

## **A Brief Conceptual Analysis on Conflict Induced Internal Displacement, Return and Resettlement**

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### **Abstract**

*The paper observes and analyses some of the key factors linked to the return and resettlement of IDPs in Sri Lanka and tries to make a new conceptual model for understanding the internal displacement, return and resettlement process in the country. The paper critically engages with the established literature on conflict induced internal displacement, return and resettlement in order to discuss the central concepts that are of relevance to the Sri Lankan context and makes a theoretical contribution to future empirical studies in the area. The aim of the paper is to develop a new conceptual framework/model of social relationships, livelihood strategies and security perceptions linked to internal displacement induced by the ethnic conflict. This model draws the attention to the importance of motivation and expectations of migrants, which are closely linked to the experiences and reactions of displaced people.*

Keywords: conflict induced, internal displacement, return, resettlement

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## **Introduction**

Conflict, violence and disasters caused 31.1 million new internal displacements globally, and one person every second was forced to flee their home inside their own country. Internally displaced people now outnumber refugees by two to one. It is urgent to put internal displacement back on the global agenda,” said Jan Egeland, Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC, 2016, p.09).

The phenomenon of conflict-induced internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the post war return and resettlement process are still relatively unexplored in the field of forced migration globally (Deng, 1998; Brun, 2000; Duncan, 2005). The above statement suggests that millions of people are displaced as result of conflict, violence, and disasters worldwide and now the increased internal displacement exceeds refugee displacement by 2:1. It also shows that more emphasis needs to be placed on internal displacement, as it involves many issues.

The global crisis of internal displacement did not come onto the international agenda prominently until the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The main reason for this interest was the increasing numbers of internally displaced persons due to internal conflicts, many of which were intensified with the end of the Cold War (Deng, 1998). This increased attention towards IDPs during the 1990s has resulted in policy interventions from the international community (Deng, 1998). In 1992, in response to a request by the Commission on Human Rights, the UN Secretary General appointed a Special Representative of the Secretary General on Internally Displaced Persons. Nevertheless, while there have been advances in international thinking about IDPs and their rights, translating these advances into practice has proved complex at the local level. It is not just numbers that cause concern. The question of how to protect and assist internally displaced people is complicated by a range of factors, such as the legal, political, and socio-economic, among others. Some scholars have identified many issues related to internal displacement such as the of settlement, host community relations, and issues related to the return and resettlement process (Cohen, 1996 Brun, 2003; Sørensen, 2003; Duncan, 2005; Hovil, 2007; Wanninayake, 2017). Many issues relating to return to and reintegration into original places of domicile remain, including

integration with host communities, living in appalling conditions, and poor security and legal protection. This paper examines and attempts to analyze some of the key factors associated with such related issues regarding the return and resettlement of IDPs and tries to make a new conceptual model for our understanding of them.

To understand the issues relating to internal displacement, return, and resettlement, the paper critically engages with the established literature on conflict induced internal displacement, return, and resettlement in order to deeply discuss the central concepts contained therein, and make a theoretical contribution to further empirical studies in the future. The concepts and theoretical framework are, of necessity, kept in general terms, using the previous literature. The first section of the paper discusses the concept of internal displacement while the second section focuses on introducing settlement patterns of the refugees such as self-settlement, assisted settlement, camps and local settlements using the literature on forced migration. The third section discusses factors important for the IDP return and resettlement process mainly focusing on the push and pull factors that affect the IDPs decision to remain where they settled or to return to their original villages.

### **Internal displacement**

It is widely accepted that there is no universally agreed-upon definition of an internally displaced person. However, displaced populations are a growing problem in the World. It is one of the world's most acute humanitarian crises. It is about the plight of over 30 million internally displaced people (IDPs) refugees within their own territories, who are forced to leave their homes because of military conflict, ethnic persecution, or other human rights violations (Cohen, 1996). According to the UNHCR, internally displaced persons can be defined as:

Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border (UN OCHA, 1999, p. 06).

The basic purpose of this definition is to “help identify persons who should be of concern to the international community because they are basically in refugee-like situations within their own countries”

(Cohen, 1996, quoted by Chimni, 2000, p. 407).

Some scholars argue that on these grounds, it would be logical and understandable to prefer the term ‘internal refugees’ to ‘internally displaced persons.’ This would both recognize the ‘refugee-like’ situation of the people being referred to and make clear the distinction between them and forced resettlers, who are also displaced within their own countries but who are not in a ‘refugee-like’ situation. However, as mentioned earlier, the logic which states the use of ‘IDPs’ rather than ‘internal refugee’ is a practical, not a conceptual one; it has to do with a concern not to undermine the protection available to refugees under the 1951 Convention of the legal definition of a refugee (Chimni, 2000; Turton, 2003).

According to some other scholars, it is common for policies directed at IDPs to consider them as localized groups. This makes perfect sense in so far as a typical defining feature of IDPs is that they remain within the national boundary. Another aspect that may have contributed to the image of IDPs as highly localized is the tendency to flee and settle in community-based groups, and it creates a sense of village and community. However, field research carried out on the response strategies of internally displaced persons has shown that in order to deal with the ordeals of displacement, many internally displaced persons would have to create networks, which would not necessarily be limited to the locality, but could involve relatives, friends, or acquaintances in other parts of the country or even in other countries (Sørensen, 2003). This well accepted view has come from refugee studies. Some authors use the term ‘refugee,’ which is based on a conceptualization of ‘refugeeness’ that is rooted not only in the flight and displacement of the particular individuals and groups, but also in the complex daily practices of living, constructing, networking, figuring relationships, and creating identities that such individuals and groups experience and take part in as they live in one or several host-societies. In other words, being a refugee is not a simple identity construct that emerges from one or several experiences of violence, war, persecution, and displacement from the homeland (Al-Sharmani, 2004). It is in Liisa Malkki’s words, the “process of becoming .... a gradual transformation, not an automatic result of the crossing of a national border” (Malkki, 1995, p.114). Conversely, according to these interpretations, refugees or internally displaced persons are the product of a complicated process including war, violence, fear, insecurity,

flight, displacement, marginalization as well as relationships, networks, constructing identities, and creating economic, social, and political status and other innovations.

