the importance of local communities, civil society, and popular support in PAI. As argued by Ljungkvist and Jarstad (2021), local ownership—defined as an engagement with local communities as a way of embedding peacebuilding locally; tailoring it to local needs and cultural expectations; producing an opportunity for emancipation through attentiveness to local particularism and support of local agency—has emerged as a key prescription for obtaining legitimate and authentic peacebuilding. Engagement with local communities and civil society is seen as a way to embed implementation locally and build it around local needs and cultural expectations (Ljungkvist & Jarstad, 2021).

Some scholars argue that civil-society inclusion in a PA leads to greater implementation because it increases accountability and legitimacy (Paffenholz, 2010; Hauenstein & Joshi, 2020). According to Binningsbo et al. (2018), popular support is key for PAI and victims of the conflict should constantly evaluate the process. Scholars have also shown the negative effects a lack of popular support can have for a peace process and its implementation. The case of Guatemala, as analyzed by Stanley and Holiday (2002), shows how voters' rejection of a constitutional reform package had profound effects on the implementation provisions and international donors' aid, confidence, and support. Others are more skeptical about the value of inclusion and point to the risk of agenda overload and unfulfilled expectations (Bramsen 2022).

Women's Participation and Gender Issues

Discussion of inclusion is especially relevant for women's participation and gender issues. Krause and Olson (2021) argue that women's inclusion can be essential for increasing legitimacy and social capital, improving the chance of durable peace. Women's meaningful

inclusion is relevant for the quality of peace, while their exclusion from peace negotiations undermines its durability (Krause & Olsson, 2021; Oettler 2019). This is evident when analyzing peace processes where gender provisions have been only added and actual changes are harder to be seen (Krause & Olsson, 2021). Joshi et al. (2020b) also argue that the mere inclusion of gender provisions in an agreement is not effective in improving gender equality or achieving durable peace. Through a statistical analysis of 205 civil war terminations in 69 countries since 1989, Joshi and Olsson (2021) find support for their argument that a conflict terminated through the negotiation and implementation of a PA significantly improves women's political rights—when the PA includes women's rights provisions—in the post-war period when compared to other types of conflict termination.

Evidence presented by Gindele et al. (2018) shows that the creation of a more peaceful society for men, through PAI, does not automatically mean the creation of a more peaceful situation for women. Gindele et al. (2018) have also shown failing women and gender stipulations can discourage women's organizations to contribute towards implementation where they are pivotal agents for victims and local communities. At the same time, while gender provisions can be one tool for including women's interests, research has yet to show their role in actual advancements in gender equality post-war (Krause & Olsson, 2021). This is exemplified by feminist unease with the terms on which inclusion is offered in PAI; Bell and O'Rourke (2007) argue that while women are increasingly being included in PAI mechanisms and discussions, there is little scope to reconsider and reshape the end goals of a PA with a gender lens.

f. Transitional Justice

Many recent peace agreements include transitional justice (TJ) provisions, defined as judicial and extrajudicial arrangements that facilitate and allow a transition from a situation of war to one of peace (Rettberg, 2005). This kind of provision seeks to clarify the identities and destinies of victims and perpetrators; establish the facts related to human-rights violations in situations of armed conflict; and design the ways in which a society will address the crimes perpetrated and the need for reparation (Rettberg, 2005). TJ is transitional to the extent that it seeks to build bridges between different regimes and different political moments in order to establish new political and judicial orders (Rettberg, 2005). Sriram (2017) perceives six main TJ initiatives discussed by policymakers and scholars: trials, commissions of inquiry or truth commissions, amnesties, vetting, restorative justice, and traditional justice. TJ can have an impact on PAI

since it exposes human rights violations and those responsible, may lead to political polarization, and requires significant resources (for the operation of TJ institutions and for the reparation of victims, for example).

Sriram (2017) writes that TJ provisions or policies are expected to help promote peace in conflict-affected countries, through measures that rely upon legal processes such as trials, amnesties, or truth commissions. Policymakers and advocates often claim that restoring the rule of law, legally reforming institutions of governance, and creating transitional justice mechanisms will help reinforce nascent peace processes (Sriram, 2017). However, a consensus now exists in the field of study that TJ has privileged "the state and the individual rather than the community and the group; the legal and technocratic rather than the political and contextual; and international rules and standards rather than cultural norms and local practices" (Sharp, 2013; Baker and Obradovic-Wochnik (2016b).[3] Through case studies in different countries and a review of literature, Sriram (2017) shows that the evidence of the rule of law in promoting peace through TJ is mixed, and that in many cases the relationship between rule of law and legalized policies and peace building has the potential to be negative.