Nevertheless, theories and concepts originally established to address refugee situations can also be used for situations of IDPs. Many studies have been conducted on refugees' settlement, refugee assimilation, integration, repatriation, reintegration, and resettlements (Bascom, 1993; Brun, 2003). Most of the international organizations and policy makers in this field have emphasized the protection of refugee rights and assistance, and they have proposed certain 'solutions' for the refugees and displaced people termed as 'durable solutions' such as voluntary repatriation, resettlement in a third country, and local settlement, or local integration in the country of first asylum. These 'durable solutions' have been developed and promoted by the UNHCR and other policy makers. Nonetheless, recent studies and policy makers place greater emphasis on seeking 'better solution' for the refugee problem, and thus the debate regarding these solutions is highly active (Jacobson, 2001; Brun, 2003).

The durable solutions were initiated for refugees, but they may also be applied to the concept of internal displacement (Bascom, 1993; Brun, 2003; Hovil, 2007). The Guiding Principles on internal displacement state that return to their homes, integration where they currently reside, or resettlement in another part of the country are the mainsolutions to the IDP problems. However, the discussion of IDPs regarding return and resettlement problem, the most accepted solution is repatriation or return, since most crises of displacement are regarded as temporary (Jacobsen, 2001; Duncan, 2005). In many cases, such return can only occur when the causes of the displacement have been resolved. However, because of limited situations of safe return, repatriation or return is a poor alternative in many of the protracted conflict situations, such as those in Bosnia, Central Africa and Sudan which have ended in internal displacement. In fact, the emphasis on repatriation or return as the preferred solution may create false expectations. As this study will show, for IDPs who face situations where repatriation or return is not feasible, there is a need for more long-term solutions like integration with the host-community. To cite a pragmatic case, in the 26 years of conflict in Sri Lanka, thousands of people were displaced and because the policy makers and government authorities focused on repatriation, host community integration became an almost forgotten option for

IDPs. This paper explains why host community integration is more important when finding a solution for displacement problems.

According to policy makers and policy-oriented studies, displacement ends when one of these durable solutions occurs and IDPs no longer have needs specifically related to their displacement (UNHCR, 2004; IDMC, 2017). This does not mean that they may not continue to have a need for protection and assistance, but that their needs would be no different from those of other similarly situated citizens (Chimni, 2000). Displaced people are not one homogeneous social or political category, and their circumstances of displacement vary from country to country. They are individuals with their own concerns, problems, and coping mechanisms: Further, as a social category, IDPs often have very little voice, few rights under international law (unlike refugees), and an unclear political status within their own countries. Large numbers of displaced persons within a country raise serious humanitarian and human rights issues, as well as concerns about their social welfare, living conditions, and issues of land and property. Moreover, continued displacement can also be a threat to security and stability. Displaced populations usually suffer marginalization, all types of insecurities, fear and threats, particularly when they live among host populations, WCs as well as when they return to their original villages (Mooney, 2003).

When an internally displaced person comes to be referred to as one who is displaced, that situation also needs clarification. Conventional understanding would have one believe that the voluntary return of displaced persons to their homes or their reintegration elsewhere marks the end of internal displacement.

According to Sorensen (2003), there are many factors regarding returning home:

The first problem that we encounter is that the term ‘home’ is a badly understood notion in itself. Do we mean back to where they stayed before displacement, to their birth village, to the place where they have relatives who can support them, to the place where they own land, house, or other assets, or do we mean to whatever place they feel at home or would like to make a home, or perhaps a place with good opportunities for establishing a safe and secure livelihood? (Sorensen, 2003, p.466).

Can internal displacement problems be solved when protection is largely missing or lacking in these areas and others occupy the IDPs land and homes? For instance, in Angola, groups of IDPs voluntarily went back to their original villages, but they could not remain there because the entire infrastructure had been damaged and they had no idea about how to maintain themselves. Hence, to end the displacement process, it must be emphasized that there should be more than registering, returning, or resettling. It should include information on whether basic security and survival are assured (Chimni, 2000). According to Malkki (1992), in most cases with regard to refugees, humanitarian agencies think that one of the first steps is providing a home for the settled or resettled IDPs; however, she argues that the factors related to the perception of peoples' identity as rooted within the territory should also be considered. She named it 'territorialisation of national culture' (Malkki, 1995).

Hence, it shows how the IDPs have already prepared for their settlement in their displacement areas or host communities. According to many researchers and institutions, there are different types of settlement patterns that can be identified among IDPs, such as self-settlement, assisted settlements, camps or organized welfare centers, local settlement, or relocation, etc. (Jacobsen, 2001). As a consequence of these different types of settlements and situations, people have dissimilar ideas about their living standards, their willingness to return or to stay longer in a host area, or to settle in a new place. There is a view that IDPs would be more attracted or pulled to the host community due to conditions such as their settlement pattern in the host area. For instance, many scholars have shown that self-settled IDPs are more attracted to the host community/area than camp refugees because of the networks, livelihood situation, and security that they have built in the host area (Jacobson, 2001; Hovil, 2007). In the case of Sri Lanka, the relationships between the self-settled IDPs and the hosts, including their social, economic and security relationships, are more important when they decide whether to return to their original villages or remain in the host areas and communities (Wanninayake, 2017).

### **Internal displacement and settlement patterns**

The literature on forced migration discusses different types of settlement patterns among refugees. There are multiple groups of refugees at any one time, from different countries, or at different

periods. All groups can be categorized into several types of settlement patterns or settlement groups, such as self-settlement, assisted settlement, camps and local settlements (Jacobson, 2001).

Self-settlement can be seen as “dispersed settlement,” “spontaneous settlement,” or “self-directed settlement”. Self-settlement occurs when refugees settle amongst the host community without direct government or official international assistance. They share a local household or settle in a temporary house close to the host people, and are helped with shelter and food by the host or relatives and friends’ families and the community (Jacobson, 2001; Evans, 2007). Assisted settlement for refugees takes a variety of types, but all of them are usually on a temporary basis, particularly in the rural areas. Camps are also used as an option. In urban areas, refugees are settled in mass shelters, in public buildings or communal places such as schools, temples, churches, etc. Camps are usually on a temporary basis, as the host community needs these places for their work in the future. But in many cases for internally displaced persons, the basic settlement places such as public buildings become permanent housing, with other assistance from aid agencies.

Camps or Welfare Centers (WCs) are built for the purpose of providing shelter for refugees in safer areas, usually close to the border in rural areas. However, there is a UNHCR regulation which indicates where camps are to be built. Camps or WCs are always situated in conflict areas or very close to the border areas, and they are controlled by the UNCHR and the host government. NGOs delegated by the UNHCR provide food and services such as schooling, healthcare, and water and sanitation. These settlements are also fixed in an emergency phase and on a temporary basis. However, in many cases, these camps become permanent fixtures and remain populated for many years. For instance, there were Cambodian refugee camps on the Thai border for an extended period from 1979-1992 (Jacobson, 2001). In the case of Sri Lanka a large number of displaced persons continued to live in the WCs for many years. The time they had lived in the WCs ranged from nine to 20 years during 1983-2009. The WCs were normally established on land or premises owned by the government. During the first year in some of the WCs, the IDPs were accommodated in tents or huts. Subsequently, with the help of donor agencies or the government, small houses were constructed using cadjans or zinc sheets for the roofs (Wanninayake, 2017).

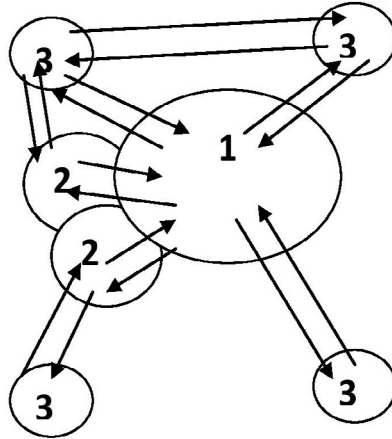


Local settlements can be referred to as organized settlements and planned like a newly created village, especially prepared for refugees, but they are different from camps. They are expected to be self-sufficient up to the time of their repatriation. In Africa, particularly Uganda, Tanzania, and Sudan have widely used this kind of settlement, and they consider this pattern as an alternative to keeping refugees in camps (Jacobson, 2001).

Under the policy of local settlements, there are some needs and goals of the host government and donors, such as ultimate repatriation. It means that at the local settlements they would be considered as being temporary settlers. But in the case of the agricultural settlements of Uganda and Tanzania, the goal was engagement in agriculture or economic development of the region, and the settlements were seen as part of the regional development strategies (Zetter, 1995). However, according to some studies, local settlements are not necessarily intended to enable local integration, they are probably intended to prevent it, because there is limited freedom of movement within the region of the host government (Kibreab, 1989). Settlements can be supervised by the UNHCR or NGOs for a number of years, or until they become self-sufficient. Then, the settlement could be handed over to the host government, and they can be integrated into the local district. However, in some cases, the settlement programs have been unsuccessful due to high costs (Stein, 1991).

Although all these settlement types and patterns are related to refugees, they can also be used to understand IDPs settlement patterns. Camps or WCs and organized settlements catering to IDPs are usually controlled by the UNHCR and international NGOs, and national NGOs who often help in various ways. The IDP settlement patterns can be associated with different views and ideas with regard to their desire to remain with the host community and unwillingness to go back. Because camp refugees have been kept away from the host community by the government or aid agencies in many cases, they do not have an opportunity to build relationships with host communities.

Figure 1: IDPs' Displacement Patterns During the Conflict Period in 1983- 2009 in Sri Lanka



1. - Home area or original village.
2. - First safe area or preliminary station
3. - Destination of displacement (relatives' area or Government Welfare Centers).

During the conflict period of 1983-2009 in Sri Lanka many displaced did not go to the houses of relatives or WCs directly from their native/original villages, but some others did go directly to their relatives' villages or WCs after being displaced. The first safe places were preliminary stations, and then they sought their settlement places and assistance from their relatives. People who explained their feelings at that time said they got various forms to fill so they could get the much needed material and emotional support immediately after displacement and final settlement. The decision to move, and to which destination, was affected by the nature of the reception of relatives in the specific destination (Wanninayake, 2017).

The nature of refugee settlement is rarely fixed, but to some extent it is in accordance with the situation in which refugees settle:

the length of the stay, the size of the displaced population, the ratio of the displaced to the host community, their coping strategies, local socioeconomic and security conditions, and the actions of the local and national authorities (Jacobson, 2001). Most of the time, refugees arrive at different places in a series of waves, and their settlement differs each time. Every wave has its own characteristics. The general condition of the refugees and their degree of destitution vary widely among the different waves (Van Damme, 1999). During the course of their stay, very often they move between different types of settlements. In some cases, refugees use the camps as part of a broader household strategy of survival.

Many refugees self-settled in border areas, developed their own coping mechanisms, and became self-sufficient, but to varying degrees, depending mainly on the density of the refugee population and the degree of integration with the host community (Van Damme 1999). Refugees are often unwilling to be relocated in camps, and in some cases, refugees move out of camps and become self-settled (Jacobson, 2001). Some refugees or displaced persons avoid camps because they are employable or because they have a relative in the host community. Others, for example persons with an unusually strong need to maintain personal autonomy or those who are involved in political, intellectual, or economic activity may feel hampered by the camp location (Connor, 1989; Evans, 2007). In general, only a minority of refugees enters the camp in an organized settlement; the majority became self-settled (Kok, 1989). In some cases, the opposite may also happen (Jacobson, 2001).