One possible explanation for the current criticism of traditional TJ, posed by Baker and Obradovic-Wochnik (2016a), is that a when trying to locate the nexus between peace and TJ scholars need to identify where theory needs to be produced in order to facilitate a peaceful outcome. This shows the imbalances between local definitions of "justice" and "peace" and the definitions held by international donors and peace builders (Baker and Obradovic-Wochnik, 2016a). The authors find it is surprising how "local and everyday dynamics are dismissed as sources of peace and justice, or potential avenues of addressing the past" (Baker and Obradovic-Wochnik, 2016a, p. 1). They therefore argue that a hybrid model using conventional and local practices of peacebuilding and TJ can respond to the way local communities embrace a legal transition from conflict to peace (Baker and Obradovic-Wochnik, 2016a; Sharp, 2013).

Another explanation is the feminist critique that argues that TJ legal standards have tended to be exclusionary for women, therefore producing gender imbalances (Bell & O'Rourke, 2007). Bell and O'Rourke (2007), argue that women suffer disproportionately from armed conflict,

[3] For an in-depth analysis of this issue see the Special Issue of the *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* on Mapping the Nexus between Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding (Baker and Obradovic-Wochnik, 2016b).

and they play a key role in post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation because they often predominate as household heads in post-conflict societies. Feminist interventions highlight the need to secure effective feminist engagement with the newly reformed state through a dynamic transition that acknowledges, for example, the impact of transition on the private sphere; family and reproduction issues; changes to and reflections on gender roles; and a specific attention to the ways in which violence against women often changes in form rather than ending (Bell & O'Rourke, 2007).

Truth Commissions

One main mechanism of TJ consists of truth commissions, which have been defined as official investigative bodies created to investigate, document, and report upon human-rights abuses within a country over a period of time (Dancy et al., 2010). Truth commissions are normally embedded within larger processes that include other forms of TJ depending on the specific provisions in each case: for example, sometimes truth commissions are created before trials, as in Argentina, or are established alongside trials, as in Sierra Leone (Dancy et al., 2010). Another mechanism identified by Dancy et al. (2010) is the presence of unofficial truth projects normally taking place at grassroots level or carried out by civil-society organizations. This type of mechanism helps to address larger historical situations that laws generally fail to address (Castillejo-Cuéllar, 2014). In other words, to grasp the multiple dimensions of violence, collective legal languages fail to render intelligible the dimensions of violence that are the root of the conflict (Castillejo-Cuéllar, 2014). This responds to the initial argument on apprehending local initiatives when implementing TJ provisions.

In a similar vein, Rudling (2019) argues that within TJ mechanisms victims are often perceived as a "single group, regardless of glaring contrasts amongst them insofar as background, capabilities, and transitional justice needs, interests, and expectations" (p. 422). This homogenization of victims has political, moral, and legal consequences that condition TJ mechanisms (Rudling, 2019). Rudling (2019) therefore suggests that a genuine incorporation of victims into TJ depends on critically assessing the beliefs behind the construction of TJ instruments and policies such as truth commissions; this is key for locally identifying victims' needs, interests, expectations, and conditions, in order to give then appropriate attention and assistance.

Reparations

Another relevant TJ mechanism is that of reparations. Reparations programs occupy a special place in TJ mechanisms because for some victims reparations are the most tangible (and sometimes the only) way the state can remedy the harms and grievances suffered during armed conflict (de Greiff, 2006). This mechanism raises the question of who should receive reparations and how should they be distributed. Most reparations policies have concentrated in a fairly limited way on cataloguing civil and political rights, leaving the violation of other rights largely unrepaired (de Greiff, 2006). De Greiff (2006) argues that "frequently decisions concerning the catalog of rights whose violation triggers reparations benefits have been made in a way that excludes from the programs those who have been traditionally marginalized, including women and some minority groups" (p. 7). Bell and O'Rourke (2007) have also highlighted a systematic exclusion of women from the process of designing reparations programs, including the definition of the violence to be repaired, the criteria for defining beneficiaries of reparations, and the benefits given to victims. Both in theory and in practice, one of the least studied aspects of programs of reparation that can help explore the debate of reparations is financing (Segovia, 2006). Mobilizing resources, both domestic and foreign, is a political issue and is identified as one of the most difficult tasks when implementing TJ mechanisms (Segovia, 2006). Segovia (2006) argues that to ensure that reparations programs will be implemented, a balance of political forces that favor such programs is necessary.

IV. Concluding Remarks

In this working paper we offered a review of the literature on the most relevant factors that influence peace agreement implementation (PAI). One of our main arguments throughout has been that the period following the signature of a PA is marked by uncertainty, intense changes, and the political and social tensions these entail. Using a variety of sources and examples to illustrate the challenges of peace implementations, we propose that political and institutional reform, international factors, economic factors, security/military reform, civil-society and popular support, and transitional justice mechanisms mark the broader landscape in which PAI takes place.

We believe there is room for further research. For example, there needs to be a stronger academic focus on people's perception of implementation; environmental issues, which are likely to become increasingly key; the increasing possibility of a lack of funding and attention to PAI from international organizations or donors; and issues related to the scope and style of verifications of implementation in the long term. All these constitute new challenges that scholars and policymakers will face in the coming years. We hope this working paper will serve scholars as input for further research and debate on making PAI more effective and conducive to sustainable peace.

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