The question of the best type of settlement for both refugees and hosts has been debated in the refugee literature for years (Kuhlman, 1994; Zetter, 1995). Many studies have examined different settlement situations (Bascom, 1998; Hovil, 2002), but only a few studies have systematically compared the different types of settlements (Bakewell, 2000; Hovil, 2002; 2007). Nonetheless, the majority of studies regarding refugees have concerned organized settlements or camp refugees (Kuhlman, 1994). But the debate on whether unstructured self-settlement or organized camps is the better option for refugees rages on (Harrell-Bond, 1998). This is not only relevant to the case of refugees, but may also be applied to the self-settled IDPs and welfare center-IDPs (Wanninayake, 2015).

## **Return and resettlement**

The notion that refugees ‘would return home if conditions changed’ has evolved from a basic equation of return = homecoming to a more sophisticated debate (quoted from Muggeridge and Dona, 2006, p. 415).

Both policy makers and academics have primarily argued that return home at the end of the refugee cycle is a stable option as well as the ideal durable solution to refugee crises (Cuny & Stein, 1990; Allen & Morsink, 1994). Yet, at the end of the 1990s, the idea that return was the ultimate point of the cycle where refugees could be restored back ‘home’ was questioned (Black & Koser, 1999). Studies of refugees who had gone back ‘home’ indicated the complexity of their experience, characterized by economic, psychological, and social difficulties (Ghanem, 2003; Bascom, 2005).

Research on going back could be perceived as covering two main trends: imagining the return and the reality of post-return. Return is imagined through concepts like the meaning of home and belonging memories of the past (Schulz, 2003), and the major concept of the myth of return (Al-Rasheed, 1994; Zetter, 1999; Israel, 2000). Return has been represented as a complete ideological system and an image of the future, and it is the only end-solution to the existing issue (Schulz, 2003). But the reality of post-return focuses attention on challenges like those researched in the contexts of post-conflict reconciliation and re-integration (Dona, 1995). The gap between pre- and post-return is connected by studies that emphasize the impact of return on exiles (Farwell, 2001), return as one period of ongoing migration (Ossman, 2004), and the experience of a visit home (Israel, 2000; Barnes, 2001) as a ‘provisional return’ (Muggeridge & Dona, 2006). The return of IDPs has also been studied as ‘fluid’; IDPs may reside in “dual residences” home and the host community (Wanninayake, 2017). In some cases the family members remained in the host area, whenever the head of the household visited the original village. It was only one or two adults from the family who went to the original area while the young and children stayed in the host area. However, the head of the household had to be present in the original village when the government officials or NGO field staff inspected the village for registration or to provide assistance (Wanninayake, 2017).

### **Factors affecting IDPs attraction to the host community**

Although many studies have been conducted regarding the relationships between refugees and the host communities (Chambers, 1986; Kok, 1989; Voutira & Harrel-Bond, 1995; Whitaker, 2002; Duncan, 2005), rather than on IDPs and the host communities, the models of analyses in former studies can be used for studying the relationships between the IDPs and the host communities as well. General migration theories and refugee studies focus almost exclusively on the push side in the field and tend to disregard or give little attention to the other aspect, which comprises pull factors (Assal, 2007). Due to the predominance of the categories of the refugees and other displaced persons from 2005, attention has been focused largely on the question of why people are forced to move to a place, rather than examine why they stay further in the host area and are attracted to stay there (Assal, 2007). Pull factors can be described as attraction to the host community/ area, while push factors can be considered as obstacles to returning and settling in the original villages (Wanninayake, 2017).

### **Push and pull factors in displacement, return and resettlement**

The push and pull perspective has played an important role in research related to labor migration, and to some extent to refugee and displacement movements (Sorensen, 1996). They differ from the other factors discussed in relation to the structural causes of movement rather than on the impacts of displacement and resettlement. These highlight the motivations and expectations of migrants or displaced persons.

In the last century, a large number of people moved from rural to urban areas. The push and pull model aims to identify those socioeconomic and political factors that force people to leave their hometowns, on the one hand, as well as the factors that attract people to the new locations, on the other hand. Push-pull factors suggest that circumstances at the original place of residence push people out to other places that exert a positive attraction or pull. This model can be approached from two different angles. First, it concentrates on the institutional factors in the socioeconomic and political context in which the specific conditions of the various regions are shaped. Second, from the perspective of individual migrants, it focuses on the decision-making process in which the different push and pull factors are assessed and acted upon (Assal, 2007).

When it comes to trying to specify the particular reasons for

flight, particularly in the context of war-induced forced displacement, the pressures mainly include violence, real or feared discrimination, and experiences of suffering. For many people, the decision to start in a new area is not a result of growing local pressures and fear alone. It should also be seen as a response to the attractions and promises that the place of destination presents. Among the most regular or common pull factors mentioned in the literature are demand for labor, availability of land, and good economic opportunities (Castles & Miller, 1993). For refugees or IDPs, the hope of getting asylum and being able to live a peaceful life are common factors pulling them across borders.

According to some scholars, a push and pull perspective or framework was combined with the sociological and anthropological approaches that gave more emphasis to the integration processes and to the role of social networks based on kinship relationships or other links with people (Assal, 2007). However, later, many scholars used it to identify the transnational networks among migrant refugees through the relationships with relatives and friends (Assal, 2007).

This model draws our attention to the importance of considering the motivation and expectations of migrants, which are closely linked to the experiences and reactions of people displaced or to be displaced in their movement. This framework can be used in analyzing resettlement issues, as it emphasizes the linkages that exist between the IDPs' original villages and the host community (destination), but this dimension, which is very important, has been neglected by researchers (Sorensen, 1996). Particularly in the issue of war-induced displacement, mainly in the internal displacement context, the push factors can be approached from two different angles.

### **Social relationships: IDPs and host relations**

Discussing social relationships among the war-induced displaced is important to examine the relationship between displaced people and their hosts (Chambers, 1986; Kok, 1989; Voutira & Harrel-Bond, 1995; Whitaker, 2002). When refugees or IDPs are welcomed and accepted by the hosts, they will be better able to access livelihoods and meet other needs without any help from the other parties such as government authorities and other national and international authorities (Bakewell, 2000). However, building successful relationships between the IDPs and the host community will have an impact on the IDPs' willingness to stay further and will have consequences when they

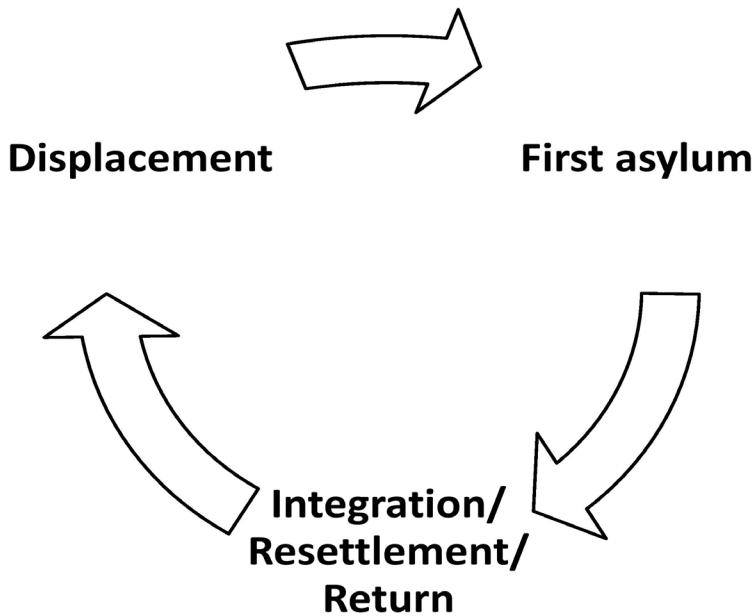
continue their life in the host community without returning. Family network, kinship, friendship, and interethnic relationships are important as factors for the IDPs to remain in the host community. In the case of Sri Lanka, I could identify strong social relationships/networks between the IDPs and the hosts as a factor for attracting IDPs to stay in the host community and weak relationship/network between the IDPs and the original villages (with other ethnic groups) is a factor that contributes to push people from the area/community (Wanninayake, 2017).

### **Family and kinship relations**

In the 1960s and 1970s, scholars studied the process of chain migration and the role played by kith and kin in providing information and facilitating migration. However, by the late 1980s, the role of social networks in the field of migration turned toward the settlement and integration of people in the host countries (Boyd, 1989). There now exists many ways of conceptualizing and studying family, kinship, friendship, and community relationship as key factors in international migration. Family networks and strong kin and lineage relations are important in most villages among all the ethnic groups and the regions, since they provide a sense of belonging, solidarity, and protection to the same group of people (Evans, 2007). According to recent experiences, social relations with relatives, kin, and friends have played a vital role in providing protection in the process of displacement and settlement (Evans, 2007). This role has been augmented during the last couple of decades in the war situation, in finding a place to stay. There are various forms of networks formed for material and emotional support during both displacement and settlement. The decision to move to a certain destination or to stay further is affected by the presence of relatives or friends.

In the 2000s, a growing amount of literature was found on global networks, in diasporas and communities of refugees and migrants, sustaining a variety of relations with kith and kin in diaspora settings (Van Hear 2003; Schulz, 2003). According to Black and Koser (1999), there is a cycle comprising of: displacement > first asylum > integration/resettlement/return (see below Figure 2).

Figure 2. Displacement Cycle



Source: Van Hear, Nicholas (2003)

As some scholars have shown, international migration of people may operate and link with a broader social field such as place of origin, in neighboring countries of first asylum, and in the wider diaspora. One of the central aspects of transnational activities is family and kinship networks. Among the extended family or relatives, those who have been displaced or need help may find some support from the link or network of the diaspora (Van Hear, 2003; Schulz, 2003). This aspect can be used in identifying sources of help among relatives and friends when people are displaced in the context of internal displacement within the country or region. Such a kinship, friendship, and other relationships among the people can be scattered in various places even within the country or region, but the link activates when their needs arise.

It is widely believed that according to the IDPs settlement pattern and their pre-existing relationship with the host area, it is more important to build a new relationship with the host community. Getting help from relatives for accommodation is similarly crucial for the IDPs.



Many self-settled IDPs often lived with or near relatives who were already established (Van Damme, 1999; Evans, 2007). The importance of support from relatives for accommodation and other livelihood needs was also clearly related to the IDPs lack of means, which gave them little possibility of relief and assistance independently, at least in the first instance (Evans, 2007). These dynamics reinforced many displaced people to self-settle in the host area. So, to build relationships between IDPs and hosts, background relationship factors, such as kinship, friendship, and other relationships with each other are viewed as important. According to some research on the migration field in different countries, the three most important types of social relations are: familial, friendship, and co-ethnic, based on a shared origin (Boyd, 1989; Herman, 2006). These relational ties have different degrees of strength (Paldam, 2000). Although in individual cases this order may be different generally, the co-ethnic ties are the weakest while the family bonds are the strongest. Among familial relations, a further differentiation is made between distant and immediate relations (Herman, 2006).

The social relationship between the IDPs and the host people varied from person to person (Connor, 1989). A local population includes a variety of socioeconomic groups, for example wealthy farmers and businessmen, poor peasants, local authorities such as chiefs and village leaders, and so on (Jacobson, 2001). Some IDPs and the host would develop a positive relationship, while others would create a negative or neutral one. In general, according to many refugee studies, local people's (host community) initial willingness to assist and accommodate refugees within the community changes with time, due to security problems and resource burdens. Within the host community, the initial sympathy and willingness to help the refugees often turns into resistance when they are perceived as creating or aggravating these problems (Jacobson, 2001). In general, the relationship between the refugees and their hosts is affected by a variety of factors such as social and economic impact and security problems and other important ones (Brun, 2000). The socio-economic settings and relationships between IDPs and hosts change the stereotype of the category of IDPs (Duncan, 2005). In the case of Sri Lanka, the host people had played a significant role during the first stage of the reception because they were of the same ethnic background, and were relatives and friends. But later the hosts were more or less forgotten by the aid agencies as important actors

in the processes of displacement and integration. This has pushed the hosts to a state of dissatisfaction (Brun, 2000; Wanninayake, 2017). When the northern Muslim IDPs were settled in Puttalam, the host people played a significant role during the first stage in their reception, but the aid agencies more or less forgot how important they were as actors in the processes of displacement and integration. This had been pushed aside as a dissatisfaction and suspicion among the local people (Brun, 2003; Wanninayake, 2017).

According to numerous researchers, the relationships between the refugees and the hosts are affected by a variety of factors such as economic and social burdens, social relationships, and the security problem of both groups, etc. (Jacobson, 2001; Duncan, 2005). Hence, tensions can arise among communities. According to Duncan (2005), this potential for conflict cannot be ignored, as it clashes between the indigenous communities and migrants and can initially be created in many of these IDP situations.

When discussing the relationships between the IDP and the host community, another important factor that emerges is the beliefs and expectations held by both communities. According to Bakewell (2000), refugees can view repatriation and temporariness in different ways

In many cases, refugees may want to maintain their national identity and attachment to their country of origin by remaining marked out with special status and treatment. However, there are also likely to be many, like the self-settled Angolans in Zambia, who, having fled from their country, wish to establish new lives as “normal” people among those where they settle (Bakewell, 2000, p. 372).

In many protracted situations, the belief in temporariness proves to be false as refugees either do not return or new arrivals appear. As mentioned earlier, in many cases host communities become upset about the arrival of refugees into the area because of perceived security threats and economic burdens. The evolution of attitudes from the initial stage: reception, assistance by host communities, increasing jealousy or envy, fear about threats and burdens, etc., is important in influencing the IDPs decision whether to stay for prolonged periods in the host community.

In some cases, host communities have different views of the

temporariness of refugees. In a study of Zambia, Oliver Bakewell shows that there may be other factors that influence an increase in refugees from Angola in the 1980s. The people followed the patterns of migration laid in earlier generations and many came to Zambia and joined their kin who had arrived before (Bakewell, 2000, p. 360).

According to him, after the initial arrival of some Angolans, refugees settled in the host community and started to establish their own livelihoods and ultimately they became members in the host community. Many of the people do not consider themselves as refugees (Bakewell, 2000). The concept of temporariness is not only related to discussing the refugee and host community relationships, but can just as well be applied to discussing the IDPs and host community relations.

### **Economic relationships and livelihoods: IDPs and host relations**

The study of livelihoods has generally been followed in the disciplines of economics and anthropology as well as in development studies. “Livelihood” generally refers to the means used to maintain and sustain life and in particular, to the resources, including household assets, capital, social institutions, and networks (kin, village, authority structures), and the strategies available to people through their local and global communities (Chambers & Conway, 1992; Jacobsen, 2002). There is considerable literature on refugee-host relations and the impacts of refugees and forced migration on host countries; much of which focuses on livelihood opportunities, constraints, and competition because livelihood issues that are so central to refugee-host relations in most contexts (Porter et al., 2008). Chambers and Conway (1992) define livelihood as constituting capabilities of people, tangible and intangible assets, and activities undertaken to make a living. Jacobsen’s definition is more relevant for situations of IDPs and host relations:

In communities facing conflict and displacement, livelihoods comprise how people access and mobilize resources enabling them to increase their economic security, thereby reducing the vulnerability created and exacerbated by conflict, and how they pursue goals necessary for survival and possible return (Jacobsen, 2002, p. 99).

Economic relationships and livelihood situation are important and influential factors for the IDPs to determine the place of residence. It was found among the IDPs in Sri Lanka that economic and livelihood factors include access to land for cultivation and residential

purposes, opportunities to continue former occupations, availability of infrastructural facilities, farming and trading, and financial aid and relief. The availability of these factors in the host community acted as a key pull factor or attraction to the host community. Conversely, the lack of the same economic factors in the original areas of residence acted as a key push factor or obstacle for returning (Wanninayake, 2017).

Some studies argue that integration into the host community can be very effective for both refugees and their hosts, but they argue that this tends to relate only to the specific contexts where the population density is relatively low, implying a labor shortage, where the refugees or IDPs belong to the same ethno-linguistic group as their host community, or where there has been a history of displacement between the original villages and the host communities. In these situations, the refugees or IDPs are able to build adequate livelihoods without generating unnecessary competition with the host community. However, some studies have shown that integration into an urban area or the most popular places is often less successful, both for displaced people and hosts, particularly where there is lack of resources and livelihood struggles occur and where the administration of the host community imposes administrative rules which hamper refugee/IDP opportunities to make a living.

The perceived benefits of regular aid and relief of food and other goods and assistance in the welfare centers can motivate envy in poor host communities (Brun, 2003). Economic suffering among the IDPs is a related concern in many cases of IDPs settlement in the host communities. Lack of access to arable land is a recurrent factor undermining the livelihoods of displaced people among the hosts. In rural reception areas, this is sometimes mitigated by the capacity of local social and economic structures to provide alternative access to land or other productive resources (Black & Sessay, 1997; Leach, 1992).

Some studies have argued that regardless of whether displaced people are in camps or settled with the host people, the host regions, administratively, often consider that the result of refugee or IDP settlement is ripe with challenges, such as excessive resource demands and associated environmental degradation, as well as security threats (Jacobson, 2002). The potential impact on the livelihoods of the poorer hosts was raised two decades ago by Chambers (1986), who emphasized

the particular dangers in land-scarce, labor-abundant regions. A study by Whitaker (2002) on refugees in western Tanzania emphasizes the significant diversity of experience, in terms of impact on the host livelihoods, showing that the host experiences are strongly influenced by gender, age, class, settlement patterns, the local socioeconomic situation, and host-refugee relations.

IDPs who are among the host communities generally survive by sharing the food and resources with the host communities and taking advantage of the income generating opportunities that exist in the host community. This positions the host families and the host community's work as an informal instrument of a humanitarian aid agency or NGOs, by saving lives, building flexibility, and providing necessary services. Increasing the support to host families and host communities through suitable and targeted programs can ease the burden of hosting by enhancing their flexibility, decreasing possible tensions, and helping the IDPs to survive. It is also important to identify when hosting may distort the IDPs and their hosts' livelihood strategies and coping mechanisms and consider ways to avoid this.

On the other hand, IDPs in host communities usually find greater opportunities for work, business, food production, etc. among other advantages than those who stay in the WCs. Joblessness, dependency, or an inability to adequately maintain their livelihood undermines their self-respect. Income-generation or work opportunities in the host communities can contribute to self-sufficiency and raise the living conditions of the IDPs. The closer the IDPs' homes and the areas in which they are assisted are, the easier their decision to return home when conditions are acceptable, or to visit their home areas occasionally to protect their property or cultivate the fields. It may be difficult for IDPs to judge when is the right moment to return if their displacement is far from home and former means of livelihood. This factor usually influences their decision to stay with the host families or host communities close to their home areas, rather than going to the WCs.

Nicholas Van Hear (2003) provides some evidence from the international experience of Sri Lankan refugees in the western world. He shows how, as elsewhere, migration and remittances have contributed to the survival and reconstruction of refugee households, both directly and indirectly. Remittances from asylum centers have helped to sustain

displaced and war-affected people in and outside the welfare centers. In this sense, as a result of the long-term displacement, the IDPs who are living in the host areas, both in and outside of the WC or among the relatives, may have created their livelihood and coping mechanism within the host area by themselves. But its economic capacity may be seen at a varying level according to the personal skills, family and kin support, settlement pattern (in WCs or self-settled), and duration within the host community.

**Fear and insecurity: IDPs and hosts, return and resettlement**

Fear and insecurity are often the main causes of forced migration and displacement. The definition builds on those for refugees and IDPs, as codified in international law. The literature on this topic is interdisciplinary and broad and includes many approaches (Moor & Shellman, 2004). Some scholars who have given an alternative approach, such as Davenport et al. (2003), begin with the choices of individual human beings. They argue that it is important to conceptualize people as making a choice to leave. They observe that in any given event of displacement, although many and sometimes most people leave, others stay or return. To explain why many individuals would leave, they identify the major point of agreement in the literature; people abandon their homes and are reluctant to return when they fear for their freedom, physical person, or lives (Moor & Shellman, 2004). In particular, borderline or border villages are characterized by a high occurrence of fighting, violence, the presence of both armed parties, and threats (Wanninayake, 2017).

Fear and insecurity in the process of displacement is common and is important in several situations: periods of displacement, staying in camps or living with the host community and when choosing to return and resettle. Fear and insecurity can be activated in different ways in the first stage of displacement, and it would be the main reason for people's exile from home. This might include coercive measures such as forced labor, land elimination, illegal taxation, and compulsory, non-viable cropping in the case of farmers, and particularly, life threats from armed groups. These events generally act cumulatively over time, producing declining levels of human security for the families in a community. At this point, leaving home without returning may appear to be the best or only option. In this context, people tend to leave as individuals or as family groups, though the whole community may

gradually migrate over a period of years.

In the next phase, fear and insecurity generally manifest again during the displaced people's settlement. However, whether the safety and physical security of refugees are greater inside or outside of camps is an empirical question. Obviously, self-settlement is safer when camps are targets for attack by rival military. Self-settled refugees are not subjected to the insecure conditions of the camp. However, there are security problems that influence even self-settled refugees within the host community (Jacobson, 2001).

The feelings of fear and insecurity arise again in the next phase when refugees or other displaced people return to their original villages, after the conflict between the two parties are resolved. A sustainable return is mainly linked with the security situation of the original villages, particularly, physical and material security and constructive relationship between returnees, civil society (original villages), and government (or regional authorities). There are five types of insecurities to be addressed: physical, social, psychological, legal, and material insecurity (Chimini, 2000). The absence of conditions that ensure security on all these types of security could force the refugee or displaced person to seek a safer place again.

Official declarations of safety and personal perceptions differ, and even after assurances from trusted sources were received, anxiety about return often persisted. According to Muggeridge and Dona (2006), in the case of African refugees who settled in the U.K. in 2001, their return was dependent on several factors. Reasons to return after a long time were many and interlinked, and some decisions were made with a degree of force or pressure. Most respondents cited conditions of safety to be a main factor or reason for returning home (Muggeridge & Dona, 2006).

In the case of Sri Lanka, although the Ceasefire Period was in force from 2002–2006, the majority of people who were displaced (Sinhalese, Tamils, and Muslims) in the border regions of Vavuniya and Anuradhapura refused to return to their original villages. Many research reports and surveys done by the government and other agencies show that one of the main factors was the security situation and physical safety in the area (Global IDP Project, 2002; 2005, Wanninayake, 2017). Return in the aftermath of violence or fear and insecurity results in an unexpected dilemma. When displaced people return to their

original villages after a period of time, re-integrating without fear and insecurity with their neighbors or new comers is a difficult. One of the main factors that pushed people from the original areas was fear and insecurity. Thus, with the presence of fear, reconciliation is one of the most challenging processes in laying the groundwork for a sustainable resolution of displacement, particularly in connection with return.

## **Discussion**

The aim of this paper was to analyze some factors related to issues that affect IDPs' decision to remain in the host community, or to return to their original villages after being displaced from their homes. The paper introduces varied factors that can influence the IDP's decision to return or remain in the host community after a long period of displacement. For the explanation of this situation, the study could identify through the literature a multitude of factors. Thus, the paper examined multiple independent variables (i.e., social, economic, and security factors). Consequently, the research has identified that the factors are very complex and that they influence each other.

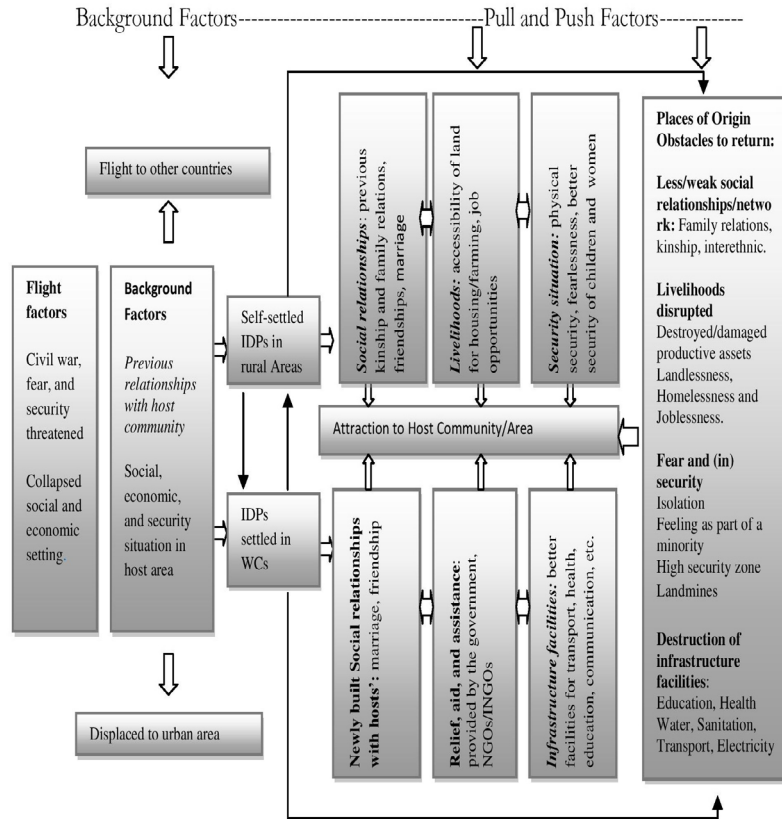
In the whole process of return and resettlement two contexts (see figure 3) will be considered: the situation in the host area and the situation in the original area. They comprise mainly factors why IDPs are attracted or integrated to the host community and the area and the obstacles faced by the IDPs when they return to their original locations of residence.

First, the left side of the figure shows the factors that spur flight and displacement, as background factors. Further, the first part of the figure shows reasons behind the flight in cases of war induced displacement such as socio-economic and security reasons, and displaced as refugees to other countries and displaced to urban areas within the country and especially majority displaced as self-settled and WCs IDPs.

Second, the middle part of the figure shows the factors that attract IDPs to the host community/area. Third, on the right, it shows obstacles to return to the original areas. Both these second and third sections show two sets of factors -push and pull- that influence



Figure 3. Conceptual Framework for Conflict Induced Internal Displacement



The figure summarizes the factors affecting the IDPs' (un)willingness to return to their places of origin.

Social relationships: Migration and refugee theories typically consider kinship, family and friends, and community organizations as social relationships. Building successful relationships between IDPs and the host community will impact on the attraction of IDPs to stay further and its consequences when they continue their life in the host community without returning. The study considers a strong social relationship/network between IDPs and hosts as a factor to pull (attract) IDPs to stay in the host area/community and a weak relationship/network between IDPs and the original area (with other ethnic groups) as a factor that contributes to push people (as obstacles) from the area/

community.

**Livelihoods:** The study identifies IDPs' living conditions, income (aid and assistance), and accessibility to land, a job, and resources to build a house and develop their coping mechanism in the WCs, in the host area as well as in the original area. The study considers well established economic relationships among the IDPs within the host areas, and between IDPs and host people that influence their stay further in host areas and the communities as well as failing economic relationships in the place of origin that make them reluctant to return to their original areas.

**Security situation:** Fear and insecurity in the process of displacement can happen and are important in several situations; periods in displacement, stay in camps or living with the host community and when it is time to return. A sustainable return is mainly linked with the security situation of the original areas; particularly physical and material security and constructive relationships between returnees, civil society (original area) and government (or regional authorities). The study focuses on a relatively better security situation between IDPs and hosts as a factor to attract IDPs to stay in the host area/community and fear and insecurity situation between IDPs and the original area (with other ethnic group) as a factor that contributes to push IDPs from the area/community.

**Relief, aid, and assistance:** Receiving aid and assistance from the government, NGOs or INGOs. It was one of the reasons for their attraction or pull as IDPs into the host area/community. The study considers better providing assistance to determine their stay further in host areas/WCs or return to their original areas.

**Infrastructure facilities:** Some common infrastructural facilities available in the host areas and the newly settled areas are one of the factors that influenced IDPs' attraction to further stay in the host area such as transport, health, education and communication etc. The study focuses on relatively better facilities for transport, health, education and communication to influence their stay further in host areas and the communities as well as lack of facilities in the place of origin that prevent their return to their original areas.

Theoretically and conceptually, the above discussion contributes to building up a new conceptual framework/model of social relationships, livelihood strategies and security perceptions

through use of existing literature and new practical knowledge. The conceptual framework contributes to understanding matters pertaining to the field of displacement, settlement, and return and resettlement process in Sri Lanka. This model draws our attention to the importance of motivation and expectations of migrants, which are closely linked to the experiences and reactions of people displaced or to be displaced in their movement. This framework can be used for analyzing conflict induced return and resettlement issues, as it emphasizes the linkages that exist between IDPs' original areas and host areas (destination).

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